

Web Publishing Guidelines

These guidelines have been produced and disseminated as part of Hutchinson Community College's effort to provide more consistency in design and quality of public web pages. Various templates have been designed by the Marketing and Public Information office to utilize consistent color schemes, type fonts and design elements. These templates are designed to provide a unified look for HCC's public website pages. At the same time, some flexibility has been provided for the informational components that departments/offices may choose to use.

In addition to providing a unified and enhanced look to the HCC Public Website pages, the templates provide a professional and simple starting point for departmental content managers to focus on the informational rather than design components of their respective pages. The templates are designed to provide a high-tech look and feel, while enabling those with limited web editing and programming experience to be able to update information in a timely manner without having to learn complicated computer coding. While some design flexibility is available to the content managers, the templates and these guidelines are intended to simplify the process of public webpage design and enhance HCC's marketing to prospective students.

General Design Concepts

A unified template design has been developed using Cascading Style Sheets with a consistent page banner, menu, font styles and faces. CSS ensures that all of the pages within the HCC web site have a consistent look and feel. The approved HCC Header and Footer components must be part of each HCC web page.

As educational industry surveys of prospective students indicate, these students are very visual and they like photos. Including a high quality photograph related to your administrative offices or academic area/program is recommended. But keep in mind that a poor quality photo of low resolution and dark shadows can do you more harm than good. Collage photos are discouraged, as they do not display well in all browsers.

Academic Department/Program Home Pages

The opening page for academic departments and programs are the place to start recruiting students. Each academic department/program should have an opening page that provides a brief description of the department/program, services and/or degrees offered; career or transfer education opportunities and a contact point for the department/program. The object here is not to overwhelm prospects with information as much as inform them what makes your department special and intrigue them with opportunities within a particular field. Your departmental/program webpage should help facilitate personal contact with potential students through a variety of communication methods, including direct communication with faculty and staff.

Because these pages are the windows more and more prospective students use to gauge their interest in Hutchinson Community College, all information should be accurate and informative. Text should be well written.

At least one image, which meets resolution and display guidelines, as established by the Information Technology and Marketing and Public Information offices, must be included on all introductory pages.

Content Pages

Each additional page within the site must use the template to ensure a consistent look and feel within the entire HCC site. The Cascading Style Sheet will determine the size of each page as well as the informational display. The font face, size and color are determined by the Style Sheet as well.

Application

These design guidelines apply to all HCC Public Website pages as by the College Web Policy.

Page information must be accurate, current and appropriate for online use.

One manager must be responsible for the content and timeliness of the page.

Pages must avoid unnecessary duplication of information and effort as well as contradictory or erroneous information. When linked to a policy or procedure as voted on or approved by the Administrative Council, or the Board of Trustees, the link must be made to the official policy or procedure as voted. Rewriting or editing of HCC policies or procedures is strictly prohibited without President's Council approval.

Pages must comply with all policies and laws, especially those governing copyright and Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

Pages must be treated as if they were being published in a hard copy format and are subject to College publication regulations and policies.

Official pages are the only documents allowed to display the official Hutchinson Community College logo and should be denoted by that logo. This logo is subject to the graphic policies as set forth by Marketing and Public Information. An online version of these policies will be linked from the official Hutchinson Community College website.

Pages should load quickly as determined by Information Technology.

Pages must have a standard link returning to the Official Hutchinson Community College Home Page.

Pages may include audio, video, graphics, and text. These elements must be provided in the proper media formats as defined by the ITS office, to ensure proper operation and timely download speeds for the end user.

Public domain information contained in official pages must have requisite permission and appropriate citations.

Official pages must be updated as necessary, or at minimum, on an annual basis. This should include checks of the validity of all hypertext links.

Examples of inappropriate materials:

Derogatory or libelous materials or materials that infringe on the rights of others.

Materials that violate policies or laws.

Confidential materials including records protected by the Family Educational Rights and Protection Act.

Materials that are abusive, profane or sexually offensive.

Advertisements for commercial products or enterprises.

Things to Remember

The usual rules of print publication apply to Web page design and text.

Spell check all text before it is posted.

Proof read all text, captions, alt tags, etc.

Minimize sentence length in text.

Use a conversational vocabulary level and avoid jargon and obscure acronyms.

Keep graphics small by using a resolution of 72 dpi. Most monitors will not display higher resolution than 72 dpi. Use thumbnail images to link to larger graphics. For information and assistance in formatting graphics and photos to the proper resolutions and sizes, contact the HCC Webmaster.

Official Use of Logos/Photos and related Copyright Information

Appropriate College icons, including the HCC logo are available from the Office of Marketing and Public Information. The use of the "Power Dragon" logo is restricted to Admissions, Athletics, Alumni and Endowment. Any use of the Power Dragon logo must be approved by both the Director of the HCC Alumni and Friends Association and the HCC Marketing and Public Information Office. It is recommended that all HCC logos be coded so that a right-click download and copy is disabled to ensure proper logo copyright and usage by the College.

Photo and Multimedia Requirements

All photographs should be of HCC Faculty and Staff. Photos which contain non HCC personnel must have a written photographic release from each and every subject pictured. Those releases should be filed with the Marketing and Public Information Office prior to the photograph being posted to the web. Photos taken by professional photographers must include a photographic release, which includes permission for posting to the Internet in the release. Those releases should also be filed with Marketing and Public Information prior to using the photograph. The Marketing and Public Information Office reserves the right to request proper documentation regarding any photo used on the HCC Public Website. Photos which do not have the proper documentation will be removed by the webmaster until such time that proper documentation can be obtained. Users are reminded to obey all US and State copyright laws regarding photographic materials.

Always use the alternate and title text tags to provide meaningful labels to non-graphical browsers. The alternate text tags are also required to meet requirements of the American with Disabilities Acts.

All multimedia applications, including, but not limited to video and audio files, should also adhere to all relevant state and federal copyright law regarding rebroadcast of these items. The Marketing and Public Information Office may require proof of fair use for these items before they are published to the website to ensure compliance with law.

Recommendations

Make sure your links are descriptive by clearly identifying the target for each link. Avoid using the words "Click Here".

Don't use graphical gimmicks such as animated GIFs. They quickly become annoying and often do not work in various browsers.

Don't use blinking text as it is distracting and frustrates those with visual impairments.

If you are interested in obtaining statistical information regarding how often a page is visited, contact IT.

Keep a total image file size to minimum.

Keep your pages current.

All Pages should be reviewed for online accessibility. For assistance, contact the Webmaster

Test all pages in IE and Firefox.

If a file requires a plug-in or viewer, provide a link to download site.

If you are using special plug-ins, make sure they are ADA-compliant.

Use the HCC logo in the format it is provided. It may be used larger or smaller, but should be kept in the proportion in which it is provided.

Don't use any logos without permission or without marking them as trademarks.

Inform users of the type of file and how large files are before they download them.

Avoid dead-end links by checking all links regularly.

Organize your files into subdirectories to make it easier to maintain.

Don't make something look like a button and not work like a button.

Don't steal someone else's graphics.

Test, test, test.

If you encounter difficulty in designing or implementing webpages, please contact the HCC Webmaster for assistance and guidance in implementing the pages efficiently and effectively.