



FAIRMONT STATE
UNIVERSITY™

Content Strategy Proposal

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Executive Summary

The Fairmont State University’s content strategy for their website contains the planning and creation of some of the important pages of the large site. While the website is good it can be greatly improved so it can be easier to navigate the different pages while improving the user experience of the site. The improvements starts with the content that this site is in desperate need of in order to have a great site that will encourage more students to enroll at the university and to encourage more users to visit the site.

The content strategy starts off with the content audit and analysis of how the website looks overall and uses the Screaming Frog SEO Spider program to see any problems it may have. Then a content strategy and analysis is conducted to know exactly what problems there are with the content of the site, what the business goals are, and what the best possible solutions are that can improve the site overall. After conducting a competitive analysis by comparing the university’s site against three other university sites, and knowing exactly the direction to go in, the content was officially designed. The design consisted of compiling a list of the pages that are really needed for the website and what information needs to be on the page, a site map to show the architecture of how the site connects from page to page, and then some wireframes to get a good idea of what those pages would look like. The writing guidelines that each page and content should follow to make sure it all sounds professional and is understood by people of all ages. This content strategy wraps up with the next steps of how the university can implement the new redesign and content.

Introduction

An overall content strategy allows a company to really hone in and focus on the planning, creation, delivery, and eventually the control of content that is produced in the end. The content doesn’t just include text on a page, but also includes images, videos, and other multimedia that can attract users to a site and be interactive with the content, resulting in returning to the site. When going into a design or in this case, a redesign, it’s important to have a content strategy. It allows the company to be as prepared as possible so that the content is helpful and useable throughout the site as well as being structured correctly so that it’s easily found if a user needs it or even to improve the overall user experience of a site.

This content strategy proposal fits into the specifics of the project as defined in the RFP by making sure the final product is a website that is inviting and welcoming to everyone that is visually pleasing as well as having a great user experience that will encourage people to want to attend the university.

Introduction (cont.)

This proposal will unfold in stages by starting with what works and what doesn't on the site so far. From there it will go into the planning stage where the team will start to figure out what content will be the most successful and where and how it'll be implemented into the site. Once that's all figured out, the creation can begin where content can start taking shape with outlines, sketches, different versions to choose from, and then creating the final content that will be on the site. After the content is created it'll go onto the site and even be adapted to be used on a phone and on a tablet. Then once the content is on the site, the university will be able to control it all to make sure it's up to date, and always has a place on the site even if it means removing, adding, or revising content.

So far, as of right now, the univeristy wants to redesign the website in order to engage and encourage more potential students to attend the university, to have better user experience on the site, for the target audience to be able to find what they are looking for on the site, and to set their students up for success for not only in the classrom, but also in the rapidly changing world. Also, the university wants to have the site be overall engaging for the users no matter who they are.

The audience are the prospective students (undergraduate, transfer, graduate, international (on-campus and learning abroad in a partner school)), current students (undergraduate, graduate, international (on-campus and learning abroad in a partner school)), and both parents of the current and prospective students. Additional audience members include donors and prospective donors, alumni, current faculty, advisors and staff, legislators, the general public and visitors, prospective faculty, advisors and staff, prospective community and international partners, as well as the media.

Background Information

Content Audit & Analysis

Organization Overview

Fairmont State University is an institution that offers many certificate and degree programs at the associate, bachelor, and master levels including 41-degree programs and over 90 fields of study.

The University is on a charming hilltop campus in Fairmont, West Virginia, a small, city surrounded by nature. Around the university there are winding, clear rivers that cut through the green hills and mountains of Appalachia, giving our campus community so much access to the outdoors. Biking, hiking, camping, rafting, climbing, skiing are just some of the activities the students can do.

Fairmont State is where students and teachers become friends for life. Here, students enjoy the opportunities offered by the state university that is combined with the personal attention and campus atmosphere they'd expect from a small, private school where the students are set up for great success in their lives.

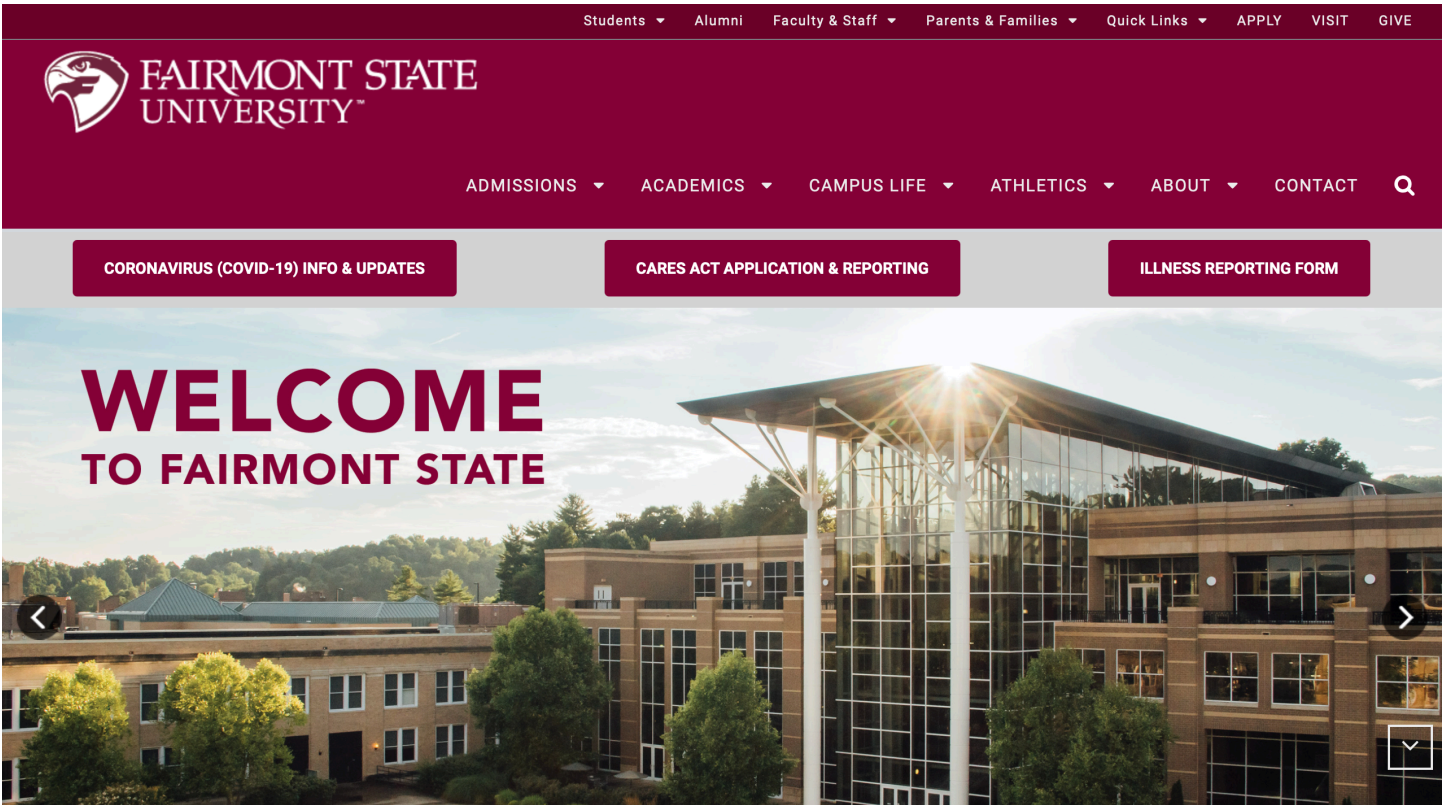
Report Overview

This report contains an audit and the analysis of the Fairmont State University's website, <https://www.fairmontstate.edu>. The website is very user-friendly with a lot of resources and full of information that is helpful for the audience interested in the organization and for those who are already part of it. Overall, the website has 7,889 HTML pages and 712 images.

The program Screaming Frog SEO Spider was used to conduct the audit of the website. The purpose of this audit was to look and examine how the website currently is, while looking for any errors in the site. This report is based on a small sample size and not all HTML pages and images. All of the findings will be noted and analyzed in this report.

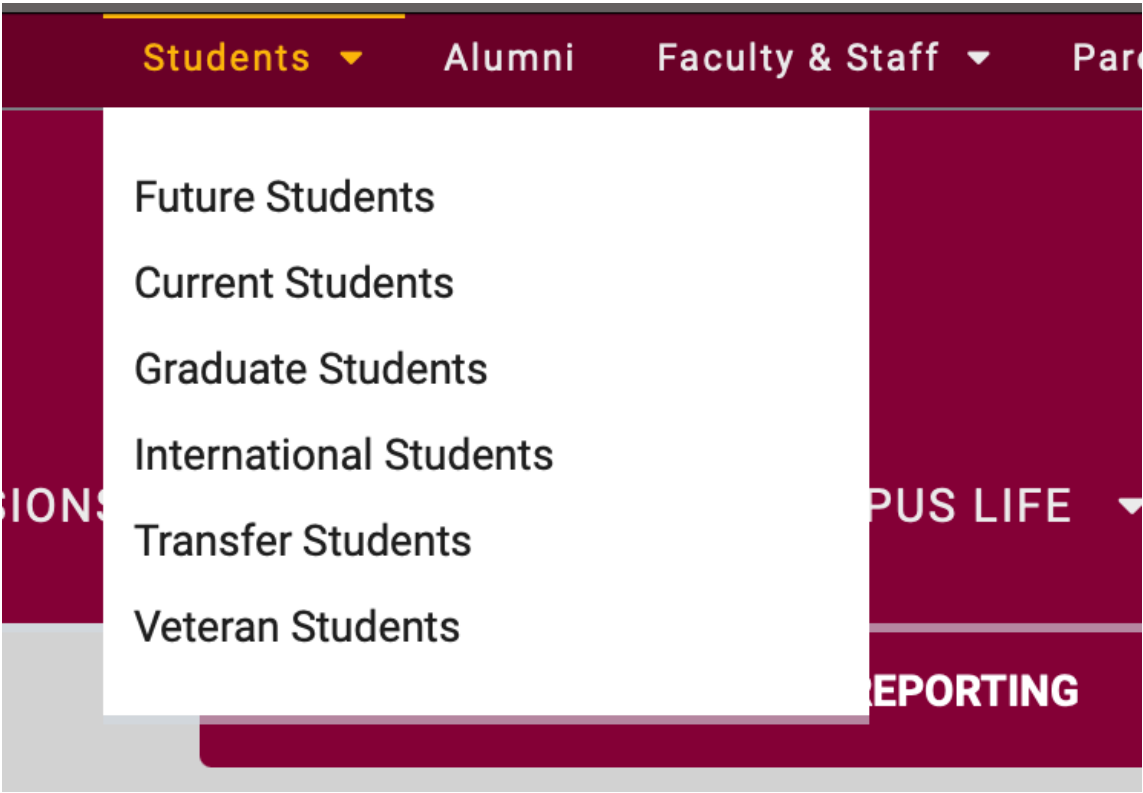
Website Architecture

The website has a very simple, yet attractive homepage. It's very simple for people navigate around and to know where to go immediately. The site uses simple colors that isn't too obnoxious for the users that will make them leave the site.



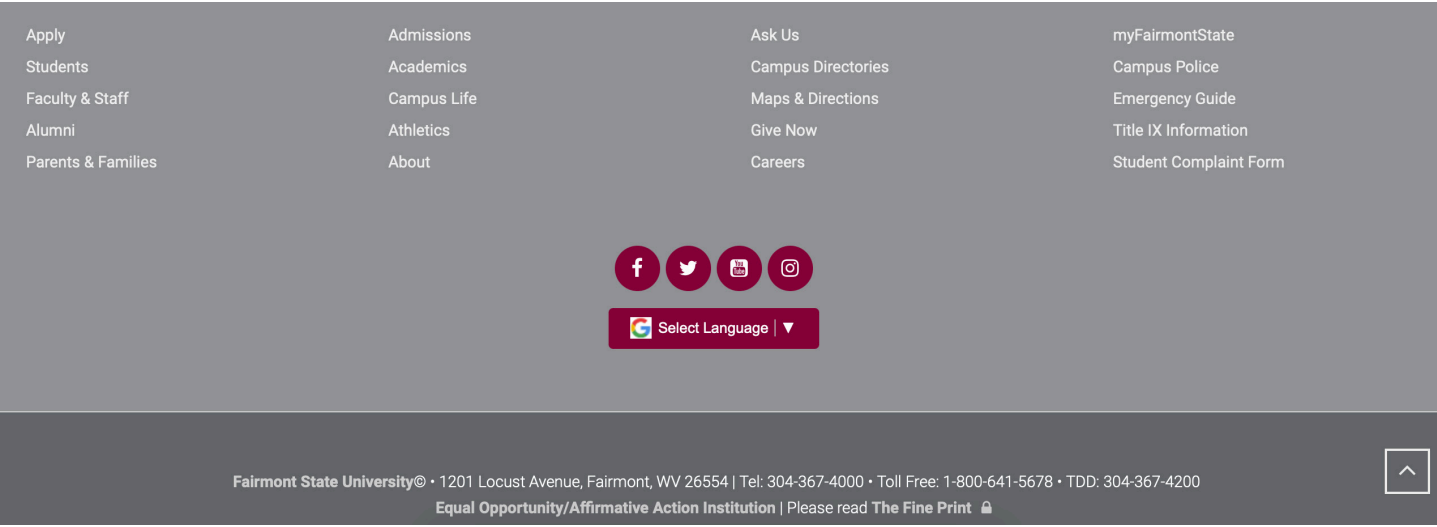
FSU Home Page

The site's navigation bar at the top can be confusing to some users since there are two separate navigation bars as well as a lot of different sections. Since there are any sections to the navigation bars, it can become uncertain to the users of where certain information is because some information can be under multiple sections. There are nine drop down menus attached to nine sections on the navigation bar. Within the drop down menus there are over 100 other pages the user can go to that can become overwhelming.



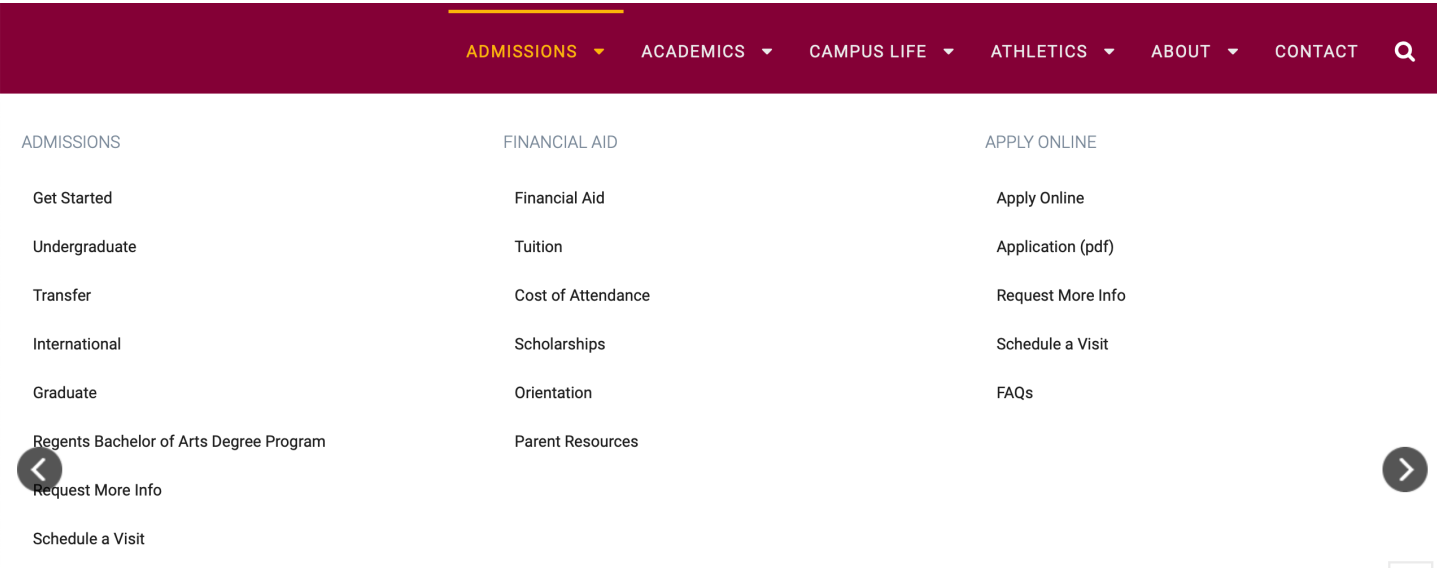
Top Navigation Drop Down Menu

It also has the same footer on each page that contains social media links, the same links as the ones on the navigation bars with some more links to new pages, and even a place to choose a different language.



Footer

Within each of the pages throughout the site there are more links to other pages within the website. These pages could be donation areas, other blog posts or stories, images, videos, and any information about the animals or that’s important based on where they are in the website.

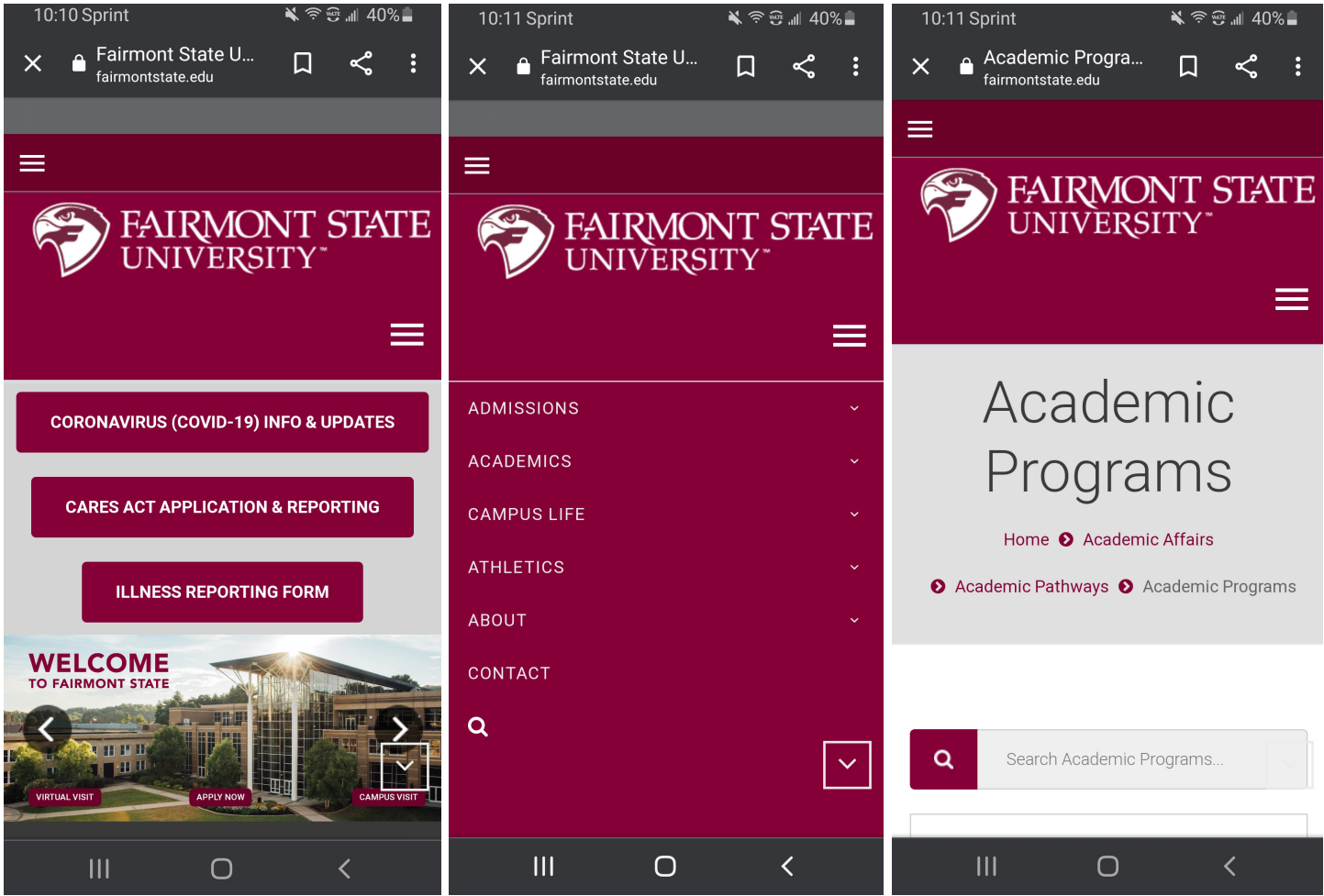


Bottom Navigation Drop Down Menu



Example of breadcrumb in the website

The site is big and is super easy to get lost in. However, there are breadcrumbs that show you where you are and the pages that lead you to there. For example, under the Academic tab there is a section called “Academic Programs”. Once the user clicks on it, at the top, like in the picture, it shows the user were they have been and where they are now. Each page at the top in the different color has a link to that page so it’s easy to go back if they wanted to.



Mobile View of
Home Page

Mobile View of
Menu

Mobile View of Academic
Programs Page

The site is mobile friendly to a point and contains everything that is on the desktop version. It is also set up in the same way from the colors to the location of everything like it's the same order and location for all the information. However, the menu location can become confusing since it's on the top left corner as well as the right side under the name of the university. At times some of the buttons and wording can become too big that's necessary for a mobile version of the site.

Page Titles

Page titles are important in an Internet search, since it's the first thing anyone looks at. According to the Screaming Frog SEO Spider program every HTML page has a title. However, not every title is the best. Some are too long, too confusing, not impactful or interesting enough for people to click on, or needs more keywords in them. Below are examples of good and bad ones, as well as one of the shortest titles and one of the longest titles.

Shortest Page Title: “User account | Forms” (20 characters)

This is a very short page title. Even though it does say exactly what that page on the website is, it's not interesting enough for a new user to click on it. While it is just a page about the user's account, the users who are looking for this page can easily spot it, and when it's easy for the user the more they'll use the site because of how easy it is to use. So even though it's not unique or interesting enough for anyone to click on it, there are certain people who while click on it.

Longest Page Title: “Policy Regarding Discrimination, Harassment Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Misconduct, Stalking, Retaliation, and Relationships | Fairmont State University” (171 characters)

Usually when titles are long and wordy people are not willing to click on it or read it. In fact the whole title is not even seen when it's being searched for on the Internet. This can easily turn many potential visitors away from the site. There are no keywords or words that interest people enough to want to click on it, in which they will just go on to the next search result. Even though this page is all about the policy involving very serious topics, a few keywords can go a long way.

Example of a Good Page Title: “Fairmont State Senior Class Launches Walk with a Falcon Campaign | News | Fairmont State University” (99 characters)

Whenever something new is being released into the world people are immediately interested in knowing everything there can possibly be on it. Using the keyword “launches” attracts potential users or returning users to see what it's going on at the university. This is a good page title because it allows for a lot of intrigue and immediately can attract people to the site. It also shows potential visitors that the site is constantly updating with new information, which is important for people interested in spending their money at a university.

Example of a Bad Page Title : “The Frank and Jane Gabor West Virginia Folklife Center | News | Fairmont State University” (89 characters)

This page title is not interesting enough to grab someone's attention. It's dull and doesn't spark any interest in the reader. The entire page title is unknown to every user unless they go to the university and know exactly who Frank and Jane Gabor is. There are no keywords that can instantly grab someone's attention when looking at search results.

Meta Descriptions

Meta descriptions are important in that once someone is interested in a search it's the next bit of information they look at to see if they want to go to that site. According to the Screaming Frog SEO Spider program there are 1,116 (88.36%) of the pages are missing a meta description. However, not every description is the best. Some are too long, too confusing, not impactful or interesting enough for people to click on, or needs more keywords in them. Below are examples of good and bad ones, as well as one of the shortest and longest descriptions.

Shortest Meta Description: *“Chance Encounters: Scholar Meets Subject - 1990 Wayne R. Kime, Professor of English” (83 characters)*

Not only is this meta description short, but it doesn't give enough to get people interested. While it can intrigue people to click on the page because it uses the keyword “encounters”, it still needs more to attract new users. This description is also dull and potential users would instantly get bored reading it and skip to another search result.

Longest Meta Description: *“As part of the Phyllis Wilson Moore Online Author Series, The Frank & Jane Gabor West Virginia Folklife Center will host an online event with author Burnis Morris, who was named a 2011-2012 West Virginia Humanities Council Fellow. On Wednesday, October 14, at 7p.m., Professor Morris will be talking about his work, reading several passages from his book Carter G. Woodson: History, The Black Press, and Public Relations, and taking questions from the online audience.” (468 characters)*

This meta description is way too long. People today do not have a very long attention span and any time they come across a lengthy passage they will either read the first few words or skip it entirely. “Burnis” is the last visible word in the Internet search, and even that much isn't that interesting to make people click on it. In fact, there are no keywords that will help to attract any user to the site. The word “event” may attract some people because people love going to events. However, that's not really enough to get them interested in clicking on the page and actually reading about the event.

Meta Descriptions (cont.)

Example of a Good Meta Description: *“Fairmont State University alumni and friends contributed more than \$300,000 in a 24-hour period on the second Falcon Day of Giving on Thursday, October 29, exceeding the fundraising goal by more than \$50,000. ” (209 characters)*

This description uses the keywords “\$300,000”, “Falcon Day of Giving”, and “in 24-hour period” intrigues people right away. These words instantly attracts people since many people are interested in knowing more about something once there is money involved. It's also descriptive enough even though it's short and not all of it can be seen in one search result. People nowadays like to read things that are quick and to the point as long as they get enough information from it. This description gives enough detail that people will want to click on it even though it they are not able to see the entrie description.

Example of a Bad Meta Description: *“The Frank and Jane Gabor West Virginia Folklife Center has partnered with the Marion County Parks and Recreation Commission and the Marion County Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) to enhance tourism in Marion County while improving the quality of life for West Virginians. This collaboration is a component of “Voicing History: Enhancing Tourism Through Story,” an Appalachian Teaching Project (ATP) funded by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).” (458 characters)*

Right away this can make people will be turned away from this page because they don't know who any of the people are that is in the description. Also, those who don't know the area won't know the places that is being talked about in the description which can instantly confuse and annoy a potential user, turning them away from the site and to a different site and school altogether. In addition, the part that is actually visible in a search result are only names of people and places that don't tell much about the page that makes enough of an impact on a user in that they would want to click on it.

Site Accessibility

Many of the images throughout the website are missing their alt tags, 514 images or 72.19% of the images to be exact. Otherwise the rest of the alt tags are written well for this site. The site is accessible for everyone to use of all ages and disabilities. However, because of the site being so large the older generation can get lost and confused. It’s also conforms well to the major accessibility guidelines.

```
<div class="views-field views-field-title">
  <strong class="field-content"><a href="/dni/news-stories/frank-and-jane-gabor-wv-folklife-center-presents-%E2%80%9Cwonderful-west-virginia%E2%80%9D"><a href="https://www.fairmontstate.edu/news/alumni-folk-life-front-page/frank-and-jane-gabor-wv-folklife-center-presents-%E2%80%9Cwonderful-west">Frank and Jane Gabor WV Folklife Center Presents “Wonderful West Virginia”</a></a></strong>
</div>
<div class="views-field views-field-body">
  <div class="field-content"><div class="field field-name-field-news-image field-type-image field-label-hidden"><div class="field-items"><div class="field-item even"><a href="/news/alumni-folk-life-front-page/frank-and-jane-gabor-wv-folklife-center-presents-%E2%80%9Cwonderful-west"></a></div></div></div>
  <div class="new-line-xs col-xs-12 new-line-sm col-sm-6 col-md-3 col-lg-3 grid-item">
    <div class="views-field views-field-title">
      <strong class="field-content"><a href="/dni/news-stories/fairmont-state-university-celebrate-spring-commencement-april-24-25"><a href="https://www.fairmontstate.edu/news/college-liberal-arts-college-science-and-technology-events-front-page-school-business-school">Fairmont State University to Celebrate Spring Commencement April 24 & 25</a></a></strong>
    </div>
    <div class="views-field views-field-body">
      <div class="field-content"><div class="field field-name-field-news-image field-type-image field-label-hidden"><div class="field-items"><div class="field-item even"><a href="/news/college-liberal-arts-college-science-and-technology-events-front-page-school-business-school"></a></div></div></div>
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          <strong class="field-content"><a href="/dni/news-stories/frank-and-jane-gabor-west-virginia-folklife-center-host-storytelling-event"><a href="https://www.fairmontstate.edu/news/events-folk-life-front-page/frank-and-jane-gabor-west-virginia-folklife-center-host-storytelling">Frank and Jane Gabor West Virginia Folklife Center to host Storytelling Event</a></a></strong>
        </div>
```

Example of HTML code

Content Types

The Fairmont State University website consists of different webpages with text, images of the campus, student life, classes, and more, and even graphics. At the bottom of the website there are links that go out to their Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and their YouTube pages, as well as a place to change the language of the site. All of the content is integrated very well into the messaging of the site in that it really helps to deliver their mission, goals, message, and ideas to people in the most respectful and best way possible. The content throughout the site helps to tell the information, stories, and even news without being obnoxious to the people visiting the site. The content flows smoothly throughout the site without it being too much for one person to handle when they are on a page. A lot of the content can be re-used, but much of it needs to be redone or avoided altogether.

Writing

The website is written in a professional way and appropriate for its audience so that all ages can understand what is being said, that is high school age and older. No matter what is being discussed whether it’s the courses, events happening on campus, financial aid information, or even campus life, there is enough written that the reader will get a lot out of it. There is so much detail and a lot of descriptions they don’t have to guess or assume anything.

Content Strategy & Analysis

Executive Summary

Fairmont State University does not want to just be known as the biggest or most exclusive school in the state. The school wants people to know them as the school that offers the best education in and out of the classroom and prepares the students for life outside of school.

After reading the Fairmont State University’s RFP report and doing independent research using the university’s website there were problems that arose relating the goals and the content that can be provided on the website. While there’s a lot of content, it can become overwhelming to the audience, and some content is also missing that can prove to be beneficial to have. This report details the findings and creates the best solution in order for the digital content to meet the business goals.

Business Goals

Content can prove to be successful when done correctly. However, before the content can be created, the business goals needs to be established. These business goals helps to establish the proper content to not only relate to the information that’s being given throughout the site, but to also have an impact on the audience so they are interested in everything Fairmont State University has to offer. The business goals that the Fairmont State University is trying to accomplish include:

- Prepare hard-working, passionate students for a lifetime of success
- Provide transformational educational experiences
- Offer several academic programs that are the only ones of their kind in the state
- Turn opportunity, passion, and hard work into excellence in a vibrant, close-knit campus community where students and teachers become your friends for life
- Provide a welcoming spirit of family that reaches throughout the region, across the nation, and around the world
- Provide learning opportunities with exceptional depth, inside and outside the classroom, from the beginning of the college experience, embracing a ‘no waiting your turn’ philosophy
- Provide an education that prepares graduates to participate in the knowledge-based economy
- Provide an outstanding faculty and staff who deliver exceptional attention and support

The Problems

Based on the website

- Too many goals to accomplish through the content (website will become cluttered)
- With a very large website, much of the content needed to achieve the goals will not be able to be seen by the audience since many probably won't go to many of the pages - only go to what they are looking for and that's it
- A lot of pages could benefit from having content including images or even videos to improve the site, but there are too many to pages that need it

Based on the RFP

- The amount of goals is overwhelming, which means that not all of the goals will be accomplished
- Create too much information that can become too much for the audience at first visit or glance at the website
- Based on people's attention span today, pictures and videos are the option to deliver information — can't help give appropriate information to people all the time which means some goals and focuses will be lost
- As of right now the site is very slow when it's loading
- Right now the information can be difficult and confusing to find and the navigation of the site is very difficult and overwhelming

Audience

As of right now the website is helpful for the those in junior and senior year of high school and anyone older. However, the website doesn't always work for the older or elderly generation. People of all ages, no matter how old they are, may go back to school to get their masters or other higher degrees, to start college from the start, or just to take some extra classes, so they have to be able to cater the information to every person possible while having a website that's easy to navigate around. The Fairmont State University doesn't want to exclude anyone based on age, financial status, or for any other reasons.

Observations of the Current Content

Present Content

Throughout the website, there are links to other pages and content, images, videos, social media posts, and even links to resources that are not on the website itself. There are links to the Fairmont State University's social media accounts including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. The footer holds a section to change the language which is great to have with international students and families with a different language as their primary language.

Missing Content

What makes a great website is how the company is able to attract their audience and to make them want to spend more time on the site. However, the Fairmont State University's site is missing quite a lot of content that can be beneficial and very helpful for the site. This can include, but not limited to:

- Images on at least every page relating to the information given
- Videos showing some past events or new events, or anything about the university that can be placed in different areas of the site to attract the audience
- Actual social media postings about the campus, student life, the university, classes, or anything else like the ones about the athletic teams and games that will relate to the everyone since social media is very big no matter where you look

The Value of Content in Relation to the Audience

Having the proper content throughout the site will be very valuable for the audience. If the content is interesting enough throughout the site it can make the audience feel relaxed and not overwhelmed with site especially with it being so large with a lot to offer. The content can really show the audience the impact the university can have on them and the state, and vice versa.

The Content in Relation to the Business Objectives

It will allow them to be very engaged with the site and spend more time on it. By having really impactful and even relatable content can have their audience return more and more frequently. It also allows for more people to want to visit the site and university. Creating content that is impactful, interactive, and interesting can show just how the university is striving to make sure the students are ready for life after college and helping even if they are not a student anymore.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

For each business goal there is a possible KPI. It doesn't need to be the one chosen, but it helps to see how a business goal is achieved so far with the information and content that a company or in this case, a university has. This helps to see where to go next and how much needs to be revised, added, or removed altogether.

Business Goal #1: *Prepare hard-working, passionate students for a lifetime of success*

KPI: Conducting user interviews in person will help to achieve the proper content for this goal. The interview will consist of mostly open ended questions so that the interviewees give their honest thoughts and answers without being confined to only certain answers to choose from. The responses to the interviews will help to determine what content is working and what content isn't in order to provide the proper resources so the students and alumni can be successful in everything they do. Doing this can allow the interviewers to see the real life reactions of how they are interacting with the site and how what needs to be improved or added.

Business Goal #2: *Provide transformational educational experiences*

KPI: In order to create the appropriate content for this goal the company must conduct a heuristic assessment. This assessment allows an actual user to give their thoughts and opinions as they are using the site. In order to see if the site allows for easy access to the educational experiences content, then having this kind of assessment done will allow the university to see just how simple it is to find that kind of content.

Business Goal #3: *Offer several academic programs that are the only ones of their kind in the state*

KPI: This goal can be difficult at times to really measure, since the university can't always control what they offer. However, looking at the analytics can help to see just how often users click on the academic programs and the pages that link off from it. This allows the university to see how often the academic programs are being looked at, which ones are the most popular, which programs are not clicked on, or even how long a user spends time on these pages. Based on the results, content can be created to improve the user experience when the user is researching a major or minor.

Business Goal #4: *Turn opportunity, passion, and hard work into excellence in a vibrant, close-knit campus community where students and teachers become your friends for life*

KPI: Conducting a survey that has both multiple choice and open ended questions to assess this goal will prove to be the most helpful. This type of measurement allows for the user to see if the site is truly shows the vibrant and close-knit campus community. While it is based on a user's opinion and it's not answering for each and every person, it will still give a sense if the site is in the right direction. The results can help understand if and what actually shows that community feel and what doesn't, while seeing where it can be improved.

Business Goal #5: *Provide a welcoming spirit of family that reaches throughout the region, across the nation, and around the world*

KPI: Reviewing the analytics will help to achieve the proper content for this goal. Using this method can help to see where people are visiting the site from. The analytics can help see which countries, regions, towns, or cities that people are visiting from and where they need to reach out more in order to achieve the goal of including people from around the world. Also, since the site includes international students as part of their target audience, they are able to see if they are reaching enough international students while creating content to show the spirit of family the university creates.

Business Goal #6: *Provide learning opportunities with exceptional depth, inside and outside the classroom, from the beginning of the college experience, embracing a 'no waiting your turn' philosophy*

KPI: In order to create the appropriate content for this goal the company must conduct interviews with people who use the site and it has to be in person. This interview consists of open ended questions in order to get actual user thoughts, opinions, and suggestions. Doing this allows the company to get the proper reactions and answers to see just how the website has been showing the learning opportunities one can get in and out of the classroom. The user is able to really tell if the site shows the opportunities or if it doesn't and even how easy it is to get to that will prove to be helpful in the redesign.

Business Goal #7: *Provide an education that prepares graduates to participate in the knowledge-based economy*

KPI: This goal can be difficult at times to really measure, but by getting user feedback by doing interviews in person with open ended questions can be very beneficial when creating the proper content to achieve this goal. For example, there are many alumni that do incredible things in their careers after they have graduated so by showing it on the website can be very helpful to prospective families when considering to commit or apply or when visiting the site. Also, everyone always wants to know if they are set up for life after college so displaying "success stories" on the site can be helpful for the user. The interviews allow the interviewer to see just how easily this content is to find and if there is enough content to show this.

Business Goal #8: *Provide an outstanding faculty and staff who deliver exceptional attention and support*

KPI: Using a heuristic assessment to assess this goal will prove to be the most helpful. This type of measurement allows for the user to see if the site is truly has content that shows just how the faculty and staff provides the support and attention the students need. While it is based on a user's opinion and it's not answering for each and every person and it's hard to show sometimes, it will still give a sense if the site is in the right direction with being able to include everyone and anyone. College can be a lot for some people so being able to show that through videos, images, graphics, or other multimedia can be very helpful for the potential families. Also, the user will be able to tell if there is enough content for this goal or not and how easy it is to get to or not.

Competitive Analysis

Having a complete competitive analysis allows Fairmont State University’s team to see just how their website compares to other sites like it and how they differ. Comparing the sites side by side can help to lead to ideas to implement in the new site that either hasn’t been thought of before and can be really useful and helpful for the site in the long run. So for this analysis, the Fairmont State University’s website was compared against the websites for Bryant University, The Pennsylvania State University (Penn State), and The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

	Fairmont State University	Bryant University	The Pennsylvania State University	The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Unique Features	-Images on homepage that changes after a couple of seconds showing new updates and important information about the university	- Video montage on home page -Navigation bar is a mix (located across the top and in a hamburger style)	-Video montage of life at the university on home page	-Unique navigation bar (on the side and sticks to the top after users scrolls down)
Design Strengths	-pleasing on the eyes (nothing too obnoxious) -good icons	-Icons make the facts and information stand out	-Strong use of color and content throughout the site -Content really connects the entire site	-Very pleasing to look at, nothing is overwhelming -Use of content to divide sections of each page is very well done (relaxing feel to it)
Design Weaknesses	-Many pages can benefit from adding visual content so it’s not just all text	-Use of colors are all over the place	-Some pages have an entirely different look to them that can be alarming to users	-Navigation bar can be alarming to first time users since they are used to it being across the top
Content layout throughout pages	-Graphics can be improved -More images, graphics, videos, etc. can be added -Decent content -Can use more content on many pages	-Lots of videos, images, graphics, and icons -Decent amount on many pages	-Flows great from one page to another -Lots of images, videos, graphics, etc. that really supports the text	-Content flows really well with the information and from one page to another
Navigation Around the Site	Confusing and difficult	Confusing	Easy	Easy, but confusing at first glance
Core Features				
Social Media Links	X	X	X	X
Article/Blog section	X	X	X	X
Email sign-up / subscription section			X	X
Research/grant opportunities			X	X
Donations/gifts	X	X	X	X

For the Client

Core Strategy Statement

To provide a welcoming and passionate university to everyone, we will improve the website that will make the students feel ready and prepared for the rapidly changing world while they are attending Fairmont State University.

Messaging Framework

First impressions the audience should have when they interact with our content:

- “That was easy to find”
- “She is an alumni and her career has allowed her to do amazing things!”
- “I am now prepared for my job interview”
- “I already feel safe and welcomed here!”
- “There are so many interesting majors, minors, and courses to choose from”

What the audience should know and believe about the value we provide:

- “Since I am not always confident in different areas like job interviews, financial aid, or anything else, I know I can trust the university to help me through it all.”
- “A lot of things have changed since I graduated high school a very long time ago, but I know I can trust the university to help me go back to college”
- “From athletics to workshops and to other events there is always something going on, so as someone who doesn’t go to the university but loves to attend different events and likes to be up to date on what’s going on, so I know the university will keep me up to date. ”

What will be able to demonstrate what the audience should believe is true:

- “They really showed me how I may use my degree(s) as a career”
- “They really give me a lot of resources to use like for jobs and job interviews, even if it’s not from them directly. I really trust them since they are not afraid to use outside resources to prepare me. ”
- “People have to have trust in the school they want to go to, so I am able to trust the information that I am given since they have to take what we have to say into what they put on the site.”

Designing the Content

Prioritization Table

Each user has a different need when they visit a site. The prioritization table will allow the university to see the needs (focus) of a potential user from their target audience based on a goal they may have. While the page includes what the user needs, it also includes content that they never would have thought they wanted or needed which is beneficial for the business (drive). Also, what they need may not always be in the best interest of the business (guide), but can still satisfy the user which can in return can make the user want to return to the site.

Note: Below is a table showing just that, but it isn't every possible goal a potential user may have, but still gives a good idea of their needs when visiting the site

User Scenario	Segment	Focus	Drive	Guide
I'm trying to figure out if Fairmont State University offers a specific major	Prospective Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PDF of courses, majors, and minors that are offered (Printable and available online)• Major description with prospective jobs after college, and requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• News/events of alumni using this major as a career• Social media channels of how this major is being used in the world now	
I want to see if the university offers any assistance with job interviews and preparations	Current Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sign up for mock interviews• Interview wardrobe to rent out• Documents and slideshows to help in a job setting• Phone numbers, emails, etc. who are willing to help	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Events that are all about helping prepare for a job interview• Social media channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outside help for job interview tips and tricks (i.e. social media, other schools, etc.)
I want to know that if I send my child here that they will be safe on campus	Prospective Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Campus safety information• Campus safety number and other contact information• Campus safety faculty information with pictures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resident life information (link to another page)• Health services information (link to another page)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forms and other documents talking about what happens if something bad does happen on campus (i.e. harassment, robbery)
I want to know if there are any events that I can still go to since I've already graduated	Alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List of events• News stories of past events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social media channels with content showing alumni events	

User Scenario	Segment	Focus	Drive	Guide
As a teacher, I want to be able to have access to resources if I were to start a research project	Faculty Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Goals for a research program• Types of grants that will be offered• Selection process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• News stories of a successful research program• Social media channels documenting the research• Link out to the research results/ final product	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Other research programs similar to the one they want to do it on• Outside help for research grants and programs• Outside research programs/ grants that not through the school
I want to be able to donate to a school I graduated from to help inspire the future generations and to make sure they get want they need to succeed	Donor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Donation options• Opportunities to give/ donate• Incentives from donating• Stories of those who donated before and what became of that donation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social media channels showing the positives that come with donations	

The Content Model

In order to get a sense of what the important pages are for the website or what should be added, revised, or removed we need to get into the mindset of the target audience. Below is a table showing what a user would want to see on the page in terms of the content. This can include images, text, videos, or any other multimedia.

Note: Not every page, just some to get a good idea

Goal	Core List	Core Page	Core Content
Have a lot of majors, minors, and courses that will attract potential students	Academics	Course Catalogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course Name• School Year (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior)• Description• Undergraduate or Graduate course
Potential students only wants to be able to see the undergrad programs and not have to sift through them all	Academics	Undergraduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course names• Major or minor• Description• Link to program page
Get more people to look into the graduate programs	Academics	Graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course names• Graduate• Description• Link to program page
Get more people to know about the university	About Us	About Fairmont State	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facts about the university• Location of the university• What’s around the university
Become known as a very safe campus	Campus Life	Campus Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Campus safety information• Campus safety faculty with their pictures and information• Contact information• Any forms and documents one may need
Provide the students with many organizations to join in order to meet new people, make connections and get a lot out of it to last a lifetime	Campus Life	Student Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List of organizations (with links for more information on each one)• Social media posts about showing what the organizations do and the fun they have• Information about each one (brief)• Forms to fill out if needed• Student organization handbook• Upcoming events put on by student organizations

Goal	Core List	Core Page	Core Content
Have the opportunity for the faculty to participate in research programs or create one of there own	Faculty/ Staff	Research Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Goals for a research program• Types of grants that will be offered• Selection process• Advisor council• Any contact information
Have career resources for our alumni to use after graduation	Alumni	Career Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Career development center contact information• Upcoming career events and information• Job preparation and tips with links to other resources• Links to different job sites and to specific career opportunities
Be able to provide the alumni with benefits that they are able to use throughout their life or career	Alumni	Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List of benefits that alumni is able to get with a link next to each one that goes to another page for more information about that benefit• Information about the benefits• Stories of alumni using the benefits
Be able to have a lot of alumni come back for events	Alumni	Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stories of past events• List of events• Dates, times, and locations of events
Get more people into the women’s athletics	Athletics	Women’s Athletics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facts about women’s athletics• List of women’s athletics• Social media postings about the women’s athletics teams• News stories about the women’s atheltic teams
Get more people to attend the games	Athletics	Tickets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social media posts of fans using a hastag from the athletic games• Ticket prices• Incentives to make people want to attend

Sitemap

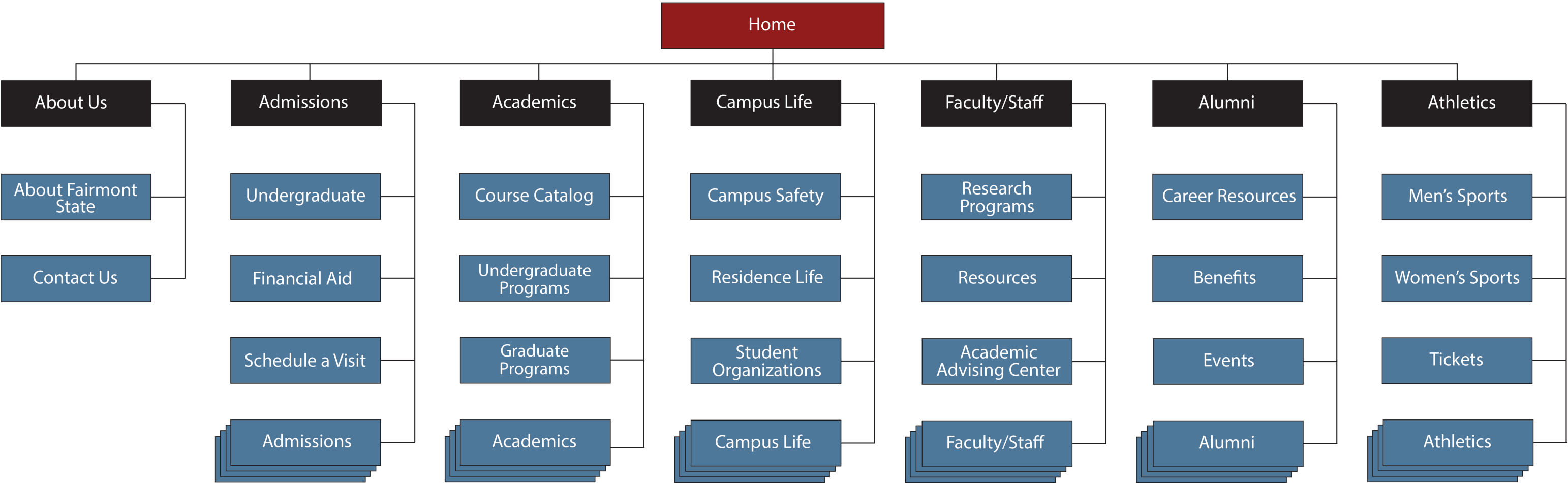
A website’s architecture is very important in a design and redesign. A sitemap is a visual representation of how the pages of the site are organized. The user experience is crucial because if they are not engaged in the site or have a hard time navigating throughout the site then there’s a good chance they won’t return to the site. So overall, the sitemap helps to determine the best way to organize the pages so the user can easily find what they are looking for at any given moment.

Note: This sitemap is separated into the core list (black) that the user will see in the navigation menu and the core pages (blue) is what the user will see in a drop down menu under each one

Key

Core List

Core Pages

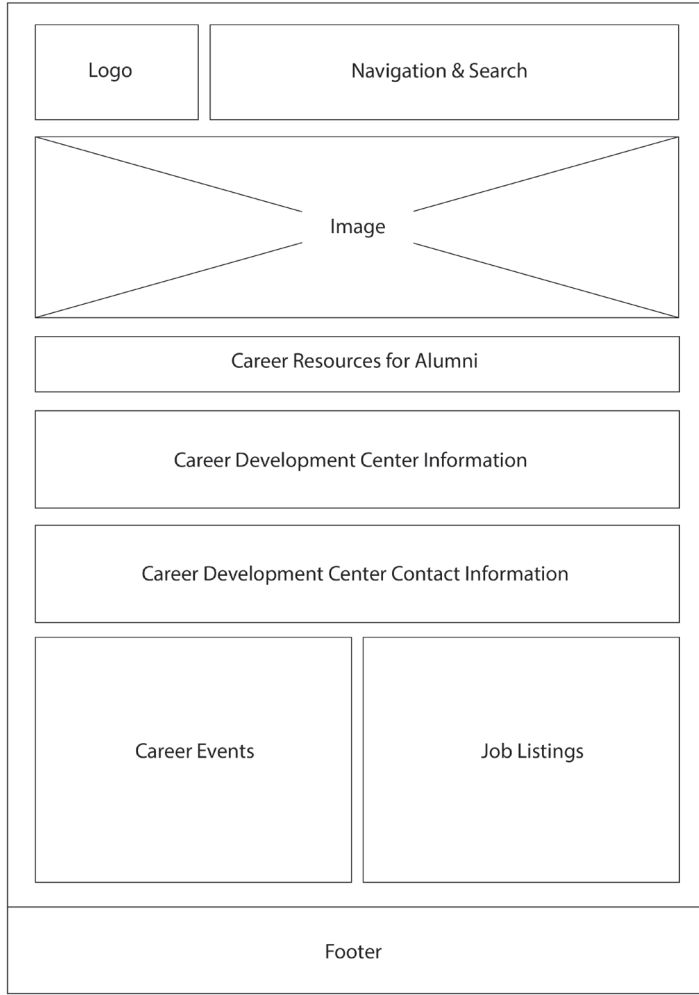


Sitemap Concept

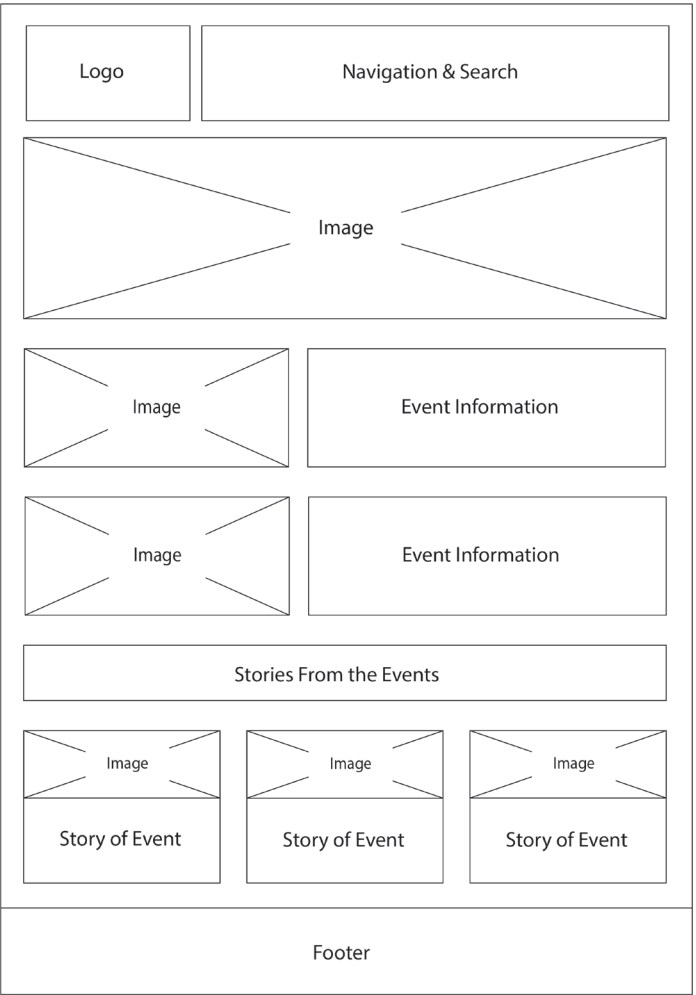
Wireframes

Before jumping right into the creation of each page with images, videos, text, and even color, it’s important to have a rough outline of what the pages would look like which is called a wireframe. These wireframes should always have no color or text (except to label the different sections) and no images, videos, or other multimedia. Instead, they should be represented by a rectangle with an ‘X’ through it for a photo or a rectangle with a triangle for a video. The wireframes allows for a visual representation of the page to see if the user will be able to get around the page and be able to use it easily and be able to find all the different components to it, without getting overwhelmed at first glance. Once the wireframes are put together and can see it all together, it’s easier to shift things around and change up the look of the page until it’s good enough to use actual colors, images, text, etc.

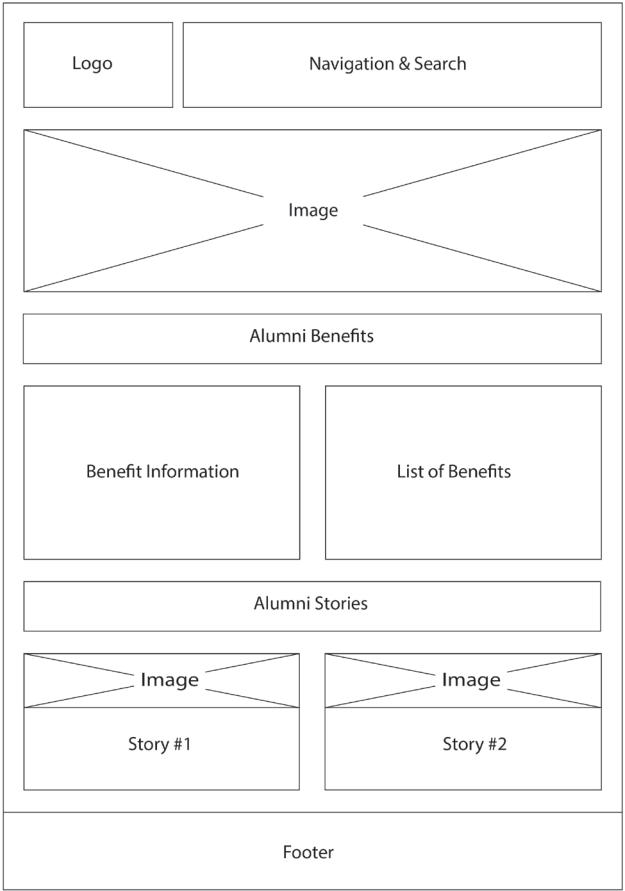
Note: This isn’t all of the pages, just enough to get an idea



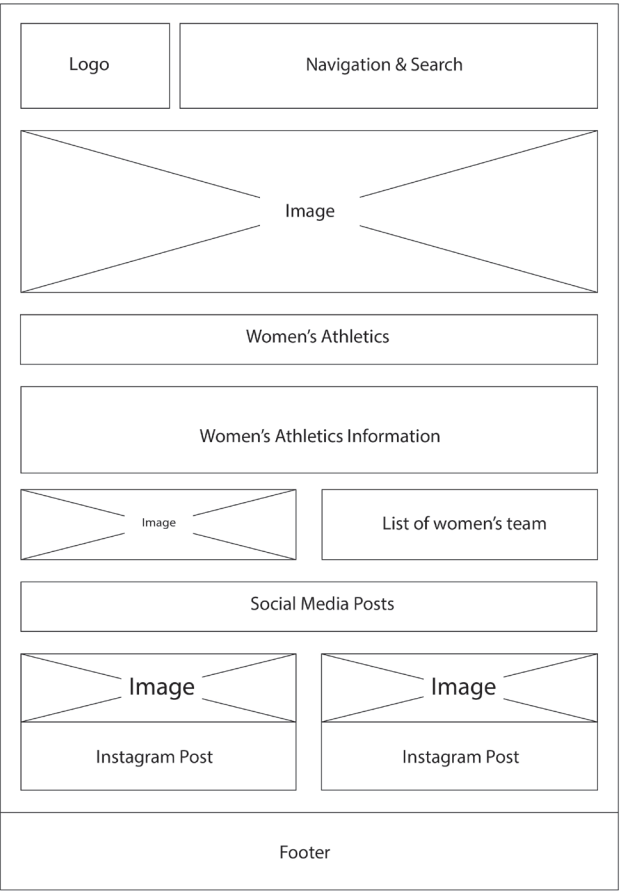
Alumni - Career Resources Page



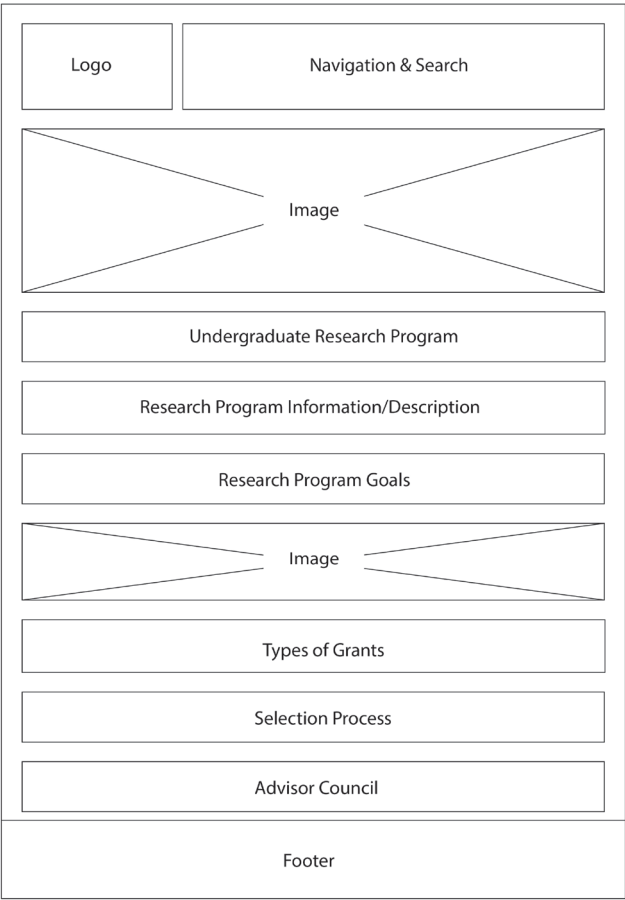
Alumni - Events Page



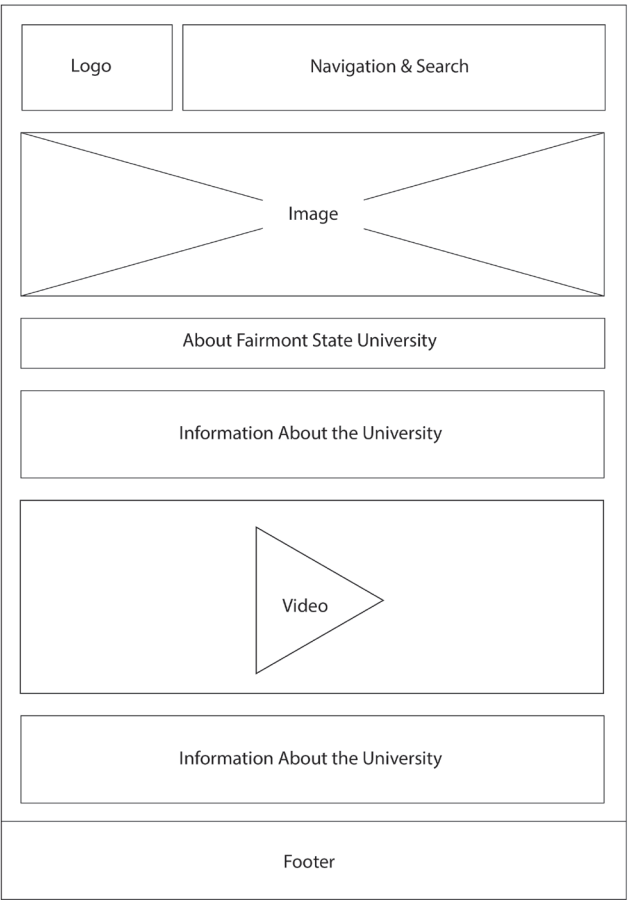
Alumni - Benefits Page



Athletics - Women's Athletics Page



Faculty/Staff Research Program Page



About Us - About Fairmont State Page

Logo

Navigation & Search

Image

Undergraduate Admissions

Undergraduate Admissions Information

Apply to Fairmont

Apply to Fairmont Information

Apply Button

Important Admission Dates

Admission Dates

More Info Button

Admission Requirements

Requirements Information

More Info Button

Footer

Admissions - Undergraduate Page

Logo

Navigation & Search

Image

Undergraduate Programs

Undergrad Program Information

Name of Program

Major or Minor

Program Description

Link to Program Page

Name of Program

Major or Minor

Program Description

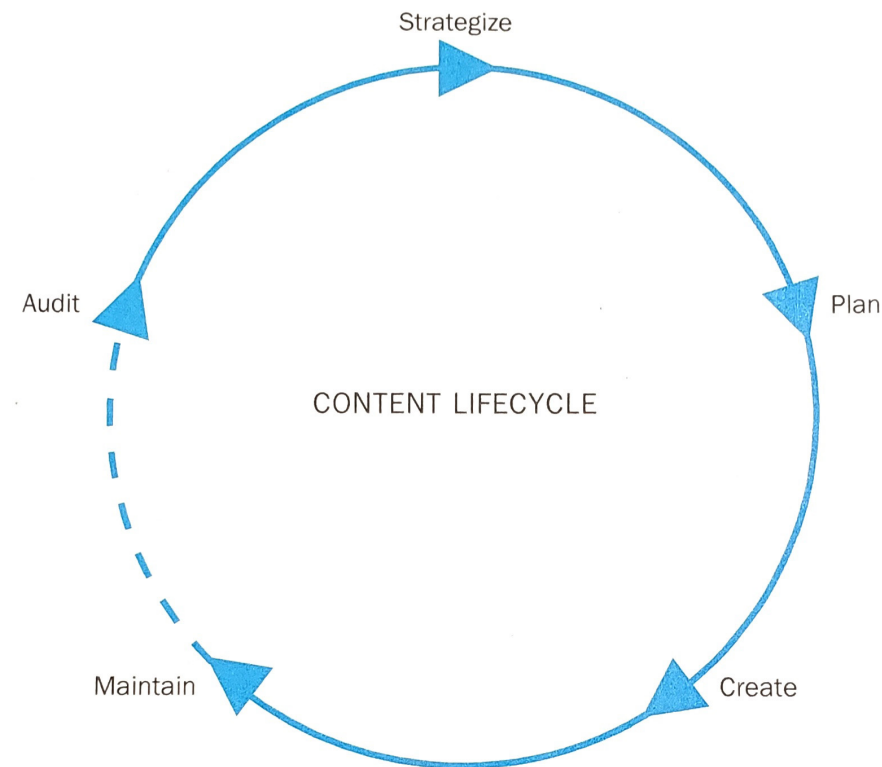
Link to Program Page

Footer

Academics - Undergraduate Programs Page

Next Steps

The Content Lifecycle



Source: Casey, Meghan. *The Content Strategy Toolkit: Methods, Guidelines, and Templates for Getting Content Right*. New Riders, 2015.

Example of a Wireframe for the Calendar from Meghan Casey

Just like any other project there are overall steps that should be followed in order to produce a successful product and outcome in the end. Meghan Casey shows a content lifecycle with five major steps from her book, but it can be more and it can be less depending on the project. For this content strategy to work then it must go through the entire lifecycle and not skipping ahead or over crucial parts that'll take the content up a level or destroy the content altogether.

Within each major part of the cycle there are different roles to be had. The strategize part involves the starting point and is where the needs are determined, like what content is needed, who are involved (creators and employers), why is it being created, as well as how to organize everything to make sure the creation process goes smoothly and where is it being viewed (website, social media app, etc.).

Next is the planning part where people are assigned the tasks and responsibilities to create the content.

Once everything is set then it's time to create the content, have it reviewed and approved, and then have it published.

Maintaining the content can be challenging when there is so much content overall. However, it has to be maintained in order to update or remove it, and to keep the information as accurate and relevant as possible, or else users will instantly be turned away which won't be good.

It can be exciting and overwhelming once the content is live for the world to see it, use it, engage and interact with it, and to judge it. Auditing the content is key in order to see how the content is doing. Maybe it's not getting enough clicks or views in a certain spot when it should be getting more so then it needs to be moved somewhere else. Decisions like that during the auditing part is crucial to having and keeping successful content.

While these are very important, crucial parts to the lifecycle, there is one more part that isn't usually mentioned. This part of the cycle is called, preserve, and comes into play at the end. Everyone is constantly focused on creating new and exciting content and getting out quickly before it becomes irrelevant. However, like content strategist, Courtney Roe, states, holding onto the past content that is older, removed from the site, app, or wherever it was from can prove to be beneficial. Sometimes there is a need for archival footage or content that is needed in the future, or past content can come together to create amazing new content. Also, some people like to preserve the content as history of the company and use the past content that isn't used anymore to learn from. So even though it's not mentioned as often, it's still can be very useful in the content lifecycle.

Content Authority

Without anyone actually enforcing ideas, strategies, rules, or showing any kind authority then chaos can ensue. Once this happens then a lot of problems can arise including content not getting done on time or at all, content not being up to par with the goal or not correct from the start, and small mistakes that are very noticable can occur like simple spelling errors. Therefore some kind of authority needs to be given. A strategic authority and implementation authority needs to be given to someone.

Strategic Authority

Having someone in charge of gathering the content strategy and showing it's success when it's needed. They also must be comfortable with telling people higher up "no" if they have to.

Implementation Authority

Having someone in charge of handling all the day-to-day tasks and responsibilities can lighten the load in some places while keeping an eye on every detail, especially if some may have missed something important. This person must be able to ask for things and tell people things that are needed whether it's an update or to tell them they can't do what they orginially thought of doing. They can be responsible for, but not limited to:

- Managing the editorial calendar for various pages
- Sorting through the unplanned content updates and sending out requests for any updates with urgency
- Coordinating the maintenance process
- Provide editorial oversight

Strategic Authority for the Roles and Responsibilities

For this kind of authority, it's best to have one person be in charge even if the tasks has been distributed elsewhere to other people. This person is normally be a director or chief of the department that oversees everything. They can be responsible for, but not limited to:

- Help to evaluate and evolve the content strategy since goals and priorities do constantly change
- Prepare the budget when it's needed
- Determine what is needed for their staff in order to achieve the content and strategy
- manage the creation of the content and make sure it's all getting done as well as communicating to business partners and other people that are neccessary for the project
- To make sure the right tools, guidelines, and standards are in place to support the content creators, reviewers, and publishers and so that they are successful too
- Establish the content success measurments in order to the content to be effective to propose content improvement projects based on the mesaurements and how the content creation is going
- Be the voice for the content they and their team has created to other people in web operations, interactive marketing, technology enhancements, and other people that they may need to talk to

Implementation Authority for Roles and Responsibilities

There should be at least one or a few people with this kind of authority, even if the tasks are spread out to different people. They can be responsible for, but not limited to:

- Take in requests and suggestions from business partners or other people and then delgate it out to people
- Schedule and organize the day-to-day content creation, review, and publishing
- Reviews and provide any feedback to the content creators before it goes to the publishers
- Mentors the business partners on any and all of the best-practices and the guidelines for content creation
- Creates and keeps track of the editorial calendars for many pages

Roles & Responsibilities

Choosing the Management Model

In order to officially start creating incredible content and redesigning the site, the university must have a content management model to make sure everything is going smoothly and efficiently as possible. Now, having a hybrid management style will be the best possible solution to have the best end result.

Since the university and its site is very large, it can get very difficult to keep track of every department and every piece of content out there. That is why having a hybrid of a centralized and decentralized management model will prove to be the best way to control the content overall. The hybrid model allows for teams throughout the university to create their own content so that it's always up-to-date and it always has the most recent information. Once the content has been created a central team will edit and review it to make sure it meets the overall needs and keeps with the content strategy as well as to keep everyone and everything on the right track.

Roles and Responsibilities

Now that the model has been chosen, it's very crucial that everyone has a role with responsibilities so that they know what's expected of them and they know what they need to do and are responsible for. This allows for a smoother work flow and the goals are able to be accomplished. Below are some of the roles that people can possibly have, and new roles can be added in to make the content creation run smoother.

Editor

With the university being so large it's important to have more than one editor, with one person as the head editor to make sure all the content is consistent and flows well together as well as making sure everything is getting done. The responsibilities of an editor can include but not limited to:

- Assigning content creation work to different teams based on what needs to be accomplished (to writers, graphic artists, photographers, videographers etc.)
- Reviewing everything and anything related to content and being able to provide feedback to make sure it's on-brand and sticks to the strategy
- Making sure that everyone working on the content have what they need to accomplish their tasks
- Bringing in and managing outside resources to work on content when it's needed (i.e. job resources)
- Overall, just helping where they can

Owner

The university, just like anything else, has someone in charge of everything and at the top. The same goes for the content creation. Here the owner is making sure the content is always accurate, new, and fresh in order to keep the visitors engaged. The owner also oversees every department to make sure what they need done is being accomplished. The responsibilities of an owner can include but not limited to:

- Reviewing everything and anything related to content to make sure it's headed in the right direction
- Making sure that everyone working on the content has their questions answered if they are needed

Writer

No matter what content it is, there is always a need for writers and something to be written on any page. For the university, having a team of strong writers will be beneficial. The writers have to keep the written content clean, to the point, include as much detail as possible, all while keeping the users as engaged as possible since it's harder to get people to actually read content these days with all the multimedia content out there. They also have to pay close attention to the strategy and requirements that have been outlined for them. The responsibilities of the writers can include but not limited to:

- Creating any outlines where content needs to be written and include any requirements for it
- Making sure there is enough content to use and to be able to write the content needed, as well as narrowing it down if there is too much
- If someone isn't familiar on a subject matter, then the writer must conduct further research so that he, she, or they gain a better understanding of that subject matter
- Creating drafts of the content to be reviewed by other people (editors or other reviewers)
- Making changes that are necessary based on the feedback given by the reviewers
- Submitting the content to be published on time with everything where it needs to be, so that limited to no editing needs to be done when adding it to the site

SME (Subject Matter Experts)

It is always great to have people who are experts on the content topics. Whether it's an expert on a product, business function, a service, or even an organization, it'll be very beneficial to have on hand when creating the content. The responsibilities of the SMEs can include but not limited to:

- Participating in interviews with those creating the content to provide their expertise and knowledge on the subject matter in order to produce the best content possible
- To review and make sure the content is accurate and provide any feedback where it is necessary

Reviewers

Reviewers are those who are not part of the SMEs or the editors, but are still vital in reviewing any content before it goes live on the site or apps. The responsibilities of the reviewers can include but not limited to:

- Participating in any interviews or research gathering to provide their expertise and knowledge on any subject matter
- Looking over the content to provide any feedback so that the content complies with internal guidelines and regulations

Proofers

The proofers do exactly what you think they do. They are responsible for reviewing and editing the grammar, typos, any formatting issues, and anything else that needs proofing before it goes to a publisher.

Publisher

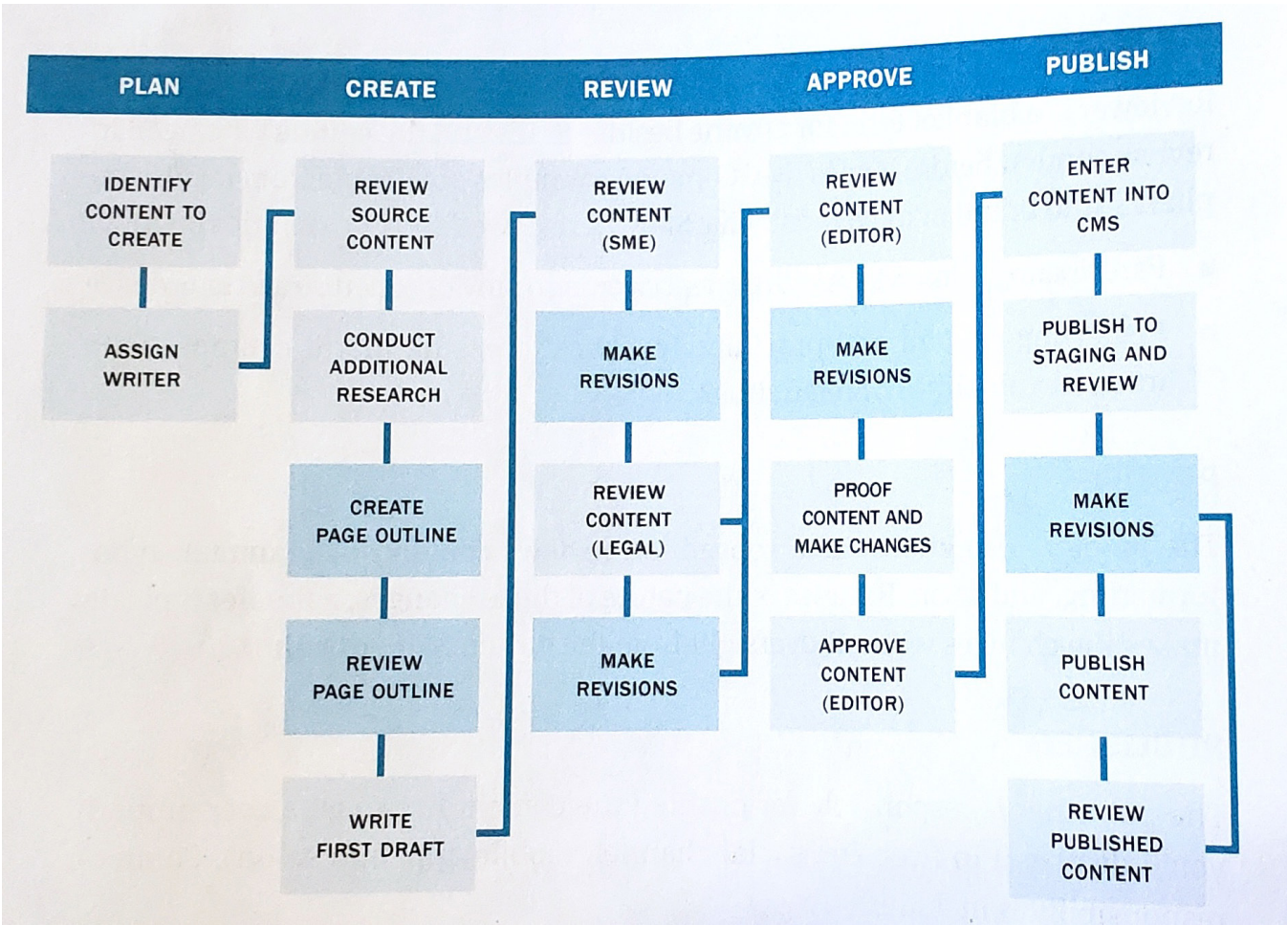
The publishers are there to make the content live on the website, social media apps, any mobile apps, or on wherever else the content is being used on. The responsibilities of an editor can include but not limited to:

- Entering the CMS and making sure the CMS is correct and everything is included
- Previewing the content like it is live to make sure it's doing what it should and there is nothing wrong with it
- Officially making the content live and making sure it's doing what it should

The Process: Content Creation

Process Workflow

Once the roles and responsibilities are given out the next step is to determine the best possible solutions and workflow that is needed to create the most successful content. While everyone has a specific role and responsibilities not everyone will need to do everything that is required of them or needed. It depends on the content that needs to be created. I should also be noted that during the workflow there will be times where a content needs to back to someone or back a couple of steps to fix it before it can continue on to the next step. A proper process workflow example can be seen in the next image from a content strategist named, Meghan Casey, in her book, *The Content Strategy Toolkit: Methods, Guidelines, and Templates for Getting Content Right*. During this stage it's important to know what each is, why it's important, who is completing each task, when each step and task will be completed, how it will all be completed. Determining all of this will help to eliminate any problems and issues down the road later on.



Source: Casey, Meghan. *The Content Strategy Toolkit: Methods, Guidelines, and Templates for Getting Content Right*. New Riders, 2015.

Example of a Good Process Workflow from Meghan Casey

Content Production Inventory

Keeping track of thousands of files, verisons, and final content can become not only time consuming to find, but to also know where everyone is on the content and who has it at any given moment. Creating an editable inventory of each content can make it a million times easier to find the content that is needed and to make sure each step is being completed and it's all staying on schedule while figuring out and problems that may arise. This inventory can or should include:

- The page ID
- Page name
- Content Type (what is being produced/created)
- Batch (if it's in chunks) or verision number
- If it is being removed, revised, or content is being added (or it's new)
- Owner name
- Content creator (who are the people creating it?)
- SME (if applicable)
- Status of the content
- Next step that includes a due date of when it should be done
- If it has been completed or not

Page ID	Page Name	Content Type	Batch or verision #	Removed, revised, or new content	Owner Name	Content Creator(s)	SME	Content Status	Next Step	Completed or Not?

Example of what the content inventory table should look like

Style Guide

Overall Website

The website will have a professional, reliable, and active voice and tone to it since it is a site for a university. However, not everyone is on the same reading level, so the text throughout the site, no matter what it's about, needs to be able to be read by everyone with any reading level, disability, and by any age. Those who are deaf should be able to use captions on any of the videos and those who are blind should be able to have it read to them, and those who other disabilities should be given an option to make it easier for them.

Headers and Subheaders

For each page there should be a captivating and interesting header, if it's possible, as well as subheaders so that the information is separated easier on the page for people to find what they are looking for as quickly as possible.

They both should instantly tell the user exactly what the page is about without getting to detailed. All headers and subheaders should be clear and to the point.

Organizing the Content

On each page the content should be in chunks so that it's easy for the user to scan and find what they need to as easily and quickly as possible. Also, chunking the content allows for similar content to be grouped together and ultimately help support the information it's with much better.

Text on a Page

People's attention span today is shorter than it ever used to be, so the information needs to be presented in a way that will be engaging while keeping people's attention the whole time. Bullet points and short paragraphs and sentences are proven to really help keep people's focus and attention on the page. This allows for information to be broken up and so it's not one long block of text and not so much text that it becomes overwhelming for the user. In addition, having white space is good to have on a page so there isn't too much text or other content on a page and provides a clean look to it overall since it allows the page to breathe and not bombarded with text.

Furthermore, breaking the text up with images, videos, graphics, and other multimedia can help improve the page and keep the user interested in what is being presented. It also allows for the visual content to support and reinforce the information and gives a visual representation of what is in the text that may seem more interesting for the user.

Through a partnership with the Harrison-Doddridge County United Way, students enrolled in the Community Health Program at Fairmont State University are assessing the health and safety needs of Doddridge County citizens.

Students will use government data, electronic surveys and interviews with key stakeholders to better understand the most pressing needs in the community. Results of the needs assessment projects will be used by the students and the United Way to develop health and safety programs that will be presented to the community later this year.



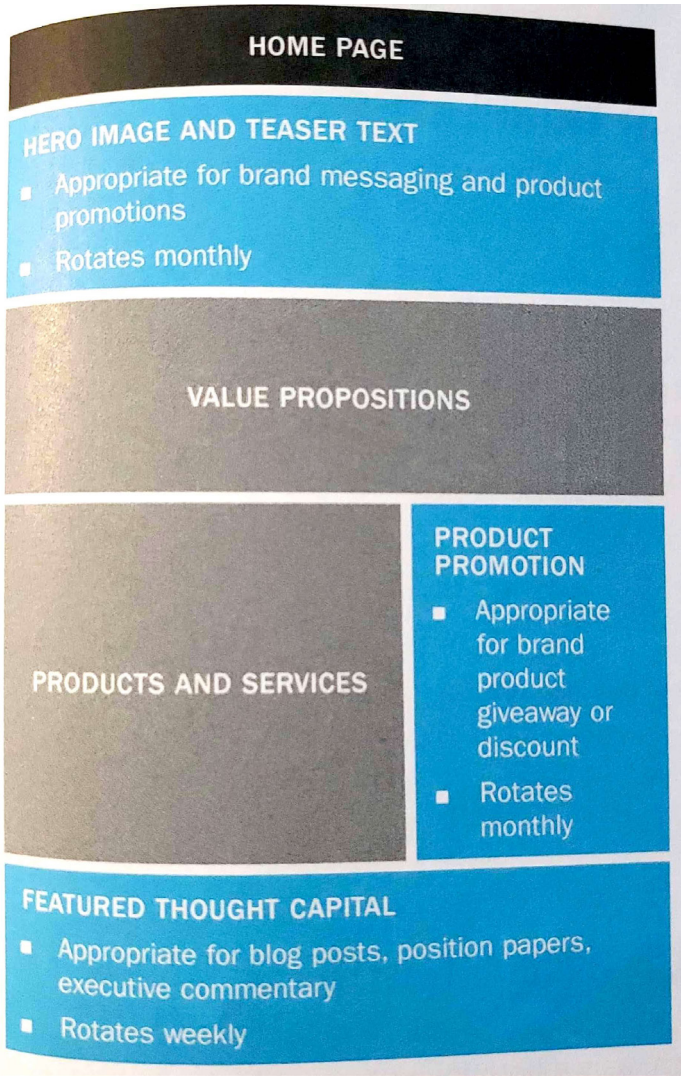
“This partnership is another example of what sets Fairmont State apart,” said Mirta M. Martin, Fairmont State University President. “Our partnerships benefit everyone involved. Our students get vital, real-world

Acceptable Style from the Website

Editorial Plan

We all at one point kept a calendar of everything we needed to do, whether it was for professional or personal reasons. In fact, we still do it today, mostly with the calendars in our phones. Now, lets take that same concept into a calendar for the content on the university’s website. Creating a content calendar allows each creator to be prepared way in advanced of what needs to be accomplished by a certain date and any upcoming projects that will need to get done soon or to start if they are done early with other projects. This calendar and the way everything is all planned out will allow people to reach out to businesses, parteners, donors, or anyone else they are creating content for to tell them if they can or cannot create certain content at that particular time and it’ll need to be pushed back, or a spot opened up to create content for them on the website.

For the actual creation of the calendar, there should be two separate parts to it. One should be a wireframe but with colors (two max) documenting what should be on the page in terms of content, how often it changes, and where it’ll be located whether it’s on the side, across the page, and so on. The second part should be table and calendar documenting the page name, the location of the content, what the content is, the date it’s due, how often it is changed (or how long it stays on the page for), and on what week does it appear with the inclusion of an actual start and end date if it is needed.



Source: Casey, Meghan. *The Content Strategy Toolkit: Methods, Guidelines, and Templates for Getting Content Right*. New Riders, 2015.

Example of a Wireframe for the Calendar from Meghan Casey

Page Name:				Month:			
Location	Content	Due Date	How Often Does it Change?	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4

Example of What the Content Calendar Looks Like

Resources

- Casey, Meghan. The Content Strategy Toolkit: Methods, Guidelines, and Templates for Getting Content Right. New Riders, 2015.
- Roe, Courtney. “The Digital Content Lifecycle in 6 Stages.” Widen, 10 Nov. 2020, www.widen.com/blog/digital-asset-lifecycle.