MERCER UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Title: Website Standards
Effective Date: August 1, 2025
Issuing Authority: Senior Vice President for Marketing Communications
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Purpose

Websites can serve as important marketing tools for the University. The many websites hosted by the University require significant resources, and they are a reflection of the mission and character of the University's students, faculty, staff, alumni and others.

Consistent and coordinated use of Mercer marks on University websites is a vital part of preserving and enhancing the value of the institutional brand. All University departments and University-sanctioned organizations should use Mercer's visual identity elements in accordance with the graphic standards.

Additionally, Mercer provides facilities and resources for websites. In order to effectively manage available resources, work within various legal requirements, and to provide an environment where the University's constituents are portrayed in a way that reflects our mission, this policy has been established.

Scope

This policy applies to all University departments and University-sanctioned organizations.

Exclusions

None

Policy Statement

1. Mercer University may provide resources to host a website for the following individuals and organizations:

   - Colleges, schools, departments, centers, institutes and other entities that make up the University;
   - Current faculty, staff, and emeriti faculty;
   - Currently enrolled students;
   - Student organizations recognized and in good standing with the University with the endorsement of the organization's adviser;

- Third-party organizations directly affiliated with and sponsored by the University;
- Professional societies and other non-profit organizations that have a substantial relationship to Mercer's mission. Further, for these organizations, a current member of the Mercer faculty or staff will be responsible for working with the organization and managing its website.

2. Colleges, schools, departments, centers, institutes and other organizational entities within the University must receive approval from the Department of Information Technology's Web Management staff before contracting with third parties for Mercer-related websites. Web Management staff must be included in all planning, design, and development phases of the project. All Mercer-related websites, including those hosted or created by third parties, are governed by this policy and the related policies.

3. All websites must be actively sponsored and managed by a current faculty or staff member or current student. Website owners are responsible for reviewing and ensuring that their website(s) are kept current. Web Management and Marketing Communications staff will occasionally review website content to ensure accuracy, timeliness, and appropriateness.

4. Approval of a website may be denied based on the lack of necessary resources whether those resources are technical, personnel, or of another classification.

Content

1. Websites are to be in accordance with all applicable Mercer policies.

2. Websites may not contain or display fraudulent, harassing, or obscene messages and/or materials. Further, materials of this type may not be stored on University websites or other information technology systems, even if they are not displayed.

3. Mercer resources may be used to create websites about an individual or an individual's interests, but may not be used for personal business, personal gain, or partisan political purposes, except as permitted by other University policies.

4. As a general rule, commercial advertising is not permitted on websites. This includes banner advertisements as well as graphic images that promote a commercial service or text links of a commercial nature. No graphic or text may imply Mercer endorsement of commercial products or services. Any exceptions to this policy must be granted in writing by the Office of Marketing Communications and Office of General Counsel.

5. Copyright laws apply to electronic publishing as well as to print publishing. Website owners are required to conform to the University's copyright and intellectual use policies.

6. Mercer graphics and images are owned by the University and may not be altered in any way. All use of Mercer graphics and images must conform to Graphic Standards.

7. Mercer reserves the right to add or require specific information to each web page or website, including, but not limited to:

- a link to Mercer's home page;
- a page owner's e-mail address;
- legal information and disclaimers;
- the date of last update for that page; and
- the URL for that page.

Domain Names

The use of "mercer" within a domain name such as www.mercer.edu in relation to the University is a trademark owned by the University. Therefore, the use of "mercer" within a domain name is specifically controlled. Anyone wanting to register "mercer" in a domain name must have permission from the Department of Information Technology.

Mercer websites generally will have the form www.mercer.edu/xyz (where xyz is a unique name or identifier for a department, organization, individual, event or other appropriate entity requiring a domain name). For technical reasons, Information Technology may establish additional servers and names such as www1, www2, etc. in place of www listed above, but for marketing purposes www.mercer.edu/xyz will be used when publicizing the site. There may be times when establishing a special name such as xyz.mercer.edu or www.mercerxyz.com is appropriate. Information Technology must approve these exceptions in advance.

Sanctions

Sanctions may include but are not limited to suspension of technology privileges, referral to Student Judicial Services, termination of employment, and/or criminal prosecution.

Additional Resources

Information Technology Access and Use Policy: https://policies.mercer.edu/information-technology-access-and-use/

Website Address

University Branding: https://www.mercer.edu/university-branding/