



**THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY**  
WASHINGTON, DC

**Responsible University Official:**  
Executive Director, Communications  
**Responsible Office:** Office of Online  
Strategy  
**Last Revised Date:** March 15, 2018

## **GW WEB CONTENT**

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### **Policy Statement**

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It is the policy of the university to promote accurate, current, useful, accessible and engaging university websites. The university promotes a unified visual design and language, positive messaging and representative images of the university. All content appearing on university websites must conform to the requirements set forth in this policy.

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### **Reason for Policy**

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The purpose of the Web Content Policy is to ensure accuracy, consistency, integrity, and protection of the identity and image of the university by providing a set of minimum content standards that all university website owners must follow.

University websites are important media through which the university carries out essential functions including teaching, research, scholarly communications, student and personnel recruitment, alumni relations, development and public relations. It is therefore important that the university websites accurately represent the university.

The George Washington University supports and encourages freedom of expression and an open environment for the pursuit of knowledge. However, this autonomy must be responsibly managed in a conscientious and accountable manner that is in accordance with both university and regulatory policies. The reputation and image of the university are determined, in part, by the quality of information published electronically by its faculty, students, staff, and affiliations. Therefore, it is important that university websites are maintained in a manner that best represents the university in an accurate and positive light.

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### **Who is Governed by this Policy**

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Faculty, staff, students, contractors and volunteers

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## Policy

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All websites associated with the George Washington University (GW) must comply with the requirements set forth in this policy. This includes websites that may be hosted on university servers or hosted externally. In addition to websites, this policy applies to social media content, official blogs and personal blogs hosted on the GW Blogs service.

### Legal & Regulatory Requirements

All university websites and the content appearing therein must comply with all applicable university policies and codes of conduct, and all applicable local, state and federal laws.

### Privacy Policy

All university websites must include a link to the [GW Website Privacy Policy](#). The privacy policy link must appear within the global footer (see below for additional information on this requirement).

### Global Header and Footer

University websites must include the global GW header and footer to maintain consistent GW imaging and ensure that GW names, logos and trademarks are properly used. The global header and footer must comply with all official [GW Identity Standards & Guidelines](#).

## **Commercial Activities & Interests**

University websites and the content therein may not be used to promote personal financial activity, commercial activity, for-profit organizations, or political or religious groups unless permitted by other university policies or applicable laws and regulations. If a page within a university website links to an external organization, the university is not responsible for the content of that page. Linking to external content does not represent an endorsement of that content by the university.

## **Illegal, Abusive and/or Offensive Content**

The use of profanity and any abusive or offensive content is expressly forbidden. Prohibited content may include, but are not limited to content that encourages or supports:

- A. Expressing prejudice, racism and bigotry
- B. Engaging in illegal activities
- C. Defaming a person or group
- D. Exploiting minors

## **University Content Standards & Guidelines**

All university websites and the content therein must follow the standards and requirements set forth by the [GW Identity Standards & Guidelines](#). University websites should also follow the standards and guidelines in the [GW Style Guide](#). Additional resources are set forth in the Related Information section of this policy. Individual content publishers are responsible for ensuring that their content appearing on the university website(s) is up-to-date, accurate and accessible.

If social media is integrated into a university website, the social media content shall comply with the university's [Social Media Policy](#).

## **Policy Non-Compliance**

Failure to comply with this policy may result in the removal or disabling of the relevant university website from university servers, networks and/or support services. If the relevant university website is revised to remove prohibited content, the website may be republished at the sole discretion of university officials from External Relations.

## **Additional Information & References**

Visit the Division of External Relations' [Online Strategy](#) website or contact the Marketing & Creative Services department for further information and requirements regarding web content and website migration, maintenance, modification, accessibility training or development requirements.

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## Definitions

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**Content:** Content is any information that is distributed on a university website. Content can take the form of text, images, diagrams, animations, video and/or audio.

**University Website(s):** Websites and other online and social media platforms that are hosted on university servers or otherwise associated with the George Washington University.

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## Related Information

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[Accessibility at GW](#)

[Copyright Policy](#)

[Division of Information Technology Help Desk](#)

[GW Identity Standards & Guidelines](#)

[GW Marketing and Creative Services](#)

[GW Online Strategy](#)

[GW Style Guide](#)

[GW Terms of Use Visitor Agreement](#)

[GW Website Privacy Policy](#)

[Social Media Policy](#)

[World Wide Web Consortium \(W3C\)](#)

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## Contacts

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Contact	Telephone	Email
Online Strategy	202-994-3938	<a href="mailto:onlinestrategy@gwu.edu">onlinestrategy@gwu.edu</a>

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## Document History

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- **Last Reviewed Date:** April 26, 2018
- **Last Revised Date:** March 15, 2018
- **Policy Origination Date:** October 1, 2004

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## Who Approved This Policy

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Louis H. Katz, Executive Vice President and Treasurer

Lorraine Voles, Vice President for External Relations

*This policy, as well as all [university policies](#), are located on the [Compliance Office website](#).*