All departments, faculty, and staff are responsible for building their own Web pages.

Departments should designate a Web publisher and Web authors. The Web publisher is responsible for using software to build and maintain the pages. The Office of Information Technology’s Training and Communications department offers courses on how to design Web pages. Faculty and staff may sign up for these courses by visiting the Training and Communications Web site: http://www.gpc.edu/~training/

The Web authors are responsible for writing, editing, and approving content written by others that will appear on the pages. Both should consult with the Web Content Coordinator to ensure pages are organized and written in a user-friendly way.

In order to establish a new departmental Web site address, the department needs to obtain a directory on the GPC server. The head of the department needs to contact the Office of Information Technology by sending an email to helpdesk@gpc.edu.

The following information should be provided in the email:

• Department head approval.
• Description/purpose of Web site
• The Web site directory owner. This is generally the department head. The directory owner will be responsible for the account and will have authority to disseminate the Web site information to other staff members if this is a district (college-wide) or campus department.
• Desired directory (Web site name). This name will appear after the .edu/ in the gpc address. For example the Transfer Admissions Guarantee Website address is: http://www.gpc.edu/tag. The directory name can be only eight characters long, including the gpc or campus prefix.
• Desired password. An eight character password with a mixture of alpha and numeric characters is best.
All department pages represent the college. All pages should contain the same look and feel. The colors that are currently used throughout the GPC Web site are as follows:

- Burgundy: #8D1B3D
- Blue: #002C77
- Gold: #FDC82F

The Web site font is called Trebuchet MS and is used throughout the entire site. Note: Since not all browsers may be able to read this font, Arial has been adapted as the alternate.

The Office of Information Technology has created Web page code to make building pages with the GPC look and feel easy. How it works: Copy and paste the web page code into the web page building software. Follow the instructions on what to change in order to customize the page.

For more on the GPC look and feel code, consult the OIT Style Guide which is located at http://www.gpc.edu/StyleGuide/publish/index.php3 and/or contact the Training and Communications department. It is best to attend a Web design course in order to receive an understanding on how to use the code.

For additional technical assistance, note that there is an instructional technologist on every campus who is trained to assist with the technical aspects of Web page design. A list of campus instructional technologists can be found by visiting http://www.gpc.edu/~gpcintec/.

If graphics, photographs, or material written by other authors will be contained on department Web sites, make sure you have permission to use them. Copyright laws apply to Web pages.

College Web pages should be accessible to persons with disabilities. Use alternative tags to describe graphics or photos. This will be read by screen readers. You may test your page to make sure the pages are accessible to persons with disabilities by visiting the accessibility testing Web site http://www.cynthiasays.com/Default.asp. Follow the directions to test your page.

Before publishing: Test your pages on different browsers like Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Safari for the Mac.
Before creating a Web site and publishing your pages, you should outline what will be included. Just as teachers create lesson plans before they teach and executives write PowerPoint presentations in advance before giving a presentation, you should outline what will be included on each page and determine how users will go from one to the other. The outline is called a site map.

Before you outline your pages answer the following:

1. Who is the audience your pages will be reaching?
2. What is the purpose of your pages?
3. What information do you need to include to reach your purpose and address your audience?
4. Who needs to write each page?
5. What pictures or graphics need to be included on each page?

After you’ve answered the above questions, you’re ready to begin outlining and then writing your pages. Web pages are like mini-magazines. With that in mind when you outline your pages make sure you structure them in that manner.

Think of it this way:

Homepage: This is like your cover page. Include a brief summary of what your pages are about and what information people receive from them.

The next set of pages on your site should continue to provide information to your audience, including what action steps they need to take. For example, if your site includes information on how to apply to a program, provide the steps on how users should do that. Direct them to the “apply” button or to an email where they communicate with someone who will provide more information.

Remember one of the purposes of the Web site is to be a “virtual” person. By going to your site, people should receive as much information as though they were speaking to you directly.
Some other points to consider when writing and laying out your pages:

People don’t read Web pages the same way they read print pages. Most people scan pages looking for certain pieces of information or a link to further information.

• Keep text brief and write short paragraphs with the key points appearing at the top of the page.

• Break up long documents into chunks, that is several Web pages, with links going from one document to the other.

• Keep pages simple. Include a graphic or photo when it is pertinent to the Web page subject, but do not overload the pages with too many images.
Further reading

Yale University Press Web Style Guide
2nd Ed., Patrick J. Lynch and Sarah Horton

The Unusually Useful Web Book
June Cohen

The Non-Designer’s Web Book
2nd Ed., Robin Williams and John Tollett

Edustyle.net
Latest web design, content trends of higher education sites