

A Proposal for CoF Web Oversight

The Context

- Today it's a given that the Web is the primary method by which the College presents itself to prospective students (graduate and undergraduate), potential research collaborators, alumni, donors, outreach audiences, and other external stakeholders.

- Web pages don't appear without
 - Technical resources such as web servers, software, Web service administration, development of the tools for serving many different types of Web pages
 - Web page editors
 - Content owners/experts

- ➔ Our resources are limited on these fronts and we're in the midst of two huge transitions -- College reorg and the move to a Web content management system, Drupal

- But our most critical obstacle to refining and maintaining a high quality Web presence is that no person or group has a vision for the College Web presence as a whole.
 - This lack of oversight results in –
 - Inconsistent or incorrect information between pages as groups develop their own pages without concern for the College Web site as a whole
 - Near paralysis in organizing and presenting information that crosses departmental boundaries – e.g., College research mission, graduate student programs, and access to course information
 - Broken links
 - Poorly organized, even inaccessible information
 - Missing information
 - Outdated pages
 - “Worker bees” feel responsible for building pages but must operate without direction or flounder in their attempts to seek out clear direction and input from many faculty and decision makers whose engagement and attention to such things ebbs and flows.

The Proposal

- We would propose that a faculty committee be established following the model of the Forestry Computing Committee.
 - The Web Oversight Committee (WOC) would be charged with working in coordination with appropriate College administrators (such as the Executive Assistant Dean, DH's or departmental web coordinators) to provide a broad coordinated vision for the College Web presence and would provide direction and decision making to inform the development and maintenance of a coherent College Web presence.
 - The WOC would work with the College Web communications coordinator and the many Web page developers in the College and would
 - take responsibility for design, organization, and content decisions and direction for the College Web site as a whole and for content areas that cross unit boundaries,
 - establish Web guidelines and standards, and
 - establish priorities for developing and utilizing new technologies and pages in light of our limited staff and financial resources.
- We would suggest that this College level committee is likely to be a good model for similar committees that would serve within large units such as departments.
 - Departments would be free to organize their individual web presence as needed but that presence would be coordinated between departments and the College.
 - Within departments, faculty committee membership should represent, at minimum, graduate and undergraduate academics/students, research, and outreach.
- Each departmental committee would appoint a knowledgeable member to the College WOC comprised of the following membership –
 - Director of College Communications, chair (Roger)
 - Web Communications Coordinator (Chris)
 - Director of Student Services (Clay)
 - Faculty representative from WSE
 - Faculty representative from FERM
 - Faculty representative from FES
- The committee would meet as needed, a minimum of once per year to review the site, look ahead to upcoming changes, and set priorities for the year ahead.