



## Web Standards and Guidelines Version 2.0

### Philosophy

[www.philau.edu](http://www.philau.edu), its sub-webs, sub-folders, and mirrors (as distinguished from its subdomains and partitions\*, which are primarily instructional and informational.) — is a recruitment entity.

Recruitment is understood to be the conscious effort to by Philadelphia University to present itself as a cohesive, professional institution that meets the needs of all visitors, from potential applicants to possible sponsors, current faculty, staff, and students to alumni, family and friends all over the globe.

### Goal

To insure that the Philadelphia University's web site is developed as a leading-edge, recruitment-driven tool that reflects and shapes best practices in web communications.

### Objectives in Pursuit of This Goal

1. To deliver a meaningful session for each new or returning visitor by insuring movement through site that is free of frustration, interruption, disinformation, or distraction.
2. To guarantee a level of integration with all aspects of campus operations so that "click" and "brick" work together seamlessly.
3. To maintain and foster brand awareness while at the same time meeting a superior level of compliance with accepted web standards.
4. To provide technical support and "best practice" guidelines for all members of the University community who participate in the management and production of site content.

### Strategies to Meet These Objectives

1. To disseminate web policies, standards, and procedures.
2. To regularly convene a Web Communications Committee and Web Action Group.
3. To implement a system of global updates and maintain common aspects of navigation and design that must be present on all pages.

\* <http://www.philau.edu> is understood as the domain. A subdomain is a part of the larger domain in the DNS hierarchy; for example, <http://faculty.philau.edu> is a subdomain. A subweb is a Microsoft term understood to mean a folder within a domain that has restricted authoring permissions (e.g. <http://www.philau.edu/admissions>). All subwebs are sub-folders, but not all sub-folders are subwebs. Mirrors include <http://www.philadelphiauniversity.edu> and literally reflect the primary domain <http://www.philau.edu>. Finally, a partition would be any division of the server for purposes of sectioning memory or areas for mass file storage.

## Web Design and Development Standards

### Overview

Guidelines as outlined in this document apply to pages hosted on <http://www.philau.edu>, its subwebsites and sub-folders. Additionally, many of the *General Page Standards* discussed later in this document represent best practices that are encouraged, but are not mandatory on <http://faculty.philau.edu>, <http://students.philau.edu>, <http://orgs.philau.edu>, and other servers, subdomains or partitions hosted and/or maintained by PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY.

For sake of accuracy, consistency, and ease of use, it is recommended that web pages published by any PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY department or school should follow certain minimum ADA and W3C standards; adherence to these standards — to be outlined in this document and updated regularly online at [www.philau.edu/pr/webstandards](http://www.philau.edu/pr/webstandards) — will promote the site's usefulness and accessibility as well as insure good practice along accepted guidelines.

If there is a question regarding the standards and practices as they apply to the web that is not covered in this document, please contact the webmaster at [webmaster@philau.edu](mailto:webmaster@philau.edu) or call 215.951.2851.

### Objectives

Standards outlined here are presented in an attempt to meet specific objectives:

*1) to insure comprehensive, correct and current information to visitors*

No department or school, service or resource is an island. As such, it is imperative that accuracy and currency of web content be viewed as a shared means of communication, and not a proprietary end in the service of a specific agenda.

*2) to guarantee a level of accessibility to all visitors, including those with disabilities*

As an institution of higher learning, it is our duty to adhere to a minimum of design and development standards that meet current standards established by the World-Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

*3) to present an image of PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY that is consistent with current branding and recruitment efforts*

Unless otherwise identified as the intellectual property of an individual or individuals entitled to copyright, material on University servers should be identifiable as being provided by PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY. Material hosted on University servers without proper markup to identify ownership invites confusion. Where given content clearly belongs to and is a product of PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY, every effort should be made to reinforce current branding and recruitment campaigns. Web content on pages bearing official PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY information should be professional, provide user-friendly navigation, and avoid use of animations, scripts, or redirects that delay or dilute the message in regard to ownership.

As you browse this document, be aware that one or more of the above-mentioned goals is always at the root of any policy decision, and that adherence to the standards herein is recommended to insure that our objectives are met.

## Management and Responsibilities

Ultimate responsibility for the campus web presence rests with the Public Relations Office ([pr@philau.edu](mailto:pr@philau.edu) or 215.951.2851) who appoints a Director of Web Communications and an Assistant Director to oversee the operation of the web site with the cooperation of Office of Information Technology's Network Administrator.

Support of the hardware and software for the main campus web server is assigned to the Help Desk ([helpdesk@philau.edu](mailto:helpdesk@philau.edu) or 215.951.40IT).

A **Web Communications Committee**, made up of members of the President's Council, Academic Council, the Office of Public Relations, and others helps to determine strategies, policies, and procedures as they relate to PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY and its presence on the web. This group meets semi-annually to discuss the future of the web.

Editorship of web content on [www.philau.edu](http://www.philau.edu), its subwebs and sub-folders, rests with the Office of Public Relations, who, in turn, oversees members of a **Web Action Group**. This group includes representatives from all departments and schools. It is managed by the Director of Web Communications, who is ultimately responsible for assembling the Web Action Group and providing its members with instruction and guidance. This group holds quarterly meetings to discuss policy, guidelines, etc. Faculty are invited to attend these meetings, but are not bound by its policies in regard to faculty pages beyond those policies related to adherence to local, state and federal laws, or the observance of international copyright regulations.

All departments and similar units are required to have a presence on [www.philau.edu](http://www.philau.edu) which is in compliance with standards to be outlined here. Individual department heads are ultimately responsible to see that their respective unit's web content is current, correct, functional, and standards-compliant. Department heads are required to have, at minimum, one individual to be the official representative of that unit in the Web Action Group. Appointees acknowledged by the Office of Public Relations as content managers and members of WAG are listed at [www.philau.edu/pr/webstandards/actiongroup.htm](http://www.philau.edu/pr/webstandards/actiongroup.htm).

All Web page authors (faculty members and students with individual home pages as well as the members of the Web Action Group) are responsible for insuring that the pages they create take into account the standards described in this document, follow individual departmental standards that may be outlined by deans or directors, observe copyright regulations, and adhere to all local, state, and federal laws, as well as any other University policies regarding conduct. Web Action Group members whose pages are part of [www.PhilaU.edu](http://www.PhilaU.edu), its subwebs and sub-folders are bound by the rules outlined later in this document.

The Director of Web Communications or Assistant Director is authorized to edit, override or remove any material that does not comply with these standards, if said material is in violation of copyright or law.

As a courtesy, the Director of Web Communications will notify authors in advance of any alteration or removal of content within pages on [www.philau.edu](http://www.philau.edu), but notification is not guaranteed nor is it required if the Director of Web Communications deems the change(s) urgent or necessary.

Similarly, notification will not be given by the Director of Web Communications or the Office of Information Technology's Network Administrator if the server-side properties of any given file change as a result of server migration or upgrades. Such changes, by their nature, do not affect content.

## **Browsing Permissions**

All areas of [www.philau.edu](http://www.philau.edu) are public and open to all visitors. Certain areas beyond the public server, including a faculty and staff directory at <https://www.philau.edu/ssl/directory>, development servers and other password-protected areas, are accessible only to users with a valid university network login and password. Those experiencing problems with their standard login and password should contact the Technology Help Desk.

Access to WebAdvisor, the University's web-based management tool (portal at [www.philau.edu/webadvisor](http://www.philau.edu/webadvisor)), is independent of the browsing permissions outlined above, and is the province of the Technology Help Desk.

## **Authoring Permissions**

Permission to write to web pages is granted by the Network Administrator and NOT the Office of Public Relations or the Director of Web Communications. However, the Office of Information Technology will routinely check with the Director of Web Communications before granting new permissions on [www.philau.edu](http://www.philau.edu), its subwebs and sub-folders. To check if author permissions are granted, an individual should contact the Technology Help Desk. The Director of Web Communications will consult on the setup of permissions, and explain how/why access may be granted or denied on a case by case basis.

Authoring in areas outside of the university main server, like WebAdvisor, the faculty and staff directory at <https://www.philau.edu/ssl/directory> and the campus store site at [www.philaucampusstore.com](http://www.philaucampusstore.com), is limited to only a few individuals. If you would like to see a change to pages on any of the aforementioned sites, contact the webmaster.

## **Software Options for Browsing Web Pages**

All university PCs are equipped with the latest version of Microsoft Internet Explorer. Pages authored and maintained by the Office of Public Relations are designed for MS Internet Explorer 6.0, and require the user to enable cookies and javascripts to insure proper display. Additionally, the java plugin from Sun Microsystems is required for display of the home page news and events scroller.

Ideal resolution for proper display is 1024x768 pixels or higher. Contact the Technology Help Desk if you are not seeing the home page at [www.philau.edu](http://www.philau.edu) properly.

In addition to testing on Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 for PC compatibles, the Director of Web Communications and Web Manager test pages using Firefox for PC, as well as Internet Explorer, Firefox, and Safari for the Mac, using the most current operating systems.

While compatibility with all browsers and operating systems would be ideal, the Office of Public Relations can only guarantee proper display on those browsers mentioned above.

## **Software Options for Web Page Authoring**

Macromedia Contribute is the web authoring software standard for all users and members of the Web Action Group. Not only does Contribute allow novice users to easily edit content, it also monitors all users in a common environment, preventing two users from working on the same page at the same time and providing the option of "rollback" should anything go wrong. If you would like to become a Macromedia Contribute user, contact the Director of Web Communications.

Depending on a user's level of competency and comfort with web-page authoring, there are additional options beyond Macromedia Contribute for both PC and Mac users. Microsoft

FrontPage 2003 and Macromedia Dreamweaver MX are available. Many more experienced users who currently use one or the other of these packages should consider continued approved use as part of a “grandfather” clause. However, those new users wishing to use these more advanced tools should first contact the Director of Web Communications, as use of more advanced web editors requires proper configuration to insure proper file management within a common environment.

All new software installations should be requested through the Technology Help Desk.

## **Design Requirements**

Design requirements for official web pages can be thought of as multi-tiered

First and foremost, specific content requirements for high visibility “home” pages must be followed. A set of general design principles then applies to all secondary or “second level” pages (i.e. those pages arrived at after one passes through the department or school’s home portal). The *General Page Standards* discussed later in this document apply to all official web content, at both the primary and secondary levels.

## **Home Page Standards**

### ***Home Page Defined***

For the purposes of this standard, a home page is considered to be either:

- 1) The top level entry page of any school, department, center, institute, lab, service or other division of PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY.
- 2) The top level page of any other web content that has an independent identity (e.g., any program, certificate, grant, project, activity, publication, etc).
- 3) The default file in any sub-folder on the server.

The home page of any entity should be the ‘main’ page in the directory housing the related material; the file should be named “index.htm” or “index.html” and must never be changed to home.html, default.html, etc. without first consulting the Director of Web Communications or the Network Administrator to insure that the given name is understood by the server as the default.

See “A Note on File Naming” and “Static vs. Active Pages” later in this document for more information on file naming consistency and protocol.

### ***Home Page URLs***

The URL (universal resource locator) of any university home page should match this syntax:

<http://www.philau.edu/X>

where X is the name of the folder on the server that houses your respective pages.

For your home page, X should be the directory name, not to an individual file name. This standard allows for clean URL display in a given browser’s address bar (e.g. <http://www.philau.edu/admissions>).

## ***Home Page Design***

PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY'S Graphics Standards Manual treats home pages on [www.philau.edu](http://www.philau.edu), its subwebs and sub-folders, as the electronic equivalent of a print publication's cover and thus must adhere to similar design standards.

The Office of Public Relations maintains examples of suggested HTML for including the shared copies of the various PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY graphics in a web page.

No fixed standards or templates exist for pages on <http://faculty.philau.edu>, <http://students.philau.edu> or <http://orgs.philau.edu>.

Contact the Office of Public Relations at 215.951.2851 for additional information should you wish to use a template for your pages.

## ***Home Page Templates***

If your home page has been provided to you as a template or shell (created by the Office of Public Relations), you are **not permitted to alter the structural, graphical, navigational or syntactical elements that have been provided**. This rule includes the imposition of animation (Macromedia Flash or otherwise) as an introductory element in advance of the home page proper (see notes on use of Flash and other animations later in this document), or the removal of existing links, icons, and images.

A home page on [www.philau.edu](http://www.philau.edu), its subwebs and sub-folders, must include, at the top of the page:

- 1) PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY'S name and logo in an accepted format (see Graphic Standards manual) in the upper left corner with a link that acts as a return to the university home page of [www.philau.edu](http://www.philau.edu)
- 2) The proper name of the unit, activity or service that is the purpose of the home page. If this name is presented in the form of a graphic image, the text must also be coded in the image's ALT tag so as to allow for proper compliance with W3C and ADA conventions.

Additionally, each home page must include

3) complete contact information, including all the appropriate of: Mailing address, physical address (building & room), phone, fax, and email address. Contact information should be rendered textually, not graphically in order to comply with ADA and W3C standards, and may either be on the home page itself or by means of a prominent 'Contact us' link to a separate page. Note that any contact information is in addition to (and not instead of) the page footer's main university contact information [see next point].

4) a common footer that includes general contact information for the university, including the university's mail telephone number (215.951.2700) and links to both Admissions and the webmaster's email addresses.

5) links to higher level units, such as division and/or department pages.

6) A TITLE tag that properly identifies the university and the respective division, department, service or unit.

7) META tags that identify the page's content (for help with META tagging, contact the Office of Public Relations).

Members of the Web Action Group are only permitted to make limited changes to a division or department's home page (usually defined as the "body" area or that area of text that is the responsibility of the content manager); without the expressed written permission of the Office of Public Relations, no changes to home (a.k.a. index, landing, or default) affecting navigation or identification of a given area as being part of the University web can be made.

Text elements of content may be changed. Examples of text elements which may be changed on a home page without first consulting Public Relations include:

- 1) incorrect contact information
- 2) incorrect or out-of-date event-specific information

All other changes must first be requested in writing via email; the Director or Web Communications will then work with individual WAG members to effect changes to home pages that are more complex than corrections to text as outlined above, or will suggest ways to work beyond the shell elements (secondary windows, etc.) to enhance specific efforts initiated by content managers.

### **General Page Standards**

The following standards apply to all official PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY web pages, home or otherwise.

Content other than official PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY pages should not be housed in departmental web page areas. This includes file swapping or sharing of any personal nature.

Content for any other organization, including professional organizations, may only be housed on the PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY server by specific prior agreement with not only the individual organization, but also the Office of Public Relations. A decision to grant an outside organization space on the PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY web server will be made based on PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY'S contractual and/or professional obligation to the organization.

Content for student organizations should be housed in the <http://orgs.philau.edu/> subdomain. Any recognized student organization may request space there by contacting the webmaster or Technology Help Desk.

Content belonging to faculty members should be housed in the <http://faculty.philau.edu> subdomain. Any recognized faculty member may request space by contacting the Technology Help Desk.

Content belonging to students should be housed in the <http://students.philau.edu> subdomain. Any recognized student may request space by contacting the Technology Help Desk. Faculty members may also initiate requests for student space by contacting the Technology Help Desk.

Please note: general page standards as they are outlined here may not apply to the subdomains listed above, but are provided to all members of the University community as tips for best practices.

Once a set of web pages has been posted, content managers should avoid reorganizing the material in ways that change the file names of any part of the material. There is no way to determine how widely existing URLs have been bookmarked or linked to from other locations. Arbitrary name changes will cause content to seemingly disappear. If a name change is unavoidable, request that a redirect be set by the webmaster.

All pages should be properly title and META tagged (the former is an absolute minimum requirement; the latter is not). If you need help with TITLE or META tags, contact the webmaster. Proper TITLE and META tagging improves search engine indexing.

Redundancy is confusing. Certain canonical documents are maintained as a single official copy on the web server. Departments are not allowed to replicate or restate information available in canon documents (e.g., course offerings, admissions standards, degree requirements, etc.) but should rather create links to the relevant portion of the official document. Fracturing core content across the server leads to inconsistencies, incorrect information, and confusion. No single department or school *owns* content. Content is not to be viewed as proprietary. Instead, it is to be shared.

At levels deeper than the section's home page, WAG members are encouraged to manage and shape text-based content, create new content, maintain currency of content, and confirm validity of external links (and report 404 – Not Found errors to the Director of Web Communications), but changes to structural elements (foundation links to other areas of the university site, graphics, colors, etc.) are not advised as they may cause a ripple effect throughout the site (causing problems in the site index, search engine indexing, etc).

### **Sponsorship, Advertising and External Links**

Generally, PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY web pages may not include any paid external advertising. However, there are instances where a department may acknowledge support from an external entity. There is specific University policy that governs what may and may not be included in such an acknowledgment. Those wishing to make such acknowledgments within their web pages should contact the Office of Public Relations for guidance. Where applicable, reciprocation on sponsors' sites is encouraged.

Links to sites outside of the PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY network should be clearly labeled and coded to initiate in a new browser window. If you do not know how to set hyperlinks to initiate in a new browser window, contact the webmaster.

### **Links: Internal vs. External (Relative and Absolute)**

When linking to external resources, an absolute link is also used. This type of link is understood to be one where the syntax of the URL is complete, including http:// (for hyper-text transfer protocol) and, where specified, www (for the world-wide web partition) followed by the domain name (anysite.com) and any sub-folders and files branching from said domain.

On the university server, however, links should be written as relative paths, wherever possible. Novice users can ignore this rule, but experienced and advanced users are encouraged to use relative linking as the norm to accommodate faster global updating by the webmaster.

Always provide prompts, indicating size and type of file, when linking to video, audio, or other specialized content.

Provide warning on links that will lead the visitor to restricted pages where they will need to provide a password.

Use meaningful, descriptive linking text on all links (i.e. avoid simply "click here").

As stated previously, create the link to directory name (including the trailing `/`), when linking to a home page on the PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY server (not to index.htm, etc.).

Maintaining proper links aids in search engine indexing by helping search engine spiders or robots following logical paths.

## **HTML (Hyper-Text Markup Language) Standards**

Pages should be created using the HTML 4.01 standard. For most content managers, the process of compliance with these standards will not be an issue. The WYSIWYG (pronounced "wizzywig" and meaning "what you see is what you get") interface of most web page editors (especially Macromedia Contribute but also FrontPage and others) does not require the novice user to "hard code" anything in HTML.

If your page uses a template set by the Office of Public Relations, many aspects of presentation are controlled by cascading style sheets, javascripts, and common graphics (like the university logo). You are not permitted to override any of these settings without the permission of the Office of Public Relations.

All pages should include the complete set of high-level HTML elements (e.g., <DOCTYPE>, <HTML>, <HEAD>, and <BODY>). The HTML tag should include the `language` attribute, which provides useful clues to browsers for hyphenation, rendering special characters, speech synthesis, etc. For an English language document, this would be <HTML LANG="en">.

Each document's <HEAD> element should contain a meaningful and concise <TITLE>. This is the name the page will be indexed under when book-marked by a viewer and is what appears in the browser's `Go` list. For home pages, this should be a short form of the name of the unit or activity owning the page. Starting home page titles with "Philadelphia University:" will be helpful for visitors who may bookmark the page.

FRAMEs are not permitted. They create unnecessary problems for some browsers, interfere with bookmarking of pages, and limit the ability to hyperlink material. INCLUDES, however, are allowed, providing that their use first be approved by the webmaster. See "A Note on File Naming" and "Static vs. Active Pages" later in this document for more information.

Note: use of older style Microsoft FrontPage templates (banner elements, etc.) are being phased out over time. In their place are templates understood by Macromedia products. These new templates are still FrontPage compatible.

Elements that are known to irritate the viewer and that detract from the professional appearance of the site (e.g., unsolicited audio or video, blinking images, flashing text, scroll bars that are not regularly updated with new content). Avoid splash pages that do not add meaningful content.

### **A Note on File Naming**

Consistency in file naming is essential to server maintenance, indexing, and linking.

### **DOs**

- 1) use .htm as a default extension for all files (if .html is or has been used, then remain consistent within any given sub-folder)
- 2) use all lowercase letters in file naming. While it is true that our server supports mixed upper and lower case assignment, you are assured browser compatibility with all lower case characters.

NOTE: mixed upper and lower case can, and should be promoted in marketing materials as it relates to the university's home page of [www.PhilaU.edu](http://www.PhilaU.edu)

As most browsers now recognize the protocol, the http:// prefix is not necessary when representing the university's home page in print.

## **DON'Ts**

- 1) Don't use spaces in file names (e.g. new page.htm). Spaces aren't resolved properly in some browsers and need to be reported as %20 to avoid errors. If you need to visually separate words in a filename, use the underscore ( \_ ).
- 2) Don't exceed a sensible number of characters in the naming of folders or files. Use common sense.
- 3) Don't post Microsoft Word documents. Instead, render all docs as Adobe PDF. If you need assistance with converting Word documents to PDF, contact the webmaster.
- 4) Don't arbitrarily renaming an existing file on the server. Once a file has been posted, it becomes part of a larger network of indexes and links. Changing a name at this point can effectively hide a file unintentionally and disrupt links.

## **“Static” vs. “Active” Pages**

Static pages are understood as those pages coded in such a way that edits must be done manually within the page itself. Any file bearing the \*.htm or \*.html extension is generally understood to be a static page. For the most part, [www.PhilaU.edu](http://www.PhilaU.edu) is static, but the Office of Public Relations has implemented a number of upgrades and improvements to code that allow for quick and easy updates to many of these pages using global search and replace techniques. It is therefore essential that even though your pages may be static, you do not alter common elements like headers, footers, and navigation (colloquially referred to as the “shell”) without the permission of the webmaster.

Active server technologies (.asp, .php, etc.) are employed by the university in key areas where database content must “feed” pages that require constant currency of content. These technologies not only deploy information from various stores of data to shells that display in a browser (e.g. faculty and staff directory), but also receive information from users to be stored on our server (e.g. Admissions forms). Limited permission is granted to those wishing to use active server technologies. Consult the webmaster in advance if you are planning to develop such pages. The use of active server technologies may affect the name of the file recognized as the default within any given subweb or folder.

## **Data Collection**

In addition to the active server technologies used to process Admissions forms (a province of the webmaster and Admissions enrollment manager), data can be collected through what is commonly referred to as a “mail to” form. These forms accept user input and are processed as plain text email to a specified university account.

Web Action Group content managers are not permitted to develop “mail to” forms from scratch on [www.philau.edu](http://www.philau.edu), its subwebs and sub-folders, but are encouraged to contact the Office of Public Relations for help in establishing such inquiry pages that can be used as a substitute for or in conjunction with traditional print reply form campaigns.

## **Security and Privacy**

All data collected via active server or “mail to” forms raises the larger issue of security and privacy on Philadelphia University servers. While a privacy policy is not within the purview of the current document, it is understood that the university does have a policy regarding privacy and that this document will be made available online.

For purposes of the current web standards document, it is important to note that the university does maintain a secure server, and that all transactions involving sensitive information need to be conducted on this server. Look for https:// in the address bar to verify secure server technology.

Pages that ask for or report or solicit sensitive information (credit card info, social security numbers, etc.) which are on the public server (<http://www.philau.edu> and all its subwebs, sub-folders, subdomains and partitions) will be removed in the interest of security. If you are aware of such pages, please notify the webmaster.

## **Content Standards**

Consistency, accuracy, and clarity of content (text and images) are as important as adherence to coding and design standards. For the most part, individual content managers have complete control over what is commonly referred to as the “body copy” or that part of the page that is surrounded by the template or shell.

### **DOs**

- 1) Use “Philadelphia University” in all sentences that refer to the University. PhilaU (except as it is used as part of the URL) is not acceptable.
- 2) Use a consistent typeface and point size throughout your pages. See “using fonts” on pages following.
- 3) Allow the style sheet (if present) to control your font sizes, types, and colors.
- 4) Write in complete sentences. Spell-check all copy.

### **DON'Ts**

- 1) Don't use acronyms and abbreviations. Use full department, building, and school names unless otherwise approved by the Office of Public Relations.
- 2) Don't use graphics to display text. If absolutely necessary to do so, be sure to use appropriate ALT tags for such images.
- 3) Write in sentence fragments.
- 4) Speak for other divisions or departments, or render other departments' material on your pages. Instead, link to appropriate information outside of your sub-folder.

## **Using Fonts**

A cascading style sheet controls font types and sizes for all text entered into current templates or shells. This style sheet has assignments for header tags, body text, table cells, etc. as well as link colors, rollover effects, etc. Content managers are thus advised to simply enter or import text and allow the style sheet to do its job. If your page uses a style sheet, and you are not able to view the style sheet properly, contact the Director of Web Communications.

If, however, a page is developed from scratch, or an element of the style sheet needs to be overridden, the following are general guidelines for accepted fonts and their use online.

### **DOs**

- 1) Use sans-serif fonts for body copy. Sans-serif fonts are understood to be the group of fonts that includes Arial, Helvetica, and Verdana.
- 2) Use sans serif OR serif fonts for headers. Serif fonts are understood to be the group of fonts that includes Times New Roman, Times Roman, and Times.
- 3) Use 10pt (size=2) for body copy.
- 4) Use 12pt (size=3) for headers.

## **DON'Ts**

- 1) Don't use uncommon fonts (i.e. those fonts that are not traditionally pre-installed and understood by most machines). Use common sense. Some obscure variation of Bodoni is not going to be visible to all visitors.
- 2) Don't exceed 12pt (size=3) for body copy.
- 3) Don't exceed 14pt (size=4) for headers

Be careful creating graphics that incorporate text. If a graphic is to be rendered to match the web site's titles, use Akzidenz Grotesque or its nearest approximation, Arial Black.

Do not use graphic rendering of text copied from older pages without first verifying proper font and color match.

For more information, see "Using Color" section of this document.

## **Using Color**

The official Philadelphia University colors as they are to be used on the web (hexadecimal values) are as follows:

Maroon:           #7C0426 should be the default, or  
                  #660000 if a "web safe" color for 256 color display is preferred, or  
                  #851434 if an exact match of Pantone 216 is needed

Gray:             #7F8485 if an exact match of Pantone 430 is needed, or  
                  #999999 if a "web safe" color for 256 color display is preferred

In 2004, Philadelphia University adopted an expanded color palette. These additional colors may be used for accent purposes.

Khaki:            #ABA96D  
Yellow:           #DFBB49  
Orange:           #E65A20  
Blue:             #7BA4AD

As a general rule, use foreground/background color combinations that have contrasting brightness (not just contrasting colors).

Avoid 'wallpaper' backgrounds in text display areas. A background's obtrusiveness varies widely depending on the viewer's equipment and also creates problems for persons with certain vision problems such as color blindness.

Do not rely on the color of an icon or text as the only way some information is conveyed.

If color is a key, ensure that there is also an alternate prompt to function or meaning.

## **Using images**

Images should always include an appropriate ALT field that conveys the same information as the image. For images containing text, ALT tag assignment should mimic that text. For images used as bullets, horizontal dividing bars, and the like use an ASCII equivalent as an ALT field. For decorative images that do not convey page content, use ALT="".

JPEG format should be the default for photographic or scanned images. For icons, business graphics, maps, and other diagrammatic content with relatively large areas of solid color, GIF format is best. GIFs are also preferable when transparencies need to be made.

Always supply correct image WIDTH and HEIGHT parameters.

Correct parameters are understood to be the actual image size, not merely the rescaling of height and width using the web editor's WYSIWYG interface. In other words, you must first resize an image using Adobe PhotoShop, Macromedia Fireworks, etc. before uploading an image to the server. By doing so, you insure better display of your resized image in a browser environment and cut down on unnecessarily large file size.

If a large image is needed, consider utilizing clickable thumbnail images to access larger images.

Use common sense when it comes to file sizes. Although broadband is fast becoming the connectivity standard for most visitors, always keep in mind the dialup user, or those with slower processors or limited RAM when developing your pages.

### **Multimedia**

The use of multimedia audio and/or video content is encouraged. In order to accommodate visitors with slower connections, visual or hearing impairments, or other circumstances that might impede the enjoyment of such media, it is recommended that the Office of Public Relations be contacted for advice regarding multimedia prior to posting.

Please insure that content is not only being provided with options for browser and operating system compatibility, but that permissions have been gotten for the use of any copyrighted material.

The use of audio and video content should be done in a way that is accessible to persons with either sight or hearing impairments. Text rendering or summarization of multimedia content will insure compliance.

### **“Flash” and Substance**

The increased use of Macromedia Flash as either an introductory “splash” element or primary navigational tool is discouraged insofar as its implementation is meant to replace traditional (and compliant) standards of content delivery is concerned. Any use of Flash should add substantive value. If used, a non-flash alternative to navigation or option to “skip” an intro should be provided. A pre-loader should always be considered.

To insure some level of ADA and W3C compliance, The Office of Public Relations must approve all uses of flash and multimedia before content is made public on [www.philau.edu](http://www.philau.edu), its subwebs and sub-folders. In many cases, a shell (or arch) may be placed around your multimedia or flash files so as to insure consistent navigation options to other parts of the university site.

### **Freelancers and other forms of Outsourcing**

On occasion — due to constraints of time, etc. — there will be a need to outsource work that cannot be done by either the Office of Public Relations or Web Action Group members. The use of freelancers must either be initiated or approved by the Office of Public Relations insofar as any outsourced work is to be posted on university servers.

## **Beyond www.PhilaU.edu**

Rules as outlined in this web standards document generally apply to all pages housed on PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY'S main server at [www.PhilaU.edu](http://www.PhilaU.edu). However, the principles discussed extend to faculty pages at <http://faculty.philau.edu>, student organizations at <http://orgs.philau.edu>, and elsewhere insofar as recommendations for best practices is concerned.

NO department, individual or entity should register their own domain (insofar as the content is university related and to be hosted on a university server) without first consulting with the Office of Information Technology. All domain registration requests should be processed through the Technology Help Desk if material is to be hosted by PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY.

In addition to its primary educational institution registration, PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY owns the following domains:

The following are maintained as mirrors:

<http://www.philau.com>

<http://www.philadelphiauniversity.edu>

<http://www.philadelphiauniversity.com>

The following domains have, will or are being used for e-commerce:

<http://www.philaucampusstore.com>

## **Summary and Conclusion**

The Office of Public Relations provides a set of template designs that may be used as a starting point by designers wishing to create pages that follow the 'look and feel' of the campus-level pages. Schools, colleges and departments are encouraged to use these templates so that visitors will have a more unified experience at PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY'S web site.

The Office of Public Relations will also provide a set of standard University logo images available to use on official pages. It is required that Web Action Group members and any/all approved freelancers access these images rather than make their own copies. Using a shared copy improves browser response as the browser will not need to re-fetch the shared images likely to be already in its cache.

Complete details of the rules governing use of PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY'S logo and identifying elements are to be found in PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY'S Graphics Standards Manual.

Although following the General Page Standards outlined here will help a great deal in making pages accessible by persons with handicaps, there is much more information available on this topic. Those wishing to learn more are encouraged to visit the World Wide Web Consortium and their Web Accessibility Initiative at <http://www.w3c.org/WAI>.