Creating a Program Directory and Home Page

Paul David Terry, MNA
Digital Marketing & Communications Specialist
Grad Studies
Introductions

- Program
- Role
- What are your frequent questions about content on the website?
- What makes a site easy to use?

Objectives

- Review
  - user experience
  - Types of support
  - Content, Structure and Design migrations
  - SEO
- Work on
  - User profiles
  - Site maps
  - Content assessment
  - Content calendars
Digital Diversity

How can we empower all users to engage and belong, utilize services that provide equal opportunities for support, and include us with their lifelong journeys?
Prospective Graduate Student Questions

• Is this degree worth the cost?
• Will I have a faculty mentor? One that understands my challenges?
• What are the TOEFL scores and what if my English is poor?
• Will I find a job as a DACA student? Will I finish my degree?
• Am I good enough for this program?
• How can I benefit from this program?
• Can I live a balanced life? Relationship? Family?
• Will I be able to eat? What about housing? Mental health resources?
• Will I fit in or continue to be the ‘other’?
• Will my voice be heard?
Social Support

- Emotional support
  - Reduces imposter syndrome
  - Emanates belonging and purpose
  - Validates behaviors and feelings
  - Reduces anxiety and depression
  - Provides a roadmap of life
  - Combats disparities

- Informational support
  - Reference and a resource
  - Content based upon user needs
  - Pathway to resources
  - Readily accessible information
  - Simple and easy choices
Max

First generation and identifies as LGBTQ+
Award-winning writer
Applied for a program with little diverse representation from faculty and social media.
Diversity statement includes diversity group with no activity since 2016
UC Davis offers modest funding while Stanford, Berkley, and MIT include financing and a climate of diversity.

Concerns: Social integration, mentorship from faculty that understands backgrounds and how to achieve a faculty position
Resources: Engagement with diverse graduate students, success stories of diverse students under mentors
Baseline conclusions

- Greater opportunities for engagement with potential faculty.
  - Emails, names, and photos
  - Labels like “First Generation”
  - Outcomes of research
- Impact international student confidence as they migrate across the world
- Current and accurate class list is a beacon of uncertainty and anxiety
- Social integration and authentic diversity
- Diverse narratives that demonstrate success among diverse populations influence acceptance to programs
Content

• Information that employs a path
  • Description of the program, people, and discipline through content, stories, and visuals
  • What is the value for entering into this program?
  • Why is this program and this culture beneficial?
  • Where do people go after they participate with this program?

• Narratives
  • Student and faculty interaction
  • Student activates and accomplishments
  • Alumni success
  • Faculty research endeavors
Content

• What do prospective students want?
  • Climate, costs, classes, culture, connection

• How do you deliver?
  • CTA (Call to action)
    • Define your audience
    • Identify priorities

• Set a path for success
  • Instead of ‘Apply’ or ‘Application’ give an action ‘Apply here!’
Content

• Keep content up-to-date
  • People are always checking out your site; leads and prospects
• Update application deadlines for the following year right away.
• Give them a timeline or check list with approximate dates.
• Reduce anxiety from uncertainty.
• Go beyond the application and demonstrate how prospects and leads can connect to culture and climate now.
Content

• Reduce acronyms
• Overuse and misuse terms
• Eliminate language geared towards internal audiences and conflicts with website users
  • E.g. agchem.ucdavis.edu
    • Do applicants search agchem?
    • AGC faculty
    • What’s a graduate group?
    • What’s the difference between a faculty coordinator and graduate coordinator
  • CTA
    • "If you have questions contact the grad coordinators"
Content

• SEO
  • Keywords and subheads
  • Duplicate content
  • Synonyms
  • Top 3 paragraphs
  • Headlines
  • Spell things out
Content

• SEO
  • Descriptor tags, transcripts, alt text
  • 600 – 900 words, not less than 300 words
  • No ‘click here’ unless it’s part of a paragraph
  • Ordered list is better than bullets
  • Use bold and italics for key words instead of all the words
  • Contextual searches
    • X subject – Y action – Z outcome
    • e.g. best beaches (x) in (y) Davis (z)
Structure

- Kill the home buttons
- Add information about the program in **About Us**
- Reduce options to essential to the user and business needs.
- Eliminate duplication
- Prioritize content
  - Undergraduate and graduate information
  - Look at the data
  - Channels for engagement
- Marketing mechanics
  - content marketing scheme
    - people, website, email, social media
- SEO
  - Domain and subdomain
Design

• Know target audiences to drive design and priorities
• Treat every page as if it’s a landing page
• Understand entry points and user needs
• Program pages are critical turning points in the prospective students journey
• Responsive design
Design

• Internal links and linking to your page
• Broken links
• Collapsible, accordion, and anchors
  • Negative marks if Google can’t figure out what’s going on
• Tabs should not lead to external links
• PDF content
  • GGG Handbook
  • PDFs are not searchable and do not improve searchable
• Move content over
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENT ASSESSMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENT CALENDAR</th>
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- **Fall**
  - Priorities
  - Deadlines

- **Spring**
  - Well-being

- **Summer**
  - CTAS

**Year:** Winter
USER PROFILES

Profiles:
1  2  3  4  5  6

Resources

Needs
1
2
3
4
5
6

Priorities

Who are our users?

What are their needs?

List relevant resources?

What are the user's priorities?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Improvements</th>
<th>Pics/Story?</th>
<th>Channels/Sitemap</th>
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Year: