

**3341-10-6 Web Identity and Website Standards.**

Applicability	All University Units
Responsible Office	Office of Marketing and Brand Strategy
Responsible Administrator	Assistant Vice President for Marketing and Brand Strategy

**(A) Policy Statement and Purpose**

BGSU websites are valuable assets of the University. As critical business and communications vehicles for BGSU, it is important that the information they provide be accessible, accurate, easy to find and navigate, and timely.

This policy has the following objectives for all websites used to conduct official University business:

- (1) To present a consistent, professional image of BGSU that meets brand standards and maintains the integrity of the institution and is befitting of a leading comprehensive university;
- (2) To define website accessibility standards and requirements.  
**University Policy 3341-6-57, Web Accessibility Policy.**
- (3) To define certain visual and informational elements required for all BGSU websites;
- (4) To ensure websites clearly establish a unit's relationship to BGSU and consistently include basic elements intended to aid users as they navigate across BGSU websites; and
- (5) To ensure websites departments and offices are regularly updating and providing accurate content.

(B) Policy Scope

This policy governs all websites that represent Bowling Green State University, are used to conduct official University business or provide official University information. These websites include, but are not limited to, all those under the domain umbrella “.bgsu.edu.”

Related policies include **3341-6-7 BGSU Information Technology Services**; **3341-6-49 BGSU Web Privacy Policy**; and **3341-6-57 Web Accessibility Policy**.

(C) Definitions

(1) Domain Name

An organization’s unique internet identity. The root domain is the web address and includes a domain name (BGSU) and a name domain extension, or top-level-domain, such as .edu, .com, and .info. Registration of a domain provides for the creation of subdomains, websites and email addresses for an organization. Domains such as bgsu.edu are owned by BGSU and managed by the Office of Information Technology Services.

(2) Domain Registrar

A company that manages the reservation of internet domain names and internet protocol (IP) address assignments.

(3) Footer

The bottom section of a webpage, which is often the same on every page of the website and typically contains copyright information. The organization name, contact information and additional links can also be added to the footer.

(4) Homepage

The introductory page of a website, which typically serves as the front door to the domain. It is the page that loads when you visit a web address that contains only a domain name. For example, bgsu.edu is the homepage of the BGSU domain.

(5) Identity Guidelines

The University's identity guidelines define the standards for using BGSU's logos and other graphic marks and visual identity elements.

(6) University Business

The work performed as part of an employee's job responsibilities; daily work and duties performed on behalf of the University by faculty, staff, student workers, guests and other persons whose conduct, in the performance of work for the University, is under the direct control of the University, whether or not they are paid by the University. This definition includes any email, calendar events, files or other electronic business data created, stored, processed and/or transmitted that is related to work performed for BGSU.

(7) URL

The Uniform Resource Locator (URL) is used to specify addresses on the web for all websites, pages, links, images, audio, video, etc.

(8) Web Integrity Team

The Web Integrity Team, comprised of staff from the Office of Marketing and Brand Strategy and the Office of Information Technology Services, works with units across the University to coordinate the content certification process.

(9) Webpage

A hypertext document on the internet. It can include text, links, images, audio, video, etc.

(10) Website

A compilation of a set of webpages viewed with a browser. It is a static content repository whose purpose is informational.

(11) Web Application

An interactive program that requires programmatic user input and data processing. It is a program that runs remotely and depends on a backend for processing and data storage.

(D) **Policy**

All BGSU websites must adhere to the following standards and criteria:

(1) Website Requirements

(a) Accessibility

In accordance with federal law and for University websites to be viewed and used by the widest audience, all webpages must comply with **University Policy 3341-6-57, Web Accessibility Policy**.

(b) University Identity

The full name of the University – Bowling Green State University – must appear on every webpage, preferably in the footer at the bottom of the page. For a suggestion on using the full name of the University, see Website Footer Requirements (section 2). The BGSU logotype must appear in the top of every webpage.

(c) Link to the University-wide Homepage

The top section of all websites officially representing BGSU must include the University logo and link to the University-wide homepage ([www.bgsu.edu](http://www.bgsu.edu)). This ensures that visitors to any University webpage can navigate, if needed, to a consistent "home base."

(d) Contact Information

Top-level pages of websites must include a clear way to contact the unit for additional information or to report problems on the web page.

- (e) Adhere to BGSU Brand Standards

The websites must follow the **Marketing and Brand Strategy brand standards**.

(2) Website footer requirements

To ensure all University websites are copyright protected, comply with federal accessibility requirements, and allow visitors to navigate across the University, all University webpages must display the following information at the bottom of the page in the webpage footer:

- (a) A prominent link to the University-wide homepage (www.bgsu.edu);
- (b) A link titled “Accessibility Resources” including events that links to our **full accessibility statement**;
- (c) A link to the color contrast version of the website that will switch the webpage style sheet and prevent color contrast issues;
- (d) A link titled “Title IX Resources” that links to Title IX office contact information; and
- (e) A link titled “Nondiscrimination” that links to the Equity and Compliance webpage.

(3) Website Content Accuracy

The accuracy of content on BGSU websites is critical as websites are developed and maintained. When offices and departments are developing their website, consider limiting it to information you can effectively maintain and keep up to date. Proofread all content for accuracy and spelling errors before it is published.

One or more website administrator(s) within the unit must be designated as responsible for ensuring that all content on the unit's BGSU's website is accurate, secure and timely.

Individuals who engage in any activity that infringes copyright-protected materials may be subject to disciplinary action, including the termination or suspension of access to information technology resources.

The Office of Marketing and Brand Strategy reserves the right to make any necessary edits on all websites, including removing out-of-date content or entire webpages.

(4) Website Content Updates and Maintenance

The frequency of updates will depend on the type of content, but websites should be reviewed at least each semester and certainly annually. Maintaining accuracy and timeliness includes:

- (a) Unpublishing out-of-date content, including documents that are no longer relevant;
- (b) Updating old photos, videos and images;
- (c) Moving older content that must be maintained on the website to an archive and/or clearly labeling it so visitors to the website can tell that the information is for historical reference;
- (d) Regularly checking the website for broken links and updating accordingly;
- (e) Adding and deleting faculty and staff from directories as appropriate and searching throughout the website for other places where employees might be listed and update accordingly;
- (f) For academic units, considering whether a faculty member's profile should be removed from your website if the faculty member retires or leaves the unit.

(5) Advertising

BGSU does not allow advertising or sponsorships on websites that students are required to access to complete their studies, such as the web registration system, or that prospective students are required to access when seeking admission to BGSU, such as application and financial aid forms.

(6) Website Administration and Management

All BGSU websites must use the university provided content management system. This system follows the brand standards, accessibility standards and proper two-step authentication.

- (a) Designate a permanent BGSU employee in your department to be the website administrator. This will ensure continuity with access to, and control and oversight of, your website. This is helpful if you hire students, temporary staff or consultants to develop and maintain your website.
- (b) Designate a backup website administrator for key administrative and content editing roles.
- (c) All website administrators must take an online training course to gain access to edit the website.

(7) Assignment of Domain Names for BGSU Websites

The University standard is to use the bgsu.edu domain for all web services that are administered by the University community as part of the mission of the institution.

The Office of Information Technology Services will administer the distribution of bgsu.edu subdomain names. It will use the following two guidelines, as provided by the Office of Marketing and Brand Strategy. First, the proposed subdomain name must be closely related to the purpose of its website. Second, the intent of

the website will be easily understood by audience members who use the subdomain name.

If a University service can only be administered through an external website, the service must be provided through a website approved or contracted by BGSU.

If a non-bgsu.edu name is needed, a request and justification must be supplied to and reviewed and approved by the Office of Information Technology Services and the Office of Marketing and Brand Strategy. The Office of Information Technology Services will define registration services for non-bgsu.edu domains. The Office of Information Technology Services will establish guidelines for non-bgsu.edu domain registrations.

Equity impact statement: The policy has been assessed for adverse differential impact on members of one or more protected groups.

Registered Date: September 8, 2022