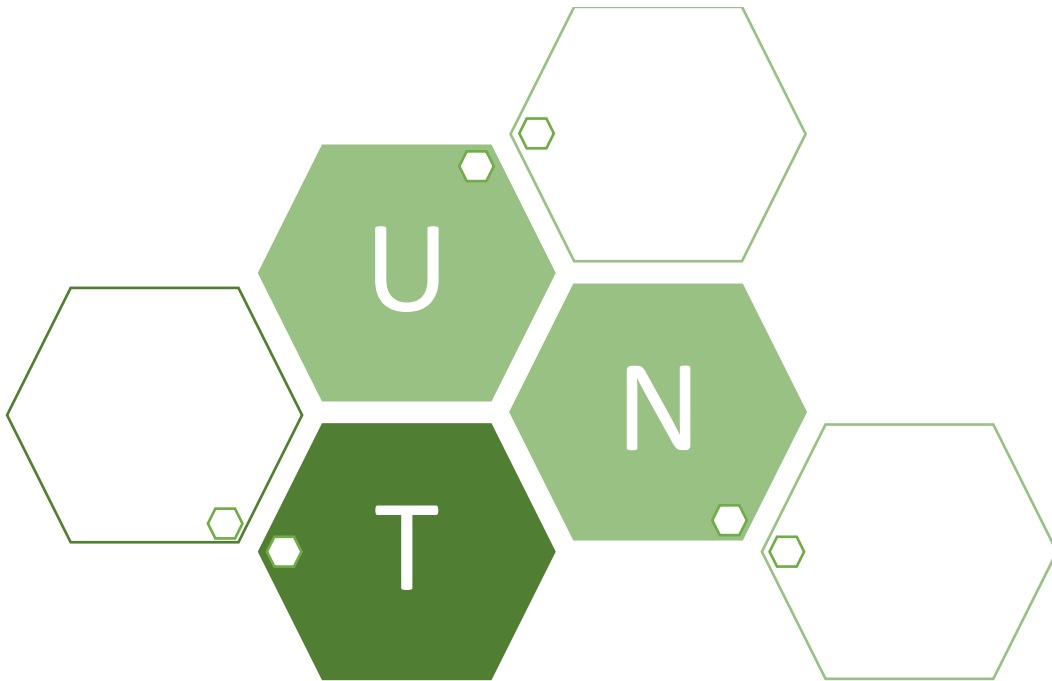# CLASS website Content Strategy plan

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Date: 4/21/23

Executive Summary

The goal of this content strategy report is to provide the CLASS website with recommendations on how to improve its site going forward. This begins with 4 Goal, a breakdown of the current audience, a review of the current content, recommendations going forward, several example content models and an editorial calendar going forward. This report will cover all the work that has been done by the 3550 TECM class so far. That includes the stakeholder interview, analytics, audience personas, content type breakdown, content audit, and content usability. By following the recommendations made in this report the CLASS website will be able to increase its reach and scale.

Introduction

This report is the result of a semester's worth of work analyzing and gathering data from the CLASS website. There were a total of 8 different assignments engineered by our professor to help us fully understand the current state of the CLASS college website. These included a stakeholder interview, audience persona, complete content audit, and usability testing. Now that we have completed all of this, I will summarize what we found in this report. I will also make some recommendations on how the CLASS website can improve going forward. I'm going to start with some goals the college should be able to accomplish if they follow my recommendations and then cover the audience of the site. I will then do a brief review of the current content on the site to make my recommendations and give some content models with an editorial calendar.

Content Goals

Looking at all the data gathered as well as the main goal that Dr. Nagaoka, I compiled the following goals for the CLASS site to improve in.

1. Increase reach by adding a research tab to promote class

2. Diversify content types

3. Provide templates to ensure information is consistent

4. Increase visibility of important content

The first goal is the one DR. Nagaoka gave us and our research on the site proved that this is a necessity going forward. The other three goals are based on the results of the interviews I did throughout the year. Both the stakeholder and outside interviewees found issues with the site and subsequent projects found that they were indeed problems that many current users had.

Audience

One of the assignments that helped us better understand the site was the creation of the audience persona. This helps us to get a better grasp of what a user would be looking for on the site and creates a fictional person in our minds to gear the content towards without actually making it for an individual. I created a fictional person called Alex Carter. He is a 31-year-old technical writer who is an alumnus of UNT and one of his goals is to assist current students of his alma-mater by donating to the college. This persona represents 1 of the main groups of users the site has: investors. The other 2 main groups that he doesn't represent are current and prospective students of the college. While he does not cover all the bases, he does help us to remember the investors. Most people would probably assume that a college website is built for the students, but many investors and donors also navigate there to see if they want to invest their money or not and we need to remember them when building the CLASS content.

Review of Current Content

As mentioned previously we did several projects that gave us a lot of great insights into the current state of the CLASS site. The first was a stakeholder interview. My group personally interviewed Bryant Marion, a member of the Mayborn advisory board. His main job is to work with donors, and he gave us a lot of good information from the eyes of these donors. His biggest problem with the site as it is, was the lack of information relating to things like student success stories and inadequate user interface. He mentioned that the donation buttons and donation options need to be much clearer and more numerous.

Next was the analysis of the current site analytics which we then used to make our personas mentioned above. After that we moved onto more of the details of the analytics. We found that pages related to academic programs and the admissions page had a lot of traffic and the donations page had far less. This indicates a need to improve the content and navigation to get there.

After that we compare the site to competitors like A&M or UTA. Overall, we found a need to create a greater sense of community and the impact that donations make. As well as making the entire donation process easier.

Once that was done, we moved onto a complete audit of all 500 links that are currently a part of the CLASS site. This work was split evenly between the whole class and found a huge portion of the content was either out of date or totally irrelevant. It also found that a large majority of the content is either a PDF or news article that is hard to read or outdated. All of this shows a great need for more edits to the content.

Finally, we did a user test that doubled as research into possible good search terms for the new Research tab. We were each tasked with finding 3 outside individuals who would be then asked to find out what kind of research professors in the CLASS college were currently doing. All 3 of the people I interviewed had problems navigating the website to find what they were looking for 2 of them also commented on the lack of information on many of the sites or just unclear information on them, especially the People tab. This shows a great need for more regulation of information and editing of content.

Recommendations

Increase reach by adding a research tab to promote class:

As Dr. Nagaoka mentioned, a Research tab needs to be added to the site. It should include not just professor research but some student research as well. This will not only draw new students but more donors as well. Donors are drawn to help the students and not knowing anything more than the occasional news story provides does not encourage them to donate. Just by adding this tab CLASS will be greatly improving their site.

Diversify content types:

A great many of the content types currently on the site are simple pdfs or news posts. These do not offer much interaction and are sometimes poorly formatted or just too long. By diversifying the content to make it more interactive and different a lot more traffic will be drawn to the sight. I recommend adding many different types like videos or simple small social media posts by students.

Provide templates to ensure information is consistent:

Some of the pages on the current site like the people page are inconsistent in their information since they come from many different sources. Using the people page as an example: some of the people, like the dean, have a large amount of information and ways of contacting them and others have nothing more than a title and email. I recommend using templates from now on for pages like this. By providing a template to be filled out the person filling it out will have an easier time knowing what to include in their profile and this will in turn make the information on the page more consistent and easier to understand.

Increase visibility of important content:

As mentioned in both the stakeholder interview and the user testing, there are a lot of important features that are hard to find or see. The donate here buttons are very small and some informative pages are hard to find because of the huge number of links on every page. A lot of this can be fixed by making these things bigger and easier to locate.
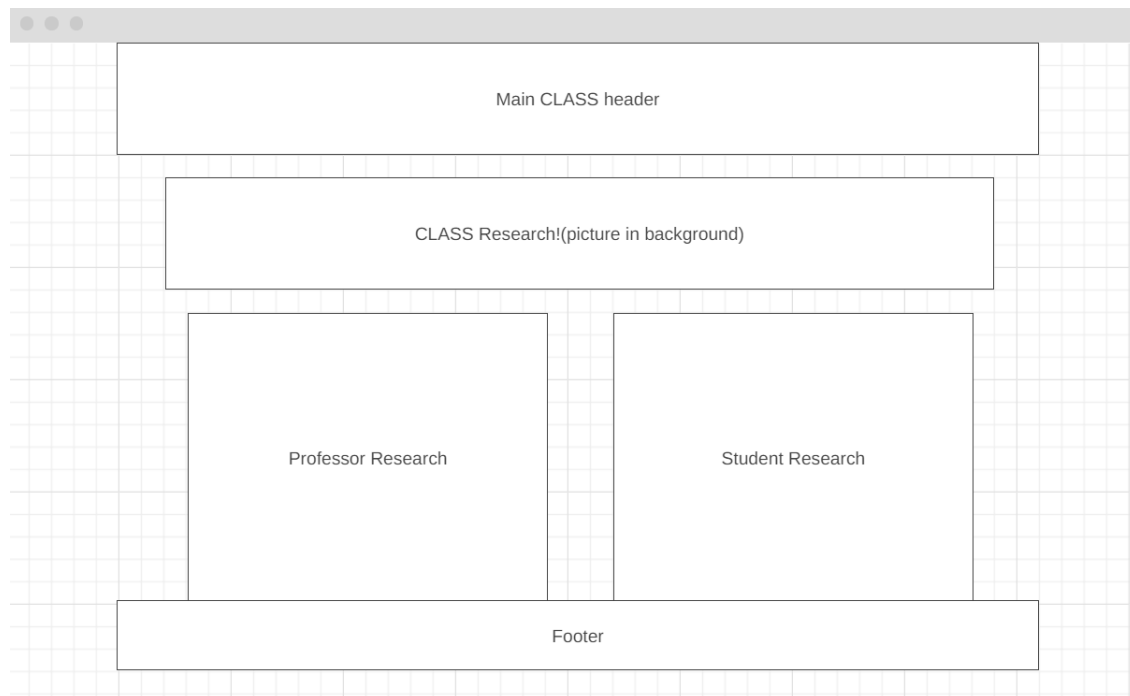
Content Models

Content model 1: New Research Landing page

Content types:

- Main CLASS Header and footer- this is what appears at the top and bottom of every page on the class website. It allows for easy movement between tabs.
- Top banner- picture of people in background with CLASS research in the foreground.
- Search bar- directly below the banner, allows for easy search of topic, professor or student research.
- Professor research- Picture related to most recent professor's research in background with "Professors Research" in the foreground. Clicking on this picture and text leads to a list of on-going research by professors
- Student research- Picture related to the most recent student's research in background with "Student's Research" in the foreground. Clicking on this picture and text leads to a list of on-going research by Students

Wireframe:

Content model 2: New People Page

Content types:

- Main CLASS Header and footer- this is what appears at the top and bottom of every page on the class website. It allows for easy movement between tabs.
- Landing page list: List of people who work with the dean. Has a profile picture, email, phone, and title with a link to know more.
- List of Departments: Each department in list leads to a individual list of the professors and important students in that department with the same info as the previous page

Wireframe:
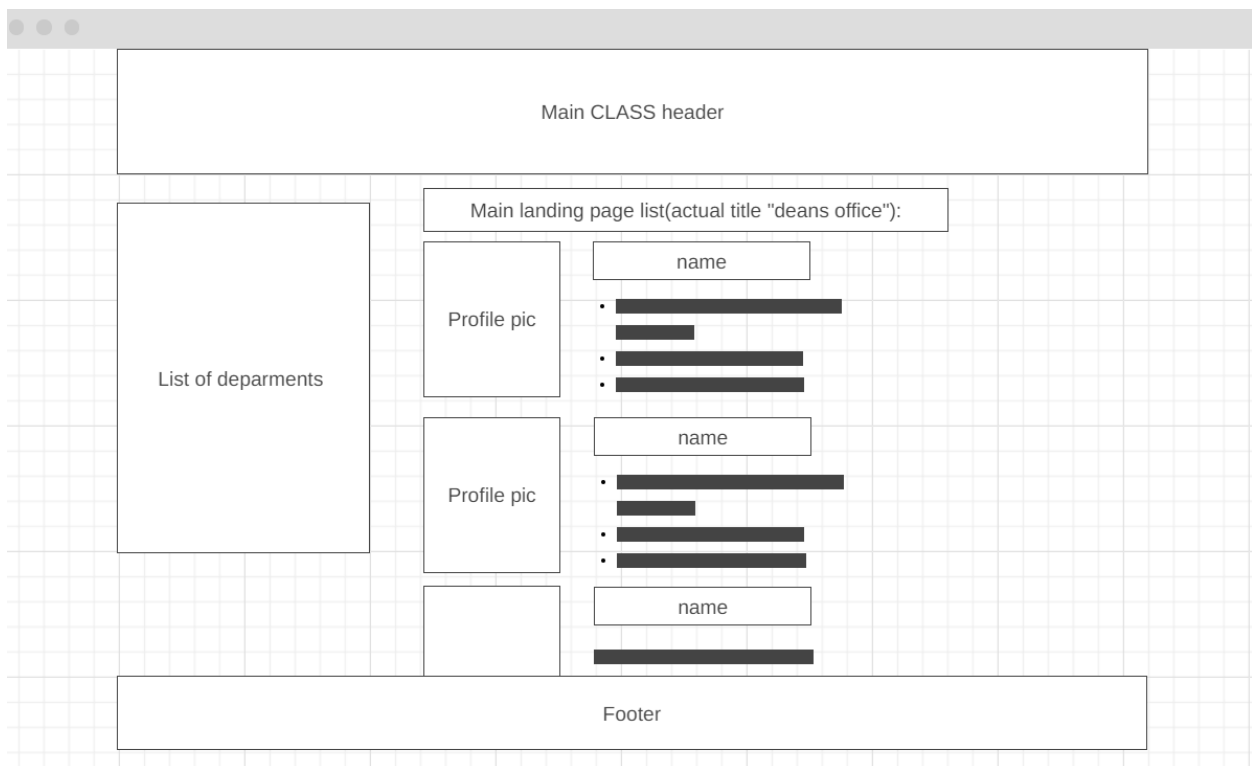
Editorial Calendar

Daily:

-Review content: skim through recent content checking for errors or inconsistency.

-Begin drafting new content: new posts about what happened today or yesterday.

Weekly

-finalize drafts and post: make new posts on any social media on the current goings on

-Keep Tabs up to date: post any new research or other new content to main tabs to keep current

Monthly

-Audit monthly content: look through all posted content, keep in mind what worked for next month

-Review Analytics: check site traffic and apply to the following 2-v

-Edit content that is still useful: ensure no errors and is up to date

-Purge outdated content: old schedules and plans that no longer apply to avoid possible confusion.

Yearly:

-review tools: check out new tools online to see if any work better than current and ensure that all editors are using tools correctly

-Inventory: review all content and edit and purge as needed.

-full content audit and analytics review

Cites:

"College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences." *Home | College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences*, https://class.unt.edu/.