

# Introduction to WordPress

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Developed by Colleen Nugent for  
Elementary German I  
Carolyn Fuchs  
Fall 2020



# Workshop Agenda

- Introduce Activity
- Introduce WordPress
- Choose a theme
- Learn how to make new pages and posts, and how to utilize widgets
- Activity: Create your own WordPress site

Slides and handouts available at <https://bit.ly/diti-fall2020-fuchs>



# Introduce Activity: Create Your Own Site

Your goal as you proceed through this presentation is to **create your own WordPress site** for your “Intermediate German” course.

Follow the steps provided in these slides to create your own site.

At the end of these slides, you will be asked to create a few different WordPress pages. These pages do not need to be completed, but rather they are a starter for the website that you will build.



# What is WordPress?

WordPress is a professional **website-building tool** that allows you to build your own website, provides a free domain name, and installs plugins and themes to customize your website. There are other website-building tools, such as Wix and Squarespace. WordPress is often used for blogging and academic websites; it has features for blogging, tagging, and categorizing.

Examples of websites (which use WordPress):

- <http://dsg.neu.edu/>
- <http://www.cameronblevins.org/>
- <https://www.moyabailey.com/>
- <https://juliaflanders.wordpress.com/>



# WordPress Examples

Look through these three examples to see how professionals use WordPress to present their professional identities.

Cameron Blevins: <http://www.cameronblevins.org/>

Moya Bailey: <https://www.moyabailey.com/>

Julia Flanders: <https://juliaflanders.wordpress.com/>



# Activity: WordPress Examples

Make a note of:

- Features the example sites have in common
- Features that are distinctive to each site

What features do you find most effective at conveying information?





# Getting Started

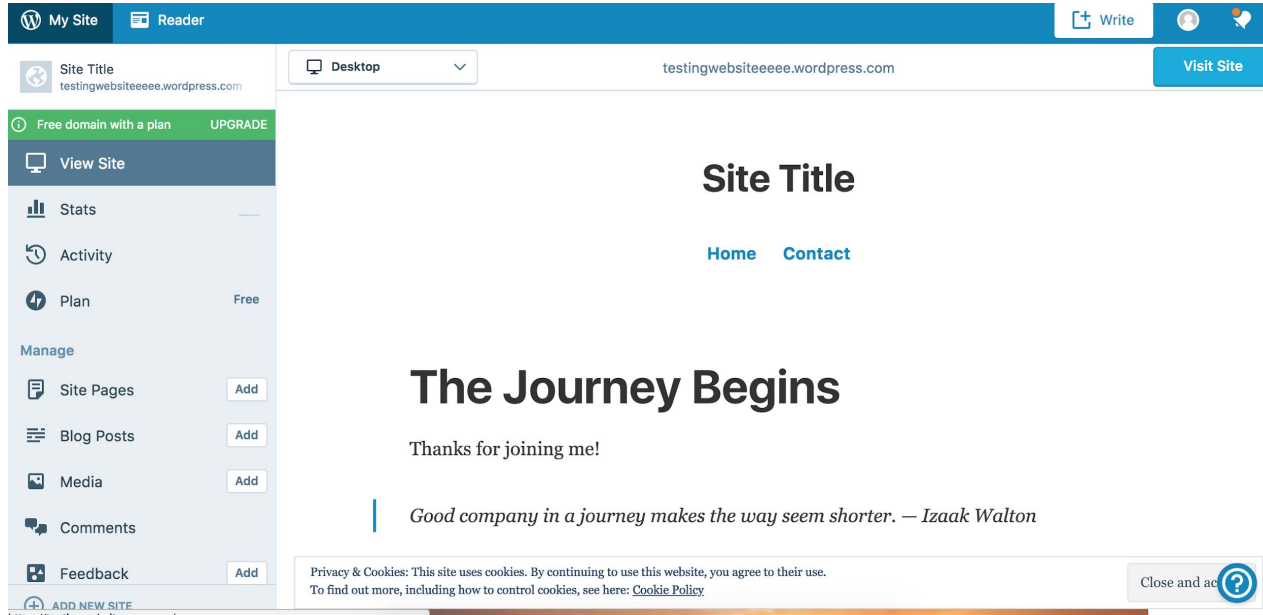
To get started, follow these steps:

- Go to <https://wordpress.com/> and click “Get Started” in the upper right corner
- Fill out the “Create a Site” information; keep in mind that the *purpose* of this website is to act as a professional website and representation of your work
- Choose a **domain name** that is professional: I recommend using your full name. WordPress provides a free domain with “.wordpress.com” at the end of the URL
- Use an **email** that you associate with your professional identity



# Your Dashboard

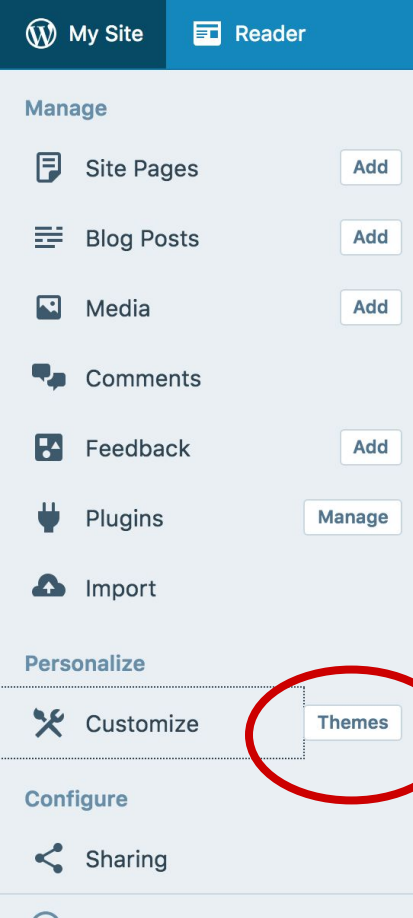
Once you have created your site, you will be brought to your website's **dashboard**. This is where you can add new posts and pages and customize your WordPress site.



The screenshot shows the WordPress dashboard for a new site. The top navigation bar includes 'My Site', 'Reader', a 'Write' button, and user profile icons. Below this, the site title 'testingwebsitewordpress.com' is displayed, along with a 'Desktop' view selector and a 'Visit Site' button. The left sidebar contains a menu with options like 'Free domain with a plan', 'View Site', 'Stats', 'Activity', 'Plan', 'Manage', 'Site Pages', 'Blog Posts', 'Media', 'Comments', and 'Feedback'. The main content area features a large heading 'Site Title', a 'Home' link, and a 'Contact' link. Below this, a large heading 'The Journey Begins' is followed by the text 'Thanks for joining me!' and a quote: 'Good company in a journey makes the way seem shorter. — Izaak Walton'. At the bottom, a privacy notice states: 'Privacy & Cookies: This site uses cookies. By continuing to use this website, you agree to their use. To find out more, including how to control cookies, see here: [Cookie Policy](#)'. A 'Close and accept' button with a question mark icon is also visible.







# Choosing a Theme

The first way to customize is to choose a **theme**. A **theme** controls your WordPress site's appearance and functionality.

In the left-hand column of your Dashboard, scroll to “Customize” and then click the “**Themes**” button.

Take a few minutes to go through the themes and see which might appeal to you. Depending on the content of your website, each theme will offer strengths and weaknesses; themes provide descriptions of how they can be used. You can play around with the different options and see what will work for your website (you can change your mind later too).

**Remember:** you are setting up this website in the context of professional development. Know your audience.



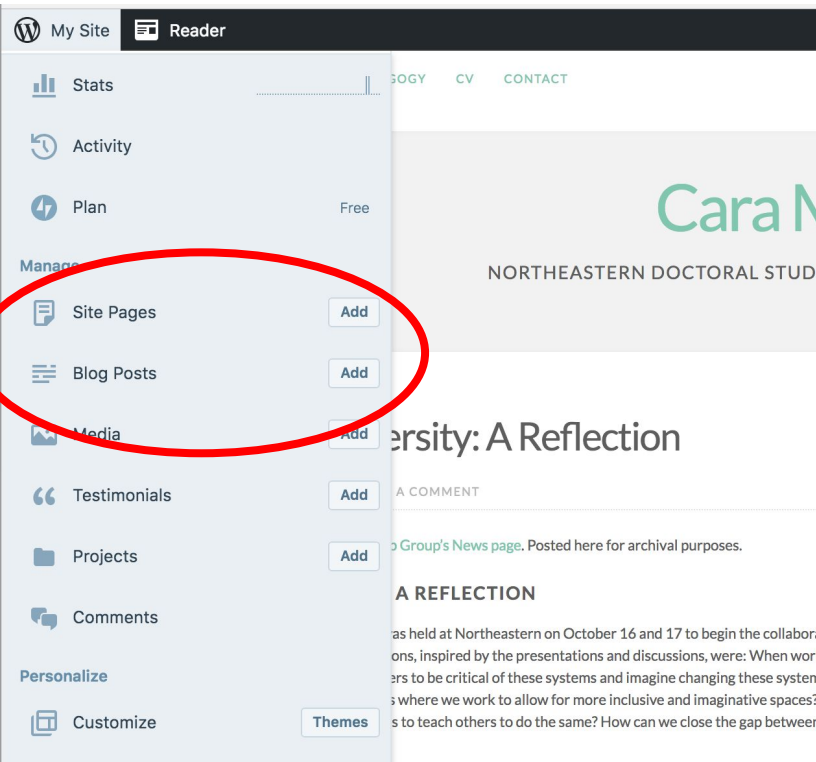
# Website Content: Pages vs Posts

**PAGES** are the static pages that appear across your header menu. Typically, this will be your “About Me,” your resume/CV, and other content that has a fixed location in your site's organization.

**POSTS** are blog or news posts that show up as you publish them. For example, you might want to make short pieces of writing you've done in class as posts.



# Add Posts and Pages



Go to your Dashboard and either click the **“Add”** button next to Site Pages or the **“Add”** button next to Blog Posts (depending on what you want to add).

This is where you fill out your content! They provide you with options to style your content (font size, style, colors, add images, add links, bullet points, etc.).

You can also use HTML, if you know that. Note that some themes have backend HTML/CSS that may not allow you to make certain changes.

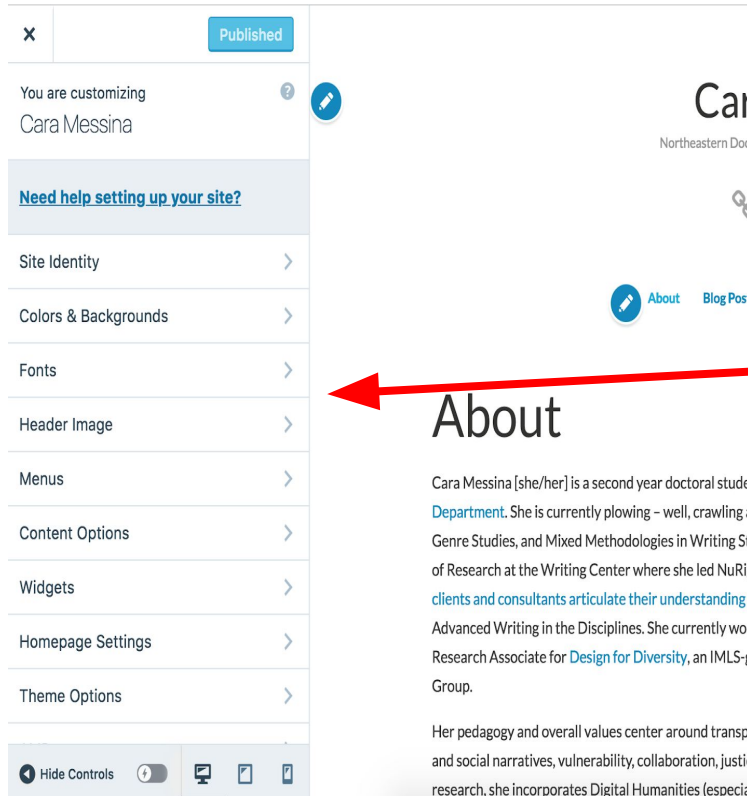


# Customize Menu

Once you choose a theme, you will be brought to the “Customizer,” which is a bar on the left-hand side that shows you the changes you would like to make on your site.

You can get back to this “Customize” menu by clicking “Customize” on your Dashboard.\*\*

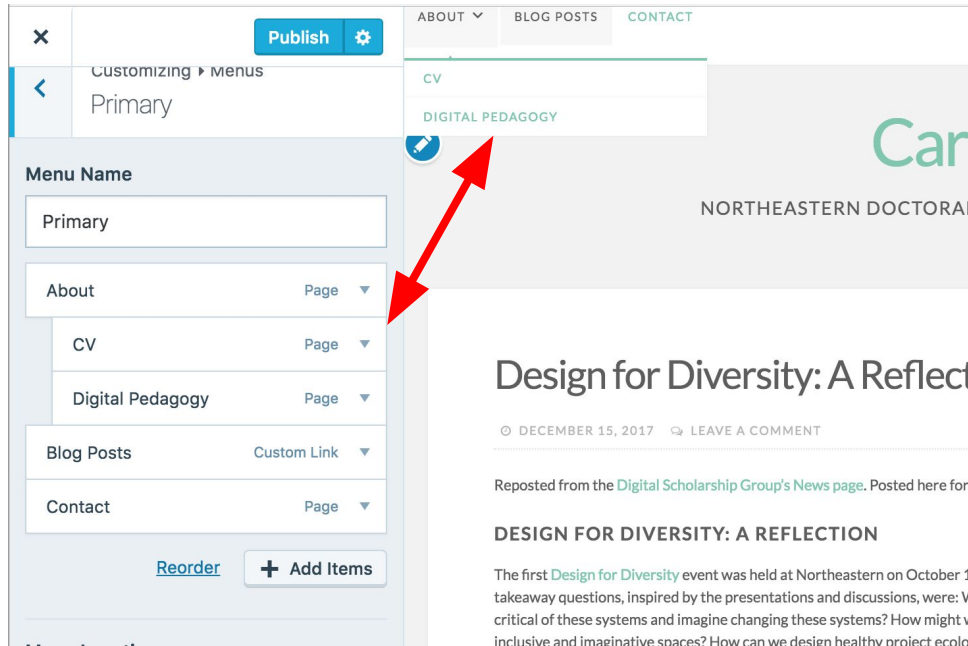
\*\* Depending on your theme, some of your customization options will change.



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*Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!*

# Site Menu



Once you have content, you want to make sure it is accessible to your potential audience.

Go back to your “Customize” menu (in the Dashboard under Customize).

In the “Customize” menu, go to “Menus,” which will allow you to add pages, posts, and other content to the overhead menus. You can even create dropdown menus by sliding one page under another page.

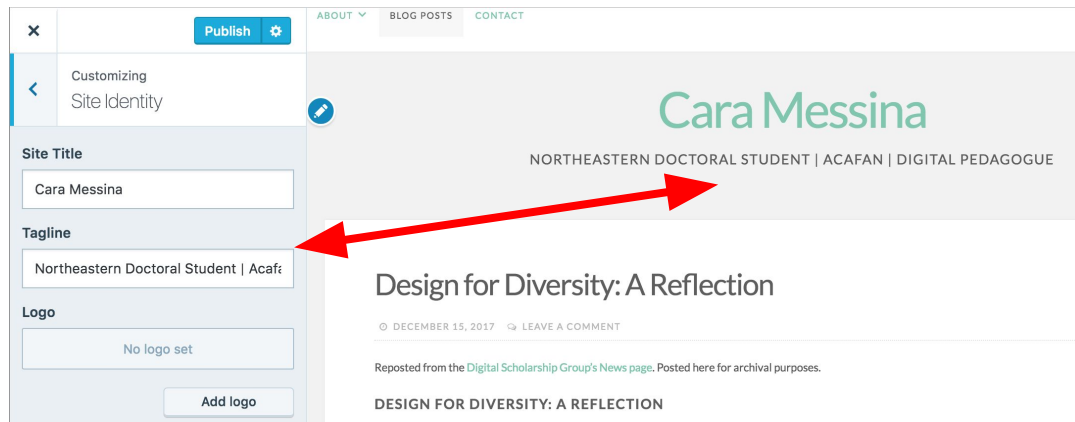


# Header

Your website, like all websites, should show off a “brand” of some kind. The **header** and subheader can help with this. The **header** is the phrase/name that appears at the top of each webpage (the subheader, if applicable in your theme, appears below)

Typically, for professional websites, the header is your name, although some people choose more creative headers.

You can find the ways to change your header in “**Site Identity**” under the “**Customize**” menu.



The screenshot displays the WordPress Customizer interface. On the left, the 'Customizing Site Identity' panel is open, showing fields for 'Site Title' (Cara Messina), 'Tagline' (Northeastern Doctoral Student | Acafa), and 'Logo' (No logo set). A red arrow points from the 'Tagline' field to the live preview on the right. The preview shows a website header with 'Cara Messina' in green, followed by 'NORTHEASTERN DOCTORAL STUDENT | ACAFAN | DIGITAL PEDAGOGUE' in grey. Below this is the post title 'Design for Diversity: A Reflection' and the date 'DECEMBER 15, 2017'.

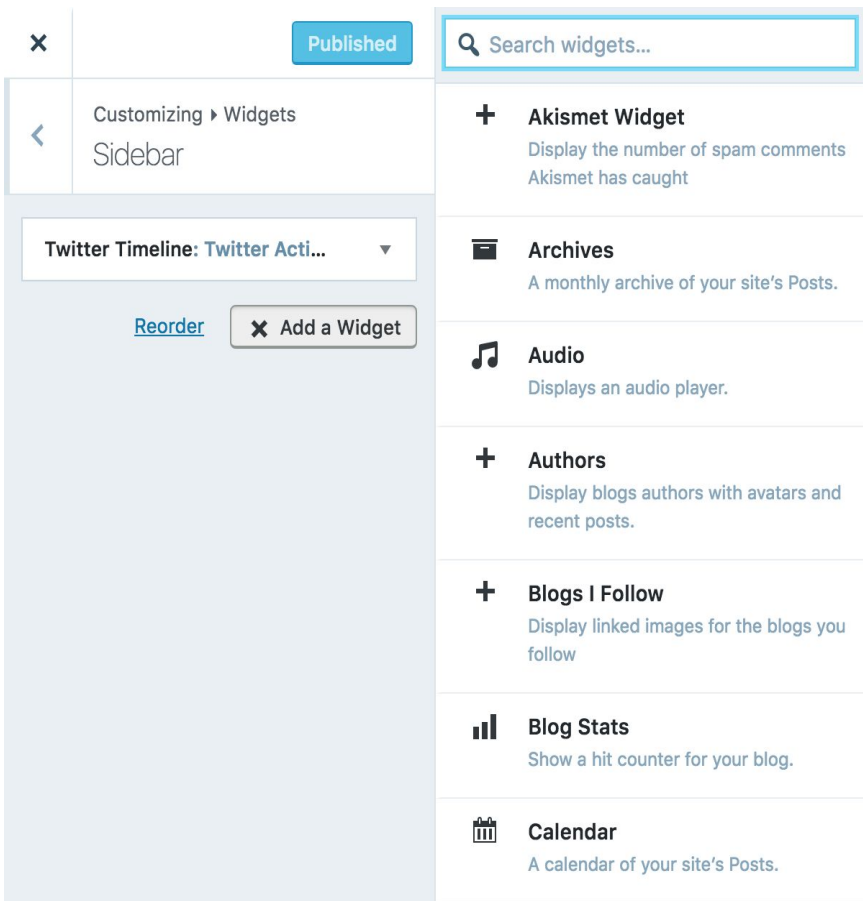


# Widgets

**Widgets** on WordPress are small applications and components that appear on your WordPress site in specific areas across your website.

For example, a “Footer” widget will appear at the bottom of your website across the different pages. The widgets you put in “Sidebar” will appear in the sidebar. You might attach your Twitter feed to your website, or a “Contact Me” section.

Think about what information you want to be presented to your audience, and where you want that information to be presented.

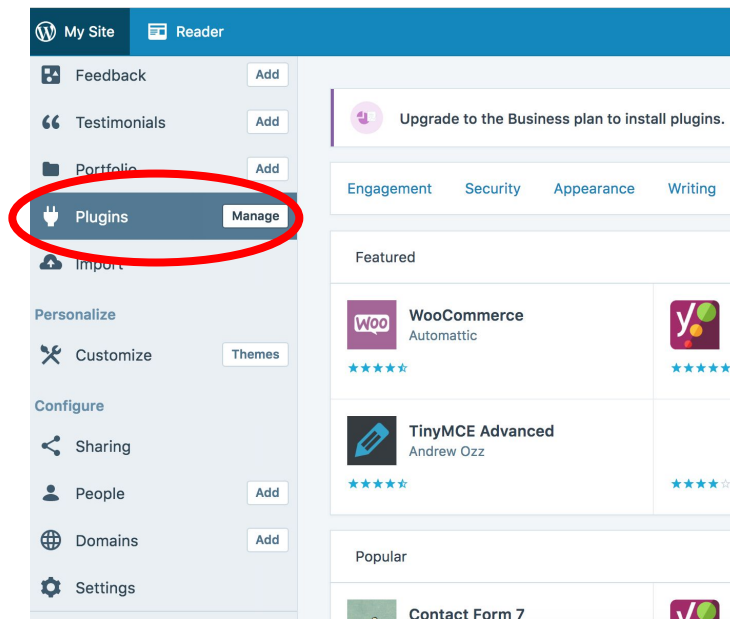


# Plugins

Like Widgets, Plugins are ways to further customize your WordPress site. You can Google or use the Plugin search box to find Plugins that may be suitable for your needs.

**Note:** Plugins are not available in the free version of WordPress (and, in fact, you don't need them to make an excellent site!), but we are mentioning them here for anyone who may be working with the paid version.

If you do add plugins, make sure that they are well reviewed and compatible with your theme and version of WordPress.





# WireFraming: Planning your Site

Before most people create websites, they create **wireframes**.

Wireframes are rough outlines for the design and placement of a website's content:

- What content will be spotlighted on the homepage and in the menus?
- What pages will be included? What will go on each page?
- How will users navigate from page to page—or navigate all the information?
- Where will information be placed?



# Keep in mind–

- Always remember your audience and think about how you want to represent your identity and your work to your audience.
- Don't overload your website with plugins and widgets; you want your website to be easy to navigate, informative, and appealing.
- WordPress has comment and tagging features. You can access other blogs and create a network.
- WordPress does not have unlimited features, but they offer **a lot!** Play around, see what works for you.
- For any questions you have, there are probably YouTube videos or written tutorials to provide an answer; just make sure you are looking at the correct WordPress version.



# Your Turn!

Begin to create and play with your WordPress site

- Create your WordPress (if you have not already) and choose a domain name
- Create an “About Me” page – you do not need to populate this with content yet, so simple information will suffice
- Create one blog post using writing you have done in this class
- Play around with your website’s menu, your site’s identity, and the themes



# SAIL: Self-Authored Integrated Learning

SAIL is Northeastern's new platform that helps you holistically track what you have learned in courses, extracurricular events, and coops. SAIL values all types of learning, from interpersonal skills to cultural and/or technical knowledge.



**Why SAIL?** With SAIL, you can keep track of everything you have learned through your experience at Northeastern and produce portfolios to share with others or remind yourself while building your resume.



# DITI Partners with SAIL

In order to help you remember and capture what you have learned with DITI, please take a few minutes to log into SAIL and reflect.

- Log into SAIL
- Click the + at the bottom of your timeline and add a “Moment”
- Fill out all the information.
  - Take a few minutes to reflect on what you learned today, what you did, and how you may use it in the future.
- When you click “Next,” it will ask you to connect to a “Learning Opportunity”
- Connect it to both your course (**GRMN 1101**) and the shorter opportunity **GRMN 1101: Digital Proficiency Module**



# Thank you!

If you have any questions, contact DITI at [nulab.info@gmail.com](mailto:nulab.info@gmail.com)

**Developed by Colleen Nugent**  
Digital Integration Teaching Initiative  
DITI Research Fellow

Slides, handouts, and data available at <https://bit.ly/diti-fall2020-fuchs>

Schedule an appointment with DITI: <http://bit.ly/diti-office-hours>



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