

# Introduction to WordPress

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**Taught by** Claire Tratnyek and Tieanna Graphenreed  
German Program  
Spring 2022



**Northeastern University**  
*NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks*

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

# Workshop Agenda

- Understand the strengths of WordPress as website builders
- Understand best practices in website building
- Learn how to create a website with WordPress

Slides and handout available at:

<http://bit.ly/diti-sp22-german-program-websites>



# Today's Activity: Create Your Own Webpage

- Your goal is to learn how to create your own WordPress site for your final project
- DITI members will work alongside you to demo the creation of a webpage on WordPress
- These skills will help as you make your WordPress website this semester for this class and remain useful skills for making professional websites in the future



# Website Development Best Practices

- Always remember your audience and think about how you want to represent your **identity** and your work to that audience.
- Use the “**Preview**” button to see how your site will appear to your audience.
- **More ≠ better!** You want your website to be easy to navigate, informative, and appealing.
- Pick a theme/format that is **compatible with mobile phones**.
- Design choices should be based on the **content** you are communicating.
- For maximum readability, **use simple fonts and a high color contrast** between text and background color. This is particularly important for accessibility.

Good

Good

Not so good

*Not so good*



# Review: Website Building Vocabulary

- **Pages:** These are the main areas of your website that your audience will be able to navigate in your site's menu
- **Domain:** Your domain name is the unique URL that leads to your website
- **Design:** the aesthetic choices for your website, including colors, font, and more



# Building for your audience

- A website is just like a research report or an essay - it needs to clearly communicate its message or purpose to a specific audience.
- Critical first steps in website design are to consider **WHO** your audience is, **WHAT** they will need to be able to find and do on your site, and **HOW** they will move through the site.
- It can be tempting to add media and components to a website that *don't* contribute to the site's message/purpose; going into any site-building platform with a clear idea of what your site needs is essential!



# Planning your website (overall considerations)

**Audience** (Message/Purpose)

**Content** (Posts, Bio, Images)

**Navigability** (Headers, Pages, Menus, Hyperlinks)

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**User Experience / Accessibility** (Interactivity, Color scheme, Readability, Alt text)

**Design** (Color scheme, Font size, Typeface)

**Media** (Images, Embedded elements)

**Other Functionalities** (Widgets, Buttons, etc.)



# Starting Points: Questions to Consider

- *Who* is this site for?
- *Why* would your identified audience(s) visit your site?
- *How* will they find what they need, and navigate around?





# Starting Points: *More* Questions to Consider

- **What is the purpose** of this site?
  - How can you communicate this clearly in the site's content and design?
- **Can *everyone* use your site effectively?** Is it accessible on mobile devices, and to people with disabilities?
- How can you make **smart design choices** to enhance the site's
  - Look
  - Navigability
  - Interactivity
  - Functionality
  - Accessibility



# Building Your Website in WordPress



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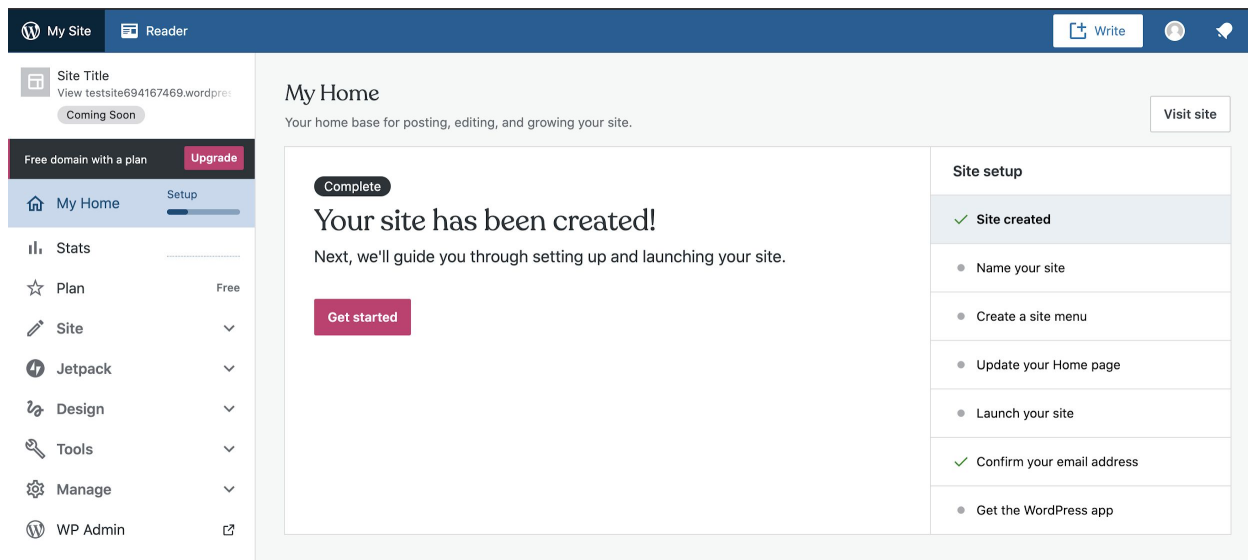
# Getting Started

- Go to <https://wordpress.com/> and click “**Get Started**” in the upper right corner
- Fill out the “**Create a Site**” information
- Choose a **domain 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
- Make sure to select the free version of **hosting** (on wordpress.com)



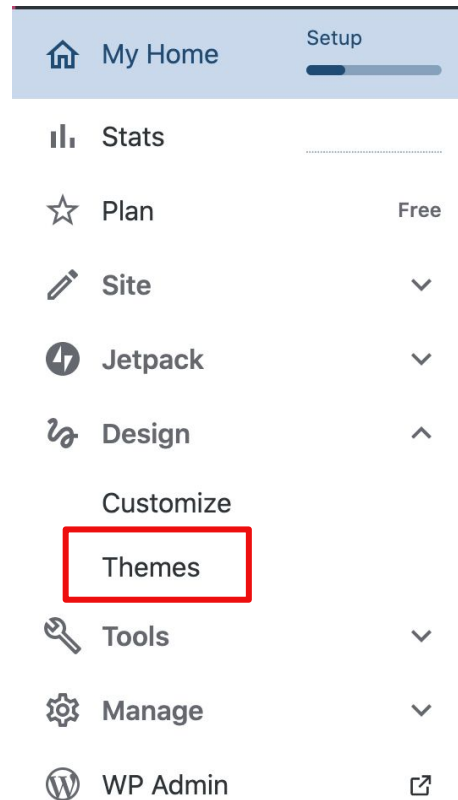
# Your Dashboard

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.

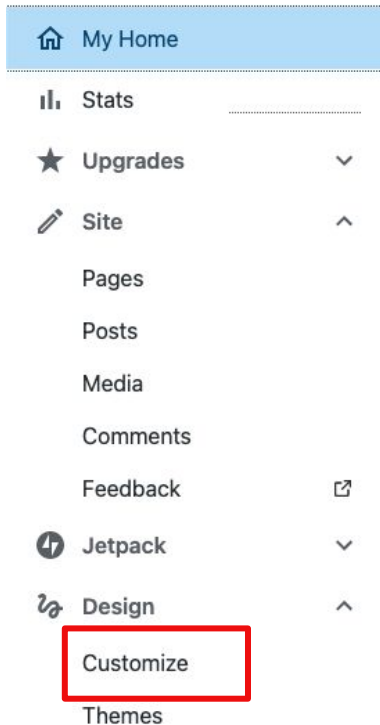


# Choosing a Theme

- **Themes** control your WordPress site's appearance and functionality
- In the left-hand column of your Dashboard, scroll to “**Design**” and then click the “**Themes**” button
  - Depending on the content of your website, each theme will offer strengths and weaknesses. You can try out different options and see what will work for your website (you can change your mind later too).



# Customize your Theme



- Under “**Design**” you can click “**Customizer**,” which shows you the changes you can make across your site. Some of the customization options are dependent on which theme you choose.
- You can get back to this menu by clicking “**Customize**” on your Dashboard



# Website Content: Pages vs. Posts

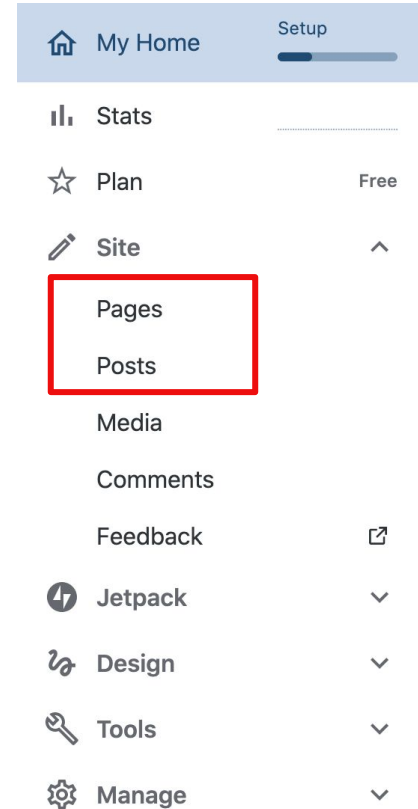
**Pages** are the static infrastructure of your website, and they appear across your header menu. Pages are content with a fixed location on the site.

**Posts** are blog or news posts that show up as you publish them, usually in a feed that appears on a page.



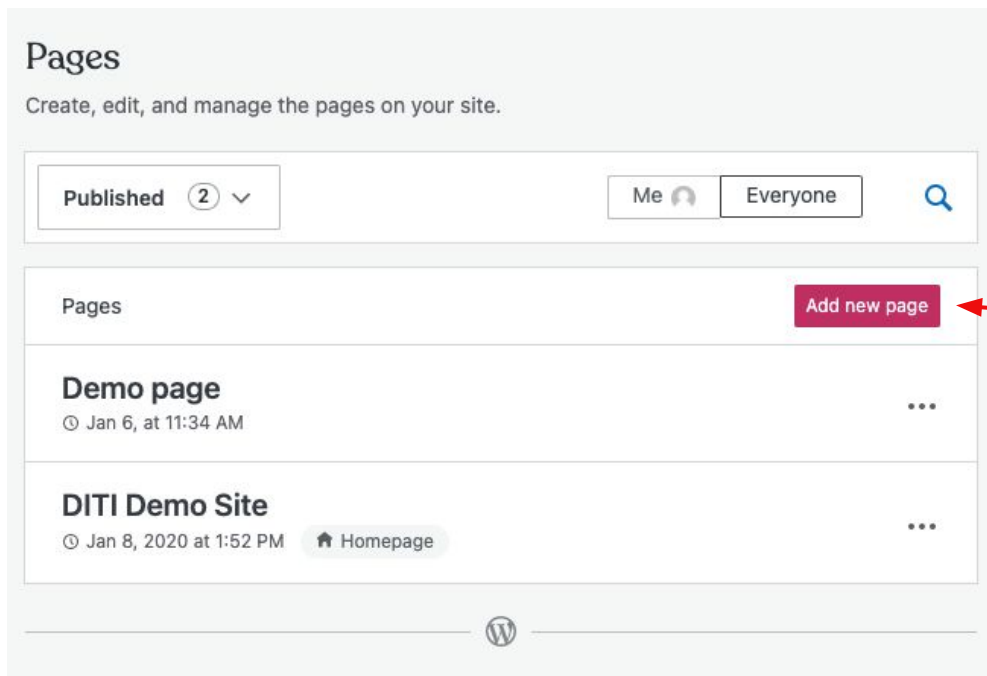
# Managing Pages and Posts

Go to your Dashboard and click “Site.” Then either click the “**Pages**” button or “**Posts**” button. You will navigate through your pages and posts using this side menu.





# Creating a New Page (or Post)

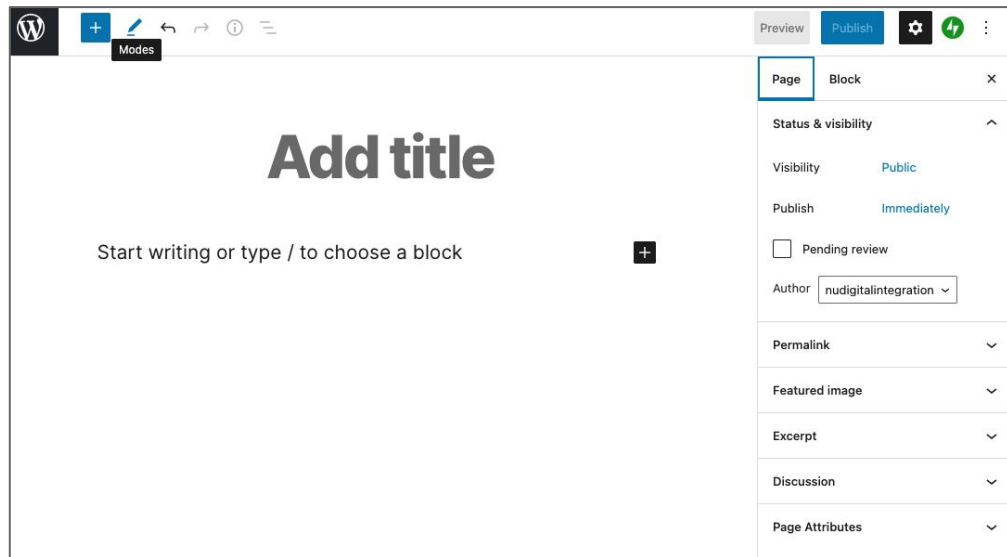


To create a new page, go to your dashboard and click the **“Add New Page”** button. The same works for **posts**.



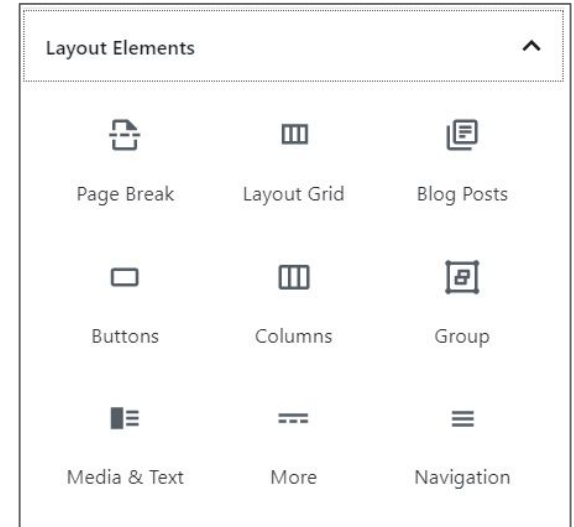
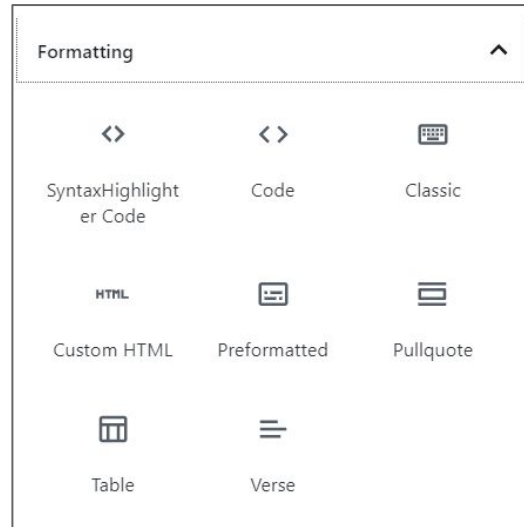
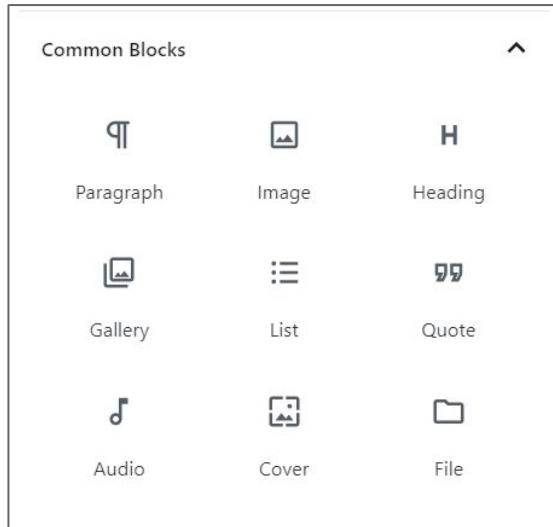
# Visual Editor (Pages and Posts)

- Creating a new page will open up the visual editor. This is where you fill in your content!
- You have options to style your content (font size, styles, colors, add images, add links, bullet points, etc).
- You can also use HTML, if you know that. Note that some themes have back-end HTML/CSS that may not allow you to make certain changes.



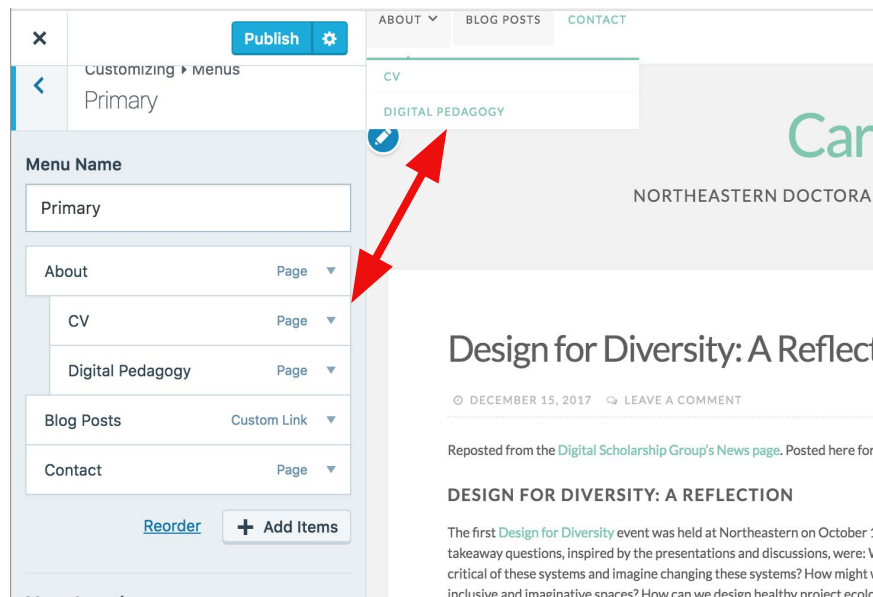
# About WordPress Blocks

WordPress pages are organized into pre-formatted sections called “**blocks.**” Blocks allow you to manipulate the layout of the page. These include:



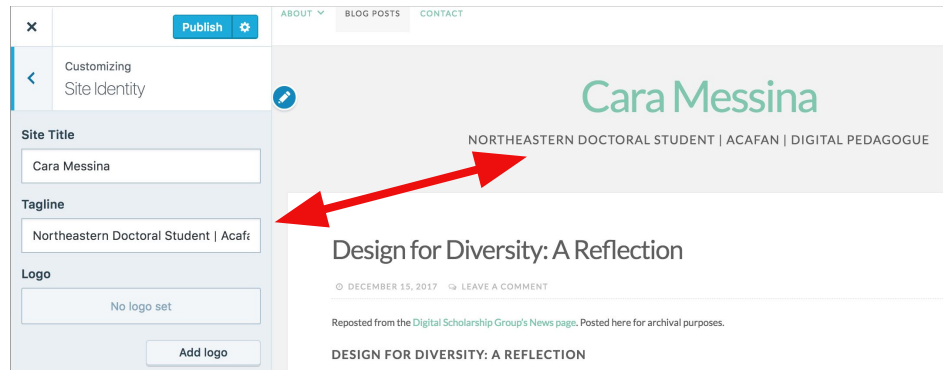
# Site Menu

- Go back to your “**Customize**” menu (in the Dashboard under “**Design**”)
- In the “**Customize**” menu, go to “**Menus**,” which will allow you to add pages, posts, and other content to the overhead menus
  - You can create dropdown menus by sliding one page under another page



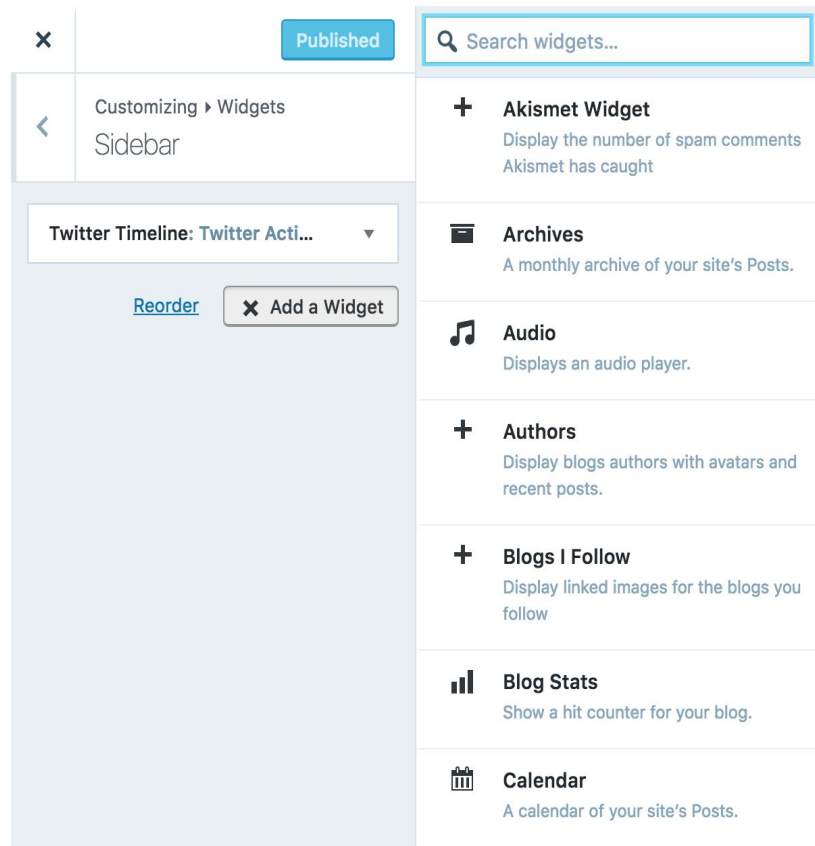
# Header

- 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 page (the subheader, if applicable in your theme, appears below)
- You can find the ways to change your header in “Site Identity” under the “Customize” menu.



# Widgets

- **Widgets** are small applications and components that appear in different places on your WordPress site
  - 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 use a widget to attach your Twitter feed to your website, or to attach a calendar of your posts



# Thank you!

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

Sign up for DITI office hours! <https://calendly.com/diti-nu>

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