Professional Websites

A GSS Workshop

October 16, 2025
Slides originally created by Shelby Cox
Updated for UNL by Anna Brosowsky

Outline

Webpage

WHY??

Imagine: I'm organizing a seminar/conference. I'm thinking of inviting you (I met you at a conference/heard about you somehow).

- Do I have your contact info?
- Am I sure I'm remembering the name of the right person?
- Do you have a project done you can talk about?

Imagine: I meet you for the first time, maybe briefly at a conference. I'm curious about you.

- Maybe your website tells me you're interested in a topic I like! I'm now more likely to remember you.

Even if you don't have any papers yet: STARTING a website is hard. UPDATING it is easy. Start one now, future you will thank you!

What to include

"Required"

1. Name & email
2. Ph.D. student at UNL & advisor
3. Publications & preprints

Recommended

1. Year in program & that you're "on the job market" (if true)
2. Photo of you (recognizably you, but can be casual/fun)
3. Teaching experience

Additional ideas

1. Link to ArXiv / Google / MathSciNet author pages
2. Upcoming travel?
3. Talks given; Slides or videos from talks; Posters
4. Outreach & service
5. A pdf of your CV
6. Research interests (even if only at "reading" stage)
7. Ask your advisor what else to add!

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The internet is permanent

Remember... the internet is permanent! (Or it can be, if someone screenshots/downloads parts of your website)
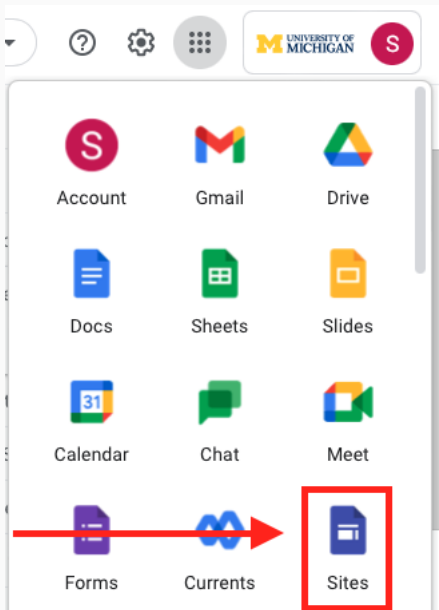
Privacy concerns: Are you comfortable with your photo & other personal info being posted? What if it gets shared beyond academic circles?

- My personal threshold: If it's easy to find the same info elsewhere (e.g., dept website), idc if it's on my website too.

Professionalism concerns: Using your REAL NAME, so only post things you're okay with a student, or your advisor, seeing.

- Fun stuff *is okay*! Hobbies, silly photos, etc.
- But... only if you're comfortable w/ students & profs seeing it

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Google Sites tips

To create: can go directly to `https://sites.google.com/`

- Use a PERSONAL gmail, not a gmail affiliated w/ an institution. E.g., `anna.brosowsky@gmail.com` instead of `annabro@umich.edu`
- Easiest option! No need to know or learn HTML or CSS.
- Less customization than HTML + CSS options... but still, a LOT of customization available.
- Possible to setup with a custom domain, if you purchase one! E.g., `mysite.com` instead of `sites.google.com/view/mysite`

Related option: Wix website builder `https://www.wix.com/` should work similarly (I have not used it)

HTML, CSS, + Hosting: Two sets of choices

A webpage is just an html file (like, a fancier text file). **How** are you creating these files?

- Typing up each file directly?
- Jekyll to create static HTML?
- Twitter Bootstrap to create dynamic webpages?

If the file lives on my laptop, no one else will be able to see it.
Where are you making it available on the internet? (= hosting)

- Github sites—free!
- Hosting on a university server (not available at UNL)
  Con: Each time you move universities, need to move website.
- Other (paid) hosting options

Again, all should be compatible with a custom domain if you want.

Getting Started

- Start with a template you find online
  - `https://www.w3schools.com/w3css/w3css_templates.asp`
- Start with a template from a friend. Ask around!
- Can view people's source code (but don't copy without permission).
- Bootstrap Starter Template: `https://getbootstrap.com/docs/4.3/getting-started/introduction/`
- Mozilla Tutorials: `https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Learn/HTML`

Bootstrap

Bootstrap is an HTML style framework developed by Twitter

- It looks nice
- It has everything you need to build a complete website
- It transfers well to mobile

To use Bootstrap, you just need to add a couple of lines to your HTML file:

https://getbootstrap.com/docs/4.3/getting-started/introduction/

Tips for an accessible website

Visibility:

- Avoid bad color combos like red/green
- Use high contrast! (No black text on dark grey background)
- No flashing lights

Screen readers:

- Make sure ALL images have alt text
- Separate "syntax" from "style"
    - HTML for "this is a header" (`<h1>...</h1>`)
    - CSS for "this should be larger" (`p {font-size: 16px;}`)

Other:

- Check it on a phone-sized AND a computer-sized screen
- File sizes no bigger than needed (resize image file directly instead of using HTML to do it)

Digital Presence

Establishing a digital presence

After you have a webpage, there are a few things you can do to establish your (academic) digital presence. More hyperlinks into your page means higher in the google search results!

For everyone:

- **ORCID:** ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier (an ORCID iD) that you own and control, and that distinguishes you from every other researcher.
    - Required for certain conferences
    - https://orcid.org

- **UNL Department Website:** Email Elizabeth Fichter. Send her your URL and ask her to link it from your department mini-profile.

Establishing a digital presence

After you have a webpage, there are a few things you can do to establish your (academic) digital presence. More hyperlinks into your page means higher in the google search results!

Once you have a preprint up; or once you have a published & reviewed paper (for MathSciNet):

- **Google Scholar:**
 - Google may be the first place someone searches for you!
  - https://scholar.google.com/intl/en/scholar/citations.html
- **ArXiv:** https://arxiv.org/login
- **zbMATH:** https://zbmath.org/
- **MathSciNet/AMS:** https://mathscinet.ams.org
- **ResearchGate:** https://researchgate.net

E-mail: spcox@umich.edu **Affiliation:** University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Name: Shelby Cox **URL:** http://www-personal.umich.edu/~spcox/
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Groups: math **Career Status:** Grad Student

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E-mail: spcox@umich.edu **Affiliation:** University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
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MathSciNet Author Page

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Yoshida, Ruriko (1-NPS-NDM); Cox, Shelby (1-MI-NDM)
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Cox, Shelby

Email:	spcox@umich.edu
Website:	http://www-personal.umich.edu/~spcox/
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Yoshida, Ruriko

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