Creating Content for the Web
Agenda

Introduction

• Provide tools, guidelines and support to make transition easier for you

Training Goals:

- A general site outline
- An outline for each page of content
- Create an easy process for creating content
- Recreate as much content as possible

Let's create Some Content

Elements of Content Strategy:

- **Content Audit**:
  assess your current content both from a quantitative and qualitative viewpoint
- **Content analysis:**
  define the purpose of each piece of content and assess how it meets your department and user needs. Determine how should users respond to the content, and be aware of content they need but don't know to look for. The analysis should consider the following factors: usefulness and relevance, accuracy, influence, completeness, voice and style, and usability
- **Message architecture**:
  identify what your organization wants to convey and how it wants to be perceived. Use clear, concise descriptions and be consistent in your department's message
- **Governance:**
  Audit. Analyze. Strategize. Review.

Tips and Tricks:

- Use Notepad to create content
- "Below the fold" concept
- Write concisely, use plain English
- **Examples of Bad Web Design:**
  http://bit.ly/hRYSIV

Presentation link: **http://www.riohondo.edu/its/content_creation**

Do's & Don'ts/Site & Page Design Tips for Content

Not so Good

Backgrounds

- Gray default background color
- Color combinations of text and background that make the text hard to read
- Busy, distracting backgrounds that make the text hard to read

Text

- Text that stretches all the way across the page
- Paragraphs of type in all caps
- Paragraphs of type in bold
- Paragraphs of type in italic
- Paragraphs of type in all caps, bold, and italic all at once

Links

- Links that are not clear about where they will take you to
- Links in body copy that distract readers and lead them off to remote, useless pages
- Text links that are not underlined so you don't know it's a link
- Dead links (links that don't work anymore) Orphan Pages (links that lead to an "orphan page" with no return links)

Graphics

- Meaningless or useless graphic files

Blinking and Animations

- Anything that blinks, especially text
- Multiple things that blink
- Under construction' signs, especially of little men working
- Animated 'under construction' signs
- Animated pictures for e-mail
- Animations that never stop
- Multiple animations that never stop

Junk

- Counters on pages-does anyone care?
- Having to scroll sideways (horizontally)

General Design

- No focal point on the page
- Too many focal points on a page
- Cluttered, not enough alignment
- Lack of contrast (in color, text, to create hierarchy of info, etc.)

So Much Better

Text

- Background does not interrupt the text
- Text is big enough to read, but not too big
- The hierarchy of information is perfectly clear

Links

- Links are underlined so they are instantly clear to the visitor

Graphics

- Meaningless or useless graphic files

General Design

- Good use of graphic elements (photos, subheads, pull quotes) to break up large areas of text
- Every web page in the site looks like it belongs to the same site

How Users read Web Pages:
http://bit.ly/13bnbZO

Layout and Navigation Tips - some broad rules of thumb are:

- Three clicks maximum to get the user to their destination
- Use page navigation frequently: "to top"
- Keep paragraphs short - 4 lines is good (not sentences)
- Use columns (tables) for lots of text; the screen is too wide for reading all the way across and keeping your place as you would in a book.
- Don't underline words that aren't links

Writing in a readable style

Tips for web writers

Web content needs to be easy to read because web users are often in a hurry to get an answer to a question or complete a task. They may not read closely or carefully and may find it harder to read from the screen.

More readable content will also help users with learning or reading disabilities and people with English as a second language.

Write in the 'standard register'

- Aim for a style that is neither formal nor informal, but somewhere in between
- Avoid bureaucratese, legalese, corporate gobbledygook and other styles that look dense and are hard to understand

Use common, everyday words

- Use words familiar to your target audience
- Avoid abbreviations (including acronyms and initialisms) unless they are commonly used ('DVD', for instance, would be fine)
- Avoid non-literal or cultural uses of language such as idioms and slang
- Never use a long word when a short one will do

Write short sentences

- Aim for an average sentence length of 15-20 words
- Edit long sentences to remove unnecessary words, or split into shorter sentences
- Sentence lengths should vary

Prefer the active voice

- Write more directly and unambiguously by using the active voice
- Only use the passive voice when appropriate (to emphasise the receiver of the action or where the agent of the action is unknown or unimportant)

Avoid nominalising verbs

- Don't turn verbs into nouns
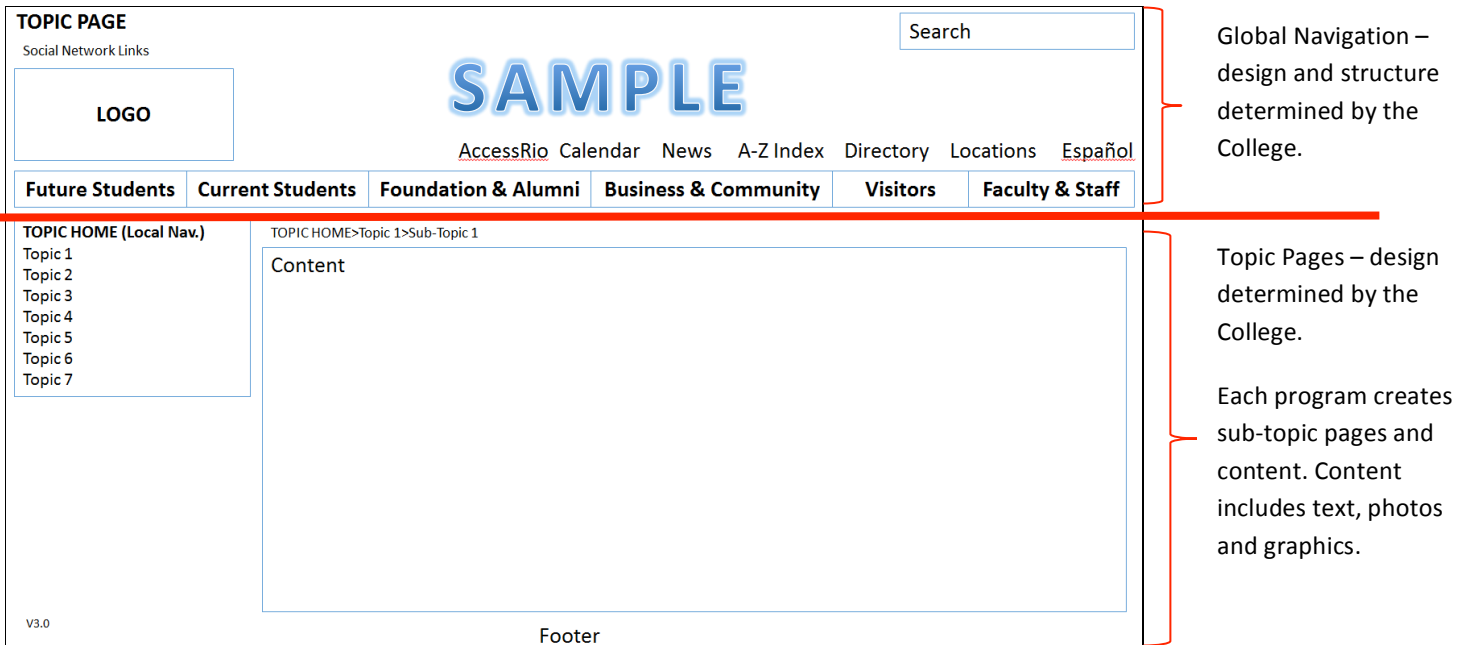 (for instance, use 'The committee discussed' rather than 'The committee had a discussion')

Use personal pronouns

- Refer to your organisation using 'we' and 'our' except where it might be confusing
- Refer to your users using 'you' and 'your' unless you need to distinguish between different user groups
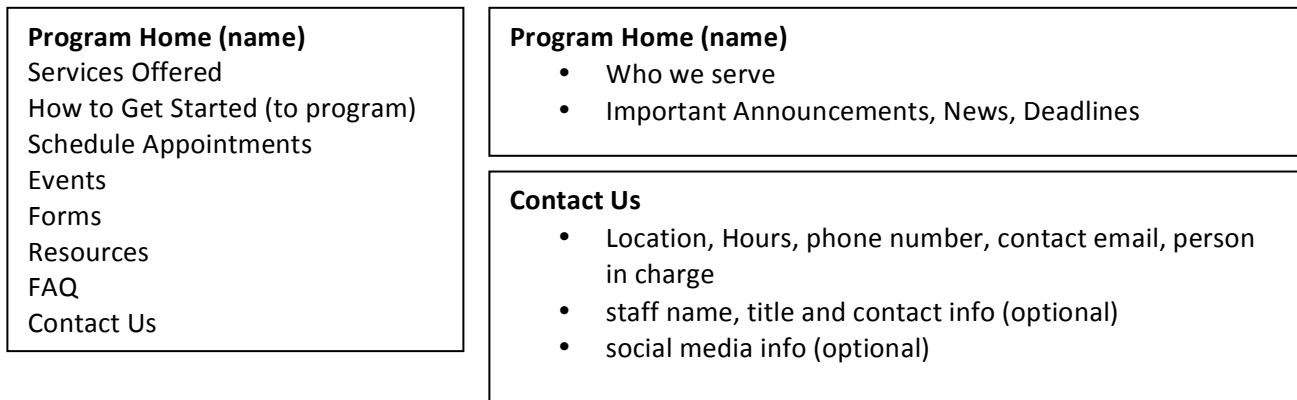
4 Syllables
great web content

New RHC Web Site
Student Services Update, 6/25/13

RHC will provide:

- Global Navigation Structure
- RHC Home Page Design
- All Program Topic Page Template Designs
- Content Creation and Word Press Training

TOPIC PAGE	Search
Social Network Links	**SAMPLE**
LOGO	AccessRio Calendar News A-Z Index Directory Locations Español
Future Students Current Students Foundation & Alumni Business & Community Visitors Faculty & Staff	
TOPIC HOME (Local Nav.) Topic 1 Topic 2 Topic 3 Topic 4 Topic 5 Topic 6 Topic 7	TOPIC HOME>Topic 1>Sub-Topic 1 Content
V3.0	Footer

Global Navigation – design and structure determined by the College.

Topic Pages – design determined by the College.

Each program creates sub-topic pages and content. Content includes text, photos and graphics.

Basic Student Services Navigation (outline):

Program Home (name) Services Offered How to Get Started (to program) Schedule Appointments Events Forms Resources FAQ Contact Us

Program Home (name)
- Who we serve
- Important Announcements, News, Deadlines

Contact Us
- Location, Hours, phone number, contact email, person in charge
- staff name, title and contact info (optional)
- social media info (optional)

Programs will need to:

- Identify Editors and Publishers by **May 10, 2013-DONE**
  - *Editor – creates, edits and inputs content*
  - *Publisher – approves content and makes available for viewing live on the web*
- Editors and Publishers attend Content Creation training on **June 27 or 28, 2013**
- Programs use the Basic Student Services Navigation as an outline to select current content to keep and/or write new content by **August 6, 2013**
- Editors and Publishers attend Word Press training in **August 2013**