



# Drake University

Website Redesign





May 2024

**Leslie Maynes**  
**Drake University**  
**Communications & Marketing**  
2507 University Ave  
Des Moines, IA 50311

*“We wanted our website  
to come to life and to take  
visitors on a journey.”*

**Danita Knight**  
Former Vice President for Communications and Marketing  
Agnes Scott College

# Hello, Drake!

And thank you for inviting us to submit a proposal for your website redesign project.

57% of graduating seniors in our most recent national college-search survey shared that an institution’s website was the number one location to find information on a school. You have three seconds to make an impression and showcase content that is relevant to them until our antsy Gen Zers leave and never come back. Three seconds.

Our comprehensive audit of Drake’s site has revealed areas for improvement, with nearly 3,000 error messages, close to 6,000 warnings, and over 1,000 redirects. Rest assured, our team is poised to address these challenges head-on, leveraging our deep bench of team members and expertise in web development and optimization to ensure a seamless user experience across all touchpoints.

Having been over 5 years since the last time Drake completed a full website audit and redesign, now is the time to answer your virtual front door for all audiences. We have had the privilege of working closely with Drake, including the successful completion of your updated messaging platform, we are intimately familiar with Drake's values, aspirations, and unique identity.

At the heart of our proposal lies a deep understanding of the symbiotic relationship between Drake University and the vibrant city of Des Moines. We recognize the potential to further amplify what makes the Drake experience special, from the exhilarating Drake Relays to the colorful tradition of Drake’s Painted Street, and the enduring spirit of becoming a lifelong Bulldog. We are committed to putting these cherished traditions at the forefront of your immersive digital environment in a way that resonates with current and prospective students, alumni, faculty, and staff alike.

We’d love to expand our partnership with you, and we can make several promises about how we’ll approach the engagement — and the results of our process:

**Your new site will be grounded in our best-in-class strategic foundation.**

We'll find ways to tell Drake’s story as only you can. Your people, your programs, your place, and ultimately your promise. And if we may add another “P”, your pooch Griff! Our work will focus on what your audiences expect — based on our experience designing websites for hundreds of other education institutions, and the research we’ll conduct with your community and your stakeholders.

**It will be beautiful, modular, and flexible.** We'll explore multiple creative concepts with you, leverage Drake’s forthcoming “Open” campaign, and develop a system of layouts and design components geared toward higher ed marketers and communicators. We'll convert the design to framework-free and performant front-end code and ensure a well built and long-lasting CMS implementation.

**Your new site will get results.** It will be search engine optimized, mobile native, fast loading, and highly accessible. It will amplify your brand, communicate Drake’s core values, and connect with prospective students and other primary audiences. It will engage and delight visitors across all devices.

**You'll get a site that's built to last.** We’ll right-size our recommendations and approach to fit your team and your governance model. We'll partner with you for a solid and well communicated launch. We'll refine your governance to position you for long-term success and avoid future content sprawl and degradation of site health. Your team will be empowered to evolve and improve the site over time.

**And equally important, you'll get a bona fide partner.** We’re transparent, innately curious, and flexible in our approach. We will build upon work already been completed in our partnership - knowing the bold Drake messaging strategy, who your competitors are, and what makes Drake unique.

Hopefully, this proposal will serve as a springboard for additional conversation and collaboration — we’d love to tailor our approach to Drake’s, and Griff’s, needs.

**Now, let’s go!**

**Kelsey Anderson**

VP, Client Success

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# About Carnegie

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# The power of human connection

## Higher Education Marketing and Enrollment Strategy

For more than 35 years, Carnegie has been a leader and innovator in higher education marketing and enrollment strategy, offering groundbreaking services in the areas of Research, Strategy, Digital Marketing, Lead Generation, Slate Optimization, Student Search, Website Development, and Creative that generate authentic connections.

We connect colleges with students through the power of human connection. We believe that genuine connection is the key to capturing attention and building affinity. Our core philosophy fuses the principles of human psychology with marketing and enrollment innovation; we measure and then market to a student’s unique behaviors and motivators to create deep connection and real conversation.

This leads to action, enrollment, retention, and lasting affinity.

600 +

College and university partners

35 +

Years of Higher Education experience

# best in class

## Our Solutions, Your Success

Whether you need to optimize digital strategies or build a brand strategy from the ground up, Carnegie provides you with single-source access to custom solutions built from our best-in-class services. We'll deliver the results you're after, time and time again.

We deliver what others simply cannot because we have what others do not: original intellectual property, powerful data, precision tools, and decades of market leadership experience.

- + Brand Strategy
- + Digital Marketing
- + Enrollment Strategy
- + Integrated Research
- + Lead Generation
- + Marketing Strategy
- + Personality Assessments
- + Signature Creative
- + Slate Optimization
- + Student Search
- + Web Development



## **mStoner joined Carnegie in October 2021 to pursue our shared goal of being the most transformative marketing and enrollment solution in higher education.**

For 20 years, mStoner operated as an independent boutique web agency with headquarters in Chicago and a distributed team spanning the country. mStoner collaborated with more than 350 colleges and universities, launching more than 250 websites.

As the Web Team at Carnegie, we bring an unmatched understanding of the strategic goals and challenges of higher education institutions and we are adept at managing the organizational and communication complexities of campus-wide website projects.

# 350 +

Collaborations with colleges and universities

# 250 +

Websites launched since 2001



We create thoughtful, experiential, simple, human experiences that engage and delight. Our design work has won more than 100 awards over the last five years.

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# Meet the Team

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**Kelsey Anderson**  
VP, Client Success

**Persona**  
The Adventurous and Energetic Dynamo



Kelsey Anderson’s ability to connect with people and problem-solve has been fostered by her background in psychology and college admission. From working at a Big Ten institution to small private colleges, she brings a range of experiences and strengths to the Carnegie team. Kelsey finds customized solutions for clients using both her people skills and strategic planning. She hails from the Midwest, where she is active in her community and volunteers with a number of nonprofit organizations. In her spare time, she enjoys exploring the outdoors, eating good food at Big Grove Brewery, and competing in triathlons.



**Kate Colangelo**  
Senior Account Manager

**Persona**  
The Resilient And Energetic Thrill-Seeker



Kate thrives on forging genuine relationships between client partners and Carnegie project teams. Kate’s mix of experience in higher education and corporate project management helps her meet clients where they are, collaborating from there to reach a shared understanding of success. Her day-to-day essentials are open communication, project efficiency, and dry humor. Kate loves to travel and like any good account manager, of course each trip starts with a to-do list and a spreadsheet (organization is key)!



**Amy Lintner**  
AVP, Web Account Management

**Persona**  
The Sophisticated and Forward-thinking Oracle



Amy is passionate about holistic student success and retention within higher education, centering joy in her detail-oriented, client-centric approach to account management. Amy walks lockstep with our project partners, ensuring that the Carnegie team is an extension of the client team and that the project is executed through an intentional, timeline-minded approach. Her Masters of Educational Policy and Leadership coupled with her previous higher education experience provides a unique lens to her role at Carnegie.



**Jon Shearer**  
AVP, Web Strategy & UX

**Persona**  
The Confident and Sympathetic Host



Jon is a trusted advisor when it comes to higher education websites. He led multiple award-winning website redesigns at private universities for over a decade before joining Carnegie. He also frequently contributed to Inside Higher Ed on timely web topics surrounding content, analytics, and SEO. With roots in both graphic design and front-end development, Jon helps clients navigate complex web projects from day one to launch. Jon enjoys leading a team of web experts who balance innate curiosity with best practices to develop custom web solutions.



**Kirstin Swagman**  
Director, Web Strategy & UX

**Persona**  
The Curious and Assertive Champion



Kirstin has always gravitated toward careers that lead with questions – first as a journalist, then an anthropologist, and now a strategist. She has graduate-level training in ethnographic research and specializes in blending quantitative and qualitative data to develop web solutions for higher education institutions. Kirstin brings more than ten years of experience working in higher education to her role at Carnegie and enjoys helping schools connect with their right-fit students.



**Bill McLaughlin**  
EVP, Web

**Persona**  
The Confident and Curious Adventurer



Bill works closely with our current and potential clients and strategic partners to achieve measurable, deeply satisfying results via superior user experience, information architecture, and technology solutions. With more than 25 years of experience in consulting and software development, Bill is an expert problem solver. Before joining our team in 2007, he spent seven years at CNA Insurance as director of application development where he led large-scale projects that helped to transform the organization.





**Alayna Setterlind**  
Director, Web Design & UX

**Persona**  
The Inquisitive and Creative Storyteller



With a lens toward prioritizing the user experience, Alayna enjoys collaborating with colleges and universities to elevate their digital presence. Alayna first discovered her passion for design early on through photography and print design before shifting her focus to web design. Today, she leverages her prior creative agency experience and collaborative mindset to guide designers and developers in producing thoughtful, creative, highly-visual design systems.



**Kelsey Lavine**  
UI/UX Designer

**Persona**  
The Curious and Independent Rock Star



Kelsey has a varied background in fine art and graphic design in agency and university settings. Her passion for web design has allowed her to merge her creative and technical skills to create beautiful sites with a strong user experience. She enjoys creating design concepts and systems perfectly tailored to a client's personality. In her free time, Kelsey enjoys reading, attempting to garden in the desert, and experimenting with new design trends.



**Derek Britton**  
UI/UX Designer

**Persona**  
The Non-conformist and Compassionate Guardian



Shaped by a youth dedicated to service and an unconventional journey into design, Derek brings a humble, collaborative, and inclusive perspective to his work. Initially fueled by a desire for self-expression, Derek discovered the influence of design as a way to solve problems for people. Today, he leads with a human-centered approach and comfortably navigates the crossroads of visual appeal, user interaction, and strategic thinking. He enjoys collaborating with teammates and clients to bring elegant and functional design systems to life.



**Greg Zguta**  
VP, Web Technology

**Persona**  
The Wise and Compassionate Impresario



Greg plays a key role in delivering the technical rigor and expansive capabilities for which our web team is known. From discovery and planning through creative development and implementation, he is involved at every step to ensure that all of a project's pieces fit together and function elegantly. He guides Carnegie's web clients in selecting the best technology, including content management systems and other third-party technologies, and also provides diligent support to help our clients integrate these tools.



**Chris Johnson**  
Asst. Director, Front-end Dev.

**Persona**  
The Intelligent and Aesthetic Connoisseur



Chris is a detail-oriented and versatile web professional with over 7 years of experience working on higher education websites. His background encompasses every facet of the web development lifecycle, including user-centered design, front-end web development, product management, QA testing, and team leadership. He plays a pivotal role orchestrating the journey from creative vision to technical execution, resulting in elegant and impactful digital experiences that both look and function flawlessly.



**Shannon Lanus**  
Principal Content Designer

**Persona**  
The Playful and Creative Composer



Shannon works to make sure great content and amazing design co-exist in every mStoner project. Before joining mStoner, Shannon spent five years working in film and television development for companies such as Harpo Films and DreamWorks Animation TV. This included a stint as a creative executive for the first season of an animated kids series on Netflix. Shannon also worked with Disney as part of a small R&D group, exploring applications of metadata in TV storytelling.



# Persona Archetypes Key

**Innovator: Yellow**

**Brilliant and forward-thinking**  
Driven by inventing the future through innovation. Delivers advancement, ingenuity, and radical outcomes. Values newness, experimentation, and progress. Causes people to feel awe and amazement.

**Explorer: Green**

**Adventurous and inquisitive**  
Driven by the quest for discovering the unknown. Delivers progress and an unmatched interest for uncovering truth. Value investigation, curiosity, and trailblazing. Causes people to feel intrigued and emboldened

**Creator: Orange**

**Creative and imaginative**  
Driven by self-expression and artistry. Delivers something new that encourages creativity. Values originality, ideation, and new concepts. Causes people to feel constructive and expressive.

**Competitor: Maroon**

**Resilient and tenacious**  
Driven by overcoming challenges through grit and determination. Delivers surprising strength, perseverance, and toughness. Values fortitude and hard work. Causes people to feel triumphant and inspired

**Rebel: Silver**

**Daring and rebellious**  
Driven by challenging and redefining the norm. Delivers empowerment, change, and boldness. Values independence, guts, and breaking with convention. Causes people to feel unrestrained and fearless.

**Provider: Purple**

**Supportive and selfless**  
Driven by compassion, warmth, and the desire to care for others. Delivers nurturing, comfort, and protection. Values altruism, commitment, and generosity. Causes people to feel valued and supported.

**Entertainer: Red**

**Energetic and enthusiastic**  
Driven to entertain and cause others to get excited. Delivers fun and the desire to amuse and uplift. Values energy, playfulness, and enjoyment. Causes people to feel exhilarated and happy.

**Sophisticate: Pink**

**Sophisticated and refined**  
Driven by experience, elegance, and beauty in all forms. Delivers excellence, finesse, and vitality. Values poise, intentionality, and beauty. Causes people to feel desired and important.

**Achiever: Blue**

**Powerful and assertive**  
Driven by growth and being a frontrunner. Delivers stability, pride, and strength. Values power, influence, and accomplishment. Causes people to feel confident and in control.

**Beige**

**Generic and confused**  
Beige, though not considered a personality archetype in the model, is still an important consideration. Beige indicates one of two things: a completely neutral personality expression, or one that attempts to do everything at once.

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# Highlights of Our Approach

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# Unmatched Experience

Our team is uniquely positioned to help you embrace a visitor-centric approach to your website. Our experience with hundreds of education institutions, our ongoing research into the needs and expectations of prospective students and their influencers, and the numerous usability studies we've conducted through the years all provide a strong foundation for building a site that is beautiful, engaging, and intuitive.

Equally important, we'll ensure your site is optimized for search engines, and built for key enrollment and other priority conversions.

# Comprehensive and Transformative Solutions

## + **Rock-Solid Strategic Foundation**

Our 20+ years of experience and our inquisitive and inclusive discovery process inform a smart strategy for your site that spans user experience, design, content, and technology.

## + **Audience-Centric Structure and Pathways**

We organize your information architecture, navigation sets, and top-level content for prospective students, and provide intuitive pathways to content for other key audiences.

## + **Award-Winning Creative**

Our creative team explores multiple conceptual directions, ultimately landing on a unique, authentic, compelling, and beautiful expression of your brand.

## + **Content-First Approach**

We assess your capacity for creating copy, photos, and video and audit the health of your current content. We then right-size your design and plan the migration to your new site.

## + **Mobile-Native and Accessible Design**

Leveraging modern web development practices and WCAG AA standards, we create mobile-responsive, performant, and accessible design via hand-crafted front-end code.

## + **Long-Lasting, Flexible, and Scalable Build**

We make it easy for anyone to manage content and on-page SEO. We arm your core team with a flexible page building system, on-board SEO tools, and content syndication capability.

## + **Smooth Transition to a Sustainable Ongoing Process**

We position you for long-term success via tailored solutions, effective web governance, support for campus contributors, and cultivation of a continuous improvement culture.

## + **Data-Driven Solutions and Measurable Outcomes**

We leverage data, analytics, and usability studies to refine the user experience, and measure traffic and on-site conversions against your benchmarks and goals.



# Modular Design Systems

Our design systems are highly modular and flexible. Each system includes specific designs for key pages, templates used across multiple pages, content components and widgets that can be placed throughout the site, and on-page design elements.

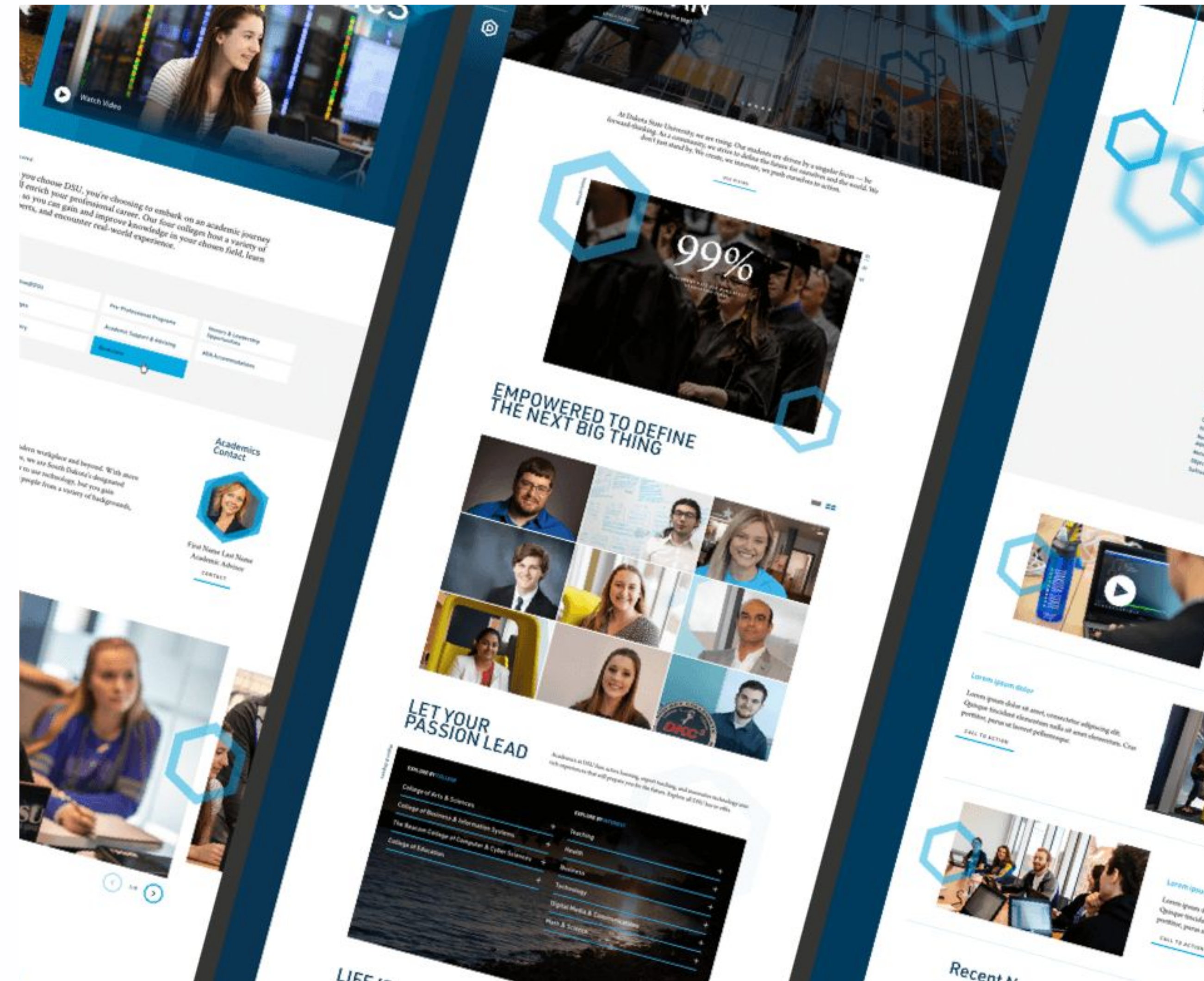
The following pages list a sample inventory of the user interface components of our typical design system. These elements can be toggled on and off and combined to make dozens of different page layouts.



# Interface Components

These modular components can appear in any order on any page.

- + Hero image with call to action
- + Hero video with call to action
- + Call-to-action block with optional image
- + Full-width image and text widget
- + Image gallery
- + Social media gallery / feed
- + News feed
- + Event feed
- + Faculty feed



Dakota State University's Visual Interface System



## On-Page Elements

Everything your editors will need to create vibrant and immersive pages.

- + Sidebar panel
- + Sidebar feature block with image
- + Infographic style (text-based)
- + Inline image with caption
- + Inline slideshow
- + Inline video with caption
- + Pull quote
- + Content list style
- + Full-width image
- + Accordion
- + Form elements



Purdue University Northwest's Visual Design



# Accessible to All

As a part of our work with you, we are dedicated to providing a fully accessible website, along with tools and guardrails to help web editors maintain compliant pages.

We embrace the four “POUR” principles (perceivable, operable, understandable, robust). Our approach will include a modular design system with components that are built for adherence to WCAG 2.1 standards at Level AA, and in many cases Level AAA.



# Accessibility

Combined with proper training of your web editors, our modular design system and the content management system will provide the foundation for a site that adheres to principles of universal design, ensuring that your new site is highly usable for all of your audiences.

Our areas of focus will include:

- + Color contrast
- + Font sizing
- + Clear use controls
- + Keyboard navigation
- + Proper heading hierarchy
- + Navigable content hierarchy
- + Clear focus indicators
- + Page movement and interactivity
- + Responsive visual design and front-end code
- + Valid, semantic HTML markup
- + Careful implementation of JavaScript elements that allows for keyboard navigation and content fallbacks

We validate our work using the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1), at Level AA.

Utilizing WebAIM, SiteImprove, W3C HTML validation, other online tools, and manual review with various input and output devices, we'll test our deliverables during design, HTML, and pre-launch.

# Accessibility Considerations by Project Stage

- + **Wireframe Stage:** Through wireframing pages and templates, we're able to start establishing navigation patterns, interactivity and user control, page and heading hierarchy, and image captions or links to video transcripts. Accounting for these important functional features ensures that once we start on design, we have a solid foundation to work from.
- + **Design Stage:** In this phase, we focus on font size and color contrast, motion and micro-animations, device responsiveness and interactivity, and hover states and link focus. We internally review designs to ensure adherence to AA standards at minimum. Since initial designs will be static prototypes, we create internal documentation to outline all planned specifications for interactivity and animations. This ensures that from design to development, we aren't losing sight of what we've strategically and methodically planned from an accessibility standpoint.
- + **Content Management System Customization:** To ensure that web editors are able to maintain compliant pages, we will incorporate accessibility guardrails into the CMS. These will help enforce the use of essential elements such as tags for alt text, headings, page titles, and meta descriptions, as well as accessible color contrast, font sizing, and more.
- + **Pre-Launch Quality Assurance:** Prior to launching the new website, we'll re-test sample pages using each page template design using the same front-end Development testing tools. This testing confirms the front-end code remained compliant after the back-end was implemented, and also begins testing site content for accessibility compliance.
- + **Training:** Our training and related resources include the fundamentals of accessibility. This training should be required for all content editors before they can gain access to the new CMS environment.



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# Project Delivery Framework

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# Flexible Framework

Our project delivery framework is based on software development methodology and best practices. It defines key elements that span all of our projects — activities, deliverables and a common vocabulary — yet offers the flexibility to adapt to the unique aspects of each client project. Within this framework, we've adopted modern and agile methods for producing our work, sharing it with you, and managing our workflow.



Phase	Goals for Your Project
1. Define	To conduct an immersive discovery, including focus groups with key stakeholders, and to develop a strategy for your new website that spans user experience, design, content, a new content management system, and other functionality and technology needs. Also, to plan for effective web governance for the new site.
2. Design	To establish a creative direction for the project, create a comprehensive, intuitive, and flexible design system, and convert the design system into fully functional, accessible, and responsive front-end code.
3. Implement	To build a scalable and easy-to-use content management system implementation, to create effective and search-engine-optimized copy (40 pages), and to establish a model for your team to do the same.
4. Deploy	To plan for and execute the migration of content into your website (and support your team in doing so), to conduct usability and quality assurance testing, and to prepare for and execute a successful site launch.
5. Transition	To address any post-launch issues and to prepare and equip you for long-term success in managing and evolving your website in a decentralized environment.
6. Refine	Optionally, to assist you in the ongoing measurement, maintenance, support, and enhancement of the website.

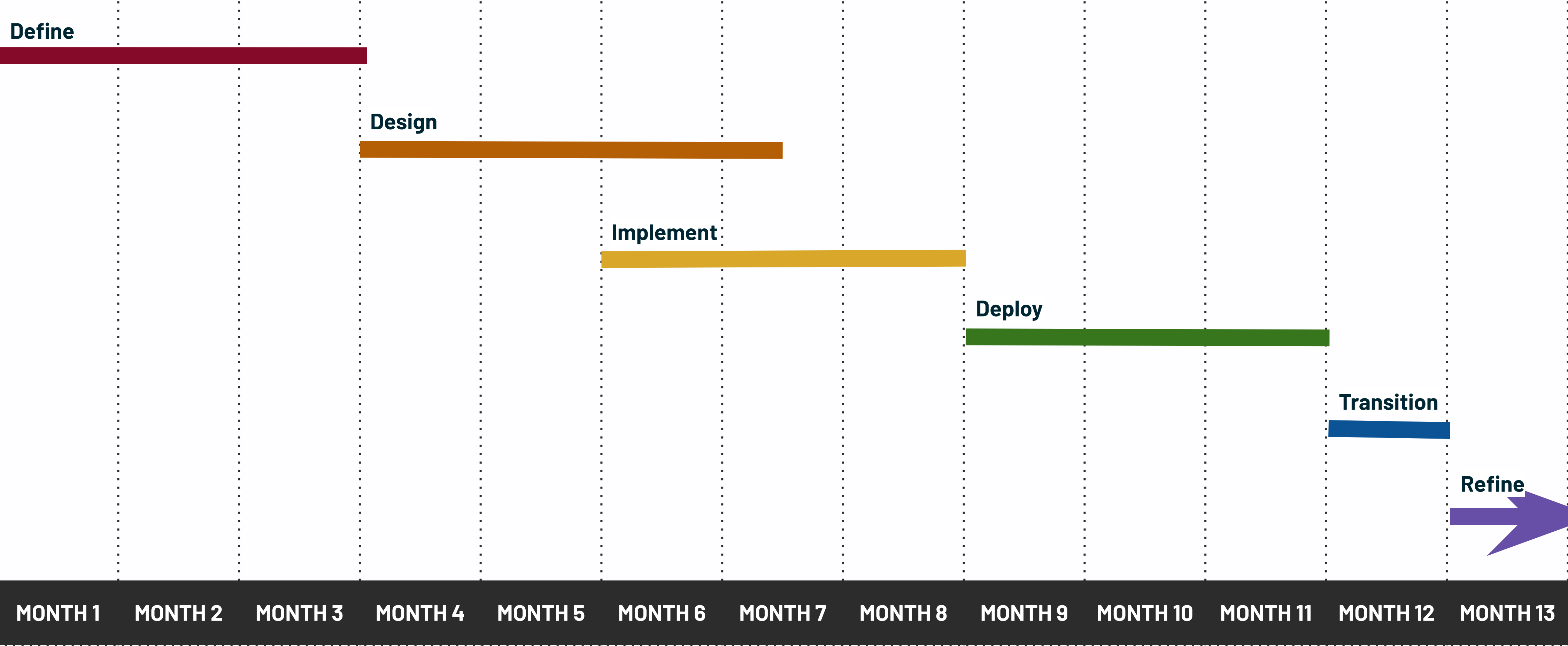
# Tailored Project Plan

At the beginning of the project, we'll develop a tailored approach and plan, and a timeline that focuses on key deadlines and leverages interim milestone markers to keep everyone on track.

The timeline will take into account the academic calendar, holidays, and any other dates that might affect the work. We'll give you plenty of time to plan for periods that will require heavy input or review from your team and crucial stakeholders across the institution.



# Timeline for a Standard Redesign



# Timeline Comments

1. At present we are available to start the project in June 2024. This means the official project kickoff would occur in early June and discovery activities would commence shortly thereafter.
2. If there is a window of time between contract signature and project kickoff, we will provide a list of materials that we'd like to review prior to discovery and a set of pre-work tasks that your team can tackle in advance of kickoff.
3. The proposed scope aligns with a typical website redesign for a project of your size, which has a timeline of 12 to 14 months from kickoff to initial site launch. As such, we are forecasting a summer 2025 initial launch for Drake.edu.
4. Based on the size of your web presence, you should expect that multiple launch events will need to take place after the initial launch to fully migrate your content into the new design.
5. We view timelines as living documents that help to guide and focus our combined team. We will work collaboratively together and both Carnegie and Drake will have a part to play to ensure that we stay on schedule. Timelines should not be viewed as promises, commitments, or "set in stone."



# Collaborative Approach

During the project, we'll conduct regular status meetings to communicate progress to the plan and highlight accomplishments, priorities, risks, and issues. We'll also schedule frequent ad-hoc meetings to collaborate and share our work with you.

We leverage a web-based, team collaboration tool called [Asana](#) that provides threaded communications, task management, and centralized file sharing for the project. Asana acts as the electronic hub for all project communications and key information.

# Fixed-Bid Budget

We are committed to fixed-bid projects.

When new information arises that threatens the scope, schedule, or budget, we'll work collaboratively with you to ensure that we have evaluated all possible options. We'll always present an alternative that involves no additional cost to you.

If we agree on a revised direction, we'll gain your written approval via a change order prior to taking on any additional work.



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# Proposed Budget

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# Scope of Work & Executive Summary

This pricing is a firm bid based on our current understanding of your project needs.

Additional charges will not be incurred without a collaborative analysis of all available options and without your prior written approval.

Our proposed budget does not include out-of-pocket expenses, such as travel and related incidentals, discovery session transcript fees, required fonts, illustration libraries, or expedited delivery. We invoice clients for out-of-pocket costs as they are incurred.

For this project, we anticipate out-of-pocket costs will be approximately \$10,000.



# Executive Summary

Phase	Scope of Work	Cost
Define	Discovery, SEO strategy, analytics benchmarking, website strategy, governance plan	\$115,270
Design	Creative concepts, design system, front-end development	\$105,600
Implement	CMS implementation and customization, SEO writing workshop, copywriting and optimization	\$166,800
Deploy	Content migration starter kit, manual content migration, usability testing, launch support	\$39,250
Transition	Post-launch support, CMS training	\$19,600
Refine	Post-launch SEO reporting	\$9,000
TOTAL		\$455,520

# Define Phase

## DISCOVERY SCOPE OF WORK:

**Discovery preparation:** our team will study all relevant materials, including strategic documents, creative campaigns and any recent studies, surveys, analytics, or information that will deepen and broaden our understanding of your institution. We'll work with you to plan for our onsite or remote discovery meetings.

**Discovery:** we'll conduct small-group interviews with key stakeholder groups, focus groups with students and faculty, and workshops with the core project team.

**Discovery summary:** we'll recap what we learned during our meetings and align with the core team and stakeholders prior to proceeding to our strategy work.

\$36,400

## SEO STRATEGY SCOPE OF WORK:

**Audit:** we'll conduct a comprehensive review of the current site and the many factors that impact SEO, including title tags, meta descriptions, 404's, and duplicate content.

**Review and Planning:** Over a series of phone calls and screen shares, we'll work closely with you to help you understand why these issues are occurring, how to avoid them on the new site, and how to prioritize and implement any adjustments to the current site. We'll also lay out a plan for redirects and other SEO considerations that are necessary for a successful launch of a new website.

Results from the SEO Strategy will inform our Creative and Content Strategy for the new website.

\$11,000

## ANALYTICS BENCHMARKING AND ANALYSIS SCOPE OF WORK:

We'll set the stage for data-driven reporting and decision making by evaluating your current visitors' behavior, engagement, and traffic sources using Google Analytics. Benchmarking current audiences and pages can lead to an understanding of how your site is performing and discover how it can be improved to deliver the ideal experience, informing the new website strategy.

Also, this service will help to measure and prove critical post-launch ROI and impact on key metrics and institutional goals (e.g., RFIs, event registrations, or applications).

Scope includes:

- GA4 Property Audit & Event Measurement Plan
- Event and Key Event Implementation
- User Behavior Analysis & Site Search Analysis
- Website Benchmarking Report - Understand key site metrics before and after the site redesign
- Reconfiguration post site launch

\$17,500



# Define Phase (continued)

## WEBSITE STRATEGY SCOPE OF WORK:

**Messaging:** we'll outline recommended messaging for the website based on your brand, visual identity, and our discovery work.

**Information architecture:** we'll develop a hierarchical map for the new site, focusing on the main sections at the top levels, lower-level sections that are key for external audiences, and other areas of priority based on your requirements (Note: this is typically three to four levels of depth and does not touch every page or section on larger sites).

**Content:** we'll create five content models that describe the purpose, content, and priority user tasks for key pages. We'll inventory your current page structures to right-size our design and inform the plan for migration to your new site.

**SEO:** we'll recommend URL patterns for the new site, map existing patterns to our recommendations, and establish a redirect strategy and plan.

**User Experience:** we'll develop five wireframes that illustrate page layout, navigation, content hierarchy and proposed user interface components for the homepage and other key page templates within our strategy.

**Functionality:** we'll recommend a best-fit CMS platform based on your needs and requirements. We'll catalog all of the features of the current website and provide a recommended path forward into the new environment. We'll also help you evaluate any future-forward functionality (e.g., personalization, AI) other ancillary needs including website QA software.

**Approach and plan:** the results of our strategy work will come together into a document that describes the approach to the website build and migration and provides a visual at-a-glance view of the plan. This includes a work breakdown structure, a concise list of planning assumptions, and key foundational decisions.

**\$36,570**

## GOVERNANCE PLAN SCOPE OF WORK:

**Assessment:** we'll review your current organizational capacity, policies, and structures that support the website.

**Recommendation:** we'll propose a plan for the governance model, guidelines for decentralized content contributors, core team staffing, CMS roles and permissions, and requisite training and support structures.

Assumes that your staff will be responsible for changes to any detailed policy documentation that underpins the governance model and guidelines.

**\$13,800**

# Design Phase

## VISITOR INTERFACE DESIGN SCOPE OF WORK:

**Concept creation:** building off our strategy work and mindful of your brand creative work, we'll create two unique creative concepts for the site, each expressed via a homepage design.

**Design system:** once the conceptual direction is established, we'll create a comprehensive, modular and flexible system of base layouts and design components that can be used to add rich functionality and visual interest throughout the website.

**Template suite development:** using the layouts and components of the design system, we'll create mockups for a secondary landing page, a tertiary page, and five to-be-determined use-specific designs.

In total, the design suite will include a homepage, two base layouts with 10 components each, and five additional template / page designs that extend the design system with additional components and possibly unique layouts.

**\$54,400**

## FRONT-END DEVELOPMENT SCOPE OF WORK:

**Programming:** we'll convert the design system into fully functional and custom-built front-end code (HTML, CSS, and JavaScript). The design will be responsive to web browsing on standard desktop, tablet, and mobile devices.

**Testing:** we'll test the code on the most common browser and operating system combinations on both desktop and mobile devices and validate the code for compliance with WCAG 2.1 accessibility standards at Level AA. Browser and operating system testing includes the combinations below. A specific list of browser and operating system versions that are currently used in our testing can be provided upon request.

- Windows: Chrome, Edge, Firefox
- macOS: Chrome, Firefox, Safari
- iOS: Chrome, Firefox, Safari
- Android: stock Android browser on the test device, Chrome, Firefox

**\$51,200**



# Implement Phase

**CMS IMPLEMENTATION SCOPE OF WORK:**

**Configuration:** we'll complete the base installation, install and configure modules/plugins, and define all required content types, media types, page components, menus, and taxonomies.

**Theming:** we'll convert the HTML/CSS templates into a custom theme.

**Development:** we'll implement any back-end code necessary to implement the required features of the design system.

**Testing:** we'll plan and execute a thorough quality assurance test.

Functionality included in the base implementation:

- Single site implementation
- News and posts content templates and listings
- Content editing capability including WYSIWYG editor
- Page templates to match the full template suite and design system
- Two-tier alert display via external feed or CMS template
- Content syndication capabilities including component-based implementation, reusable supplemental content types, and supporting taxonomy (also known as, "Create Once Publish Everywhere")
- Media library for documents, images, and Oembed videos
- CMS-centric or Google-based internal site search
- URL aliasing and friendly URLs

**\$62,800**

**Pricing assumptions:** Cascade, Drupal, Squiz, or WordPress is chosen as the CMS. All development work will be performed via Carnegie's internal preferred development tools, environments, and processes.

Pricing does not include software license costs of any kind, including but not limited to CMS, modules/plugins, web quality control software, chat bot licensing, third-party search, forms, or calendar platforms.

If Drake chooses a CMS platform other than Cascade, Drupal, Squiz, or WordPress, this budget line item may need to be reshaped to fit the selected CMS. If we agree that it makes sense for Drake to contract directly with a CMS provider for implementation and training services, we'll credit the majority of this budget back for Drake to reallocate.

# Implement Phase (continued)

**ADDITIONAL FEATURES / CMS CUSTOMIZATION SCOPE OF WORK:**

This is a budget allowance for additional features or customization that may be required. We'll work together to finalize this portion of the scope and budget during the Define phase of the project. The scope will be defined in detail and each individual scope item will be priced. Possible features include:

- Faculty Bio / Profile template
- Faculty Directory integration
- Course Catalog integration
- Third-party calendar integration and styling
- Additional content structures and/or CMS templates for special needs (e.g., marketing landing pages)

**\$30,000**

**SEO WRITING WORKSHOP SCOPE OF WORK:**

We'll train and enable your content contributors to create and maintain effective and search-engine-optimized content with their sections of the web presence.

To do this, we'll conduct two collaborative Zoom sessions, spaced two weeks apart and each lasting two-and-a-half hours. Between the two sessions, attendees are given a practice assignment to optimize a piece of content.

Participants are encouraged to collaborate virtually during each session, and breakout rooms will be utilized within Zoom to facilitate group work.

Links to reference materials, presentation decks, and recordings of the Zoom sessions will be provided.

**\$6,600**

**WEB COPYWRITING AND OPTIMIZATION SCOPE OF WORK:**

Content: production of 40 marketing-critical, search engine-optimized content pages for the new site including copy and two rounds of copy editing. Our typical approach is to write academic program pages, top-level landing pages, and feature stories.

Image optimization: Image optimization is essential both for SEO and ADA compliance. Carnegie will optimize images for the 40 pages of content that we create. This will include performing keyword research and writing the alt text for each image.

Additional content development can be purchased in bundles of five pages, at \$8,200 per bundle (includes image optimization).

**\$67,400**



# Deploy Phase

**CONTENT MIGRATION STARTER KIT SCOPE OF WORK:**

We'll use this line item as a 32-hour allowance to assist with the planning and commencement of content entry and migration activities. Our approach will likely include building a few example pages that take full advantage of the design system and build out of the skeletal structure of the information architecture in the new CMS.

**\$4,800**

**MANUAL PAGE BUILD / CONTENT MIGRATION SCOPE OF WORK:**

We'll manually enter content into the CMS for 100 pages. This includes text, images and metadata.

Price assumes a mix of 35 percent simple pages, 50 percent moderate pages and 15 percent complex pages. Simple pages are mostly plain text. Moderate pages include text, imagery and a few additional elements (e.g., a basic table). Complex pages include many images or design components and/or complex data or tables.

Content will be provided in an organized fashion by Drake.

Additional Page-level migration can be purchased in 25-page blocks at \$3,700 per block.

**\$17,050**

**BETA SITE USABILITY TESTING SCOPE OF WORK:**

**Testing:** we'll use a structured process to gain feedback on the effectiveness of the beta site in terms of user experience and interface. We'll conduct the testing remotely with software enabled to record, aggregate and summarize feedback (both verbal and on-screen actions) from usability testing subjects.

**Report:** we'll document a summary of findings and recommendations for improvement.

Includes a single round of usability testing with 10 individual testing sessions, each with one person.

Includes a \$5,000 allowance to adjust the design and front-end implementation based on the results of the testing.

**\$13,400**

**LAUNCH SUPPORT SCOPE OF WORK:**

We'll provide 20 hours of web developer time to assist with launch preparation and "go live" activities. Typically includes working with your team on server redirect configuration, sitemap and SEO configuration, and submission of re-crawl requests to popular search engines.

**\$4,000**

# Transition Phase

**POST-LAUNCH SUPPORT SCOPE OF WORK:**

At no additional charge, we'll support your team by resolving any issues that are rooted in our implementation or project deliverables. This includes items reported within the first 30 calendar days after launch.

Outside of the 30-day support window, we've allocated 30 hours of web developer time to aid in the transition from implementation to ongoing operations.

**\$7,000**

**CMS TRAINING SCOPE OF WORK:**

**Pre-Migration Training:** we'll deliver web-based just-in-time training for the project team prior to content migration.

**Post-Launch Training:** we'll deliver web-based training shortly after launch:

- A two- to four-hour session for content administrators.
- A two- to four-hour session for content contributors. This is typically train-the-trainer, enabling your staff to train the broader user population.

**Documentation:** we'll produce thorough guide documents for each type of CMS user plus technical documentation for IT team members.

**\$12,600**



# Refine Phase

**POST-LAUNCH SEO REPORTING AND ANALYSIS SCOPE OF WORK:**

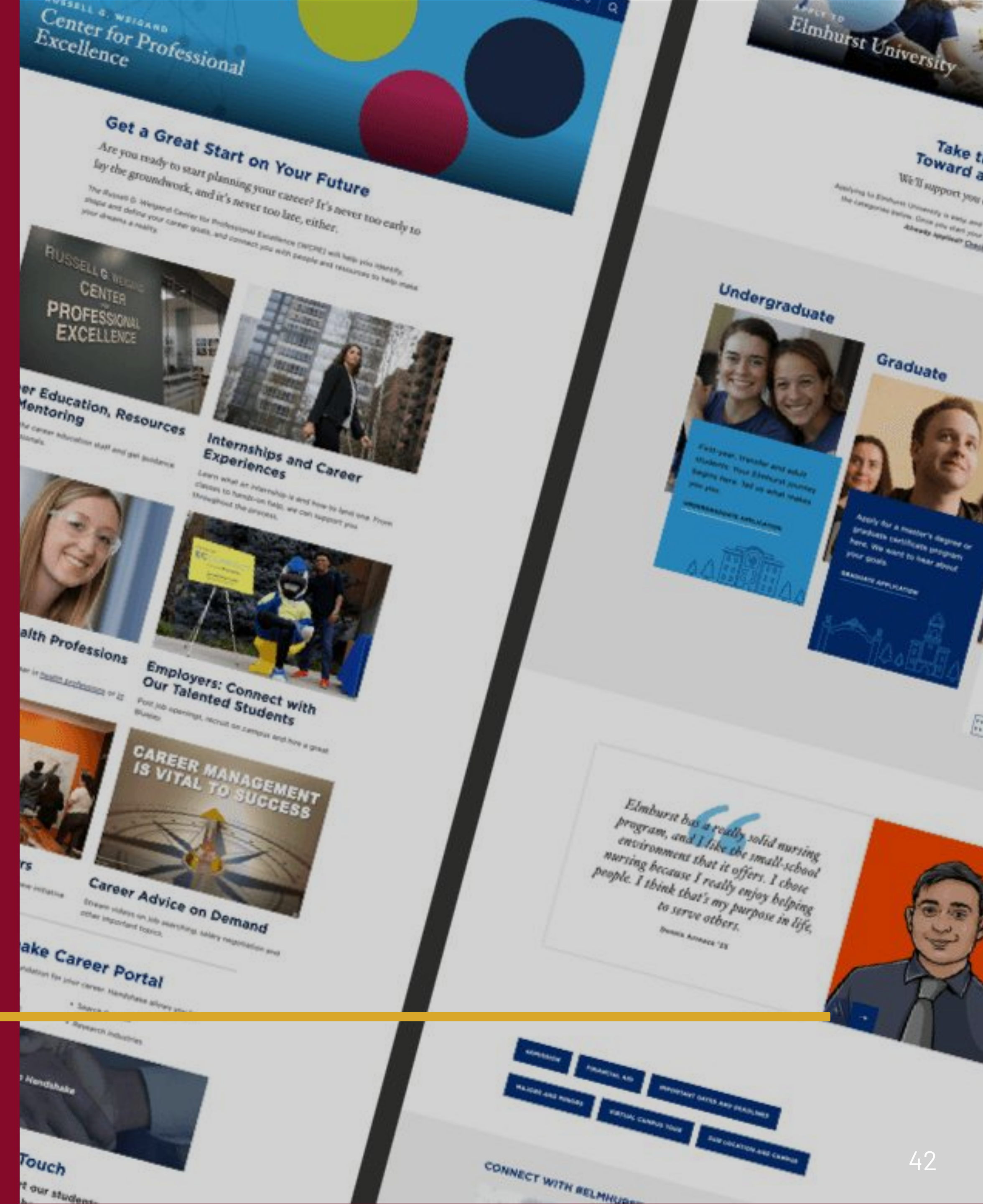
We'll develop a Google Looker Studio dashboard to report on the website's post-launch organic search performance. The dashboard will pull in data from Google Analytics, Google Search Console, and rank tracking tools as applicable. In this way, your team will be able to visualize changes in organic clicks, impressions, and average position rankings.

We'll meet with you once per quarter for the first year after launch to analyze and synthesize the data and discuss insights and suggestions for iterative improvement.

**\$9,000**

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# Our Work





# Agnes Scott College

We created a beautiful new design and immersive visitor experience for Agnes Scott College. The site illuminates their brand and brings stories of their people to life. We also elevated Agnes Scott’s signature Summit Experience that provides each student with leadership development, professional opportunities, and global experiential education.

[Read the Agnes Scott case study](#) for more information.





# Interlochen Center for the Arts

Starting with their new visual identity and our comprehensive strategic foundation, we created a new look-and-feel to highlight Interlochen's unique creative energy and close-knit community. We designed a visitor centric website that is commensurate with one of the nation's premier boarding arts high schools and summer camps, elevated program pages for visitors and search engines alike, and implemented a best-in-class Drupal build.

[Read the Interlochen case study](#) for more information.





# Other Recent Launches

[Belmont University](#)

[Clarkson University](#)

[Indiana State University](#)

[Kogod School of Business at American University](#)

[Palm Beach Atlantic University](#)

[SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University](#)

[University of Dallas](#)



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# References

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# Appendix: Process Details

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# Define

## Gathering Information

We begin by conducting an immersive and collaborative discovery. We want to capture your functional needs and requirements for the project and to understand the essence of your institution. What’s it like to be on campus? What’s different about your students? What are your programs of distinction? Your firsts, bests, and onlys? Your points of pride?

We take several weeks at the onset of the project to gather and review anything and everything we can get our hands on. We use this information to craft an approach and focus for our discovery interviews.

We then conduct a rigorous discovery process — on campus, online, or both — with stakeholders that include students, faculty, and staff. We talk to groups of students. And we workshop with your core team.

## SEO Strategy

Google takes into account dozens of factors to rank your website in search engine results. Many of these elements focus on your backend setup — Do title tags and meta descriptions meet the length requirements? Do any pages lead to 404 errors? What duplicate content exists on the site?

Our technical SEO strategy goes beyond crawling your site to inform your team about errors and warnings. We work closely with you to help you understand why these issues are occurring, how to avoid them on the new site, and how to prioritize any adjustments to the current site. We’ll also lay out a plan for redirects and other SEO considerations that are necessary for a successful launch of a new website.

## Content Strategy

In terms of content strategy and information architecture, we take a user-centric approach. Our philosophy is that prospective students are your primary audience, and we focus on their needs first and foremost. For secondary audiences, we create intuitive navigation pathways to the content they need and surface clear calls to action.

We’ll use the SEO Strategy results to inform our information architecture and content strategy recommendations and to identify pages to eliminate.

By utilizing data from your Google Analytics and Google Search Console accounts, we can see how your audiences interact with your current website, identify where they’re encountering roadblocks, and decide what key content we should elevate in your site structure. We use [cloud-based Slickplan](#) to organize your site and build your information architecture.

# Define

## Web Governance

Web governance planning and policy implementation is an essential part of a successful web initiative.

A good governance plan takes into account resources, processes, standards and guidelines, policies, and training. All of these factors must come together to ensure the integrity of your web presence over time.

To help you with your web governance needs, we'll review your existing policies and facilitate conversations with stakeholders to explore the following:

- + Have you clearly designated ownership of specific sections and pages?
- + Do you have the right editors and publishers in place across your institution?
- + Do those editors and publishers have the proper skills and training to be successful?
- + What ongoing resources do you need to provide your users?
- + What tools do you have in place to help with web maintenance and enhancement? How do people get access to those tools?
- + Do you have the optimal cycle for content reviews and updates?
- + What mechanisms for accountability may you use?

We begin working on governance during the Define stage of our process. At the outset, we'll identify opportunities to create new policies or update existing ones based on our discussions and planning sessions.

We'll then revisit the topic of governance once we've made decisions about content strategy, information architecture, and visual design.

We'll make recommendations for improvements and additions to your existing policies based on our discoveries and help you socialize the policies, both with the people who'll need to abide by them and those who'll need to enforce them.



# Define

## Content Management System Selection

One of the main choices you must make is the content management system that you plan to use.

Over the last 20 years, we’ve implemented hundreds of higher education websites across many content management platforms and many clients seek our assistance in picking a CMS for a website redesign.

We most frequently work with the following content management systems that have a great rate of adoption with higher education:

**Open Source:**

- + WordPress
- + Drupal

**Commercial:**

- + Hannon Hill Cascade CMS
- + Modern Campus Omni CMS
- + Squiz
- + TerminalFOUR

To help you select the best-fit content management system, we’ll work with you to catalog and prioritize your website requirements and needs, as well as your technical and functional requirements for a CMS.

Key decision criteria include the number of content editors and the amount of decentralized content management, technical architecture preferences and complexity, and the capacity and skills of the web team.

Based on that prioritized list and armed with the details that our conversations will have provided, we’ll make a recommendation for a best-fit system that addresses your needs and expectations.

# Define

## Google Analytics Strategy + Benchmarking

We believe that redesign efforts should be data-driven, relying on facts as well as intuition and a deep understanding of the needs and expectations of all of your audiences.

In order to start making data driven decisions you need to have the correct data. Our team has a structured approach to data-driven website redesign.

The four steps of our process:

**Step One:** Our certified Google Analytics specialists conduct an assessment of your account to build data collection confidence by ensuring proper setup and feature utilization.

**Step Two:** Utilizing Google Analytics, our team analyzes onsite search to understand what users are searching for on the site and how effectively. This information provides insight into what information should be added on the new website.

In the event that our team discovers your site search is not properly configured this will be resolved during the assessment period. In this situation the site search will have to be performed after at least three months to ensure there is enough data to gain insights.

**Step Three:** We develop a measurement strategy to help create a cohesive dataset for the institution across campus websites.

We create a benchmarking report for your selected core web pages and website audiences. We also use this report post-launch to prove ROI through comparative analysis to the benchmarking dataset. This report includes data on users, bounce rates, sessions, time on site, heat mapping, and other key metrics.

**Step Four:** We'll develop Data Studio comparison report based on benchmarking statistics gathered pre-launch vs. three months post-launch.



# Design

## Conceptual Creative & Design System

Moving into creative, our team starts with workshops and ideation sessions to explore different visual design, user experience, and content strategy approaches. With Drake’s web design process, we’ll be starting with a strong foundation, leveraging clear brand standards, your messaging platform, and new creative campaign, “Open”.

At this stage of the project, it’s all-hands-on-deck. We work as a team to develop creative feature ideas, preliminary navigation sets, page layouts, and key messages for the site. This work comes together in the form of wireframes and content models that we’ll review and refine with you to ensure a shared vision for the project.

From there, we move into conceptual creative. This is when visual design and user interface decisions start to take shape. We’ll express our conceptual ideas in the form of two unique and distinct homepage designs. These concepts are in no way constrained by technology – our design team drives the process without any imposed limitations based on CMS platforms, frameworks, starter themes, or other technologies.

Once we’ve agreed on a conceptual direction, we’ll begin to build a robust, flexible, and modular design system. Typically, we start with global elements including the header, footer, navigation, and menu sets. When these foundational elements are in place, we’ll design unique pages, page templates, and a suite of widgets and content components that can be reused across pages on the site.

Throughout the process, we iterate between mobile and desktop viewports to refine the user interface. Our design team uses [Figma](#), and we share our ideas and collaborate with you within the Figma interface.

# Design

## Front-End Development

After the designs are approved, we'll move into front-end development. We convert the design system into hand-crafted HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. We do not rely on a framework. Instead we build lean and custom HTML from the ground up — optimized for speed and accessibility — using a process that leverages Sass, Nunjucks templating, and continuous integration into Github. When necessary, we will leverage specific aspects of JQuery, Angular, and other JavaScript libraries.

We leverage a variety of approaches to optimize page load speed. Typically, we craft our CSS and JavaScript to prevent the browser from performing numerous reflows and repaints. This is crucial when working with micro-animations and transition states. Images account for more than 60% of the size of a typical webpage — we use responsive images (for example, srcset) to improve page load time on mobile devices and tablets that frequently utilize cellular data networks with slower speeds.



# Implement

## CMS Implementation

As we transition into the technical phase of the project, we carefully plan the implementation from a functional and technical perspective. We create a detailed specifications document and consider ease-of-use for all user types, from occasional contributors to power users.

The next step in the process depends on the content management system. For Drupal or WordPress, our team will convert the HTML templates into a completely custom theme. We'll create custom content types to facilitate content sharing and leverage a modular approach that allows for pages to be built with simple drag-and-drop options.

We'll install and configure trusted modules or plugins to extend functionality where it makes sense, while ensuring the site remains lean and optimized for performance. We manage our development environment and configuration management with [Github](#) and [Panttheon](#).

For commercial systems, we'll typically partner with the professional services arm of the CMS provider or a trusted platform-specific implementer to build the site. In this scenario, we'll ensure a smooth transfer of our deliverables and remain engaged throughout the implementation phase.

Typically, we'll allocate time to help with implementation tasks and adjustments to front-end code. We'll also act as subject matter experts on the project strategy, design, and requirements. We'll work collaboratively with our partner to ensure a seamless experience for you, and a successful end result.

# Implement

## Web Copywriting and Optimization

Our approach to web copywriting is steeped heavily in search engine optimization. After all, content is the most important factor in site ranking for Google and other search engines. Our team of professional writers are not only expert storytellers but are also trained in how to optimize copy for the most qualified and searched-for keywords.

With the goal of getting your institution to show up in Google for the most searched-for keywords and phrases, we optimize both frontend and backend content (metadata) for priority pages on your website.

Once a user actually clicks through to your site, we want to ensure the content provides a positive user experience. We utilize various data points — including Google Analytics, Google Search Console, and keyword research tools — to understand what your audience is looking for and tailor content to those needs.

In this way, the content not only appears in search results but also illustrates understanding with your audience, making it more likely that they think your school or a specific program is right for them and thus fill out a request for information form, sign up for a visit, apply, and ultimately enroll.

That’s why it’s important that your website’s content matches the search queries that got them there and answers all the questions prospective students might have. These changes are intended to enhance organic search visibility and user experience, which in turn drives all marketing efforts

We’ll work with you to identify priority pages for web copywriting and optimization, which may include rewriting existing pages or writing new pages from scratch. The highly optimized content we’ll deliver will also have metadata, a keyword list, header tags, and internal link recommendations.

## Image Optimization

Image optimization is essential both for SEO and ADA compliance. We’ll optimize images you provide for the pages you designate in this scope of work.

Our efforts will include performing keyword research and writing the alt text for each image you provide.



# Deploy

## Usability Testing

Questions that we explore in a usability study include:

- + Can prospective students find the request-for-information form?
- + Are they able to easily locate information about a specific academic program?
- + How do they navigate to the application checklist?

Our usability studies also measure site visitors' emotional response to design and site structure. For example, users provide feedback such as:

- + "I would have thought the apply button would be in the top navigation."
- + "I find the photo here really distracting because it means I have to scroll down before I can see any content on the page."
- + "I love success stories of young alumni because they make me feel like I can achieve my goals, too."

We offer both unmoderated usability studies through [UserTesting](#) and moderated, one-on-one sessions using Zoom.

For both unmoderated and moderated studies, we'll create a list of general questions and specific tasks that we ask individuals to complete.

Typically, our studies include 10-15 total questions, and sessions last for 10 to 25 minutes. When testing prototypes, we limit our testing to desktop viewports. In testing beta-sites or live sites, we test both desktop and mobile versions.

Usability studies typically include a total of 10 sessions. We recommend no fewer than five sessions for each audience segment that you would like to include in the usability study.

Once our usability study is complete, we'll compile the data and produce a list prioritized changes and enhancements to your site.

Our project budget typically includes funds to implement the most important changes and enhancements immediately. Our team can also work with you to identify additional opportunities to evolve your site over time — based on analytics, A/B and multivariate testing, heat map studies, and additional usability studies.

# Deploy

## Content Migration

Beautifully executed design is only half the battle of accurately elevating your brand. Great design should align with quality content to deliver an engaging user experience on your new website, making content migration a critical stage within your project. We'll be with you every step of the way, providing guidance in planning and executing your content migration.

## Launch

Finally, we'll work with you and your on-campus team to plan and execute a seamless and coordinated site launch. This typically involves partnering with your technical team to establish an approach to URL redirects, ensuring SEO and analytics configurations are properly in place, and helping you organize the steps involved with taking the new site live.



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