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Web Presence Steering Committee Charge

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Charge approved by TASC on February 9, 2018

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Background and Purpose

The information discovery and content environment that the library provides is fundamental to how faculty, students, and researchers do scholarship. In order to keep pace with the increased complexity of scholarship today, we need a web presence that is iterative and fluid; that expects and anticipates interaction, above simply passive consumption of information; that is responsive to new technologies, adapts to new methods of research and learning, and integrates with new technological solutions in many different fields and disciplines.

In the Summer of 2017, the Library received approval for a [Provost budget proposal](#) that described this vision of a new web presence and outlined a holistic approach to a comprehensive virtual space redesign, including the library's website as the core, but extending more broadly to the library's whole suite of web-based applications and products that have a public-facing user interface.

The Web Presence Steering Committee is charged with being the home and the coordinating center for the vision presented in the budget proposal. It also acts as the umbrella for website governance, (replacing and adopting some of the responsibilities of the former Web Committee). The purpose of the Web Presence Steering Committee (WPSC) is to create, steward, and champion a focused, clear, and unified vision for the library's public-facing web presence. This group will have the authority to set direction and standards broadly for user interfaces, to make recommendations driven from the perspective of user needs, and to provide stewardship and guidance to ensure a cohesive and connected overall web presence.

Definitions

- **Web presence:** all products created and/or supported by the University Library that have a public-facing user interface
- **Website:** the University Library's primary website at lib.umich.edu

Responsibilities

- *In the short term:*
 - Charge a website redesign team
 - Set project milestones and priorities for the website redesign and provide leadership and decision making throughout the redesign process
- *For the long term:*

- Provide ongoing stewardship for the library website
- Provide vision and direction for the user interfaces of the library's overall web presence, including design, interaction, services, and microsites
- Collaborate with stakeholders to ensure a cohesive and integrated overall web presence that incorporates service design principles
- Advise on timelines for the changes in the web presence, bringing knowledge from the workings of the library-at-large
- Provide feedback on specific web presence elements as requested
- Identify and support prioritization of both large and small-scale areas for improvement
- Collaborate with Design & Discovery, the Service Design Task Force, and other groups across the library to conduct assessments of stakeholder needs
- Execute an ongoing library wide communication strategy about work being done on and in support of the web presence in order to foster communication and broad sharing

Scope

The WPSC has direct responsibility for managing the stream of web applications (not necessarily the service) connected to library website, and provides stewardship for the experience layer across the entire web presence. To fulfill this responsibility on a project and operational basis, it is the parent committee for these teams:

- [Web Content Coordinators Group](#)
- [Intranet Team](#)
- [Discovery & Access Advisory Group](#)
- [Website Redesign Project Team](#)
- [Search Communication Task Force](#)

The WPSC will also coordinate with other teams or departments that manage online services that are integrated into the web presence.

Membership

Primary representation on the WPSC is from Design & Discovery as this department shepherds the library's main website and coordinates regularly with those who manage products that are integrated into the web presence. It is critical that all WPSC members have or are able to develop a keen understanding of the needs of the overall library web presence and its overall operations. The proposed group membership is intentionally limited to foster nimble decision making and a consistent forward thinking mentality.

Membership includes:

- [Rachel Vacek](#), Head of Design & Discovery (Co-Chair)
- [Alexa Pearce](#), Head of Social Sciences (Co-Chair)
- [Alan Piñon](#), Director of Communications & Marketing
- [Heidi Burkhardt](#), Web Project Manager and Content Strategist
- [Ken Varnum](#), Senior Program Manager for Discovery
- [Robyn Ness](#), Senior User Experience Specialist
- [Whitney Townsend](#), Informationist & Coordinator, Health Sciences Executive Research Service

Relationship with Other Library Groups

There are a substantial number of groups in the library that are key stakeholders in the library web presence that the WPSC will coordinate and collaborate with to investigate and implement changes in support of the vision.

Technology Alignment and Stewardship Committee ([TASC](#))

Chair: Maurice York; Facilitator: Marian Leon

TASC will be the parent committee for the WPSC. TASC is charged with “the responsible management and planning of IT as a strategic resource for the organization, specifically the stewardship of IT project time and the strategic fund associated with the Front Door process.” TASC is a large group that has library-wide representation and meets monthly to discuss LIT projects that have stakeholders from the rest of the library and that were originally submitted through the Front Door. TASC also assists with creating the technology roadmap for the library. For all these reasons, it is ideally suited to be the parent committee for the WPSC.

Design & Discovery ([D&D](#))

Department head: Rachel Vacek

This department, among other things, makes the website happen through user experience expertise, front-end development, design, information architecture, content management systems, and supporting applications. They also help coordinate efforts across the entire web presence.

Communications & Marketing ([C&M](#))

Department head: Alan Piñon

This department works closely with D&D in integrating library news and events into the web presence, and writing forward facing content for many pages on the library website. They are responsible for developing and maintaining the U-M Library brand and message and work with D&D to make sure that brand is consistent across the web presence.

Library Environments ([LE](#))

Department head: Emily Puckett Rodgers

This department “collaborates with library staff and our academic community to design and strategically develop adaptive staff and public spaces within the library.” Library Environments frequently collaborates with D&D, and potentially the WPSC, to facilitate the design of thoughtful and effective library spaces for both library staff and the public to ensure they are reflected in the library’s virtual spaces. Users regularly navigate between the library’s online and physical spaces, and being mindful of their experiences interacting with those spaces is critical to a successful web presence.

Web Content Coordinator Group ([WCCG](#))

Chair: Heidi Burkhardt

The WCCG “supports a distributed model of web content creation and management while helping to meet divisional goals and adhere to library-wide best practices.” The WCCG maintains an understanding of all the web content platforms in our ecosystem and works to promote valuable, quality, and current content across the web presence. In this capacity, the representatives for each division (plus LibGuides and Omeka), support and oversee new content creation, provide content management support to the Content Strategist, and serve as the point of contact for web content requests and issues within their division. This group also works very closely with the Communications & Marketing department on content creation and review. The library is composed of eight divisions with varying goals and needs, and has 100+ content creators in LibGuides. Having Web Content Coordinators across the organization is essential for this group’s success. They serve as ambassadors, advocates, and valued contributors to web content work. This model has been very effective.

Other Groups within Scope

The WPSC has the potential to oversee other groups that exist or that are formed in the future as the need arises. Some teams might report directly to the WPSC, and others might just be a collaborative partner.