Digital Media Governance

The development of the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension website was an extensive undertaking and major investment in enhancing the Extension’s electronic image. It is important that as a statewide resource we maintain www.uaex.edu and all its sub-sites according to best practices and at the highest quality possible.

To that end, this document outlines the management and governance of the U of A Cooperative Extension web environment. Web governance refers to people, policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines that govern the creation and maintenance of our official website.

*Note: This is a working document and is subject to change to meet the evolving web needs of the Division.*

**Objective**

The primary objective of this document is to provide collaborative centralized governance for the ongoing development, deployment, delivery, and maintenance of the UA Cooperative Extension website. An underlying goal is to achieve a consistent look and feel for the official Extension web pages by consistently representing the UA Cooperative Extension brand through standard processes, roles, responsibilities, and practices.

This objective is achieved with the website’s underlying strategic priority in mind: to facilitate a user experience that will develop a lasting digital relationship with all visitors – but particularly Arkansas residents and CES (Cooperative Extension Service) personnel – providing them with the information they need quickly, easily, and enjoyably. The website intuitively presents information to users, particularly Arkansas residents and CES personnel, in a way that facilitates a satisfactory, pleasant, and usable online experience.

**Governance Structure**

The **Digital Media Council** is composed of representatives from IT (Information Technology) including the Digital Media Manager and technical leads as well as designated team members from program areas.
It is the responsibility of the Digital Media Council to set the direction and policies for the Extension’s website and the web operating environment based on best practices. In order that directions and policies are set with a full understanding of the issues and impact of the decision, decisions appropriate to the jurisdiction of the Digital Media Council will be reached by consensus. Consensus is defined as achievement of full support for a decision after a complete airing of differing viewpoints. Consensus is achieved through discussion. If the group cannot reach consensus, the options will be presented to the Senior Leadership (including the Director of Cooperative Extension, Associate Vice President, Associate Director of 4-H and FCS, ANR Associate Director, CED Assistant Director, Associate Director of Finance and Administration, Assistant Director of County Operations, Ozark District Director, Delta District Director and the Ouachita District Director) with a recommendation for resolution.

The Digital Media Council will continually look at opportunities to communicate relevant information to appropriate audiences and take input from the Digital Media Advisory Board, who will review requests from active users and content contributors. The Digital Media Advisory Board is comprised of representatives from administrative, operational, and technical teams from each of these areas: Farm & Ranch (ANR), Program & Staff Development, Yard & Garden (ANR), county representatives, 4-H, Community & Economic Development, IT, and a designated individual who represents their department’s interests on the website.

A group of content creators from every department within Extension make up the Digital Media Forum. The Digital Media Council will attend monthly OU User Group meetings where layout, content, search engine marketing, and other digital media strategies and issues will be addressed. The Digital Media Council and Digital Media Advisory Board will update the Digital/Digital Media Forum on project plans. The Digital Media Forum will then disseminate that information to their staff and department members. Throughout the year, the Digital Media Forum and other web visitors are invited to send ideas, requests, problems, and concerns to the Digital Media Council via forms located on [www.uaex.edu/websitehelp](http://www.uaex.edu/websitehelp) where users can request site updates and website access as well as short URLs.

**Responsibilities of the Digital Media Council and the Digital Media Advisory Board**

In response to the needs of web visitors, provide oversight of and set strategic direction for [www.uaex.edu](http://www.uaex.edu) the responsibilities for the DMC and DMAB include:

- Establish appropriate policies, processes, and procedures to govern current and future website standards
- Evaluate effectiveness, content, standards, and policies for technology and editorial components
• Suggest global changes to taxonomy, structure, branding, look and feel, navigation, styling, etc. as needed
• Ensure compliance with all legal and regulatory standards, including accessibility, security, etc., by consulting with the current Extension Civil Rights Compliance Officer
• Ensure site quality
• Recommend additional templates or changes to existing templates
• Facilitate and resolve non-compliance issues
• Individual content creators within Extension are held responsible for the accuracy and validity of their content

Page content: Roles and Responsibilities

Page Proprietors are the department heads, executive team members or designated high level team members who have the final say in decision making for what is and is not allowed on their department’s pages.

Content Owners typically report to page proprietors and are responsible for the voice, content and writing of the information on their department’s web page(s). They may or may not be the individuals entering copy into the web editing tools, but they are the ultimate writers and crafters of content that will be read by the public. Examples: program specialists and county agents.

Web Editors may or may not be the authors of their web content. Their primary responsibility lies in using OU to add the copy to the page. Web editors are typically trained in the OU system having taken the beginning OU training course in learn.uaex.edu and are responsible for uploading accessible files, documents, videos or content to their designated pages. They report directly to the Content Owners or in some cases, the Content Owner and Web Editor are the same person.

Governance Policies

Guidelines/Compliance

The website, www.uaex.edu, is the sole property of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service; while certain faculty and staff will have access to edit certain portions of the site, create new content, and remove old content, the site and all its sub-sites remain the property of Extension.

The website provides a platform to showcase the Cooperative Extension Service’s best qualities and project a positive image to the entire world. It is a strategic asset, which carries enormous influence
and provides global access to all aspects of Extension’s services. With more than one hundred web editors managing portions of the site, guidelines that encourage clarity, accuracy, and consistency are essential to protecting Extension’s online image. This document aims to cover all areas of web governance, but if you have questions that are not answered upon reviewing this, please contact webhelp@uaex.edu, or the Digital Media Program Manager.

Extension reserves the right to revise or delete content housed either on Extension IT resources or external resources that does not meet acceptable use guidelines or the standards outlined in this policy.

**Request/Appeal Process**

Website Update Requests to IT Digital Media Services will be reviewed by the Digital Media Program Manager before being assigned. If there are questions about the request, it will be referred to the digital media staff for a decision. If the requesting party disagrees with the decision, it will be reviewed by the Digital Media Advisory Board. The decision of the Digital Media Advisory Board may be appealed to the Digital Media Council, which will make the final decision.

**Roles/Permissions**

Permissions are determined by OmniUpdate user groups, which are generally the same for all editors assigned to that specific area (e.g., all users in the County user group have the same privileges). If specific needs are determined (e.g., someone can add copy but not publish to the live site) then a member of the Digital Media Advisory Board representing that department should contact IT Web Services and/or the Website Project Manager. Web content directors should also contact Digital Media Services if editors (e.g., work only when needed staff, former employees) should no longer have permission to edit the site. For their own reference, it is recommended that web content directors keep a list of their page editors and contributors.

**Quality Control/Workflow**

No one is guaranteed an OU account. All OU users should take the training in Learn [https://learn.uaex.edu/course/view.php?id=1663](https://learn.uaex.edu/course/view.php?id=1663) first and request access via this form [https://forms.monday.com/forms/ef0959ae130ead26d3708643b1caabb2](https://forms.monday.com/forms/ef0959ae130ead26d3708643b1caabb2)

Once a user is granted access, it is the responsibility of the content owners to ensure all of their content is up to date and accessible.

All OU users should be logging into Monsido monthly to check for quality assurance issues and accessibility concerns.
County and program management are responsible for determining their own internal workflow. It may be that there are multiple writers who report to a county or program manager. County and program managers need to contact the Digital Media Program Manager if there are content contributors in their groups who should **only** have the ability to “edit” pages, not “publish” pages. Only “publishers” will be able to make changes that will instantly go live on the site.

By default content contributors will edit copy then submit for review. Publishing will occur after the page is submitted to their superior for review and subsequently approved. Should county and program managers need content contributors to edit and publish without review, user may ask IT to set this feature up on a case-by-case basis.

Content owners will be notified if their copy is found to be in error or incomplete. Visitors to the site will be encouraged to submit feedback regarding issues with the site and the copy will be under routine review and the content will be flagged for correction by digital media team members via an email to the content owner. Should the content not be resolved or fixed in a week's time, the content contributor's supervisor will be notified.

Requests for new pages must be submitted online using the Web Request Form (see Addendum 1 in this document).

It is imperative that we all work together to keep the new website free of typos, bad grammar, etc. and consistent in style and quality.

Regardless of the structure, when your department makes changes to existing pages, have a second person review the webpage(s) content before it is published. There is a “Check Spelling” box within the Body Text area before submitting changes.

**Level 10 Access (administrative level access)**

No one outside of the IT department will be granted Level 10 administrative access unless approved by the Digital Media Council. Only the IT Director and Digital Media Program Manager will have the authority to make an OU user a Level 10 without the authority of the Digital Media Council. If any
Level 10 user other than the IT director or Digital Media Program Manager grants Level 10 access to another person, the user's own Level 10 access will be removed.

Measurement
Google Analytics has been embedded in all site pages, so departments wanting to track page views do not need to embed codes on their own. For help with interpreting your department’s page analytics, contact Digital Media Services.

Monsido is also available for all OU users to measure site traffic, demographics, and other insightful visitor data. Reports are emailed monthly. Alternatively, users may log in at any time using active directory credentials at www.monsido.com.

Large Web Requests
Even though some departments may be able to make financial investments for web work on their behalf, all work orders and digital media projects must be approved by the IT department. The IT project request form is available for anyone to submit an idea for a proposed project.

Content Management System
All content will be held and propagated to the site using the approved Content Management System OmniUpdate and its implemented version. No other software product may be used within Extension’s approved CMS and its build architecture.

No additional blogs or websites on behalf of Extension will be established without approval by the Digital Program Manager.

Accessibility
All content contributors should familiarize themselves and follow the ADA Compliancy guidelines. Digital Media Services will run all site pages through a compliance monitor system within the OmniUpdate platform. Compliance monitoring systems within OmniUpdate can and will be utilized.

If a refresher is needed for accessibility contact the Accessibility Manager located in IT or visit www.uaex.edu/accessibility for help.

IT personnel have the right to delete or remove non-accessible content. If site scanning software (Monsido, Funnelback) finds inaccessible content which violates WCAG or Section 508 guidelines, IT personnel will contact the content owner to advise that content is inaccessible and to work with them to find resources to remediate said content.
ADDENDUMS

Addendum 1

Training/Education
Only fully trained content contributors will be given access to the content management system once their county or program area managers approve their inclusion in the process. Beginning OU web training is available on Learn https://learn.uaex.edu/course/view.php?id=1663. Monthly training sessions are available via OU User Group Meetings (first Tuesday of every month) and on-on-one training meetings as requested.

Addendum 2

Written Content/Messaging/Branding
The Extension’s new site embraces a writing style that engages our readers in a conversation. We want to speak directly to them, answer their questions, and give them information as concisely and clearly as possible. We don’t want to bog them down with text. Web visitors are task oriented – they skim and scan, getting just enough information to get to their next destination. Subheadings and bulleted and numbered lists are tools to help us achieve these goals.

So that we convey a clear and consistent message, it is critical for all parts of the site to use Extension’s official visual identifiers (logos) and Extension’s naming conventions and style outlined in the U of A System Brand Manual, the Extension Web Standards Guide, and grammar consistent with the AP style guide.

Addendum 3

Visual Content
Photography that meets a high professional standard plays a critical role in creating a positive image of Extension. The photographic images used on the website should effectively convey our mission of service and of being a resource to the community of Arkansas. Our photos should make a connection with the people and activities depicted and they should make citizens proud of the work done in and for their state. In order to achieve these goals, when posting photos on the site, please use primarily...
documentary-style photography that captures the authentic and vibrant interactions with Arkansans and Extension employees, as well as document processes and/or work as a visual aid for supporting content. Obviously, it will be important to show a range of genders, ethnic backgrounds, races, ages, etc., but try to avoid artificial-looking situations that are obviously trying to communicate diversity.

Content contributors should follow the guidelines set forth in the brand manual, ensure all images are not copyright protected (or are ideally, original images) as well as keep photos under 50KB to allow for quicker page load times.

Part of the strategic plan when it came to the website was ensuring that there was a uniform, professional look to all faculty and staff photos featured on the official biography pages which at this time, can be found in the staff directory. Therefore, one of our Extension photographers takes all of the faculty and staff photos for the faculty bio pages.

Faculty members are welcome to use their own pictures on their own, personal websites. As a public entity, it is critical to make our site accessible to all users. When adding photos, you need to include “Alt Text” so that those who are visually impaired and using text browsers can know what your picture or illustration looks like. The World Wide Web Consortium accessibility guidelines suggest that you imagine reading the picture/illustration aloud over the telephone. If the image is decorative, mark it as “decorative” so screen readers skip the image entirely. If the image conveys information (how-to image, chart, graph, etc.) then a long description may be necessary.

**Videos**

All videos posted on [www.uaex.edu](http://www.uaex.edu) must be ADA compliant. All videos that appear on the UAEX.EDU website must be captioned and a transcript attached.

Each video should end with a video logo clip that can be found on the Logos and Standards webpage. If you need an alternate format for your purposes, contact Communications.

If you’d like a video embedded on the Division **YouTube Channel**, contact Communications.

All videos embedded on the website should have a transcript.

**Addendum 4**

**Use of Social Media and New Technologies**
When participating in a social media site on behalf of Extension, clearly state your role and goals. Before you jump into a discussion thread or respond to a posting, think about the implications. Will your response stimulate positive discussion, provide new information or insight, or inflame? If you have any questions about whether it’s appropriate to enter into a social media discussion or write about certain kinds of material in your role as an Extension employee, ask your supervisor before you post or contact the Digital Media Program Manager or Social Media Manager.

Uphold Extension’s mission and values in your activities. Don’t include political or personal comments. This includes changes to your photo or avatar in relation to political or social issues. Always double check your facts, and if you’re not the best editor, have someone else read your postings before going live. Additional social media policies and best practices can be found at the end of this document as Addendum 8. Note that if you are registering a Facebook page ensure that you have more than one person in your department who is able to log in and maintain the account. This is similar for LinkedIn professional groups and Twitter, Instagram or Pinterest accounts. Fill out the social media request form to begin the official Extension social media registration process.

For information on branding on social media sites, see the U of A system brand manual.

**Addendum 5**

**Mobile Applications**

Colleges, departments, and centers should contact IT Digital Media Services prior to launching mobile applications to ensure the applications follow Extension programming and development standards and support the Extension mission.

**Addendum 6**

**Website Modification Notices and Modifications**

All changes are to be posted and all pertinent parties notified of major changes and or outages, third-party integrations, operations, and capacity planning (with reports and metrics from our hosting vendor). Appropriate change management and communications with the hosting provider will be followed. The Digital Media Department will post all major planned events on the IT Technology Changes page. The notices will include browser updates, coding updates, etc.

**Addendum 7**
Social Media Guidelines

The purpose of the social media usage of the Cooperative Extension Service is to further our mission to provide research-based information through non-formal education to help Arkansans improve their economic well-being and the quality of their lives.

These guidelines govern the publication of and commentary on social media by employees of the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service (“UACES”) and its related entities. UACES employees may publish or comment via social media tools in accordance with these guidelines. UACES employees are subject to these guidelines to the extent they identify themselves or are recognized as a UACES employee and engage in the use of social media tools as part of their job.

The Social Media Committee is a group of faculty and staff who meet regularly to discuss and plan UACES social media efforts. The committee researches and evaluates social media platforms, provides information on best practices, makes recommendations for training, advises when questions arise, and maintains the social media registry. The Social Media Committee is under the leadership of Amy Cole, Website Program Manager and Digital Principal.

Send questions, suggestions, or comments regarding social media to: Amy Cole, accole@uaex.edu

Social Media Channels

For the purposes of these guidelines, social media relates to any medium for online publication and commentary, including but not limited to blogs and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube. Additional social media outlets may be used. A full list of Extension’s registered social media sites is available at www.uaex.edu/social-media/default.aspx.

Official Policies

Social media usage at UACES is governed by all official policies. Read the policies before engaging in any social media campaign as part of your official duties. All uses of social media must follow the professional ethical standards expected of UACES employees. These guidelines are in addition to, and complement, any existing policies or guidelines regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet.

Specific policies of interest related to social media include but are not limited to:

University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture
Advertising on behalf of external vendors is prohibited on Extension social media presences. Be mindful of the policies set by social media sites.

Obey copyright law.

If you have questions about policies or social media practices, contact (point person for social media).
Getting Started

Before engaging in work-related social media, employees must register their social media accounts (individually) with UACES at 501-671-2304. Designate who will be responsible for the account and ensure you have a backup person in your department and approval from a supervisor before starting to post. All accounts will be listed in the UACES social media directory. Social media accounts for UACES entities, including 4-H, EHC, Master Gardeners and any other entity representing UACES, should be set up by the county agent or specialist. In the event an account is set up by a club member for the entire group, a county agent or specialist must be added as an administrator to maintain settings and controls as set forth in these guidelines. If you need assistance choosing a social media platform or setting up an account, please contact Amy Cole, accole@uaex.edu.

Privacy

It's not permissible to post confidential information. Think before you post. Be mindful of posting personal information you wouldn't want clients or co-workers to know. Don't post anything you wouldn't say in public. What's posted online is online forever. It's not just about the organization but also about protecting your own online reputation as well. Don't talk negatively about anyone, especially co-workers or competitors.

Your posts should never include:

- Sensitive financial or legal information.
- Confidential information.
- Sensitive or personal medical information that would violate HIPPA regulations.

Protect minors. When posting photos of 4-H youth or other minors, follow this format: First Name, First Initial of Last Name, County; ex.: Joe S., Anywhere County.

Protect your own privacy. Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see professional profile information.

Honesty

Make it clear that you are blogging/Tweeting/Facebooking, etc. in your role as an employee of UACES. Individuals’ use of social media can help to personalize the organization to the public.
Don’t be afraid to be yourself, but do so respectfully. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.), but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion.

Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty - or dishonesty. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue or misleading. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out.

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly.

Quality

The quality of your posts reflects on your professional reputation and on the organization. Use clear, concise writing. Spell and grammar check. Proofread before posing. Use appropriate photos and properly edit them. If you have any doubt or need training, contact Amy Cole (501-671-2304).

Remember the mission of UACES is to provide research-based information to the public. Focus on providing non-biased, reliable, up-to-date information. Remember that writing for the web is different than writing fact sheets or journal articles. See “Tips for Writing for the Web” to make the most of your social media efforts.

When posting in your professional role, avoid making claims that may appear to endorse commercial products or services, political parties or viewpoints or religious affiliations.

Response

Social media requires regular attention. Check your sites at least a few minutes each day. Post fresh content several times a week. People will lose interest if your site isn’t kept current.

Be prepared to accept and respond to comments on your site. At the very minimum, comments should be monitored regularly. Some sites offer an option to moderate comments before they are posted. Consider moderating comments when this option is available.
Comments that are completely inappropriate can be hidden or removed. Post the following statement on your official UACES social media outlets:

We reserve the right to remove all offensive and unrelated comments on our social media outlets. You may contact Amy Cole, 501-671-2304.

Understand that not all comments will be positive, and respond to negative comments professionally and respectfully, and by providing additional information that may help resolve the issue. If you see a post that you think needs an official UACES response, please contact 501-671-2304.

If you are commenting on someone else’s site as an official part of your job, be sure to indicate who you are and your affiliation with the UACES. Leave only constructive, helpful comments.

**Emergency Communication**

If an emergency is unfolding, please do not post speculative information about the situation on your site. For proper emergency communications response, please refer to our communications department. If you discover erroneous information about an unfolding crisis, please contact Mary Hightower, at 501-671-2126.