

Website Editor Guide

Introduction

The purpose of the web editor guide is to help departments and website owners better manage and maintain their websites as well as provide guidance on how to onboard new website editors and manage employee transitions.

There are three main sections in the web editor guide: [Getting Started](#), which covers the different resources we have available for editors, [Ongoing Maintenance and Website Improvements](#), which covers common website maintenance tasks as well as best practices, and [Knowledge Transfer and Transition](#), which covers how to make employee transitions a little smoother.

Not sure where to start? Which of the following best applies to you?

I am in a department with frequent turnover or a high volume of student workers. For departments or organizations with frequent turnover, we recommend starting with the [Knowledge Transfer and Transition](#) section. This section will help get you thinking about all of the information your new employee might need to get them started from website goals and common edits to external tools.

I am a new editor to GU WordPress. If you're new to Georgetown WordPress sites, we recommend starting with the [Basic Resources](#) under the [Getting Started](#) section first to get an overview of how GU WordPress sites work, learn about website accessibility, and some tools that will help you manage your website better. Next, we'd recommend moving on to the [Ongoing Maintenance and Website Improvement](#) section for common maintenance tasks and best practices before circling back to the [Advanced Resources](#) section for more helpful tools.

I am a seasoned editor looking for the next steps. For editors already familiar with GU WordPress sites, we recommended starting with the [Advanced Resources](#) section before moving on to the [Ongoing Maintenance and Website Improvement](#) section.

I am an editor with a million other responsibilities, but I want to stay on top of website maintenance. If you've reviewed our [Getting Started](#) section and are looking for guidance on how to maintain your website, check out the [Ongoing Maintenance and Website Improvement](#) section for tips on prioritizing website edits and other best practices.

Getting started

We have a variety of resources available to help content editors get familiar with their websites and best practices. We recommend starting with the basic resources first before moving on to the advanced resources.

Basic resources:

1. GU WordPress

1. [Introduction to WordPress](#): This module is part of Web Services' Canvas training course and covers the essentials for getting you up and running with editing your GU WordPress website. The course is entirely online, so you can take it on your own time whenever you like, at your own pace. We'd still recommend this module even if you have previously worked with WordPress as the Web Services team has created a customized version of WordPress for GU sites.
2. [WordPress Documentation](#): The documentation site is a great source for best practices and helps with using and maintaining WordPress at Georgetown websites. We recommended reviewing the GU WordPress resources on the documentation site as a follow-up to the Introduction to WP Canvas course. If you're unsure where to start, we recommend reviewing the following sections to begin:
 - [Site Administration](#): The site administration section provides information on the admin side of your GU WordPress site. It includes information on visual identity, WP terms, access and roles, navigating your dashboard, menus, footers, URL redirects, and site settings.
 - [Content Editor](#): The content editor section covers different aspects of the WordPress content editor including how to manage content, the distinction between pages and posts, how to best utilize images on your site, and how to manage categories and tags.
 - [Block Catalog](#): Once you've familiarized yourself with the admin and content editor side of your GU WordPress site, we highly recommend reviewing the block catalog. This section covers the various components you can use to structure your web pages and how to use them. You can view information on all of the available blocks as well as view examples of how each block will look on your site.
3. [WordPress Training Site](#): The training site can be used to practice editing and publishing test pages. Here you can test out new layouts or designs before applying them to your own website. For editing access to the training site, please email webservices@georgetown.edu.
4. [1789 Handbook](#): The documentation site for the 1789 theme.

- [1789 Block Catalog](#): How to use the 1789 theme blocks
- [1789 Component Guide](#): What the various blocks look like and their design options for the 1789 theme

2. Website Accessibility

1. [Web Accessibility for Content Editors](#): This module is part of Web Services' Canvas training courses and covers essential practices to create and manage accessible websites. You will also learn how to manage tools like Siteimprove to create content that is easy to access and navigate by all populations of people regardless of ability. The course is entirely online, so you can take it on your own time whenever you like, at your own pace.
2. [Accessibility site](#): The accessibility site provides guidance on how to make your site's content accessible to every visitor, regardless of ability. This is a great follow-up resource to the Web Accessibility for Content Editors course. For GU WordPress sites, we recommend reviewing the [Website Accessibility](#) section first. This section covers what web accessibility is, the 5 essential fixes, and steps you can take to make your website more accessible.
3. [Siteimprove](#): Siteimprove is a web accessibility tool you can use to help manage accessibility on your website. To gain access to Siteimprove, fill out the [Siteimprove access request form](#). The Web Accessibility for Content Editors Canvas course gives a general overview of Siteimprove as an accessibility tool. You can use this tool to monitor and fix common issues like heading order, link text, and missing alternative text.

3. Images and the Georgetown PhotoShelter Account

The [Georgetown PhotoShelter account](#) is a great resource to find high-quality GU-related images. You can find a variety of images ranging from Jack the Bulldog and campus life to seasonal images and GU buildings.

Adding images is a great way to add some visual interest to any page. Make sure to review our [recommended image dimensions](#) for featured images, our [best practices for featured images](#), and our [image editing documentation](#).

4. Keeping Up with Web Services

1. [The Cache](#): The Cache is Web Services monthly newsletter that provides only the information you need to know—no deep-dive (or dictionary) required. If you don't already receive it, you can [subscribe to our newsletter](#).
2. [WhNu Release Notes](#) | [1789 Release Notes](#): Release Notes are updates from Web Services about the new features, updated features, and bug fixes we've been working on recently. Keep an eye on this area to stay up to date with the most recent updates to the WordPress platform.

3. **Office Hours:** Web Services holds virtual office hours every Tuesday, 2:30–3:30 p.m. via Zoom. Sign-up for office hours to discuss any issues or questions you may have with a Web Services team member.
4. Not sure where to start or having trouble with your website? Send us an email at webservices@georgetown.edu!

Advanced resources:

1. EIT Accessibility

It's important to make sure all of your electronic content is accessible. After reviewing the website accessibility resources, take the time to review EIT accessibility resources on:

- [Video and Audio](#)
- [Social Media](#)
- [Emails and Newsletters](#)
- [Electronic Documents](#)

2. Siteimprove

1. **Decisions in Siteimprove Canvas training:** The Decisions in Siteimprove course is part of Web Services' Canvas training courses and follows the Web Accessibility for Content Editors course. This training course is necessary to become a GU User in Siteimprove and will allow you to make decisions on review issues.
2. **Siteimprove Workshop:** Siteimprove can do more than help monitor accessibility issues. This workshop covers how to use Siteimprove to optimize your website by using tools that detect content quality issues such as broken links, and misspellings.

3. Content Process

Content strategy is an essential part of creating an effective website for your department and your users. Essentially, we view content strategy as encapsulating the full process of planning, creating, and maintaining content on your website. In the [Content Process](#) section of the documentation site, we lay out all the steps we think you should be considering in your full content process. You can review each section individually, or watch our [content strategy workshop video playlist](#).

1. [Defining website goals](#)
2. [Understanding your users](#)
3. [Review your content](#)
4. [Information architecture and site navigation](#)
5. [Page layouts](#)

4. Google Analytics

[Google Analytics](#) can be a valuable tool for tracking user behavior on your website, but it should always be used in conjunction with your overall [content strategy process](#). You can request access to your site's data by emailing Web Services at webservices@georgetown.edu. For comprehensive training on Google Analytics, we highly recommend the [Google Analytics 4 Skillshop courses](#). You can also reference Web Services' [Google Analytics 4 documentation](#) for information on [navigating the group property setup](#), [enhanced measurement events](#), and accessing your [historical Universal Analytics data](#).

5. Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Search engine optimization, or SEO for short, refers to the process of increasing both the quality and quantity of website traffic through organic search engine results.

1. [SEO Workshop](#): This recording of the SEO workshop goes over what SEO is, keyword research, link building, as well as how to make an effective SEO plan.
2. [SEO documentation](#): This section of the documentation site provides written information on SEO tactics to help boost your site's ranking as well as links to additional resources on SEO.

Ongoing maintenance and website improvements

Keeping track of best practices and performing ongoing website maintenance can be overwhelming. Here, we'll break down best practices, common website maintenance tasks, how to prioritize edits, and tips on staying on track.

Tips and best practices

These tips and best practices will help you stay on top of your website updates and make sure your website is meeting your users' needs.

Set [SMART goals](#) for your website

The best websites have a clear purpose that informs and trickles down into the site's actual content. Setting goals will help you better understand which edits to prioritize and what needs to be worked on. Check out how to [define website goals](#) in our first step of the content process.

Always keep your users in mind

When making changes to your website, it's important to keep your users' perspectives in mind. This will help ensure your website will be both user-friendly and help you better accomplish your

organizational and website goals. For information on [how to understand your users](#), check out the second step of the content process.

Set a regular schedule for making website updates

Many departments have recurring tasks that follow a typical schedule. You can set reminders or calendar events for updates that need to be made yearly or at the beginning of every semester so your website remains up to date. You can also create periodic reminders or calendar events to help set aside time to review website content, update images, check for out-of-date content, or make progress on other website maintenance and improvement tasks.

Create a content calendar

If you struggle to keep up with publishing posts or new content, a content calendar is a great tool to use. Content calendars are essentially schedules that dictate when and where to publish upcoming content. Depending on the needs of your department, a content calendar will include information on the content such as author, publishing date/time, and title, the status of the content completion, and any related promotional activity. Check out Web Services' [content calendar template](#) and guidance on [how to use the content calendar](#).

Divide and conquer larger sites

Managing a large site can be overwhelming. Dividing up the site into smaller sections throughout your team can help make it more manageable. This way every team member is responsible for their section instead of an entire site. We recommend using a spreadsheet that lists out each page on the site and who is responsible for editing and updating each page so everyone is on the same page. To ensure consistency with multiple editors, make sure to establish clear guidelines for your editors.

Create a shared Google Drive or Box folder for website assets

Creating a shared drive or folder is a great way to ensure everyone on your team has access to the same information and is on the same page. Here you can document your website goals, regular and past website updates, content inventory, and other internal processes important to your department.

Use Siteimprove to its fullest extent

[Siteimprove](#) is a great tool that can help with a wide range of website maintenance and improvement tasks. It can be used to fix accessibility issues, update broken links, correct misspellings, and help phase out outdated information or phrases.

Stay up to date with Web Services

Web Services provides a few ways to keep up to date with changes to GU WordPress sites, tips, and resources that can help you manage your site. Make sure to subscribe to [The Cache](#), Web Service's monthly newsletter, and check out our [WhNu](#) and [1789](#) release notes to stay up to date on all things GU WordPress.

Attend office hours

If you have any questions, want additional information, or advice, feel free to sign up for [office hours](#). Here you can discuss any concerns or questions you might have with a Web Services team member. If you're looking for advice on your website or have a complex question, shoot us an email at webservices@georgetown.edu before your appointment with more details so we can better assist you.

Ongoing maintenance and how to prioritize

In this section, we list five ways to improve your website in order of priority. Remember to always keep in mind your overall website goals. You may find the order of priority to be different for your site or that some tasks aren't relevant. If you have any questions on what is best for your site, email us at webservices@georgetown.edu.

Keeping content up to date

Updating existing content will help ensure your site is accurate and can help with your SEO efforts. This can be as simple as updating an application deadline, or faculty name to adding relevant keywords or linking to new resources. When updating existing content, consider the following:

- **Is everything on the website accurate?** Changes in programs, policies, application processes, faculty turnover, etc should be reflected in your site's content. Think about any time-sensitive information you may have on your site. It's a good idea to make note of any time-sensitive information you publish on your site so you know exactly where and what to update when the time comes. Depending on the type of site you manage, you should be reviewing your site's content for accuracy every few months.
- **Add something new!** Search engines and users love new content. If you're adding to your existing content, make sure to update your page/post's publishing date. Here are some ways you can keep refreshing your existing content:
 - **Optimizing your keywords.** If your page/post isn't ranking as high as you'd like, rethink your keyword strategy. Think about what keywords you're ranking for, your overall SEO strategy, and the content of the page.
 - **Update your Calls to Action (CTAs).** If relevant, make sure your page/post includes a call to action. If you already have a CTA, is it effective? Consider

- changing the CTA format to improve conversions.
- **Linking to new and better resources.** As new resources become available, it's important to update your content accordingly.

Fixing broken links and spelling

Fixing broken links and spelling errors within your website content is an essential part of quality assurance. Broken links are frustrating for users and spelling errors can make your site appear unprofessional and unreliable. You should be checking for broken links and spelling errors monthly. You can use SiteImprove to help you find and fix [broken links](#) and [spelling errors](#).

Keeping content fresh

Publishing new content on your website that is relevant and useful to your audience will keep them engaged and informed about your department. When creating new content, consider the following:

- **What information are your users interested in?** Think about your users' needs and what questions they might have. Do you have a need that isn't met being met by a piece of content?
- **Is your department working on anything new?** Help your users keep up to date with your department by publishing department news and events. Make sure you include information on how they can get involved to encourage engagement.

Utilizing the content process

Content strategy is an essential part of creating an effective website for your department and your users. Essentially, we view content strategy as encapsulating the full process of planning, creating, and maintaining content on your website.

You should use the content process to periodically re-evaluate whether your current approach is working. Pick the parts of the process that make sense for your site to check in on overall website goals, whether you're meeting your user needs, and if you need to update navigation or page layouts. Here are some questions to help you pinpoint what needs to be worked on:

- **Are you unsure what content to publish?** If you're unsure of what content you should be publishing, think back to your website goals and your users' needs. What does your department want to accomplish with your website? What information are your users looking for?
- **Do you have a high [bounce rate](#)?** Having a high bounce rate on individual pages could mean your users aren't finding what they are looking for. If you believe this is the case, think back to your user personas. Is the content on this page relevant and useful? Consider where users are coming from. Is there a disconnect between the information they were hoping to find and the information presented?
- **Do you have a lot of outdated content?** If you find you have a lot of outdated content,

creating a [content inventory](#) and performing a content audit would be a great step. Creating a content inventory and performing an audit can be a lot of work, but is a crucial step in avoiding outdated and repeated content. You can contact Web Services at webservices@georgetown.edu for help setting up a content inventory.

- **Do your page layouts help effectively convey your message?** If you're unsure how to best organize a page take a look at our [page layouts](#) section. Here we break down how to create a thoughtfully constructed page in three steps.

Utilizing external tools

Using tools like [Google Analytics](#), Google Search Console, and Google Tag Manager in combination with other user research and the overall content process can help you evaluate the effectiveness of your content, your users' engagement with the content, and find parts of the site that need improvement. These results should feed into the overall content process to help you iterate on your content strategy. For additional tools, check out our [supplementary tools](#) page.

Knowledge Transfer and Transition

About your website(s):

These questions will help you think about all the information your new employee might need to better understand their website responsibilities. If your department manages multiple websites, be sure to answer website-specific questions for each site you manage. Feel free to pick which questions are most relevant for your department.

1. Which website(s) are you responsible for managing?
2. Are you the sole person responsible for managing the website(s)
 - a. Who is responsible for different pages/sections?
3. What are your website goals?
 - a. Do you have user personas? What is your target audience?
 - b. What is your department's writing style?
4. Do you have a running document of previous website updates?
 - a. Were any big changes to your website made recently?
 - b. Are you working on any projects for your website?
 - c. Do you use a content calendar?
5. What are some regular website updates you typically have to make?
 - a. When do you have to make them?
 - b. How often do you make these edits?
 - c. What is your editing process?
 - d. Do changes need approval before going live?
 - e. How do you prioritize edits?
 - f. Is there any documentation you feel is relevant?

6. Do you follow templates for certain pages?
 - a. Think about any reusable blocks you might have
7. Are there any lingering edits/projects that still need to be addressed?

About external tools:

It's important to make note of any external tools you and your department use to help manage your website(s). Be sure to add your new employee to any shared department accounts and make sure to include any relevant information about each tool. Some common external tools you might already use are:

1. Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager, Google Search Console, Google Ads, etc.
 - a. Who has access to these accounts?
 - b. What do you use them for?
 - c. Naming conventions
 - d. Any ongoing campaigns, goals, tags, etc.
2. Shared Google Drive
 - a. Explain how the information about the website/your department is organized
 - b. What kind of information is stored here?
3. Do you have a shared Box folder with departmental PDFs, images, etc.?
 - a. How is it organized?
 - b. What kind of information is stored here?

Admin duties:

1. Email Web Services at webservices@georgetown.edu that there will be a new point of contact for the website. Make sure to include if access needs to be removed for any users and if users need to be added to any external tools Web Services manages (GA, GTM, etc).
2. Email the Events Calendar team at eventscalendar@georgetown.edu for any changes to the event manager.
3. Transfer ownership of external resources. This can include:
 - Google Sites
 - Youtube, Vimeo
 - Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc
 - Box folders

Appendix

How to Use a Content Calendar

A content calendar can help you stay organized and up-to-date with publishing content on your site. Web Services has created a [content calendar template](#) you can use and customize to fit your department's needs. Here's a quick guide to better understand the different sections of the template:

- **Publish Date:** The date the content will be published.
- **Due Date:** The date you want the content completed.
- **Author:** NetID of the author of the content.
- **Title:** Title of the content.
- **URL:** URL of the draft or published content.
- **Post type:** Is it a post, page, or external link?
- **Status:** Here you can note the stage your piece of content is in. Is it in planning, in progress, does it need review or is it completed?
- **Content/Details:** Here you can include what this piece of content will cover and any details you want to include.
- **Categories/Tags:** Include any categories or tags you want to be added to the content.
- **Reviewed by:** NetID of the editor who reviewed the content.
- **Keywords:** Here you can include keywords you want to focus on in this piece of content.
- **Target Audience:** If your department uses user personas, you can note which persona you are targeting here.
- **Supporting Media:** Here you can include any supporting media you need or want to include in your content pieces such as images or videos.
- **CTA:** Here you can note the call to action you want to include in your content piece. A call to action is the action you want your users to take. This could be to apply to a program, register for an event, sign up for a newsletter, etc. Make sure to include a link if relevant.