

**WEB STANDARDS  
& STYLE GUIDE**  
JULY 15, 2015

SOUTH DAKOTA



SCHOOL OF MINES  
& TECHNOLOGY

# **WEB STANDARDS & STYLE GUIDE FOR THE SOUTH DAKOTA SCHOOL OF MINES & TECHNOLOGY**

## **Purpose**

This document is supplemental to the “Graphic Standards and Style Guide” produced by the University Relations Department for the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology. That document, available from the University Relations department website (<http://www.sdsmt.edu/Campus-Services/University-Relations/>), provides a wider scope of direction for university publications and materials. For all matters of linguistics and writing, punctuation, proper usage of academic and technical terms, etc. please refer to the “Graphic Standards and Style Guide.”

*This document provides guidelines that pertain to the website only, and may differ in places from the master “Graphic Standards and Style Guide” to address the unique and specific requirements of the web.*

## **The Need for Standards and Uniformity**

In 2012, the university launched a new website to better showcase the capabilities, accomplishments and history of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology. In 2015, that website was converted to “responsive design” to better accommodate a wider variety of screens and devices. To maintain the university website as a professional and effective component of university branding, it is important that all publishers to the site adhere to the standards contained in this document. Most published content on the web will be reviewed by University Relations for consistency and proper construction before that content is published out to the live website.

## **Ektron Content Management System**

The university website is built on a proprietary content management system (CMS) developed by Ektron, Inc., a company with many high profile corporate and academic customers.

## **Roles of the ITS and University Relations Departments in Maintaining the SD Mines Website**

Individuals from the ITS department maintain the servers that house the SD Mines website, install CMS updates and upgrades, develop website templates and address many of the functionality needs of the website, including building custom forms.

Members of the University Relations department manage the design and content of the website, using the templates to present SD Mines web information, and assist department publishers and others with their website needs. UR also manages the university’s social media accounts.

If you need website assistance, you should use the UR web request form (available from the UR website at <http://www.sdsmt.edu/Campus-Services/University-Relations/>). If your web request requires the assistance of the ITS department, then the UR department will request that assistance on your behalf.

# WEB STYLE GUIDELINES

## Presentation and Voice

The university website serves both internal and external needs. We urge you to always present information with an external audience in mind. If you need assistance with copywriting or information structure, contact University Relations using the UR Job Request form.

## Fonts used on the Website

Body text and titles on the website will appear in PT Sans. It is the default font and publishers should not use other fonts.

## Responsive Layouts

The university website is designed so that information will condense or expand to meet the parameters of a wide number of devices. To make sure new information functions properly in the responsive framework, **edits by campus publishers will be reviewed by the University Relations web team prior to publication on the website.** Plan in advance for the time this will take.

# Colors

## Website Colors

Website colors are meant to carry forward consistency with the print style guidelines, though the individual colors may vary slightly to accommodate the different needs of onscreen presentation. RGB color values are show below. Pantone or CMYK colors are not applicable to the web.

### *Primary Use colors include:*

	White used in the site background (pure white): #FFFFFF
	Light Gray used in the site background and boxed CTAs: #EEEEDEB
	Light Gray-Blue (accordion sets and horizontal rules): #E6E6EC
	Charcoal body text: #333333
	Dark blue text used for links, buttons, header/footer: #011C4F
	Gold text against any white or light background: #946E2B
	Gold text against a dark blue or black background: #C1A868
	Green text - preferred accent color: #227700

On occasion, the use of more than the primary set of university colors may be appropriate (for example, when displaying a chart or graph image that requires multiple colors easily distinguished from one another). In that case, use one or more of the following secondary colors:

**Secondary Use colors include:**

	Pale yellow: #F0E87B
	Bright orange-yellow: #F8B219
	Pale blue: #319B42
	Red: #AF272F

## Page Content and Layout

### Website Home Page

The website home page is maintained by the University Relations web team. News stories featured on the home page news list and/or highlighted by the rotating image banners are selected by our Media Relations/Public Relations personnel. If you have a suggestion for a story that merits home page presentation, contact [mediarelations@sdsmt.edu](mailto:mediarelations@sdsmt.edu). They will consider your suggestions and always appreciate being informed of anything newsworthy happening on campus.

The website home page that an external audience sees is different from the abbreviated version that an internal audience (accessing the website from the campus network or vpn'd in) sees. You can see the full version by clicking the Toggle Full Page button at the bottom of the page.

Smaller CTAs (Call To Action) boxes also appear on the website home page. These get changed on a periodic basis and can be used to highlight important events or university accomplishments.

To suggest changes to home page information, “audience” pages (Current Students, Parents/Families, Faculty/Staff, Alumni/Donors), the A-Z List, footer links, etc. use the UR Job Request form or contact [webmaster@sdsmt.edu](mailto:webmaster@sdsmt.edu).

### Subsidiary Pages - Guidelines

A majority of pages on the website are built on a three column format. Components include the top site-wide header, an optional page banner image, left-column (left-rail) content, right column (right-rail) content, the main page content area (center), and the site-wide footer area. *See diagram - next page.*

Department publishers have the ability to change the main content of the page, the CTA (call to action) boxes on the right and left rails, and related links on the right rail,

Department publishers are designated by their department head, who emails a request to [webmaster@sdsmt.edu](mailto:webmaster@sdsmt.edu) asking that a member of their department be given rights to publish and training. Specific “how to” instructions for publishing are available on the University Relations website under “Web Services > Publishing to the University Website” and will be updated from time to time.

## Page Titles

Page titles should be in **title case** and appropriately sized by using Heading (or h2) styling/ and in gold (RGB color #986e2b).

What does “title case” mean? It means . . .

**use this (title case):** **Campus Emergency and Safety Procedures**

**not this** (all capitals): **CAMPUS EMERGENCY AND SAFETY PROCEDURES**

**not this** (sentence case): **Campus emergency and safety procedures.**

**Underlines should only be used to indicate a hyperlink, never for emphasis or headings.**

## Subtitles

Subtitles should be in title case and be appropriately sized by using h3 formatting.

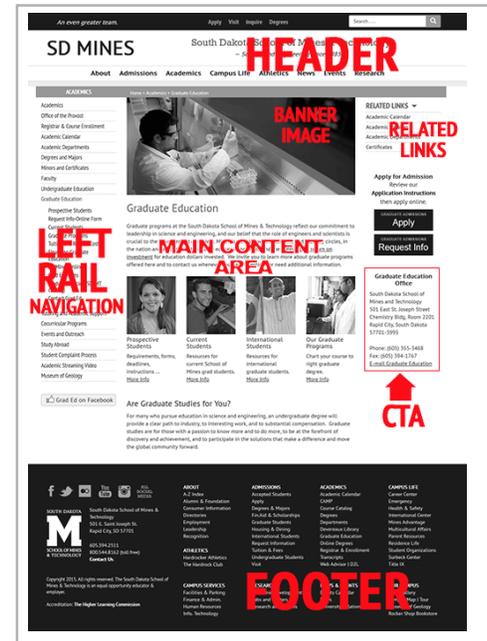
## Writing for the Web

Make information scannable and skimmable, and as brief as its purpose will allow. More often than not, people are searching for a specific subset of information, or fact or link. They don’t want to, and won’t, read a lot of text. Help them by using subtitles, bullets, bolding and numbering so they can scan your information efficiently to drill down to the portion that they need. Keeping your text concise makes it more useful to users.

Use gender-neutral references when possible and appropriate, and follow the university “Graphic Standards and Style Guide” for consistent usage of abbreviations, acronyms, number and date formatting, etc.

## Avoid Duplication of Information

Help users find other information on the SD Mines website by linking to the pages where its located, rather than incorporating that information within your webpages. If you think your content might duplicate information found elsewhere on the site, try a site search to see if it already exists. If you feel that content belongs in your area instead, contact a University Relations web designer for assistance.



## Linking and Other Internet References

Links to external websites should open in a new window. Links to SD Mines content that lives in a separate website (the Academic Catalog, the Foundation, the Alumni Association, the bookstore, for example) should also open in a new window. All internal links should open in the same window.

Where possible, spare users from long and unwieldy URLs, and maintain the semantic flow of information, by linking to an entity's name rather than its website URL.

**Example:** display a link to the World Clock Time Zone Converter rather than displaying a link to <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>, unless there is a particular need for the user to remember or copy the URL.

## Related Links

Related Links display in the upper right column of most SD Mines webpages and are generally chosen at the discretion of the publisher. When a publisher adds a “**standard**” related link (through the Ektron Metadata interface) it shows up only on the page to which it is added. **Sitewide** related links are also available, and show up on every page within a designated department. When both are used, the sitewide set of related links will display first, with any others specific to the individual webpage appended beneath them, with no additional spacing between.

## CTAs - Call to Action Boxes

To highlight information for users, a CTA (Call to Action) item can be added to the right or left rails of most webpages by members of the UR web team or by authorized department publishers. The CTA can be text against either a white or gray background and can include an image or just be a single image. In most cases, a CTA should include a link to a webpage, website, or news story with additional information. Sitewide CTAs (a CTA that shows up on all pages of a department website) can also be added. CTAs can be pre-scheduled to start and end, useful for CTAs that promote date specific events or date-sensitive information.

## Images

### General Information about Images

Images are important on the web, a visual medium, so be sure you know how to properly select, size and compress an image for the web. Specific instructions for adding images are in the CMS publisher instructions. If you don't have the software or training to modify images, contact University Relations for assistance.

*Image selection:* The university “Graphic Standards and Style Guide” provides helpful information on image selection. Briefly, you should use a high quality image that is appropriate to the content of the page and adds visual interest. While it is best to use authentic university photos whenever possible, department publishers are cautioned to steer away from posed group photos of employees or students as they are quickly out of date and not particularly compelling for external audiences. An action photo is always better. Contact University Relations if you need help finding appropriate images. UR has many photos on file.

*Permission for use:* It is technically easy to copy photos off the internet, but just because an image can be copied doesn't mean you are authorized to use it. Image copyright violation is a serious crime with consequences. Be sure you can document the permission to use any image that isn't a photo or design you originated or didn't come from SD Mines photo archives.

## **Banner images**

On a standard three column display page, the banner image size is 536x232 pixels. The standard banner size for a two-column template (used for Residence Life, Museum of Geology, Apex Gallery, and a few other departments/offices) depends on the layout being used. Guidelines are included in the instructions/documentation for campus publishers.

For News stories, the accompanying image should be a horizontal image. Size can vary but the aspect ratio (proportion of height to width) should be standard. Sizes might be: 400x260 pixels, or 300 x 195 pixels. This image is automatically resized by Ektron for use in the News Releases list.

## **Logo usage**

If needed, university-approved logos are available on this page: <http://www.sdsmt.edu/Campus-Services/University-Relations-and-Media/Logos/>

## **SD Mines Calendar of Events**

A variety of university publishers are authorized to add events to the SD Mines master calendar. Department heads or business unit heads determine who is authorized to add calendar events, and notify University Relations when a publisher should be added or removed. When adding events to the calendar, publishers must add certain required information (title, description, date and time) and are also encouraged to consider other information that users will want to know: who can attend, if there's a cost to attend, who to contact with questions, etc. The University Relations web team will provide training and "how to" documentation for calendar publishers.

## **News**

News stories are added to the website by members of UR's web, media relations or public relations teams, and they determine which stories will be featured on the website home page or highlighted by home page image banners. News stories can include related video or Flickr slideshows. Contact [mediarelations@sdsmt.edu](mailto:mediarelations@sdsmt.edu) if you have a story or accomplishment you would like to see publicized.

## **Directories**

Personnel Directory entries are managed by ITS, HR and UR. Any personnel changes to individual records that involve Name, Title, Office Number, Phone Number, or Education must be approved by HR before information on the website can be changed. Personnel photos are uploaded by the university photographer.

## **Internal Search Results**

Many visitors to the site go first to the Search function to find the information they are seeking. The Ektron CMS allows the fine-tuning of search results on the website. In most cases, Search will use its own internal algorithm to find and list appropriate results (i.e. an "organic" search). However, those

results can be modified in two ways:

1) Suggested Search Results: Ektron offers the ability to direct Search to display a particular webpage link and description in response to specific search terms.

2) Search Results Descriptions: When search results are listed, the first few sentences of a page's written content are listed as that page's description. This description can be customized instead.

Contact the University Relations web team if you need to tailor search results for a particular subject.

## **Aliasing**

Aliasing refers to the ability to apply a shortened URL in place of a long one. This is often useful for high profile pages that need to be addressed in print. For example, a page with the URL of:

[www.sdsmt.edu/Academics/Registrar/Transcript-Requests/](http://www.sdsmt.edu/Academics/Registrar/Transcript-Requests/) could be aliased to [www.sdsmt.edu/transcripts](http://www.sdsmt.edu/transcripts) for ease of use and recall. Contact University Relations if you need to put an alias in place.

## **Website Syncing**

The SD Mines website exists simultaneously in two environments: the staging environment and the production environment (the live site).

The University Relations web team and designated department publishers make website changes and additions in the staging environment ("staging"). Periodically (currently once a day) changes made in staging are published out to the live website. However, ITS and University Relations can sync (or publish) to the live site on an as needed basis. If you have something that is critical to change before the next scheduled syncing, please contact the University Relations web team which can sync most individual components as needed.

## **Social Media**

Social media icons that appear on the home page of the website link to the Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Flickr (or other social media) accounts for the university. Departments may add and link CTAs to their own social media pages, if they have them.

## **Updates to these Guidelines**

The website is in an ongoing state of development and things can change. University Relations will update this document upon significant changes, however, please contact the University Relations web team any time you have questions or need assistance.