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## **Perspectives of academic web content managers on the effectiveness of web publishing and web hosting policies**

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### **Abstract**

The development of policy to handle the increasingly diverse issues that arise from web content management is becoming a concern for academic institutions. An exploratory investigation that seeks institutional web content manager perspectives from higher educational settings on current web publishing and hosting policy and issues is presented as a mixed-method research design, using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, to investigate how field factors influence policy creation. A web-based version of a survey instrument was designed, piloted, and implemented for this investigation, and data is presented, and discussed in relation to current field literature. Findings indicate that web hosting and publishing policies increasingly fall under the purview of institutional Communications or Public Relations departments and that policy elements concerning web content do not yet match field recommendations in several key areas.

### **Keywords**

Web publishing; Hosting policy

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### **Introduction**

As web publishing and web hosting issues garner more attention among higher educational administrators, the creation of web publishing and web hosting policies that address common issues are gaining more acceptance as a countermeasure to individual grievances in the request for web resources. A growing number of higher educational institutions are investing more time and resources into web policy development due to security concerns (Cate, 2007); increasing

adoption of portal (Corbitt, Bradly, & Thanasankit, 2005), course management systems (Malikowski, Thompson, & Theis, 2007), and mobile technologies (The Campus Computing Project, 2010); as well as legal issues such as the increasing liability limitations of the institution as an Internet service provider (Taipale, 2003) and the fostering of free speech on web pages created by individuals (Quilter & Heins, 2007). In addition, the depth and breadth of web content management personal is becoming increasingly hierarchical as institutions grasp the need to deal with abstract and concrete aspects of web content management for web sites that typically number in the thousands of pages (Powel & Gil, 2003). The development of web content policy supports higher education institutional goals of promotion and quality improvement initiatives by improving transparency (De Vries, 2008), fairness in requests for system resources (Joshi, Finin, Kagal, Parker, & Patwardhan, 2008), and service efficiency (Deans & von Allmen, 2002). Although institutional web page developers have long recognized that the primary use of institutional web sites is as a promotional tool, with the growing number of institutions hosting individual web pages, the use of the institutional pages to serve as a forum for free speech and to promote academic discussion may influence institutional administrators to develop policy to bridge institutional and individual needs.

Early literature in policy development indicated that institutions are gravitating towards comprehensive policies that incorporate issues such as security, copyright, plagiarism, as well as other issues of interest to individual web authors (Todd, Verbick, & Miller, 2001). The changing landscape of web content management software and the growing number of communications channels (Meek, 2007) combined with greater faculty, staff, and student demand for online resources (Wallace, 2004) may not be reflected in current web-policy due to factors such as age of the policy, or infrequent review of the policy. Therefore, it seems reasonable that a study which examines and measures attitudes expressed by institutional web personnel regarding web publishing and hosting policy elements has the potential not only to convey a measure of how policy is related to practice, but also to allow a characterization of the strength of web content manager insight of how users perceive the policy in its relation to their needs. In addition, insights into the extent of web hosting and publishing policies at higher education institutions and the range of stakeholder actions that fall under the policies are expected to be revealed.

## **Review of literature**

The academic literature related to web content policy is growing and diverse. It is hoped that rich sources of information including methods, techniques, web author and user attitudes collected to date, examples of institutions developing successful web publishing and hosting policy, and best practices for web policy development will be revealed in this literature review. Although this review cannot be considered comprehensive for all aspects of web publishing and web hosting policy, it does reflect most accessible, recent research on the topics that will contribute to the themes of this research study. Emphasized within the reviewed literature is the prominent role that web policy has taken, and will continue to take, in web page authoring.

The history of web page content management in higher educational settings has developed from the use of web sites as promotional tools and the development of distance learning courses in the nineties. Societal factors such as the greater integration of cell phones and technical devices into coursework (Cui & Wang, 2008) and campus life (Lever & Katz, 2007); generational shifts in communication behavior (Vykoukalová, 2007); combined with collegiate

trends towards web-based student services due to perceived greater accessibility (McNickle & Daniell, 2001), personalization, and interactivity (Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications, 2002); as well as institutional factors such as the cost-effectiveness of web-based promotion (Cohen, Nachmias, & Forkosh-Baruch, 2004 ); facilitated the need for a greater investment in academic web site content management.

The growing expectation that students will have a web-based presence (Ast & Gerfen, 2003) and know how to promote themselves and develop social networks via technology (Cain, Scott, & Akers, 2009) has trickled down to greater demand of web hosting and web publishing services of higher educational institutions (Murnan, 2006) so that students may promote themselves to potential employers and colleagues. In addition, pedagogical arguments for integrating student-generated web pages into coursework in order to facilitate communication and build a collegiate culture (McGee, 2008) may force institutions of higher education to reconsider the allocation of web resources.

A consistent theme in antidotal field discussion is that web hosting and publishing issues such as libel and slander, copyright violations, and plagiarism on student web pages has pressured institutional administrators to examine the appropriateness of hosting individually-developed web pages (Greenwich Public Schools, 2006; Madison Metropolitan School District, 2005). In addition, researchers and policy developers are just starting to validate the implications that the growing demand of web resources has on institutional resources. Of the many studies examining higher educational policy, only a select number have presented research on the effectiveness of policy for influencing user behavior. Further, only a small number of studies offer comprehensive research on the relationship between web policy components and policy effectiveness.

Web publishing and hosting policy components that have been the focus of scholarly research, include: 1) ownership; 2) policy purpose; 3) scope of issues; 4) institutional efficiency; and 5) institutional branding. It is perceptions about these five items that the survey instrument will be employed to explore.

## Ownership

Although there is a paucity of field literature on web page ownership, with the increase in the number of hosted web pages and increasing importance of the content of those pages for representing the institutional message and brand, it is expected that web page ownership issues will be a primary concern of web policy developers. Anecdotal evidence indicates that higher educational institutions are increasingly publishing ownership matrixes (Massachusetts Institute of Technology Report, 2011; University of Southern California Report, 2011) to either anticipate or curtail questions of web content ownership. A recent Supreme Court decision blocking university rights regarding research patents (Supreme Court Syllabus 09-1159, 2011) indicate that institutions of higher education would be well-advised to invest resources in sorting out the ownership of materials such as university-hosted pages. Granter's (2010) description of the University of Sussex's Student Personal Learning and Social Homepages (SPLASH) project, which granted permanent student ownership and control of all content, suggests that the role of user stakeholders is becoming an important consideration in ownership negotiations.

When reviewing literature concerning how web page ownership influences web policy, there are several important considerations. Currently, empirical evidence indicates that institutional web sites can be classified as either publishers or distributors of content with implications

regarding the responsibility for the liability of the material. Since publishing expectations include the right to create, edit, or suppress material, the growing number of legal cases regarding web content indicates the importance that ownership issues should have in institutional web policy. Although legal trends regarding responsibility of user-content areas such as blogs and listservs tend to exempt web site owners, web policy that addresses proactive monitoring efforts may offer preemptive liability measures.

### **Policy purpose and scope**

Institutional web administrators seem to be aware that ad hoc decisions regarding acceptable web page content is a recipe for failure. Prior identification of acceptable content to govern the approval and administration of web pages may offer web authors specific guidance on the types of content the organization will accept for hosted on published pages. In addition, guidelines regarding content form and information regarding the institution's role in administering the content may well serve as an introduction to institutional policy. An overview of the policy and why it was created will facilitate transparency (Steering Committee on Quality Improvement and Management, 2008). Descriptions of policy stakeholders including administrators, the policy audience, and the appeals process may provide clarity in grievance issues (Lopolito, Morone, & Taylor, 2009).

### **Free speech issues**

While higher educational institutions have generally tried to promote student free speech rights in recognition of the authentic stakeholder voices of adults who may be aware of consequences, student-generated web pages seem to serve as an exception (Nicholson, 2002). Permanence of web communications (Martin, 2010) and impact on institutional reputation and branding seem to be a major concern of institutional administrators, driving many to either limit or completely ban student pages. To counteract institutional concerns, the Association of Departments of English Bulletin (2002) recommended that web page authors make efforts to separate their opinions from institutional position by either declaring ownership or including a release clause. Seltzer (2010) argued that the removal or prevention of web publication harms the public by the loss of individual voices and serves as an end-run around constitutional law.

### **Intellectual property and copyright infringement**

Issues related to academic freedom and intellectual property also impact web policy as individuals may be concerned with the inspection and handling of web materials. For institutions, copyright infringement was one of the earliest identified problems with web pages authored by individual users (Roelants, 1997). Since institutions control the hosting of web pages, they are liable for the content of those pages. In addition, protections offered in the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (1998), which protects web site owners from copyright infringement by third parties, may only be secured by policy development and site registration, so investigation of existing sources of governmental protection should be a crucial step in the policy development process.

## Privacy

Field literature indicates that privacy rights are undermined by the social capital benefits of social networking sites (Abril, Levin, & Del Riego, 2012; Steinfield, Ellison, & Lampe, 2008), the interactive nature of the web, and interests of commercial sites to collect personal information (Berson & Berson, 2006). Negative public response to institutional reactions of web content that falls in the privacy domain (Lindenberger, 2006) pressures institutions to seek policy reform. Some privacy policy reforms include declaration of information collection practices and the granting of individual right-to-know and review rights (Texas SRRPUB11, 2004). Increasingly, leading field experts are encouraging organizations to include information on tracking issues, such as third-party-services, and use of cookies, in web policy (Mayer & Mitchell, 2012).

The literature reviewed in this section suggests that privacy issues will be an ongoing concern for institutional policy developers. Institutions that explore how their web pages capture and store data; investigates the tracking of user online movements, prevents false or misleading statement in a privacy policy, and is transparent about privacy protection procedures may foster greater privacy protections for individual users and web authors.

## Accessibility or Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance

With an increasing number of institutional resources either transferred to online locations or developed as online-only resources, the need to manage accessibility to those resources has never been greater (McHale, 2011). Given that a recent study of federal governmental web sites found that a significant number had accessibility issues (Olalere & Lazar, 2011), implications for organizations with fewer resources than the federal government are troubling. Section 508 of the United States Access Board's Electronic & Information Technology Accessibility Standards (2011) qualitatively describes sixteen rules that organizations must follow in order to prevent non-compliance. With state laws increasingly dictating web accessibility standards, implementation guidelines, and procurement for higher educational settings (Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act, 2007) penalties for non-compliance are dictating policy change. Field literature provides numerous recommendations (Bradbard & Peters, 2010) for developing accessible sites, pages, and page components such as links, menus, and forms.

## Web site Efficiency

Due to the increasing size of academic web sites, managing web site efficiency has never been more important. Antidotal evidence indicates that academic institutional web publishing and hosting policy is mandating the consideration of bandwidth limitations in the provision of their Internet service (Robinson College IT Policy, 2012). A whitepaper published by Symantec Hosted Services (2010) noted that in addition to bandwidth loss due to spamming, criminal activity, and user misuse, advertising and pop-ups, chatting and instant messaging, gaming and media streaming are a drain on typical workplace bandwidth, so minimizing web pages that employ this type of content may be an effective policy consideration. In addition, more web policies are dictating the modularization of information so that web site resources can be contained within one official location to prevent duplication of effort or worse, the communication of outdated information in one location (McGowan, 2011).

This literature review covered main web content themes for the purpose of examining important elements in web content policy. Specific themes of ownership, policy purpose and scope, privacy, free speech and defamation, libel, and slander, intellectual property and copyright infringement, accessibility, information timeliness, reliability, completeness, and currency, modularization of information, institutional branding; and policy non-compliance were addressed. Since a key concern of web content policy is user perceptions of its effectiveness, literature exploring the perspective of users and implementers is offered.

## Methodology

This study is designed to gather information from a multidisciplinary group of higher educational web content managers about the effectiveness of web publishing and hosting policy components to communicate institutional concerns of academic web pages. A quantitative methodology of selected-response survey items was employed for the purpose of investigating the effectiveness of web publishing and hosting policy components in terms of the selected factors and the difference between the effectiveness of individual policy components. The research was triangulated in terms of people, place, and time (Bogdan & Biklen (2006). Prior research promoted the use of survey methods for gathering data about individual factors to determine causality (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2005). This study employed a commercial-use polling web site since the investigated phenomena supported an online method of participation.

## Instrumentation

One instrument was employed for data collection in this research study; a survey of web content managers or institutional-designated web personnel to determine the effectiveness of web publishing and hosting policy components in light of the eight studied factors (Appendix A). The survey instrument has been designed as an exploratory tool to gather a large data set of information relevant to web content manager perception of the effectiveness of web publishing and hosting policy for changing behavior of web page developers in higher educational settings. The results from the survey are used to: (a) measure differences between policy component effectiveness and (b) as a source of attitudinal data used in descriptive statistical analyses.

The 19 items of the "Academic web content manager perceptions on effective web publishing and web hosting policy" survey instrument are divided into five subscales of selected-response items that represent the variables of interest of this study: 1) ownership; 2) policy purpose; 3) scope of issues; 4) institutional efficiency; and 5) institutional branding. In addition, a background section will collect additional information on policy meta-data and respondent information. Since an existing survey instrument that serves the needs of the present investigation is not currently available, a systematic process has been followed to develop a survey grounded in relevant research and a consideration of the factors of the investigation (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2005). A following section discusses the development of subscale items in terms of what the items are expected to reveal about the effectiveness of academic web publishing and web hosting policy for addressing the five studied factors.

Assessing usage of academic web publishing and web hosting policy among respondents is expected to be difficult, as exact definitions of the term could vary greatly. To increase reliability, two separate types of questions will be included. One question will offer a list of web

policy components in which respondents can select those that reflect their current institutional policy while another question will ask respondents to gauge web policy components that they feel will be important in future drafts of web policy. The survey will initially collect data regarding the existence of a dedicated web hosting and publishing policy.

**Subscale 1: Ownership.** The first item in this sub-scale is constructed by summing the participant's indication of where, on a continuum from one to three, lies the nature of seven levels of institutional page ownership including: institutional only; sub-organizational ownership; authorized staff ownership; other stakeholder ownership; external or third-party ownership; institutional publishing rights with individual maintenance responsibilities; or a combination of ownership levels. Lower scores of this ordinal data indicate internal ownership and higher scores indicate external ownership is present.

The second item of the ownership sub-scale collects ordinal data on the participant's indication of where, on a continuum from one to eight, lies the nature of eight levels of individual page ownership including: faculty and staff ownership of pages; student ownership of pages; multiple categories of faculty, staff, student, and departmental ownership; departmental ownership, institutional ownership as well as options for indicating that the policy does not address this issue or the section of the policy is under revision. Lower scores of this ordinal data indicate individual ownership and higher scores indicate institutional ownership is present.

**Subscale 2: Policy purpose.** The first item in this sub-scale is constructed by summing the participant's indication of where, on a numeric continuum from one to four, lies the explicit nature of four levels of a web policy purpose statement including: the provision of a purpose subheading; the provision of a formal statement regarding the purpose of the web policy; the provision of a formal statement regarding the purpose of the institutional web site/web pages; or an indication that the purpose of the policy can be inferred from the policy content as well as options for indicating that the policy does not address this issue or the section of the policy is under revision. Lower scores of this ordinal data indicate that a more explicit purpose statement exists, while higher scores indicate that policy purpose is inferred by the reader.

The second item of this sub-scale collects ordinal data on the participant's indication of where, on a numeric continuum from one to four, lies the explicit nature of four levels of identification of web policy audience including: that the policy is intended for all Internet users and appropriate for all readers, so benefits and penalties apply to all readers; the policy is intended for all users authorized by the institution to create web pages and/or content, so benefits and penalties apply to them; the policy is intended only for those recognized by a department or office as an institutional web content manager; the policy is intended for some or all of the above; as well as options for indicating that the policy does not address audience or the section of the policy is under revision. Lower scores of this ordinal data indicate a wider or more general audience, while higher scores indicate a narrower audience focus.

**Subscale 3: Scope of issues.** The first item in this sub-scale is constructed by summing the participant's indication of where, on a continuum of issues including free speech, intellectual property, copyright infringement, and privacy, lies the nature of seven levels of issue policy inclusion including: that compliance issues can be inferred from the policy; the policy explicitly addresses the issue from an institutional; individual; or mutual perspective; the policy seeks to inform users about the issue as well as options for indicating that the policy does not address the issue or the section of the policy is under revision. Lower scores of this ordinal data indicate lower communications regarding issues and higher scores indicate that the policy seeks to inform users about the issue.

The second question collects ordinal data that will gather information about the use of disclaimer statements in web publishing and hosting policies, of where, on a numeric continuum from one to four, lies the nature of four levels of a web policy disclaimer usage including: a requirement of disclaimer statements on all pages representing an individual; the requirement of disclaimer statements on pages maintained by users not employed or affiliated with a department, office, or sub-organizational unit; an indication that disclaimer statements are required or will be placed on all pages containing opinions or unauthorized content; an indication that the web policy is used to disclaim statements made on a web page; or an indication that disclaimer statements are not part of the web policy or the web policy is under revision. Lower scores of this ordinal data indicate that the institution has interests in protecting itself against liability cases, while higher scores indicate that individual responsibility is the concern of the web policy.

The third item in this sub-scale collects ordinal data that will gather participant's indication of compliance with the American with Disabilities Act web site accessibility, of where the nature of five levels of issue policy inclusion including: an indication that the institution acts responsibility for complying with the American with Disabilities Act in regards to web page/site accessibility; an indication the policy explicitly indicates that the site must maintain a required percentage of accessibility or that all pages must meet a required percentage of accessibility within the page; an indication that the policy explicitly cites how accessibility is evaluated ; an indication that the policy provides accessibility guidance, such as information about text alternatives; or an indication that the policy provides links to accessibility guides or email information for contact person; as well as options for indicating that the policy does not address the issue or the section of the policy is under revision. Lower scores of this ordinal data indicate that the institution has a less formal method for the self-evaluation of web site accessibility and higher scores indicate that the institutional has setup up formal guidelines and procedures for the evaluation of web site accessibility.

**Subscale 4: Institutional Efficiency.** The first item in this sub-scale collects ordinal data of participants' indication of how web publishing and hosting policy handles four issues of web site management efficiency including: timeliness, reliability, completeness, and currency of content. Participants will judge four levels of policy development including: an indication that web pages will be removed by system/web content team after failure to update within a certain time period; an indication that individuals designated as sub-organizational web content managers must review pages periodically; the policy contains a statement indicating that information timeliness, reliability, completeness, and currency are desirable; or an indication that the policy contains a statement that information timeliness, reliability, completeness, and currency are the responsibility of the page/content developer; as well as options for indicating that the policy does not address the issue or the section of the policy is under revision. Lower scores of this ordinal data indicate that the institution has a formal method for the evaluation of web site content and higher scores indicate that the institutional has a less formal guidelines and procedures for the evaluation of web site efficiency.

The second item in this sub-scale collects ordinal data of participants' indication of how web publishing and hosting policy handles the modularization of web site content. Participants will judge three levels of policy development including: an indication that information may exist in one official location only; an indication that information may exist in one official location and one alternative location, such as an archives; an indication that large sub-organizational structures, such as a department, may request duplication of information (such as a section of a

student handbook) for convenience purposes; as well as options for indicating that the policy does not address the issue or the section of the policy is under revision. Lower scores of this ordinal data indicate that the institution restricts web site content to specific locations and higher scores indicate that the institution allows the same content to be located in numerous locations.

**Subscale 5: Institutional branding.** The only item in this sub-scale collects ordinal data of participants' indication of where, on a numeric continuum from one to four, lies the nature of four levels of a web page institutional branding including: an indication that official template, logo(s), banners, or presentation layer is required for all pages; an indication that a common menu/navigation system required for all pages; an indication that official elements such as institutional logo(s) required for official pages only; an indication that individual pages such as faculty or student pages must employ templates common for those groups or select from a limited number of templates; as well as options for indicating that the policy does not address the issue or the section of the policy is under revision. Lower scores of this ordinal data indicate high visibility of institutional branding elements, while higher scores lower visibility of institutional branding elements on web pages.

**Background Section.** The background section consists of two items that will seek out meta-data concerning the policy and one item that allows participants to enter qualitative data in order to allow the participants to offer unsolicited data that may inform policy creation. The first item in this section will ask respondents to provide information regarding the date that the policy was last updated which will help inform findings that reflect issues, such as page accessibility, that have arisen in recent years.

The second item in this sub-scale collects ordinal data of participants' indication of where, on a numeric continuum from one to three, lies the nature of three levels of a policy maintenance transparency including: an indication that the policy lists the names of all committee members, reviewers, and compliance officers; an indication that the policy identifies the committee or sub-organizational structure responsible for the creation and maintenance of the web policy; an indication that the policy refers all questions and concerns about the policy to institutional administrators; as well as options for indicating that the policy does not address the issue or the section of the policy is under revision.

The last item of the background section will allow respondents to provide qualitative data regarding any web policy components that were not addressed in the survey, but that the respondent feels should be included in web publishing and hosting policy. This type of question serves as a check to insure that the study employs content validity and represents the entire range of participant opinions (Sanders, et al., 2004).

## Independent Variables

Four independent variables, institutional categorization, job responsibility area, policy revision responsibility, and policy age are included in the study. Each variable will be collected via the survey and was measured as described below:

1. Institutional category variable - a dichotomous variable determined by subject self-identification which will help inform discussion regarding institutional ability to support web resources.
2. Job responsibility area - since this variable is responsible for subject placement in sub-groups, this variable is employed as a dichotomous variable in order to categorize respondents as members of various respondent subgroups.

3. Policy revision responsibility - since this variable is responsible for subject placement in sub-groups, this variable is employed as a dichotomous variable in order to categorize respondents as members of various respondent subgroups.
4. Policy age - a continuous variable determined by the reported number of years as the age of the policy.

### Dependent Variables

The dependent variables of the study were composite compilations of the participant's ranking of the survey questions on web publishing and hosting policy effectiveness.

1. Ownership– a continuous variable derived from the questions on the survey regarding web policy ownership.
2. Policy purpose and scope - a continuous variable derived from the questions on the survey regarding policy purpose.
3. Free speech, intellectual property, copyright infringement, and privacy - a continuous variable derived from the question on the survey regarding policy scope.
4. Accessibility or Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance - a continuous variable derived from the question on the survey Accessibility or Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.
5. Institutional branding - a continuous variable derived from the question on the survey regarding institutional branding.
6. Policy non-compliance - a continuous variable derived from the question on the survey regarding policy non-compliance.

### Population and Sample

The population for this survey consisted of the personal dedicated to web governance at public 4-year American colleges including: web content managers, Campus Technology personnel dedicated to web support, faculty that serve on web governance committees, and institutional administrators familiar with web governance issues. In a systematic sample of higher educational institutions representative of all American states, as well as a careful selection of research sites from public and private higher educational settings allowed the researcher to compare similarities and differences in web policy development and perceived effectiveness to individual web page developers. The name and email addresses of the web content managers were culled by the research team from the institutional web sites; in all cases, attempts were made to survey the person responsible for web content, however, some institutional contacts were listed in a generic form, so the person completing the survey may have a job load with less than full-time dedication to web content management. Institutional status was determined by visiting the appropriate state department of education web site.

Due to ease of access and existing working relationships, the population for the pilot study consisted of a systematic sample of web content managers at institutions local to the researcher's home institution or known to the researchers personally. Since the pilot institutions are not representative of the entire range of spectrum of the study institutions, the results of the pilot study were only be used to determine if the parameters and procedures of the study were valid.

For the research study, a sample population was drawn from the sampling frame using a stratified random sampling of web content managers representing public and private institutions

that employ the same percentage of participants (Patten, 2004) so that every potential participant had an equal opportunity of selection. The population size was projected as 2,774, given a conservative estimate of one individual dedicated to web-content interests at the 2,774 four year colleges in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). Given a confidence level of 90% and a confidence interval of 10, our recommended sample size is 66. In order to insure that this sample size is met, 300 surveys were sent to potential participants.

## Survey Procedures

The survey instrument was prepared for online delivery by the present researchers using a creation tool available from the sponsoring web site, *SurveyMonkey.com*. The web-based survey instrument was subjected to a number of revisions and tests to improve both its design and validity. Revisions were made to the design and format of the instrument with regard to ease of use, time to complete, screen design, and item presentation.

To establish instrument validity, experts in the field of research, testing and evaluation, were asked to evaluate the face validity of the survey in order to make suggestions about how to improve the design of the instrument (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2005), while experts in the field of web design, computer science, and informational technology administration evaluated the content validity for measuring the variables in the study (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2005). These experts were given the proposed instrument and selected literature, and asked to use their experiential knowledge to determine if the proposed instrument was 1) overall a good measure for evaluation and 2) if the dimensions and sub-scales are inclusive and valid. Face and content validity were thus established via this review by multiple experts.

Permission for conducting research activities involving human subjects was obtained from the Oklahoma City University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

A pilot test was conducted at institutions local to the researcher's institution to enable the researcher to find any ambiguities in the instrument, and revisions were made appropriately (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2005). The use of the pilot test as well as the official study will begin to establish reliability of the instrument. Pilot results were saved to a cumulative data file and used to evaluate the efficacy of the chosen format for data presentation and naming variables. Although the institutions chosen for the pilot study do not represent the population percentage of public institutions and therefore does not represent the proposed study, the pilot study institutions were chosen for researcher convenience factors as well as an anticipation of a high response rate. A cover letter was emailed to the possible pilot study participants that informed them of the importance and justification for the study. This email also invited potential participants to participate in the study via a hyperlink to the survey located at the *SurveyMonkey* web site and inform participants of their voluntary participation and right to withdraw at any time without penalty. The cover memorandum explained that the participant's name will not be associated with his or her answers to the questions. After two weeks of non-participation, a follow-up letter was emailed to pilot study participants to encourage their participation in the study. Finally, at the third week, the final email informed participants that the study will be drawing to a close and that their input is valuable to the results of the study. The same protocol was observed for the research study participants.

By clicking on the link provided and logging into the secure site, the participants indicated agreement to participate in the research study, which helped to insure that voluntary participation occurred (McNamara, 1994). Participants were free to quit the survey at any time.

After the data was collected, the response rate was calculated and the SPSS software package was employed to analyze and interpret the collected data. Descriptive statistics were calculated on the independent variables to summarize and describe the data collected. Responses to the survey items were coded from 1 to 4, 1 to 5, etc. The code for all survey items in the same category were summed together for a composite score per category. This category composite score was used for statistical analysis. Using Cronbach's alpha, item analysis was conducted to determine the internal consistency and reliability of each individual item as well as each subscale (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2005). The survey instrument was tested in its entirety, and the subscales of the instrument were tested independently. Inferential statistics including independent t-tests and/or simple analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to look for significant differences between the web policy components that web content managers deem important when grouped by subscale. All analyses used an alpha level of .05 to determine significance.

## Results

The following chapter summarizes the survey results from this investigation. Survey data collection proceeded as described in Chapter Three, with the pilot study beginning February, 2013 and concluding in March, 2013, and the research study beginning in March, 2013 and concluding in May, 2013, due to the need for a second round of participants. The survey data has been subjected to a number of statistical analyses in order to explore, describe and interpret results from the entire sample for each subscale, and results about the whole sample will be reported by subscale, as well as reporting on the differences between groups along three self-reported dimensions: (1) job responsibility, (2) level of policy making responsibility, and (3) age of policy. Qualitative data from an open-ended response question will be summarized. All analyses used an alpha level of .05 to determine significance and were conducted to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent, if any, does web publishing and hosting policy address web page ownership in light of the needs of policy stakeholders?
2. To what extent, if any, is the purpose of the policy and the web site and pages addressed in light of the needs of policy stakeholders?
3. To what extent, if any, does web publishing and hosting policy address violations of free speech, defamation, libel, slander, obscenity, harassment, and extortion or illegal activities in light of the needs of policy stakeholders?
4. To what extent, if any, does web publishing and hosting policy prevent copyright infringement and privacy violations in light of the needs of policy stakeholders?
5. To what extent, if any, does web publishing and hosting policy address accessibility of web pages or American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance in light of the needs of policy stakeholders?
6. To what extent, if any, does web publishing and hosting policy require web pages to reflect information timeliness, reliability, completeness, currency, and data modularization in light of the needs of policy stakeholders?
7. To what extent, if any, does web publishing and hosting policy require institutional branding elements?
8. To what extent, if any, does web publishing and hosting policy address non-policy compliance in light of the needs of policy stakeholders?

## Participant Information

This study was conducted to help gain insights into perceptions of institutional web hosting and publishing policies. The data of this study reflects the extent to which the studied factors contribute to policy effectiveness. In interpreting and comparing the subscales of the survey using various descriptive statistics, this study not only addresses the null hypothesis of the study, but also addresses other questions concerning the importance of specific web policy elements.

Two participation rounds in the Spring of 2013 yielded 79 responses with 9 mid-survey dropouts. Complete survey data was obtained from 70 participants (32 [46%] communications or marking personnel), 15 [21.4%] identified as web content personnel, 9 [13%] participants indicated that they were web, networking, or IT support personnel, 6 [8%] indicated a status of other campus administrator, and 5 [7%] selected the title of "Other", and 3 [3%] indicated faculty status (M=11.66).

This sample (M=10.00) represents participants at all-levels of policy making: Top-level administrators (13[18%]), Committee chair or significant input into policy creation/development (19[27%]), Committee member or policy consultant (17[24%]), Policy reader or voter (4[6%]), Policy user or other stakeholder (7[10%]), Other (9[13%]), and I do not know (1[1%]).

The sample is almost equally divided amongst respondents who state that the institution has an independent policy dedicated to the hosting and publishing of web pages (35[44%]) and those that note that hosting and publishing of web pages is a sub-section of a larger web or technology usage policy (39[49%])(M=15.8). Three respondents (3%) indicated that their institution does not have an institutional policy in any form regarding the hosting and/or publishing of web pages. Two participants (2%) noted that their institutional policy is currently in development and changes would be made effective by July 1, 2013.

Respondents in this survey were allowed to participate in multiple selections to describe the extent that their web policy addresses web page or web content ownership. Survey results (M=7.37) reveal that institutional ownership of all web pages is explicitly stated in 7(9%) of all studied policies; implied in 12 (16%) of studied policies; is not addressed in 6(8%) of policies; or this section of the policy is under revision for 2(3%) of the studied policies. In addition, four (5%) of respondents indicated the institution is explicitly considered the web publisher, but individuals bear maintenance responsibilities; while 12(15%) indicate that the policy implies this relationship. Six (8%) participants noted that the policy does not address individual responsibilities while 2(3%) individuals noted this section of the policy is under revision. Nine (11%) of respondents indicated that the policy implies that web pages are owned by recognized sub-organizations such as a department or campus office. The only other response in this category was that 2(3%) respondents noted this section of the policy is under revision. According to study participants, only one (1%) of the studied policies explicitly address the ownership of web pages by authorized staff; with nine (11%) of the sample indicating that the policy implies such ownership. Two of these participants indicated in the comment section that ownership implies responsibilities such as currency or maintenance. One (1%) respondent indicated that web pages are owned by the individuals that create them, while 3(4%) noted that this is implied in the policy. 21(27%) noted that general individual ownership is not addressed in the policy. Two (2%) respondents indicated that policy is under revision for this category as well as the last. Six (8%) of policies do not address third-party or external agency ownership of web pages, however, one of the two (2%) respondents who indicated that this section of the policy is under revision noted that athletic pages at the institutional web site are owned by a third party, so

policy revision to address this ownership was likely. Finally, 15 (19%) of participants noted that some combination of some or all of the noted ownership categories exists for their institutional policy, with 16 (20%) of responses noting that a combination of ownership is implied. Three (4%) of respondents answered I do not know in this section.

Results are mixed concerning the existence of a purpose statement in web policy ( $M=9.5$ ). 16 (28%) of participants noted that the purpose of the policy can be inferred from the policy content. Still, 8 respondents (14%) note the existence of a formal purpose statement; while 13 (23%) reported that an informal statement exists. 15 (26%) of studied policies do not have a purpose section in the policy while 2(3%) of respondents noted that this section of the policy is currently under revision. Three (5%) participants selected I do not know for this question.

Regarding the audience for the web policy ( $M=10.57$ ), 24 respondents (32%) noted that the policy is intended for all Internet users and appropriate for all readers, so benefits and penalties may apply to all readers. 21 (28%) respondents indicated the policy is intended for all users authorized by the institution to create and/or maintain web pages and content, while just one respondent (1%) noted that the policy is intended only for those recognized by a department or office as an institutional content manager. A large number of respondents (20[27%]) felt that the policy is intended for some or all of the previous categories while 3(4%) of replies indicated that the policy does not explicitly address its audience. Finally, two respondents (3%) indicated this section of the policy is currently under review and 3(4%) selected the "I do not know" response to this question.

Concerning policy element availability, results were equal regarding web policy attention paid to issues such as free speech (13[17.5%]), intellectual property (13[17.5%]), copyright infringement (13[17.5%]), and privacy concerns (13[17.5%]) as inferred as a part of published or hosted web page policy; each category had 10[13.5%] policies with explicit statements on each issue. This data, combined with a visual survey conducted by the research team indicates that policies tended to address these issues together or policies were detailed enough to include each of these issues. In addition, results were similar regarding the issue being addressed from an individual versus institutional perspective: free speech (6[8%] vs. 6[8%]), copyright infringement (7[8%] vs. 4[5%]), intellectual property (9[12%] vs. 6[8%]), and privacy 7[9%] vs. 6[8%]). Nine (9) respondents indicated that some or all of these issues were addressed by the institution in another policy, with three (3) respondents noting that the institution had separate, free-standing copyright, intellectual property policies, etc. Two of the studied policies (3%) make an effort to inform readers on how copyright issues affects stakeholders; one (1%) policy informs readers about privacy issues. 12 (16%) responses indicated that free speech is not addressed in the web publishing and hosting policy, 8 (11%) of policies do not address intellectual property, and an equal number of respondents (7[8%]) noted that neither copyright issues nor privacy issues are addressed in the policy. Finally, 2 (3%) of respondents indicated that this portion of the policy is under review and 3(4%) of respondents selected the "I do not know" option for this question.

To the extent that the institutional web hosting and publishing policy requires disclaimer statements, such as "The views expressed on this web page are those of the author and do not necessarily the views of XYZ college ...", ( $M=8.00$ ) an equal number of participants (15[27%]) indicated that disclaimer statements are required on all pages representing an individual as well as the option that the policy is used to disclaim any statements made by those acting as an individual or on their own behalf. 13 (23%) of participants indicated that the policy does not address disclaimer statements; 3(5%) indicated that disclaimer statements are required on pages

maintained by those unaffiliated with a department, office or other sub-organizations unit, meaning a student; while 4(7%) of respondents noted that disclaimer statements are required or placed on pages containing opinions or unauthorized content. Finally, 2(3%) of responses indicated that this section of the policy is under review, while 4(7%) selected “I do not know” in response to this question.

With ( $M=7.75$ ), Americans with Disabilities Act compliance is indicated in 31(50%) of the studied web hosting and publishing policies, however 10(16%) of the studied sample do not address ADA compliance or web page accessibility in the policy. Few policies qualify how accessibility is achieved; 6(9%) of policies provide accessibility guidance such as information about text alternatives to web developers; 4(6%) provide links to accessibility guides or email information for a contact person; 2(3%) explicitly state how accessibility is evaluated; and 1(1%) explicitly states that the site must maintain a required percentage of accessibility or meet a certain standard. 2(3%) of respondents indicated that this section of the policy is under revision and 6(9%) of the sample selected “I do not know” for this question.

Individual responsibility concerning the timeliness, reliability, completeness, and currency of web page content ( $M=6.82$ ) is required by 12(27%) of the sampled Web policies, while 10(22%) do not address this issue. 7(15%) of the policies imply that information timeliness, reliability, completeness, and currency are desirable, while 6(13%) of policies indicates that web pages will be removed by system/web content team after failure to update within a certain time period. 4(8%) of policies dictate that individuals designated as sub-organizational web content managers must review pages periodically. In addition, 4(8%) of participants selected the “I do not know” option for this question while 2(4%) of participants indicated that this section of the policy is under revision.

Lowest participation in the survey ( $M=7.16$ ) occurred with the question regarding modularization of web content which was answered by 32(45%) of active respondents. Existing research by the survey designers led then to anticipate confusion with how the term modularization would be perceived by the participants, so the term was qualified with a definition within the question. The majority of question respondents 19(59%) indicated that web policy does not restrict duplication of data on the institutional web site. 12(37%) of sampled policies indicate that information may exist in one official location only, while 2(6%) of policies allow information to exist in one official location and one alternative location, such as an archives. 1(3%) of respondents indicated that large sub-organizational structures, such as a department, may request duplication of information (such as a section of the student handbook) for convenience purposes. Despite findings of the survey designers that evidence exists that some policies allow any web authors to request duplication of information, none of the participants selected this option.

On the other hand, the question regarding web page branding received the most user responses ( $M=10.14$ ), outside of the meta data questions, which perhaps reflects the sample membership as members of a communications or public relations department. 19(27%) of respondents indicated that the web policy requires an official template, logo(s), banners, presentation layer for all hosted pages. A similar number of participants 18(25%) note that a common menu or navigation system is required for all pages. 11(18%) reveal that official elements such as an institutional logo is required for official pages only. Institutional branding is not addressed in 12(17%) of studied web policies, while 5(7%) of participants indicated that this section of the policy is under review. 4(5%) selected “I do not know” for this question.

The largest percentage of respondents (15[33%]) indicated that the web policy does not contain a grievance procedure to allow the review, impartial consideration, and equitable disposition of requests for web resources. However, a similar number 14(31%) indicated that an informal grievance policy allows users to present a case to an administrator or governing board, while 9(20%) indicate that a formal grievance procedure listing the appeals process and timeliness is presented in the policy. Two (4%) of respondents replied that this section of the policy is under review, while 5(11%) selected the “I do not know” option for this question (M=9.00).

19(33%) of studied web policies are two to four years old with 16(28%) of policies aged at four to eight years old. 4(7%) of policies have been changed or updated within the past year while 3(5%) of policies have not been changed or updated in over eight years. A significant percentage of respondents (12[21%]) indicated the “I do not know” option for this question (M=10.80).

A significant number of web hosting and publishing policies are maintained by the campus communications or development office (26[42%]) while a campus technology or information services office maintains the next largest amount (12[19%]). Six (10%) of policies are maintained by a college committee while 8(13%) of participants noted that each administrative unit develops its own policies. Four of those respondents indicated that due to third-party hosting [two indicated this was of athletic pages], the institution had to respect third-party policies. Eight (13%) participants selected the “I do not know” option while five participants picked the “Other” option (M=10.6).

Transparency of web policy development (M=5.83) does not seem to be a concern of policy generators as 15(35%) of policies do not address transparency of how the policy was generated or by whom, nor how the policy is maintained. The next largest response to this question was “I do not know” 7(16%), while only 4(9%) of policies identify the committee or sub-organizational structure responsible for the creation and maintenance of web hosting and publishing policy. 5(11%) of policies refer all questions and concerns about the policy to institutional administrators while an equal number of participants 2(4%) indicated that the policy lists the names of all committee members, reviewers, and compliance officers or that this section of the policy is currently under revision.

One open-ended response item provided a forum for participants to discuss their perceptions on any other web policy components not addressed in this survey that will be important in future drafts of web publishing and hosting policy. Of the 20 posted replies to the open-ended question, 6 respondents (30%) commented on the need to include student or individual users in web hosting and publishing policy, and 4 respondents (20%) commented on how anticipated use of the cloud will impact all web usage. An equal number of respondents (3[15%]) were concerned with the need to generalize content due to projected growth as well privacy concerns. Two (10%) of respondents were concerned the rise in third-party hosting issues, and 1 respondent (5%) each commented on the need to consider different types of devices in web hosting and publishing policy and the use of apps in web-based computing.

## Discussion

So, how can institutional stakeholders use the study findings to improve the effectiveness of their policies on web hosting and publishing? Although development of web policy may result in greater audience engagement and better communication, policy developers must consider publication, transparency, and compliance in order to legally protect the institutional entity and its members and instruct audience participants in a pedagogically valuable manner.

Many field experts note the dearth of policy development, particularly with policies related to Internet resources (Arendt, 2009; Bertot, Jaeger, & Hanson, 2012). This study's findings of the lack of web policy content for even well-established institutions is paralleled in other fields, including high-need service fields such as food policy (Midgley, 2010). In addition, the age of the studied web hosting and publishing policies is a concern since about one third of the policies are over 4 years old and the age of the policy was unknown to an additional 21% of respondents. Flynn (2009) recommends an annual review of web policies which should include a legal review of policy elements. In addition, field discussion suggests that the growth in usage and the complex nature of web resources (Crawford, 2013) indicates the need for a more frequent review of policies. Since studies of web policy development in higher educational settings are rare, Hendrick's (2007) study of university library web policies is cited as a historical precedent regarding web policy existence with 52% of that study's institutions having a web policy compared to 97% for this study, conducted 6 years later. Another change between the two studies concerns the stakeholders invested in web policy development, with Hendrick's historical study comprised of librarian and webmaster respondents, while this study highlighted the increasing use of public relations and/or communications staff (46%) and web content personnel (21%).

Concerning web policy ownership, this study's findings of eight (8) different ownership categories seems to confirm a Department of Transportation (2012) report which noted the complexity of data ownership and the lack of clear precedents regarding ownership issues. A telling finding is that with regard to web policy audience, only 32% of the studied policies addressed the policy in terms of all readers; a point emphasized by Bolchini, Garzotto, and Sorce (2009) who noted that in order for higher education institutions to effectively convey their web brand, usability of web products needs to be a primary consideration; meaning that the needs of all readers need to be addressed in web page policy.

This study's findings that high-concern areas such as copyright infringement, intellectual property, privacy, and free speech were not specifically addressed in web policy runs counter to field-based recommendations indicating their importance. Arendt (2009) encouraged institutions of higher education to develop a policy response for both copyright and secondary infringement of copyright due to the increasing use of shared resources on the Internet. One solution to this potential problem is to include a policy statement that indicates that a reasonable amount of research will be conducted on hosted pages to find potential copyright infringement cases (Roelants, 1997). Other proactive policy stances could include hosting individual pages on a server that can only be accessed by campus community members (Qua & Dorman, 2008) or to host the page in a password-restricted area (Berti, 2009) located on institution-owned servers. Kowalski's (2007) assertions that intellectual property policy forms the very foundation of intellectual property management and, as such, serves as the starting point for a system of institutional best practices, have serious implications for web policy development. Cranor (2005)

argued that privacy polices increase organizational transparency in regards to data practices. Due to liability issues associated with cyberbullying, there is an increasing realization from the field for the need to counter online harassment with policy and legislation (King, 2010). Finally, Leitch and Warren (2011) offer a policy framework for dealing with issues associated with Internet, web, and social networking usage which include employer mandated policy training and consistent review and management of web-related policies.

Despite the growing pressures of liability due to inaccessible web content (Department of Justice 28 CFR Parts 35 and 36), this study's findings that 50% of policies do not address Americans with Disability Act compliance, echoes Nakata's (2012) concerns that new laws and regulations have not caught up to best-practice standards. In addition, the findings of this study replicate the findings of a large-scale 2009 survey of community colleges that reported only half with accessibility policies for web content (Erickson, Terise, VanLooy, Lee, & Bruyere, 2009).

While issues concerning data modularization received the lowest interest in this survey, based on participation rates, field literature suggests that web developers should pay closer attention to data modularization due to benefits of searching ease (Faden & Baskin, 2007) as well as reusability and development ease and speed (Limp, 2012). In addition, Faden & Baskin (2007) had additional findings that when policy elements are disaggregated into several areas, completeness of message is compromised.

This study's findings that a large percentage (83%) of policies specifically addressed web branding in some form is linked to the large number of Communications office personnel that completed the survey as nearly 94% of positive responses concerning branding in web policy came from participants self-identified as communications personnel. However, 17% of policies still do not explicitly mention branding in the policy, and worse, quantitative analysis of the studied policies reveals that the policies do not address how web marketing materials should attend to the decision-making needs of prospective adult learners on their web sites, a significant factor in web site marketing effectiveness (Stein, Wanstreet, Saunders, & Lutz, 2009).

Findings of low availability of a grievance procedure or policy within the web hosting and publications policy parallels field findings that grievance procedures are underrepresented policy elements across fields and locales (Guari, 2011).

Despite the low visibility of timeliness, reliability, completeness, and currency issues in the studied web content policies, field literature is increasingly pointing to these factors in terms of branding and communication effectiveness (Fusch, 2011, Slover-Linett, Stoner, & CASE, 2011, Weaver, 2011). Faden and Baskin (2007) found that a significant level of detail was required to effectively convey policy elements and that some readers construed the absence of policy elements on a web page to mean that the information was located elsewhere on the site.

Findings that a large number (26%) of studied policies that do not have a policy purpose statement, is counteracted by field literature the supports the use of mission or purpose to help define a communications strategy (Bramlett, 2012).

This study's findings of low transparency in web hosting and publishing policy development, seems to parallel field literature that indicates that educational institutions and districts (Chriqui & Chaloupka, 2011) fall behind other types of fields, such as financial sectors (Geraats, 2005) in their attention to policy transparency. In fact, computer-mediated transparency of public institutions is still evolving, with a recent theoretical framework proposing three dimensions of transparency including: decision making transparency, policy information transparency, and policy outcome transparency (Grimmelikhuijsen & Welch, 2012).

*Open-Ended Responses*

The concern of six (6) respondents on the need to include student or individual users in web hosting and publishing policy is echoed in field literature concerning institutional liability for web site or social network user actions (Monaghan, 2011), as well as a measure to restrict cyberbullying (Goodno, 2011). Four (4) respondents commented on how anticipated use of the cloud will impact all web usage, a trend that is starting to impact web policy as organizations and institutions grapple with response to rapid technological changes in terms of privacy, security, anonymity, liability, reliability, access and usage restrictions (Jaeger, Lin, & Grimes, 2008).

This study attempts to make the reader more aware of the perceptions of web hosting and publishing policy makers concerning the importance of selected policy elements. If policy developers approach web page creation and content deployment with a critical eye towards facilitating information organization, quality, and quantity, they will not only improve their web site design, but will foster organizational, sub-organizational, and individual efforts of web communication. With web pages of higher educational institutions being increasingly used by prospective students to mine information regarding the institution, the importance of policy to manage this communications channel becomes an essential ingredient for promoting a strong, unified institutional brand. Through analysis of perceptions regarding individual policy elements, stakeholders invested in improving web hosting and publishing policy can determine how current trends and emerging technologies will impact the current web environment and serve as a forecaster for future web needs.

The questions that have been raised in this study offer a wealth of future research opportunities. Additional surveys might reveal how other stakeholders view current and emerging issues in web hosting and publishing policy. In addition, further immersion in Web 2.0 settings, including social networks will further influence the need for institutional response and policy development, so surveys and instruments that allow policy to be developed and monitored will allow for controlled, sustainable growth in Internet resource usage.

### **Limitations of Present Study**

This exploratory investigation used a survey methodology in order to better understand how web policy developers perceived web hosting and publishing issues. Although this study has made some steps forward in answering this research question, the results should be construed with an understanding of the methodological limitations of this study. The methodological limitations relate to: sample size, generalizability, and the variables selected for investigation. Although the sample was drawn from a national sample, it is not appropriate to generalize the overall survey results to a larger, potentially dissimilar population. One limitation of the present study is the failure to include Web 2.0 and social networking topics in the survey. Although these topics were designed to address web pages only, it is clear from some of the participant comments that policy-makers detect that there is no policy response to the rising usage of Web 2.0 applications in higher educational settings.

## Conclusions

The results presented in this study have both theoretical and practical significance. Documenting the current state of web hosting and publishing policy and stakeholder assessment of future web policy trends has provided information that can be used by those invested in improving institutional response to issues via policy. Due to the rising number of field-based arguments for inclusion of policy that addresses, free speech, intellectual property, copyright issues and privacy, web hosting and publishing policy developers might consider the inclusion of these topics into policy or refer to current institutional policies in these areas. Since a significant finding of this study was the growing importance that Communications and/or Public Relations staff as well as staff dedicated to web content have in developing policy, institutions not aligned with these findings might consider if another configuration of experts might better inform policy development.

There is still a great deal to learn about web hosting and publishing issues and trends and the more general topic of web policy in higher education. Case studies reflecting successful development, deployment, implementation, and maintenance of web policies can help model best practice. This study discussion clarifies the important themes of the study findings and provided specific strategies for successful development of web policy or field justification as to the importance of the finding. The findings and discussion section of this study offer a set of recommendations that will be useful for policy developers and campus administrators invested in improving both the communication of institutional policy overall as well as greater adoption and usage of web page authoring.

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## Appendix A – Survey Instrument

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] Academic Web content manager perceptions of web hosting and publishing po - Windows Internet Explorer pro  
 http://www.surveymonkey.com/.../PREVIEW\_MODE=DO\_NOT\_USE\_THIS\_LINK\_FOR\_COLLECTION&ms=spIERI1PgftwK%219zAHAXn%2F%2bzSiNnMpOKH15NmY2%3d

**Academic Web content manager perceptions of web hosting and publishing policies** Exit this survey

**1. To what extent does your institution have a policy regarding the hosting and publishing of Web pages?**

Hosting and publishing of Web pages is a sub-section of a larger Web or technology usage policy.  
 I don't know.  
 The institution has an independent policy dedicated to the hosting and publishing of Web pages.  
 The policy is currently in development and will be made effective by July 1, 2013.  
 There is no institutional policy in any form regarding the hosting and/or publishing of Web pages.

Other (please specify)

**2. To what extent does your Web policy address Web page or Web content ownership?**

	The policy explicitly states:	The policy implies that:	The policy does not address this point	This section of the policy is under revision and will be implemented by July 1, 2013.
I don't know.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All pages are completely owned by the institution.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The institution is the Web publisher and "owns" the pages, but individuals bear maintenance responsibilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pages are owned by recognized sub-organizations, like a department or campus office.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pages are owned by authorized staff such as a faculty or staff member.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pages are owned by the individuals that create them, such as a faculty or student.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pages are owned by an external agency or third-party ownership.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pages are owned by an external agency or third-party ownership.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A combination of some or all of the above exists.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

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**3. To what extent does your institutional web policy address individual ownership of web pages?**

- The policy addresses only faculty and staff ownership of pages
- The policy addresses student ownership of pages
- The policy addresses all categories of faculty, staff, student, and departmental ownership of pages
- The policy addresses departmental ownership of pages
- The policy addresses institutional ownership of pages
- The policy does not address web page ownership
- There is no policy related to institutional web pages
- This section of the policy is currently under revision to be implemented by July 1, 2013
- I don't know.

Other (please specify)

**4. To what extent does your institutional web policy have a purpose statement?**

- There is a formal statement regarding the purpose of the Web policy in a dedicated section.
- There is an informal statement regarding the purpose of the institutional Website/Webpages.
- The purpose of the policy can be inferred from the policy content.
- There is no formal or informal policy purpose section.
- This section of the policy is currently under revision to be implemented by July 1, 2013
- I don't know.

Other (please specify)

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**5. Whom is the audience for your web policy?**

- The policy is intended for all Internet users and appropriate for all readers, so benefits and penalties apply to all readers
- The policy is intended for all users authorized by the institution to create web pages and/or content, so benefits and penalties apply to them
- The policy is intended only for those recognized by a department or office as an institutional web content manager
- The policy is intended for some or all of the above
- The policy does not explicitly address its audience
- This section of the policy is currently under revision to be implemented by July 1, 2013
- I don't know.

Other (please specify)

**6. To what extent does your web policy address web site free speech, intellectual property, copyright infringement, or privacy concerns or inform policy readers of related issues in hosted web pages?**

	Free speech	Intellectual property	Copyright infringement	Privacy
Compliance with issues can be inferred from the policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The policy explicitly addresses the issue from the institutional perspective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The policy explicitly addresses the issue from the individual perspective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The policy explicitly addresses the issue from both the institution's perspective and from an individual perspective.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The policy makes an effort to inform the reader about how the issue affects stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The policy does not address the issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This section of the policy is currently under revision to be implemented by July 1, 2013	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't know.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify)

**7. To what extent does your institutional Web hosting and publishing policy require disclaimer statements, such as "The views expressed on this web page are those of the author and do not necessarily the views of XYZ college...."?**

- Disclaimer statements are required on all pages representing an individual.
- Disclaimer statements are required on all pages maintained by an individual not employed or affiliated with a department, office, or other sub-organizational unit.
- Disclaimer statements are required or placed on pages containing opinions or unauthorized content.
- The policy is used to disclaim any statements made by those acting as an individual or on their own behalf.
- The policy does not address disclaimer statements.
- This section of the policy is under revision to be implemented by July 1, 2013.
- I don't know.

Other (please specify)

**8. To what extent does your web policy address American with Disabilities Act compliance or establish guidelines for web page accessibility for people with disabilities?**

- The policy indicates that the institution acts responsibility for complying with the American with Disabilities Act in regards to web page/site accessibility.
- The policy explicitly indicates that the site must maintain a required percentage of accessibility or that all pages must meet a required percentage of accessibility within the page
- The policy explicitly sites how accessibility is evaluated (employment accessibility checker software, etc)
- The policy provides accessibility guidance, such as information about text alternatives
- The policy provides links to accessibility guides or email information for contact person
- The policy does not explicitly address Web page accessibility or ADA compliance in the Web policy
- This section of the policy is currently under revision to be implemented by July 1, 2013
- I don't know.

Other (please specify)

**9. To what extent does your web policy address the timeliness, reliability, completeness, and currency of web pages and/or content?**

- I don't know.
- The policy contains a statement indicating that information timeliness, reliability, completeness, and currency are desirable
- The policy contains a statement that information timeliness, reliability, completeness, and currency are the responsibility of the page/content developer
- The policy does not address information timeliness, reliability, completeness, and currency.
- The policy indicates that individuals designated as sub-organizational Web content managers must review pages periodically
- The policy indicates that web pages will be removed by system/web content team after failure to update within a certain time period
- This section of the policy is currently under developed and will be implemented by July 1, 2013

Other (please specify)

**10. To what extent does your institution mandate the modularization of web content (i.e the same information existing in two places on your web site)?**

- The policy indicates that information may exist in one official location only.
- The policy indicates that information may exist in one official location and one alternative location, such as an archives.
- The policy indicates that large sub-organizational structures, such as a department, may request duplication of information (such as a section of a student handbook) for convenience purposes.
- The policy indicates that any Web author may request duplication of information
- There is no restriction on duplicating data nor the existence of a modularization policy.
- I don't know.

**13. How often has your web page creation policy be changed or updated?**

- The policy has been changed or updated within the past year.
- The policy is 2-4 years old.
- The policy is 4-8 years old.
- The policy has not been changed or updated in over 8 years.
- I don't know.

**14. What is the level of transparency of the web policy generation?**

- The policy lists the names of all committee members, reviewers, and compliance officers.
- The policy identifies the committee or sub-organizational structure responsible for the creation and maintenance of the web policy.
- The policy refers all questions and concerns about the policy to institutional administrators.
- The policy does not address transparency of how the policy was generated or by whom, nor how the policy is maintained.
- This section of the policy is being currently being revised and will be implemented by July 1, 2013.
- I don't know.

Other (please specify)

**15. Are there any other Web policy components not addressed in this survey that you feel will be important in future drafts of Web publishing and hosting policy?**

**11. To what extent does your institutional web policy promote branding across web pages?**

- The policy indicates that official template, logo(s), banners, or presentation layer is required for all pages
- The policy indicates that a common menu/navigation system required for all pages
- The policy indicates that official elements such as institutional logo(s) required for official pages only
- The policy indicates that individual pages such as faculty or student pages must employ templates common for those groups or select from a limited number of templates
- The policy does not address institutional branding is not addressed in the policy.
- This section of the policy is currently being revised and will be implemented by July 1, 2013
- I don't know.

Other (please specify)

**12. To what extent does your Web hosting or publishing policy contain a grievance procedure to allow the review, impartial consideration, and equitable disposition of requests for Web resources?**

- A formal grievance procedure listing the appeals process, and timelines and is presented in the policy.
- An informal grievance policy allows users to present a case to an administrator to governing board.
- The policy does not address this issue.
- This section of the policy is being revised and will be implemented by July 1, 2013.
- I don't know.

Other (please specify)

**16. What category best represents your institution?**

- Community, junior, two-year, or associate-degree granting college.
- Public undergraduate degree conferring instituton
- Priveate undergraduate degree conferring instituton
- Public graduate and undergraduate degree conferring instituton
- Private graduate and undergraduate degree conferring instituton
- For-profit degree-conferring institution

Other (please specify)

**17. What is your title?**

- web content manager
- web support personnel
- faculty
- other campus administrator

Other (please specify)

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