

# Web Standards

TCNJ's website is one of the primary communication tools used to promote the college's mission and values. It is critical for the college community to keep the website's content up to date and for the site's look and function to operate within web and brand standards.

The Office of Communications, Marketing, and Brand Management developed these brand standards under the authority of the Board of Trustees. Adherence is mandatory, and any modifications to the design or functionality of a TCNJ website without the approval of the Office of Communications, Marketing, and Brand Management will be brought into compliance.

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## Website Roles and Definitions

### Official Website

An official website is one that is directly affiliated with any TCNJ school, department, program, unit, or initiative.

### Web Content Owner

A web content owner is a senior representative of any TCNJ department or organization (e.g., a dean or department chair) who works alongside the Web Team to create or maintain an official website. A web content owner reviews major content changes prior to implementation.

A web content owner may request a new official website. This request will be reviewed by the director of marketing communications. Prior to the production of an official website, the web content owner and any designated web editors are required to meet with the Web Team and review the official website's outline, scope, audience, goals, and project timeline. The web content owner must approve a manuscript for an official website in writing before production can begin.

### Web Editor

A web content owner may, in turn, designate one or more web editors to receive access to update or publish content on an official website. Web editors may be TCNJ faculty or staff members or student employees. In some cases, one individual may serve as both a web content owner and a web editor.

All web editors must attend WordPress training and work alongside the Web Team to maintain their department's official website. Only individuals who have successfully completed WordPress training are eligible to receive official website login privileges. Failure to comply with these standards will result in the suspension of editing privileges.

## Web Team

The Web Team is the digital branch of the Office of Communications, Marketing, and Brand Management. The Web Team oversees the design, development, and maintenance of all official TCNJ websites as well as the branding of the college's digital materials.

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## Web Content Management

Web content owners are responsible for creating and maintaining the content on their website. The Web Team provides training for web editors and assists with homepage changes and other requests that exceed what is considered to be simple maintenance.

## Web Editor Responsibilities

Each web content owner must designate at least one web editor to attend WordPress training and to work alongside the Web Team as the point of contact for content management.

WordPress web editor training covers the following topics:

- Roles/responsibilities of the Web Team: senior web architect, senior web designer, and web content manager
- Web standards for homepages and internal pages
- Accessibility and copyright considerations
- Post and page formatting
- Website architecture and organization
- Uploading and replacing digital documents and images

The web editor accepts responsibility for making timely updates to content on behalf of the web content owner. Standard updates are often related to:

- Event information or department deadlines
- Outdated written content
- Faculty and staff listings
- PDF or Microsoft Word documents
- Links to old or inactive surveys

Official website homepage changes or requests exceeding simple maintenance should be [sent to the Web Team for review via a Team Dynamix support ticket](#).

General tips for content creation:

- Strive to keep content fresh, clean, accessible, and legal.
- For images and videos, use only those with appropriate copyright permissions.
- Avoid using a website or page as a bulletin board for specific departments/organizations.
  - Websites targeting an external audience should present information relevant to that audience, not display internal information relevant only to faculty or staff members.
- Provide accurate and consistent information.
- Avoid reflecting an internal organizational structure or bureaucracy.
- Write concise, well-researched, and purposeful content.
- Write meaningful and actionable link text. Avoid using generic or broad link text like “Click Here.” All isolated text links and buttons should use actionable language.
  - Text Link Example: "See how this school is doing this great thing »" In this example, the whole sentence can be used as a link.
  - Button Text Examples: “Learn More,” “Visit Site,” “Donate Now”
  - Linking appropriate copy in a paragraph is also acceptable.

## Web Team Support

Web editors should contact the Web Team for assistance with any topics covered in training, for additional training, or for support regarding more complicated tasks (e.g., configuring menus, grids, accordions, or carousels).

Common support requests include:

- Login instructions
- Adding and removing users from a website
- Navigation menu updates
- Page formatting
- Search Engine Optimization
- Updating photography

[\[Submit a ticket to the Web Team\]](#)

## Web Support Tickets

The Web Team utilizes the TeamDynamix system to sort and service web-related support tickets. These support tickets are broken down into three categories:

### **WordPress Support**

Submit a support ticket for both critical and non-critical website updates as well as friendly URL requests.

#### [Critical Web Requests »](#)

Report a crashed or partially loading website, broken homepage formatting, or inaccurate content of a critical nature (e.g., a potential legal or copyright issue).

*The Web Team will begin troubleshooting ASAP, typically within the same business day.*

#### [Web Edits/Navigation and Photo Updates »](#)

Request edits to your site's homepage, navigation menu, or icons, or replace a photo. Rename an existing website or request a friendly URL.

*We will prioritize these requests and typically respond within two business days. Substantial photo research or information architecture changes may result in a new project with a separate timeline to be agreed upon by the Web Team and the web content owner.*

#### [Web Content Editor Access](#)

Request the addition or removal of site access for individual web content editor accounts.

*TCNJ web content owners and web editors can request access changes with prior supervisory approval. New web content owners or web editors are required to attend WordPress training before being granted access.*

#### [New Site or Redesign](#)

Request a new WordPress site or a site redesign (limited to TCNJ administrative offices, academic programs, faculty/staff members, and recognized student groups).

*TCNJ web content owners and web editors acting on behalf of web content owners may request a site. The Web Team will select the appropriate website theme.*

[\[Submit a ticket to the Web Team\]](#)

## Web Architecture

The senior web architect collaborates with web content owners and web editors to develop a web architecture that is both user-friendly and in line with best practices established for global navigation. This web architecture is based on the initial written content provided by the web content owner and is designed to scale with minor content changes and additions. If there are significant additions to this content, the web architecture may need to be revised.

Once a site has been developed, it may not contain empty placeholder pages or pages with incomplete sections. These pages will either be made private until the content is complete or removed if they are no longer needed. Incomplete page content often causes issues with Search Engine Optimization and may negatively affect the user experience.

## Web Design

The senior web designer collaborates with the Web Team to design modules and elements included in web themes and also makes photo and graphic selections for homepages and internal pages for some websites.

## Web Accessibility Standards

Any official TCNJ website must be accessible by all users, including those with disabilities; this is mandatory. While doing so is a requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act, it's also simply good practice for web development.

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) provide a single, shared standard that meets the needs of individuals, organizations, and governments both nationally and internationally. They explain how to make web content — including text, images, and sounds — more accessible to people with disabilities.

[Read the latest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.](#)

Additionally, editors should follow a few simple best practices when creating pages.

- Use headings (e.g. H2, H3, H4), bullets, numbered lists, horizontal dividers, etc.
- Use alt tags and image titles to improve the accessibility of your website for those with poor vision or screen reader devices.

## Copyright and Legal Concerns

Websites featuring problematic, copyrighted materials can and should be reported to the Web Team by any TCNJ user. These issues will be prioritized above other projects.

Do not use photos directly copied from a Google Image Search without researching that photo's copyright status.

To search for an image by copyright usage rights, [proceed with a Google Image Search](#), then click “Tools > Usage Rights.” Even if an image appears under the category “Labeled for reuse,” proceed to that image’s URL for a more detailed description of the photo’s usage rights.

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## Brand Standards and Web Themes

All TCNJ schools, departments, offices, centers, units, programs, and initiatives are required to build their official websites using both the college’s official web themes and its chosen enterprise-level content management system, WordPress. Exceptions require a valid business reason in addition to the approval of the Office of Communications, Marketing, and Brand Management.

Any official website that does not follow the college’s brand standards will be designated as a noncompliant website and be brought into compliance following internal procedures. The entire site or certain pages within the site may be taken offline while the Web Team performs an audit.

General brand standards:

- Do not add your unit’s logo on any pages.
- Do not override the styles (i.e., change colors or sizes) in the master style sheet. Use only HTML elements (e.g., heading 1-4, bullets, numbered lists) for markup.
- Make sure page formatting is mobile friendly.

For more information, [consult TCNJ's Graphic Identity Standards Guide](#).

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## Developing a New or Redesigned Website

Once an official website has been approved by the web content owner, the Web Team will schedule a project kickoff meeting to:

- Decide upon the scope of the website or project
- Determine the responsibilities and duties of each group member
- Identify the appropriate web theme and structure
- Evaluate the current written content
- Review any relevant media and/or graphics

The Web Team will determine the appropriate theme for each official website. [Learn more about TCNJ theme options](#).

The Web Team will work to satisfy all reasonable time frames, prioritizing efforts based on the following considerations:

- Alignment with TCNJ's strategic priorities
- Target audience
- Objectives and goals
- Time frame and scope of work

Web content owners interested in requesting a new or redesigned website should [submit a ticket for New Site or Redesign](#).

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## Photography Usage and Specifications

Any photos used on official TCNJ websites, whether taken as new or repurposed from existing photography, must meet the following requirements:

- The resolution must be set at a minimum of 72 DPI.
- Photography must be clear and well lit. Blurry and/or grainy photos are not acceptable.
- Professional photography or photography taken with a higher-quality camera is preferred.
- Smartphone photos are generally of insufficient quality.

## Requesting Existing Photography

The images taken by TCNJ's Photography Team are an essential means through which to share our beautiful campus, vibrant student life, and engaged classrooms with prospective students and others. The Office of Communications, Marketing, and Brand Management stores and organizes the college's existing photography in Canto, a digital photo and video repository.

Web content owners or web editors can request photo updates by [submitting a ticket for Web Edits / Navigation and Photo Updates](#).

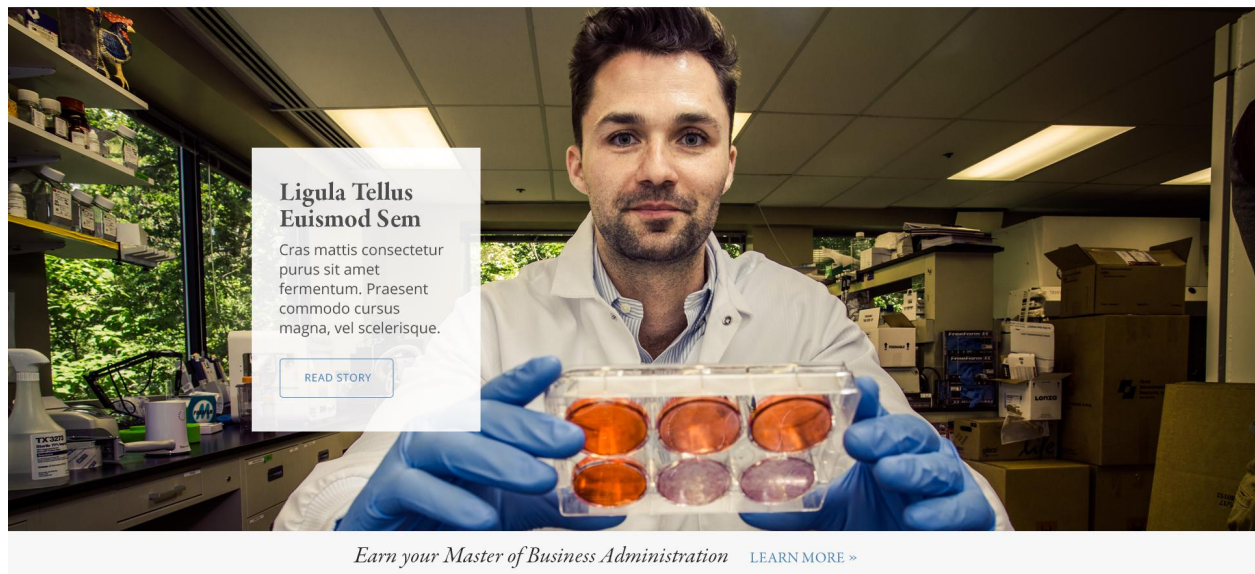
## Photography Resolution and Specs

Homepage Features (1920px x 1080px)

Only TCNJ's Web Team has access to post photos to the main [TCNJ homepage](#). These images are carefully evaluated as part of an editorial content strategy to highlight stories about remarkable events, people, initiatives, and more within the TCNJ community.

Most homepage features are published in tandem with a TCNJ news story aimed at appealing to the college's external audience. If you are interested in developing news stories for this audience, [contact the Office of Communications](#), Marketing, and Brand Management.

See the homepage banner image example below:



Billboard Photos (1920px x 800px)

Certain web themes feature a billboard photo for marketing and/or recruitment purposes on the homepage. are selected by the Web Theme.

Web content owners or web editors can request photo updates by [submitting a ticket for Web Edits/Navigation and Photo Updates](#).

Three-Up Photography Block (Recommended Minimum Resolution: 640px x 427px)

Some web themes feature a home page layout with three photographs and marketing copy. These marketing/recruitment photos are selected by the Web Team.

Web content owners or web editors can request photo and copy updates by [submitting a ticket for Web Edits / Navigation and Photo Updates](#).

See the sample module below from the [School of the Arts and Communication homepage](#):



# Outcomes

The value of a TCNJ education is reflected in the success of our graduates. They are accepted into top graduate and professional schools and enjoy successful careers in global communication and arts environments. The success of our alumni is grounded in their understanding that the value of creativity lies in its positive impact on others.



## INVENTIVE CAREERS

Our grads forge unique and fulfilling career paths—from music exec, to art liaison to media planner.



## INTERNSHIPS

Students gain invaluable, hands-on experience with gigs in broadcast, communications, fine arts and beyond.



## CONNECTIONS

TCNJ has a vibrant network of well-placed alumni who look forward to supporting a new generation of innovators.

News Post Featured Image (Recommended Minimum Resolution: 640px x 427px)

Every news post on an internal TCNJ website should have either a featured image highlighting a key person or location mentioned in the story or relate directly to the story's content.

The dimensions of feature images are dependent on the web theme. Some web themes have circular featured images that are automatically cropped and require the main subject to be positioned in the center of the frame.

[View detailed directions on creating a news post and adding a featured image.](#)

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## Plugin and WordPress Theme Processes

[\[See Google Doc\]](#)

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## Official Website Disputes and Resolutions

### Noncompliant Websites

TCNJ's official websites are designed to best appeal to our target audiences while maintaining compliance with the college's brand and web standards.

Efforts to develop an official website without partnering with the Web Team can, despite best efforts, result in noncompliant websites, which can inadvertently communicate a lack of professionalism in addition to adversely affecting marketing and recruitment efforts.

Noncompliant websites:

- Are designed using an unassigned or unapproved page layout
- Include empty or placeholder pages along with incomplete sections of pages
- Feature unapproved website functionality or navigation structure
- Create duplicate pages that mirror the content of an existing approved website
- Misuse the TCNJ brand or logo

If the Office of Communications, Marketing, and Brand Management determines that a website is no longer brand compliant, the Web Team will perform an audit and detail any issues for the web content owner and web editor.

**This review will cover:**

1. TCNJ's graphic identity standards
2. TCNJ's editorial style
3. Information architecture, website organization, and navigation
4. User access
5. Broken links and outdated content
6. Best practices for Search Engine Optimization

### Compliance Issue Resolution

If any compliance issues are found, the Web Team will provide the web editor and the web content owner with a list of the issues that need to be addressed. A follow-up meeting can be scheduled for clarification. Web editors will have two to four weeks (depending on external factors) to make any revisions needed to make a problematic site brand compliant.

## WordPress Access

If identified compliance issues are not addressed within the given time period, web editors will lose all WordPress editing privileges until they can meet with the Web Team and the director of marketing communications. This meeting will help determine when and if access can be restored or if additional training, supervision, and evaluation may be necessary.

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## Web Themes

Recurring page layouts and design structures convey and reinforce the strengths of an institution; they also create a consistent identifier for the audience. The Web Team created web themes to help identify different types of websites, matching their content to a specific page layout and design.

The web theme descriptions below identify the various types of websites and provide best practices on effectively using included page layouts.

### TCNJ Recruiting Theme

*For undergraduate admissions and student transitions*

### TCNJ Program Theme

*For schools and academic programs*

### TCNJ Administration Theme

*For divisions and administrative areas*

### TCNJ People Theme

*For faculty/staff research interests and organizations*

### TCNJ Event Theme

*Custom theme for events and conferences*

[\[Detailed Write-Up Draft\]](#)