

UCCS Institutional Website Project

Project Charter

December 2012, UCCS University Advancement
www.uccs.edu/advancement/website

What's Been Done

Over the past year the Website Development Committee conducted a variety of primary and secondary research aimed at learning more about best practices and user needs in website development for Colleges/Universities.

- Reviewed white papers and secondary research about website development trends, prospective student website needs and College/University website development best practices.
- With the help of Institutional Research (IR), conducted interviews with leadership and key personnel in 12 UCCS departments and colleges.
- Also with the help of IR the committee conducted a web survey that was sent to current students, faculty and campus staff, which received over 800 responses.
- Reviewed the websites from 41 other colleges and universities, including UCCS peer institutions and competitors, along with other sites that had received recognition as being outstanding in the higher education field.
- Analyzed the current website design and outlined potential improvements that will be implemented in the redesign.
- Began gathering “feedback” on the current homepage to gather information from current users, including prospective students.

Goals

To design an institutional website that drives enrollment growth, engagement and retention, and contributes to the positive reputation of UCCS.

Project Scope

A cohesive institutional website, focused on prospective students as well as serving current campus community members, that covers "the first few clicks" before sending visitors out to the various department- and office-level websites.

Strategies

- Drive enrollment growth by supporting the recruitment and yield strategies, and satisfying the primary information needs of prospective students and others in the decision-making process.
- Contribute to retention and engagement by supporting the needs of current campus community members.
- Contribute to a positive reputation by presenting a high-quality, polished, thoughtful, genuine representation of UCCS.
- Design our information-architecture and user-experience to reflect the needs of our primary audiences, including for example, a focus on the mobile experience.

Success Metrics

- Increased traffic to content important to the recruitment and yield strategies, such as scheduling campus visits and starting applications.
- Improved user satisfaction as measured by user surveys and feedback mechanisms.
- Improved usability and accessibility as measured by scores on common accessibility and markup test such as WAVE, FAE, and the W3C Markup Validator.

Requirements

In order to accomplish the goals outlined here over the next nine months, the following support will be required:

1. Senior leadership approval of this project charter for the development of the UCCS institutional website.
2. Authority to reach out to any UCCS department or staff member for help with additional research, domain expertise, and content creation.
3. Budget — a pre-determined amount from which the final site development plan will be created.