Columbia.edu Style Guide

Policy, design, and technical standards

Version 1.3.1
November 14, 2005

If you have questions about this document, send an e-mail to:
webteam@columbia.edu.

Table of Contents

2 Overview
3 Workflow Chart
4 Organization Chart
5 Global Elements: Banner
6 Global Elements: Navigation
7 Global Elements: Footer
8 Homepage: Overview
9 Homepage: Photographs
10 Homepage: News
11 Internal Pages: Overview
12 Internal Pages: Sub-Pages
13 Headers
14 Typography & Spacing
15 HTML Coding Standards
16 File Names & Locations
17 Visual Templates: Generic
18 Visual Templates: Senior Administrator
19 Indexing & Editing Guidelines
Management Process
Day-to-day updates, corrections, and queries pertaining to the homepage and top-level pages of Columbia.edu are handled by the two-person Web Team, which consists of a producer and a multimedia developer employed by Columbia University Digital Knowledge Ventures (DKV). The team provides a range of services including information architecture, content development, design, HTML coding, and customer service.

Additional DKV staff are called on, as necessary, to provide photography and photo research, rights clearance, design supervision, advanced programming, and the development of new Web-based applications. The Web Team also maintains a close relationship with staff at AcIS, who maintain the servers and provide technical support for the search function, e-mail, site hosting, security, and other back-end processes.

Questions or suggestions that require discussion are forwarded by the Web Team to the Chair of the Web Advisory Committee (WAC) and either resolved by him or put on the agenda for the next month’s meeting.

Each month, DKV staff selects new photographs for the homepage in consultation with DKV’s Executive Director. These images are then sent for approval to the WAC and Columbia.edu's senior advisors: the Provost and the Vice President for Information Services. Any other significant change in content, navigation, or layout of the homepage and top-level pages must likewise be approved by the Provost.

News
Headlines and announcements are selected by the Public Affairs Office on a daily basis. Anyone wishing to submit a story or announcement for consideration should visit the Public Affairs Web site for more information:

Pages maintained by the Web Team
Co-owners provide content for their pages.

- about_columbia/
  - administration.html
  - directions.html
  - history.html
  - index.html
  - mission.html
  - tour/
  - Co-owner: Office of Public Affairs
- academic_programs/
  - index.html
  - departments.html
- az_index/
  - index.html
- faculty_staff/
  - index.html
- help/
  - about.html
  - copyright.html
  - index.html
  - search.html
  - visitor_info.html
  - slideshow/
- cu/jobs/
  - Co-owner: Human Resources Department
- neighbors/
  - index.html
  - local.html
  - opportunities.html
  - outreach.html
  - Co-owner: Office of Government and Community Affairs
- prospective_students/
  - index.html
- research/
  - departments.html
  - index.html
  - publications.html
  - research_institutes.html
- students/
  - index.html
  - org_gov.html
  - org_gov_az.html
  - services.html
  - Co-owner: Student Services
- publications/
  - index.html
  - school_departmental.html
  - student_periodicals.html

Ownership of Other Top-level Pages

- Alumni (http://alumni.columbia.edu)
  Owner: Alumni Relations Office, UDAR
- Athletics (http://gocolumbialions.com)
  Owner: Physical Education & Intercollegiate Athletics Department
  Owner: Public Affairs Office
- E-mail & Computing (http://www.columbia.edu/email_computing/index.html)
  Owner: AcIS
- Events Calendar (http://calendar.columbia.edu)
  Owner: Student Services
- Libraries (http://www.columbia.edu/cu/1web/)
  Owner: CU Libraries
- Medical Center (http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/)
  Owner: CU Medical Center

Information current as of March 2005
The Web Team fields suggestions and assembles a proposal.

Additional staff at DKV review.

Academic Information Systems (AcIS) is consulted if necessary.

DKV’s Executive Director determines if the proposal requires review by the WAC Chair. If not, it advances.

The Chair of the Web Advisory Committee reviews the proposal and may forward it for consideration to the entire committee.

The Chair determines if the proposal requires review by the Administration. If not, it advances.

The Provost and the Vice President for Information Services consider the proposal.

The Provost has final decision-making authority over the top levels of Columbia.edu.

Upon appropriate approvals, the Web Team proceeds with the project, working with AcIS and other DKV staff as necessary.
The Web Advisory Committee is a volunteer group of faculty and staff who provide recommendations to the Provost and the VP for Information Services, who reports to the Provost.

The two-person Web Team expands into a much larger “virtual” team with the assistance of staff at DKV and AcIS. Guidance is provided by the Executive Director of DKV, DKV’s Senior Director of IT Services (who also manages the Research & Development group at AcIS), and the Deputy VP, AcIS.
Banner

The banner establishes the visual identity for Columbia.edu. It contains several elements that remain the same from the homepage through most of the top-level pages.

CU Home Link

Although the logotype itself should be hot-linked to the homepage, this text link provides another navigation option for users.

Verdana, 12 pixels

style class NavLink

Help Link

This links to a Help section with information on resolving technical problems, using media plug-ins, and communicating with the Web Team and AcIS.

Verdana, 11 pixels

style class linkHeader

Logotype

Neither the words nor the crown may be modified for other uses, other than to scale the graphic in direct proportion to the original. All words must be legible. Minimum space equal to the height of the phrase “in the City of New York” must be maintained on all sides.

cu_logo.gif

Preferred size: 353 px width x 49 px height

Minimum size: 200 pix width x 28 px height

Search & Directories Feature

This feature includes a direct link to the Search & Directories page as well as an input field and radio buttons that allow the user to search either the sites hosted on Columbia’s servers or the directory of faculty, staff, and students.

Search & Directories

Verdana, 12 pixels

style class n/a

Search box size=12 to ensure proper display in Netscape 4.7.

“go” button

cu_btn_search.gif, 22 px width x 17 px height

“web” and “people”

Verdana, 11 pixels

style class smallText
Navigation

Providing a consistent navigation bar from the homepage through the top-level pages helps users to explore the site without getting lost.

Tip: To avoid confusion, the style of this bar should not be replicated with other links (i.e., with different navigation elements on other sites). Consider using just one of the blues, or a different color scheme.

Navigation Row Height

Most cells in the navigation bar are 17 pixels high. The first and last cell in each block are 22 pixels high.

Dividers

A 1-pixel high row divides each navigation row (see colors on the right).

Dividers between navigation blocks are 1 px height, color #CCCCCC

Current Section

White triangle next to the section link indicates current section

cu_nav_on.gif
7px width x 17px height

Navigation Block A

style class navLink
background color #2D2A62
divider color #314E83

Navigation Block B

style class navLink
background color #336699
divider color #5285B8

Navigation Block C

style class navLink2
background color #99CCFF
divider color #B8DBFF
Footer
Footer elements remain the same from the homepage through most of the top-level sections.

Webmaster Link
Queries through the Webmaster link are routed by AcIS. E-mail goes to webmaster@columbia.edu.

Columbia University Copyright
This is a direct link to the copyright page.
Overview

The homepage consists of two unique areas: a series of rotating photographs and a section for news and announcements. Additional links to Jobs, Visitor Information, and About this Site are provided exclusively on this page.

Top-level pages using this design retain the global elements (banner, footer, and navigation bar) while incorporating a separate set of styles for the content area (see page 11).

Special graphics for important universitywide events may be placed below the navigation for a limited period of time. The C250 logo was removed in 2005 and a graphic for Commencement was later added. Requests must be made to the Web Advisory Committee.
Photographs
At any given time there are at least 12 large images or image pairs, with at least one-third being replaced monthly. The photographs load randomly each time a user reloads the homepage, ensuring variety. The mix of images is selected to reflect different aspects of the Columbia experience: iconic images of Columbia’s physical space (e.g., Alma Mater, Low); academic scenes in classrooms and libraries; representative images of New York City, especially where it surrounds our campuses; student life, including studying, athletics, and leisure; diversity of people, especially the international aspect of the CU community.

After a photo is taken out of circulation it is catalogued in the “Homepage Slideshow Archive” at http://www.columbia.edu/help/slideshow/.
Photos may be used again, particularly for seasonal purposes, without going through the review process twice.

template file cuedu_home_photo.psd
dimensions 600px(w) x 217px(h)
Columbia News

The content for Columbia News is supplied by the Public Affairs Office, through a web-based application developed by Columbia DKV. The application allows Public Affairs to post up to four headlines in the middle column and up to three events or announcements in the right column. Columbia DKV provided a range of graphics to label the right column, such as “Announcement” or “Upcoming Event.”

Information on submitting ideas for articles or announcements is available on the Public Affairs Web site:

See Typography (page 14) for typography and spacing rules.

See Headers (page 13) for details about section headers and subheaders.
Overview

Section Banner
Top-level sections are identified with a banner that includes a topical photograph or pair and a gray bar with the name of the section in all-caps.

See Headers (page 13) for details about section headers and subheaders.

Content Area
The section template provides space for an introductory paragraph, lists of links, and sidebar text and links. Lists of links should be alphabetized unless there is a compelling reason not to do so.

See Typography (page 14) for details about text size, headers, spacing, and indenting.

See Indexing & Editing Guidelines (page 20) for information on organizing lists.

Left Column
When there are two columns on a section page, the width of the left column is 385 pixels, with space of 10 pixels on each side.

Right Column
Graphic headers such as “Quick Links” go above any other graphics or images. When a sidebar column is used, its width is 214 pixels, with space of 10 pixels on each side.
Sub-Pages

Pages within a section (excluding the main page) use a "breadcrumb" style of subnavigation, which includes a link to the main page of the section and the title of the sub-page. These elements are placed beneath the graphic section title header.

The content area of sub-pages can be developed in one of two ways: with a right-hand column for links and graphics, or without the column, when it is not useful.

See Typography (page 14) for typography and spacing rules.
Graphic Page Headers

Dimensions
width: 385 pixels
height: 33 pixels

Font
DIN 1451 Engschrift, 24 pt, Smooth
hex value: #666666

Matte
hex value: #E5E5E5
File name
cuedu_headers.psd

Graphic Sidebar Subheaders

One-line subheaders

Dimensions
width: 194 pixels
height: 15 pixels

Font
DIN 1451 Mittelschrift Alternate,
11.4 pt, Crisp
hex value: #666666

Matte
hex value: #FFFFFF
File name
cuedu_subh.psd

Two-line subheaders

Dimensions
width: 194 pixels
height: 27 pixels

Font
DIN 1451 Mittelschrift Alternate,
11.4 pt, Crisp
hex value: #666666

Matte
hex value: #FFFFFF
File name
cuedu_subh_2lines.psd

Place one <br /> tag between a sidebar subheader and the text beneath it. Place two <br /> tags between each text item under the subheader (see http://www.columbia.edu/academic_programs/index.html).
Typography & Spacing

**Text Copy**
Verdana 11 pixels with 17-pixel line-height for News and Announcements sections. Style class `smallText`.

**Secondary Pages and Sub-Pages**
Verdana 12 pixels with 18-pixel line-height for both main content area and right-hand column. Style class `none needed`.


**Subnavigation**
Pages within sections are denoted with a small title and a link back to the main page of that section.

**Text Headers**
Text headers are used to organize listings or text.

- **Level 1**
  Verdana 12 pixels, bolded, all caps, with 18-pixel line-height. Style class `header`.

- **Level 2**
  Verdana 13 pixels, bolded, with 21-pixel line-height. Style class `subheader`.

**Line breaks**
Place one break (`<br />`) between a header and listings. (See [http://www.columbia.edu/students/index.html](http://www.columbia.edu/students/index.html))

Place two breaks (`<br /><br />`) between a header and text content. (See [http://www.columbia.edu/about_columbia/administration.html](http://www.columbia.edu/about_columbia/administration.html))

Place one break (`<br />`) between a subheader and all content beneath it.

Place three breaks (`<br /><br /><br />`) between the end of a content section and a new header. (See [http://www.columbia.edu/research/index.html](http://www.columbia.edu/research/index.html))

Place two breaks (`<br /><br />`) between the end of a content subsection and a new subheader. (See [http://www.columbia.edu/research/index.html](http://www.columbia.edu/research/index.html)).

**Lists**

- **Indenting**
  Listings beneath headers are indented, using a 10-pixel wide column as a spacer.

- **Wrapping**
  If a listed item wraps, subsequent lines should be indented slightly. See HTML Coding Standards (page 15) for the code used to force indenting.

- **Bullets**
  Bullets are used when showing sections that fall within a single listing. See: [http://www.columbia.edu/academic_programs/index.html](http://www.columbia.edu/academic_programs/index.html).

- **“Back to Top” link**
  Pages with long listings include “Back to Top” links that return the visitor to the top of the page.

  On pages without a sidebar column, the “Back to Top” link is aligned with the final entry in each section in a 100-pixel wide, right-aligned column. See: [http://www.columbia.edu/az_index/index.html](http://www.columbia.edu/az_index/index.html).

  On pages with a sidebar column, the “Back to Top” link is placed in a separate, right-aligned row. Place two breaks (`<br /><br />`) between the final listing of a section and this link. See: [http://www.columbia.edu/students/org_gov.html](http://www.columbia.edu/students/org_gov.html).

---

RESEARCH

Research > DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH

Verdana 11 pixels with 17-pixel line-height. Style class `smallText`.

Verdana 11 pixels, bolded, all-caps, with 17-pixel line-height. Style class `breadcrumbHeader`. 
To preserve formatting and keep the code standardized, HTML should be coded by hand, not by using a WYSIWYG editor such as Dreamweaver or FrontPage.

**Tags**
Content sections should be denoted by tags such as: <!-- BEGIN [CONTENT SECTION] --> and <!-- END [CONTENT SECTION] -->

**Text**
Paragraphs should not wrap to new lines within the code. New paragraphs begin on new lines:

Columbia University in the City of New York was ...
<br /><br />
From its beginnings in a schoolhouse in lower ...
<br /><br />

**Space breaks**
Space between lines of text should be made using <br />, not <p>.

**Wrapped text in listings**
Code has been added to the style sheet to force a wrapped line of a listed item to indent. Each item in the listing should include <p class="indent"></p> when using this style:

<p class="indent"><a href="http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/">Journalism, Graduate School of</a></p>
<p class="indent"><a href="http://www.law.columbia.edu/">Law, School of</a></p>

**Images**
Always set width and height for images.
Always assign "alt" values to image tags.

**Attribute Quotes**
Always use attribute quotes (e.g., <table width="200"> not <table width=200>).
Graphics

Graphics files are stored on the DKV production server in the following folders:

Homepage photo templates
Folder: `other_projects\columbia_edu\design\FINAL\homepage_photo`
File name: cu_home_photo.psd / cu_home_#.jpg

Columbia 250 shield
Folder: `other_projects\columbia_edu\design\FINAL`
File name: cu_c250_shield.gif

Headers
Folder: `other_projects\columbia_edu\design\FINAL`
File name: cu_headers.psd / cu_header_.gif

Subheaders
Folder: `other_projects\columbia_edu\design\FINAL`
File name: cu_subh.psd / cu_subh_.gif

Site files

All other site files are located on wwwgrp.columbia.edu. When changes are made to a file, the file is uploaded first to the cu_staging server for QA. When QA is complete, the file is transferred to the cu_src folder. The file moves from the cu_src folder to Columbia's live servers when the "Push Home" script is run.

Only staff at Columbia DKV and AcIS have access to the root directories for pages managed as part of the Columbia.edu project.

Downloads

University groups wishing to adopt the Columbia.edu visual identity for their official Web sites may download the logotype, HTML example, stylesheets, and related files at: http://www.columbia.edu/help/styleguide/

See Visual Templates (page 17) for more information.
While Columbia University does not enforce design guidelines on sites produced by schools, departments, or offices, it is recommended that these groups incorporate some aspects of the university's identity into their Web pages. Options are provided through the generic template.

**Generic Template**

This template employs a smaller version of the homepage banner (see p.5 for details) and the footer (see p. 7). It does not include the left-hand navigation (p.6) because only university-wide sites are permitted to use the tri-color style of the homepage design, with approval of the Web Advisory Committee.

The space between the banner and the footer may be customized. The Web Team recommends that university groups design their own banners that clearly display their name. Navigation may run down the left-hand side or across the top of the page. The vertical gray rules are optional.

*Tip:* At a minimum, it is helpful to users if official university sites place the dark blue strip with "CU Home" at the top of their pages.

Download

Files for this template are available for downloading at: [http://www.columbia.edu/help/styleguide/](http://www.columbia.edu/help/styleguide/)
Senior Administrator Template

This template was developed for use by senior University administrators. It has been integrated with the content management system developed by Administrative Information Systems (AIS) and thus can be maintained by non-technical staff.

It includes the following elements:

• Homepage banner, footer and navigation bar (see pages 5-7)
• Administration banner with name of office, navigation for office pages, and Low Library photo
• Photo of Administrator (150w x 150h)

Tip: Senior administrators should contact the Web Team for information on using this template.
Alphabetical Lists

In alphabetical lists, the substantive word should lead the entry. Generally speaking, the word "Columbia" should appear first only when it is the proper name of a university entity and its absence would be misleading or inaccurate. While rules for indexing are somewhat subjective, the following examples should assist in adding future entries.

Schools
Journalism, Graduate School of Public Health, Mailman School of

Departments and Programs
Epidemiology Department
Materials Science and Engineering Program

Institutes and Centers
Accounting and Security Analysis, Center for Excellence in Child and Family Policy, Institute for Chazen, Jerome A., Institute of International Business

Student Groups
Glee Club
Columbia Daily Spectator
American Institute of Aeronautics & Astronautics at Columbia (AIAA)

Administrative Offices
Student Financial Services
Provost, Office of the Executive Vice President for Health and Biomedical Sciences, Office of the

Editing

Pages managed by the Columbia.edu Web Team conform to the editing standards outlined in the comprehensive Editorial Style Guide developed by Columbia University Digital Knowledge Ventures. In matters of style DKV follows primarily The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th edition (CMS), and for spelling relies on Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition.

The Columbia.edu Editorial Style Guide is available in web-based and printer-friendly format at: http://www.dkv.columbia.edu/edstyleguide