

## Web Site Assessment 10/25/02

In attendance: Web Team members

### 1) Web customers:

- Internal are primarily on-campus constituents, with the ability to be off-campus
- External are off-campus constituents, usually without EC accounts
- The distinction between these audiences supports customized navigation and marketing needs, while assisting to better target user needs and situations.

Internal	External
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students, faculty and staff</li> <li>• Members of student and faculty organizations</li> <li>• Members of campus committees</li> <li>• Faculty meeting attendees</li> <li>• Members of departments and programs</li> <li>• Web content creators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prospective               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Employees</li> <li>○ Students/Families</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Board Members</li> <li>• Parents               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Current</li> <li>○ Past</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Alumni, donors, etc.</li> </ul>

### 2) Web site needs:

What do our customers want?

- **Ease of navigation and use**
- **Information they would expect to have obtained in person before the Web – almost anything/everything**
- **Official documents**
- **Readable and well written text**
- **Up to date information**
- **Information in usable chunks**
- Visuals/photos/embellishments – video and audio
- Expect it to work - reliable services – want it to work, be fast - want it now
- A sense of the spirit/atmosphere/values of our campus
- Interactivity – doing “business” online at their convenience and in their time-frame
- Entrée to campus – directories, people, offices
- Compatibility with their own system
- Ability to report problems and ask for help/info when something doesn’t work
- Anonymity – browse without having someone “breathing down your neck”
- Ability to do business at their convenience (pay bills, donate, make reservations as well as instruction and homework --internal and external)
- Expect the site to function within the culture of the times (offer services similar to that of other sites)
- Campus goings on – news, calendar and events
- To further teaching and learning
- Juxtaposition of user’s need with our marketing needs

What does the Web Team need/want?

- A content management system that interacts with the Banner database
- An interactive system that is expandable, intuitive and teachable.

**3) Current Site Positives & Negatives:**

Positives	Negatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wealth of info – helpful detail</li> <li>• Existing content gives us a good start in redesign</li> <li>• Provide interactivity for primary functions (online forms &amp; PDFs)</li> <li>• People on-campus are familiar with the site</li> <li>• Diversity of search options – site index, Google search (www &amp; Earlham)</li> <li>• Depth of interconnection (links between pages)</li> <li>• Use of material in print or externally reused on Web</li> <li>• Sense of ownership among some departmental Web sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Front page too busy</li> <li>• Organizational structure inadequate</li> <li>• Navigation lacks method &amp; consistency</li> <li>• Inconstant graphic appearance to support institutional identity (including layout)</li> <li>• Lack of accountability/ownership for Web site/page quality and content</li> <li>• Site not focused to meet needs of primary user groups</li> <li>• Lack of training</li> <li>• Inability to do financial transactions</li> <li>• Little if any connection to our printed material (publications)</li> <li>• We have a non-standard site – structurally, visually, navigationally</li> <li>• Lack of effective procedures &amp; mechanisms for keeping the site up to date (maybe not relative to some other colleges)</li> <li>• Diversity of search options without listed rules/methods</li> <li>• WebDB essentially separate from main site (site is bifurcated)</li> <li>• WebDB limits services compared with other campuses</li> <li>• Lack of or awkward control to non-public information</li> <li>• Uneven commitment by departments to maintain/create departmental sites</li> <li>• Lack of consistent design – resistance to losing design and content control over site</li> <li>• Lack of a well communicated central Web plan &amp; sufficient staff</li> <li>• Budget limits use of outside products and number of staff</li> </ul>

#### **4) Goals for the plan:**

- Need to create balance between institutional plan and local initiative/imagination/creativity/responsibility
- Develop guidelines for appropriate Web content within context of “Community Principles & Practices
- Plan must be realistic given resource limitations
- Include training and tools in plan (with incentives for using/attendance)
- Plan for maintaining an up-to-date site
- Redesign site architecture to improve organization and maintenance
- Redesign page layouts incorporating consistency
- Plan for enhanced use of Web site for instruction and to conduct daily business
- Integrate existing resources with new services and technology
- Create a relatively “guided navigation” customized for primary audiences
- Involve the campus in planning and policy setting initiatives
- Evaluate site use and incorporate feedback into future plans
- Provide staff development and training
- Communicate plan to community

#### **5) Rationale for Change:**

1. Enable customers to use site more efficiently and effectively
2. Modernize the site
3. Improve communication of Earlham’s distinctiveness
4. Need to meet customer expectations, needs and wants (navigation, content, etc.)
5. Need to improve site performance (efficiency, maintenance, services, etc.)
6. Improve site management
7. Provide new and additional services

#### **Notes on standard usage of terms:**

- Web site
- Internet
- Web Team
- Home Page
- e-mail/ E-mail