Faculty: How to get a free personal website!

Intro: Is your current personal website years old? Do you find that you need to hire someone to update your site? Are you tired of dealing with learning website-building software like Dreamweaver to update your site at http://web.arizona.edu/~homepage/? Are you too busy to build your own website? Do you want a website where you can update your own content at will? Do you want a cool page to link to from your profile page on your department's website?

FYI: Here is some awesome news for any faculty member here at the UA who needs a personal website with the capacity to update anything at a moment’s notice without any special web skills or professional software.

The Story: About two years ago, the amazing staff at Office of Instruction and Assessment (OIA) decided that using a new open-source cms system could help solve the campus-wide problem of endless requests for website design and assistance. By creating a simple template, the folks over in the OIA now offer a free service to any UA professor who wishes to take an hour of their time to make an appointment, come in, bring some information on a flash drive and talk to a staff member. This staff member will develop your site for you, upload some content that you bring, and teach you how to log in using your UA NetID, and train you how to manage your very own website material.

What will I get? From anywhere in the world, you can log onto your website, update your office hours, class content, syllabi, cv, list of publications, change your picture, add new pages, etc. You can post MSWord docs, add pdf files, video files, post photos or lists of links. Once you are comfortable with that, you can expand features to do things like add a blog or create additional menu items or even passworded directories. You can start with just a basic site and keep adding over the years as you become more comfortable with the system. The service is free and you can find out more about it when you meet with OIA staff.

Preparation: It is always appreciated when your content is ready before you even make your appointment. Not only does it respect the time of the staff person, more importantly, it will prevent you from having to come back, thus saving your own time. Here is a guideline for what to put on your jumpdrive (thumbdrive or any removeable media) when you are ready to visit OIA:

1. An MSWord doc or txt file is perfect
2. Include all your pertinent info such as office hours, phone number, office location, fax number, email address, etc.
3. A brief bio of yourself or description of what you do
4. Put a recent photo of yourself on the jumpdrive too!
5. Your cv or resume (pdf or MSWord doc or both)
6. A list of the classes you teach (optional)
7. Your list of publications and/or books, presentations, conferences, etc. (optional)
8. Your syllabi (optional)
9. Whatever else you’d like to include on your site! Ideas include: all the stuff you need to post in your peer review anyway, links to labs, links to research resources, links to press releases and media featuring your work, accomplishments, awards, etc.
10. Any media such as videos, pdf files, pictures, that you would like to feature (optional)

With this kind of pre-preparation, OIA will be able to build the pages for you very quickly and you’ll be able to start managing your own website right away from the comfort of your own desk!

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