Web Policy for Student-Led Academic Society Sites

This policy brief has been authored by the CTO Lab under supervision of the Academic Office as part of the campus-wide web migration audit effort. Student leaders in each respective society must be familiar with, and abide by the guidelines in this web policy; doing so will ensure successful use of society web space, and contribute to a more legitimate online presence. Moreover, society contacts and information can be better maintained for the benefit of all society stakeholders. For more information on BYU web migration, we recommend visiting this web page. While these policies are targeted towards societies, this document may also be a useful resource for student associations. Significant items are highlighted in red.

Introduction: Why a Web Policy?

Academic Societies with all of its subsidiary sites constitutes the largest presence of a single office on the BYU-Idaho public website; with anywhere between 80-100 active societies in any given semester, there are hundreds of web pages that can be attributed to these student-led societies. In the past (using the old Webtools platform), site access and maintenance was unorganized and hard to track, resulting in outdated and abandoned society pages, as well as a functional disconnect between web editors as each new presidency took their place.

Because societies tend to change leadership frequently (often on a semestery basis), continuity of information in general can be difficult if not handled responsibly, and society web presence tends to be one of the most important items left behind when responsibilities are handed over at the end of each term. As such, this web policy aims to educate, define, and organize a set of processes and procedures that can help your society to achieve an effective web presence that is current, organized, and easily maintained.

Part 01: Why a Website?
The success or failure of society activity and participation lies in that units’ ability to effectively communicate its message(s) and existence to certain groups. In the 21st century, the most popular medium for such communication is the internet, most commonly via institutional web pages and sites. When students are looking for more information on specific societies or extra-curricular interests, they will first turn to the web. As such, each registered society must have at least one maintained web page (at least detailing up-to-date contact information). It is also highly recommended that each society maintain a Facebook group (not a page) that is linked to and from the BYU page; FB groups are useful as members are notified of all updates published on the group wall (with pages notifications only appear on the user’s news feed).
Part 02: Web Management Structure

The organizational approach to web policy is perhaps as important as policy relating to content—a mutually understood system allows sites to be managed and maintained with consistency and ease. Starting from the “top” the Academic Office secretaries are responsible for maintaining the main societies landing page (www.byui.edu/societies). Under this domain are the sites for each individual society; so for example, the address for the International Studies Society is www.byui.edu/societies/international-studies. For these individual society sites, at least two individuals need to always have access to editing the site: one must be a fulltime employee (e.g. admin support/department secretary, or the faculty advisor for the society); the second individual must be a member of the society (preferably from the presidency or leadership). These individuals need to contact and be known by the Academic Societies office by the first week of the semester, if not before (so they can give users access and editing rights).

While the fulltime employee web editor (admin support/faculty advisor) should become familiar and comfortable using the Ingeniux web builder platform, it is encouraged that the students take the lead on keeping the site maintained throughout each semester. If and when personnel changes occur within the society that affect web access, it is the responsibility of the student web editor to a) train the new student replacement on the basics of web editing and maintenance, b) notify the Academic Societies staff of this change, and request access for the new replacement.

At any given time, the Academic Office staff should be able to know not only who is in the leadership of each society, but who is responsible for maintaining the site.

Part 03: Web Strategy

Creation of websites is not a one-time task, but is an on-going process vital to the effective communication efforts of an organization. It is therefore imperative that each society have a defined web strategy that details at least a) a basic site plan, b) a basic maintenance schedule. University Communications is currently requiring every office and department to document a “site information architecture,” which includes an overall approach, site map, and maintenance plan for public web content; we strongly encourage that each society do likewise so that future leaders in the group can also understand the role of the web in your society operations. For more information on site plans, please view the instructional documents on the Ingeniux Web Migration page.

In terms of maintenance, all contact details must be kept current and updated by the end of the first week of each new semester; all other society information (membership details, due fees, meeting times, etc.) should also be updated at the beginning of each semester, and kept current at all times. Maintenance plans should also specify how assigned web editors will be trained in using the Ingeniux web builder platform.
Part 04: Content
You are free to use your site as you wish in order to display web content to the public and your target audience(s), as long as all images, links and writing are relevant to the society’s mission, and are in accordance with BYU-Idaho standards (please consult with your faculty advisor or the societies office if you have any queries regarding appropriateness of content). Below are details of content that is required and recommended for your site.

**Required Content**

- A landing page featuring a short description of the society (mission, interests, benefits, details on how to join or get involved, etc).
- A list/table of contacts featuring the following:
  - Name, position, and email of all student leaders in the society.
  - Name and contact details of faculty advisor and admin support personnel.
  - A star (*) next to the name of the primary site manager (the student), and two stars (**) next to the name of the site co-manager (fulltime employee from sponsoring college or dept.).
- Links to any affiliated websites or pages that are updated and used by the society (e.g. Facebook group or blog, or national honor society information).
- A “Last Updated” date-mark at the bottom of the landing page which must be updated each time edits are made to the site, in the following format [Last Updated Month day, year]

**Recommended Content**

- Some kind of quality image or banner that represents or illustrates the society and its members.
- A schedule, or information about upcoming gatherings/events (date, location, description etc.).
- A few images or details of past society gatherings (additional photos can be stored on Facebook groups or other external sites).
- A list of useful resources relating to careers/internships/graduate programs/relevant information for your society.
- Reports, newsletters, or other online academic publications.

Part 05: Web Resources

For more full details on web migration, planning, and using Ingeniux, please refer to the Web Support Resources page. It is recommended you find somebody in your department or college with experience using the Ingeniux web builder platform to show you the ropes of site building and maintenance; also, be sure to attend a couple of the web builder workshops that are held weekly in order to become familiar with the tool.
Part 06: Policy Recap
In this section, each of the individual policies will be listed in short form for your reference and review:

1) Each registered society must have at least one web page in their assigned site space that is maintained and kept current. It is recommended that societies also maintain a Facebook group to assist in the coordination of society activity. Societies that cease to continue must contact the societies office and un-publish their site. (See Part 01)

2) At least two individuals from the society need to always have access to editing the site; one must be a full-time employee (e.g. admin support/department secretary, or the faculty advisor for the society); the other must be a member of the society (preferably from the presidency or leadership). (See Part 02)

3) Whenever the web editors retire from their positions in the society, they must contact the societies office with the name of their replacements before they leave so that web access can be given. (See Part 02)

4) Societies should document a plan for their site and its maintenance. This does not have to be submitted to the societies office but should be kept and known within the society (it is suggested you put this kind of information in a society leadership handbook, which is recommended you create if you don’t already have one). (See Part 03)

5) Society contact and other general information should be updated on the site during the first week of the semester; the specific semester should be stated above the contact info. (See Part 03)

6) In terms of content, each site should contain at least:
   a. A brief description of the society,
   b. An updated contacts list, which denotes the site managers,
   c. Links to any other sites used and maintained by the society,
   d. A current “Last Updated” date-mark at the bottom of the landing page.
   (See Part 04)

Part 07: Site Example
Required items are highlighted in red; recommended items are highlighted in blue.
"Of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms." ~ D&C 88:99

Welcome to the BYU-Idaho International Studies Society website!

Officially we are known as the Epsilon Zeta (EZ) chapter of the Sigma Iota Rho (SIR) National Honors Society for International Studies. The EZ chapter was established in the Spring 2012 semester as Sigma Iota Rho's first chapter in the state of Idaho. Membership in the national honors society represents outstanding academic achievement in the field of international studies, and opens unique networking, learning, and publication opportunities to those who join. While the presidency of this society at BYU-Idaho must be members of the SIR chapter, society activities and gatherings are open to all foreign language and international studies majors, as well as all BYU-Idaho students unless specifically stated.

We invite you to browse our site for more information about the society, and to join our Facebook group [BYU-Idaho International Studies Society (SIR)] to keep up-to-date with the latest announcements and happenings.

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