

# English/Writing Program Website Style Guide

## Draft 1.2 / 07.15.04

### **Mission**

The purpose of this document is to create consistency in the construction and maintenance (but not design) of all websites connected to the English department and the Writing Program. This consistency will, in turn, enable any worker trained on one such site to work on any other site.

All sites are expected to be in full compliance with these policies. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 732-445-2106 or [barclay.barrios@rutgers.edu](mailto:barclay.barrios@rutgers.edu)

### **Servers, Accounts, and Access**

1. All sites should have departmental accounts. Departmental accounts allow multiple users to access the account and allow for virtual hosts. To request a departmental account, follow the instructions at <http://www.nbcs.rutgers.edu/newdocs/dept/dept.php3#Submit> (or simply follow the appropriate links off the RCI homepage). Keep in mind that you will be asked to submit three names for a departmental account, in case your first choice is not available. In some rare occasions, sites will be hosted outside of Rutgers. In these cases, FTP/server info should be sent to Barclay Barrios ([barclay.barrios@rutgers.edu](mailto:barclay.barrios@rutgers.edu)).
2. All sites should have a virtual host address, in the form of "some\_site.rutgers.edu." Before making the request, you must have a web page of some sort in the public\_html directory of the site, if only a temporary placeholder. Requests for such an address should be directed to [help@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:help@rci.rutgers.edu). In the email you should specify what address you'd like, what departmental account is associated with the address, and what URL the virtual host should point to. For example, after getting the departmental account "dialogs," we requested [dialogs.rutgers.edu](http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~dialogs) to point to [www.rci.rutgers.edu/~dialogs](http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~dialogs).
3. Barclay Barrios ([barriosb](mailto:barriosb)) and Richard Miller ([rimiller](mailto:rhimiller)) should be set as "super users," for all departmental accounts. A super user has the ability to grant access to other users. To set these accounts as super users, log into the department account access page at <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/ratspriv/grouptool>, grant access to [barriosb](mailto:barriosb) and [rimiller](mailto:rhimiller), and then click the "ChangePrivs" button and put a check mark next to these names to give them super user status.
4. Due to the new security restrictions as RCI, all sites should also have samba passwords activated, retrieved, and on file with me. The samba password will serve as an alternate means of accessing the server; having these passwords on file will prevent confusion since each user can request a samba password, invalidating the passwords of previous users. To activate samba and get the password, see <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/tools.php>. Please note that you will need to check the mail on the department account. See <http://www.nbcs.rutgers.edu/newdocs/dept/dept.php3#Getting> for help with this.

5. Traffic to all sites should be tracked twice a year, in December and in May. If you are responsible for maintaining a site, you will need to retrieve the traffic data for your site from <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/stats/web/>. This data should be dumped into an Excel spreadsheet and sent to Barclay Barrios ([barclay.barrios@rutgers.edu](mailto:barclay.barrios@rutgers.edu)).

### **Site Construction, File Naming, and Organization**

1. All HTML files should end in the extension ".html"—*not* ".htm." Recent versions of Dreamweaver require you to change the default extension in an XML file. To make ".html" the default file extension, search your computer for the file "MMDocumentTypes.xml." Open this file and on the third line, reverse the order of "htm" and "html" then save the file.
2. Files and folders should *only* use lowercase letters. Not only does this make URLs more robust and easier to remember, but RCI's servers are case sensitive, so if someone doesn't remember the exact capitalization you created they won't be able to find a page.
3. Files and folders should not have any spaces in their names. Instead, use an underscore ("\_") to designate a space, as in "file\_name.html." RCI's servers do not handle spaces well at all.
4. All sites should be strongly organized through rigorous folder implementation. Folders should logically reflect the organization of the site and should be used to group together similar or related pages. When making folders, keep in mind that they're reflected in the eventual URL of the page, so you will want to reflect that in naming.
5. The main file of every folder, including the root, should be index.html. The only exceptions are those folders that have no HTML files (such as the templates or images folders or folders of folders) or sites constructed with PHP, ASP, or some other scripting language.
6. Files should be named intuitively, though consideration should also be given for length. Avoid lengthy names for files.
7. All images should be stored in a folder called "images." Further organization within this folder is strongly encouraged.
8. All templates should be stored in a folder called "templates." Please note that Dreamweaver automatically creates a folder for templates but names it "Templates." This should be changed to lowercase.
9. All style sheets should be named "style.css." For sites that have multiple style sheets, naming should be logical—for example, "inner\_style.css."
10. The index, the favorites icon (see #8 below) and style sheet should be the only files in the root. Some exceptions are possible, particularly PHP or JavaScript files whose functionality are impeded by being located in folders.
11. All templates should have accompanying design notes that explain what the template is used for. To make a design note, go to the site window, select the template, right click, and choose "Design Notes" (the last option). Select

“final” from the drop-down box (assuming this is indeed the finished version of the template) and then type a short description of what that template is used for in the site.

### **Design, Construction, and Maintenance**

1. All pages in a site, except for the main page, should use templates. This makes it easy to add new pages into the site and to update existing pages.
2. Templates will typically have two regions, which should be named “Title” and “content.” At the very least, the main content area of a template should be named “content.” Consistent naming makes it easier to import content as needed.
3. All sites should use style sheets. Font family, size, color, and style, specifically, should *not* be set through the properties palette in Dreamweaver or through the use of the <FONT> tag.
4. All styles should be named intuitively.
5. All style sheets should have an attached design note that specifies how and where every style in the sheet is used in the site. See 11 above for instructions on how to make a design note.
6. Content should be chunked throughout the site. As a general rule, a page should not be longer than 2 screens, meaning someone should only have to scroll down one screen’s length. Longer pages should be broken into several shorter pages.
7. The main page of all sites should have a linked Rutgers logo image, a copyright notice, and the English/Writing Program logo, linked to <http://english.rutgers.edu/sites>. Contact Barclay Barrios ([barclay.barrios@rutgers.edu](mailto:barclay.barrios@rutgers.edu)) for copies of this logo. A layered Photoshop version is available for those sites that do not use a white background.
8. Ideally, the main page of a site should not scroll at all but should be designed such that it fits within a 1024x768 browser window.
9. All of the primary links on a main page should lead to an inner page of the site. Outside links should not be featured off the main page, since immediately leaving a site is disorienting to visitors. Opening these links in new browser windows can also annoy visitors. If you need to link to an outside source, create a “jump” inner page that describes the resource and provides the outside link there. Three main exceptions to this policy are for the links to other English/Writing Program sites, the E/WP logo, and the link to the Rutgers main page.
10. All sites should use the favorites icon, favicon.ico. This is a small image that will appear in the address bar of certain browsers and will designate the page in bookmark lists. Contact Barclay Barrios ([barclay.barrios@rutgers.edu](mailto:barclay.barrios@rutgers.edu)) for copies of this icon. Installing the icon is very simple—you only need to place the file in the root directory of the site.

11. All sites should have some form of contact information available, preferably through an email link at the bottom of inner pages. If the departmental account is used for the email address, be sure that someone has responsibility for regularly checking that mail.
12. If inner pages feature a banner image at the top of the page, this image should be linked to the main page of the site.
13. All sites should be backed up before any major work is performed. These backups should be stored for a period of at least 3 months.
14. All people working on any English/Writing Program site should have check in/check out enabled in their copy of Dreamweaver. To enable this feature, click Site → Manage Sites → [select the site to change] → Edit → [be sure you're on the advanced tab] → Remote info. Use your initials and email address.
15. Because of RCI's security policies, remember to set the permissions for *all* new files and folders on a site. You will need the "set permissions" extension for Dreamweaver MX 2004. Contact Barclay Barrios ([barclay.barrios@rutgers.edu](mailto:barclay.barrios@rutgers.edu)) if you need help with this.
16. All new pages should be spellchecked before uploading. Spellcheck is available in Dreamweaver by hitting Shift-F7.
17. All sites should be compatible with a variety of browsers, platforms, and screen resolutions. Specifically, sites should be tested:
  - At both 1024x768 and 800x600 screen resolutions (support for 640x480 is NOT expected)
  - In both Internet Explorer 6 and Netscape Navigator 7 (support for Netscape Navigator 4.X is no longer required)
  - On both Windows and Mac. For Mac testing, use the computers in any RUCS lab and test in both Safari and Navigator.

#### **Miscellaneous Policies**

- English/Writing Program server space should not be used as storage space for personal files.
- On occasion, some folders will be "orphaned" within a site, having no clear function in the site as a whole. If these folders contain separate sites or are otherwise clearly related to the site's function, they should be explained by a design note that specifies their function.