



## UNIVERSITY POLICY

**Section:** 80.1.7

**Section Title:** University Communications and Marketing: University Communications and Marketing Policies

**Policy Name:** Rutgers University Website Policy

**Formerly Book:** N/A

**Approval Authority:** Vice President for University Communications and Marketing

**Responsible Executive:** Vice President for University Communications and Marketing

**Responsible Office:** Department of University Communications and Marketing; Office of Information Technology

**Adopted:** 12/10/2020

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<b>Policy Name:</b>	Rutgers University Website Policy				
<b>Section #:</b>	80.1.7	<b>Section Title:</b>	University Communications and Marketing: University Communications and Marketing Policies	<b>Formerly Book:</b>	N/A
<b>Approval Authority:</b>	Vice President for University Communications and Marketing	<b>Adopted:</b>	12/10/2020	<b>Reviewed:</b>	
<b>Responsible Executive:</b>	Vice President for University Communications and Marketing	<b>Revised:</b>			
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### 1. Policy Statement

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All policies are subject to amendment. Please refer to the Rutgers University Policy Library website ([policies.rutgers.edu](http://policies.rutgers.edu)) for the official, most recent version.

This policy governs all websites representing Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, and any of its entities that are used to conduct official University business or that provide official University information to its constituents. These include, but are not limited to, websites under the domain umbrella rutgers.edu.

The University's rutgers.edu domain is a valuable asset of the institution, and all websites falling under that domain umbrella (i.e., any website that uses a web address that includes ".rutgers.edu" in its name, such as "admissions.rutgers.edu" or "~~uem~~communications.rutgers.edu") are governed by this policy.

This policy also applies to rutgers.com, rutgers.org, rutgers.info, and all other domain categories of websites that represent any entity of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, and that are used to conduct official University business (i.e., cinj.org).

This policy is not intended to affect the activities of faculty members and their freedom to conduct and share research and other academic and scholarly work.

This policy is not intended to affect student organization websites.

## 2. Reason for Policy

Rutgers websites are valuable assets of the University. As critical business and communications vehicles for Rutgers, it is important that the information they provide be accessible, accurate, easy to find and navigate, and timely.

This policy has the following objectives for all websites used to conduct official University business:

- a. To ensure sites are regularly updated and provide accurate content to constituents
- b. To present a consistent, professional image of Rutgers that maintains the integrity of the institution and is befitting of a leading research university
- c. To define certain visual and informational elements required for all Rutgers websites
- d. To ensure websites clearly establish a unit's relationship to Rutgers and consistently include basic elements intended to aid users as they navigate across Rutgers websites
- e. To define website accessibility standards and requirements
- f. To establish a process to decommission dormant Rutgers websites and to reclaim rutgers.edu subdomains

## 3. Who Should Read this Policy

- a. All Rutgers faculty and staff
- b. All administrative leaders, including members of the Administrative Council
- c. All those hired or assigned to develop or maintain Rutgers websites, including vendors, student workers, and part-time and casual workers

## 4. Resources

[University Policy 20.1.15: Charitable Contributions and Expending University Funds Related to Charitable Causes](#)

[University Policy 40.2.13: Donor Gift Policy](#)

[University Policy 50.3.7: Copyright Policy](#)

[University Policy 60.1.9: Commercial and Charitable Solicitations](#)

[University Policy 60.4.2: Code of Ethics for Administrative and Professional Staff Members](#)

[University Policy 60.5.8: Conflicts of Interest – Faculty; Professional Activities Outside the University and Outside Employment for Academic Personnel](#)

[University Policy 70.1.1: Acceptable Use Policy for Information Technology Resources](#)

[University Policy 70.1.2: Information Classification](#)

[University Policy 70.1.5: Rutgers University World Wide Web Accessibility Policy](#)

[University Policy 70.1.6: Email and Calendar Policy](#)

[University Policy 80.1.4: Endorsements, Sponsorships, and Advertising in and on University Assets and Communication Materials](#)

[University Policy 80.1.5: University Visual Identity](#)

Code of Ethics: General Conduct: [uec.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/CodeofEthics.pdf](http://uec.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/CodeofEthics.pdf)

Communicating about Rutgers: [communications.rutgers.edu](http://communications.rutgers.edu)

Data Classification Information: [rusecure.rutgers.edu/data-classification](http://rusecure.rutgers.edu/data-classification)

Information Technology Policies: [it.rutgers.edu/policies](http://it.rutgers.edu/policies)

Report Accessibility Barrier / Provide Feedback Form: [it.rutgers.edu/it-accessibility-initiative/barrierform](http://it.rutgers.edu/it-accessibility-initiative/barrierform)

Visual Identity System: [communications.rutgers.edu/brand-policies/visual-identity-system](http://communications.rutgers.edu/brand-policies/visual-identity-system)

Website Security: [it.rutgers.edu/security](http://it.rutgers.edu/security)

## 5. Definitions

- Domain Name – an organization's unique internet identity. The root domain is the web address and includes a domain name (Rutgers) and a name domain extension, or top-level domain, such as .edu, .com, ~~or~~ .info. Registration of a domain provides for the creation of subdomains, websites, and email addresses for an organization. Domains such as rutgers.edu and rutgershealth.org are owned by Rutgers and managed by the Office of Information Technology. Subdomains that are part of the Rutgers domain, such as [xxxxx].rutgers.edu, must be requested from the Network Operations Center (NOC).
- Domain Registrar – a company that manages the reservation of internet domain names and their internet protocol (IP) address assignment.
- Endorsement – any statement, publication, visual representation, or activity that appears to indicate a preference by the University, or any of its employees acting as representatives of the University, for any commercial product or service. Rutgers policy prohibits endorsements that are qualitative. A neutral statement of fact is typically not an endorsement.

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- Footer – the bottom section of a webpage, which is often the same on every page of the website and typically contains copyright information. The organization name, contact information, and additional links can also be added to the footer.
- Homepage – the introductory page of a website, which typically serves as the front door to the domain. It is the page that loads when you visit a web address that contains only a domain name. For example, rutgers.edu is the homepage of the Rutgers domain.
- Identity – the University’s identity guidelines define the standards for using Rutgers’ logos and other graphic marks and visual identity elements.
- LMS – a Learning Management System (LMS) is software used to administer, document, and deliver educational coursework. It facilitates online learning and provides metrics for reporting.
- NOC – the Network Operations Center (NOC) is the unit within the central Office of Information Technology that manages Rutgers’ central data network, including assigning Rutgers domain names.
- Sponsorship – the provision of money or gifts, such as goods, materials, and/or services, by an external entity to a University unit in support of activities, events, or programs. Rutgers policy provides guidance on how sponsors can be acknowledged on [University websites](#).
- Subdomain – a domain that is part of a larger domain. Using subdomains provides for the creation of discrete website addresses for unique site content across a larger organization. Subdomains, such as [xxxxx].rutgers.edu and [xxxxx].rutgershealth.org, can be used to represent smaller sections of the larger Rutgers organization.
- University Business – the work performed as part of an employee’s job responsibilities, daily work, and duties performed on behalf of the University by faculty, staff, student workers, guests, and other persons whose conduct, in the performance of work for the University, is under the direct control of the University, whether or not they are paid by the University. This includes any email, calendar events, files, or other electronic business data created, stored, processed, and/or transmitted that is related to work performed for Rutgers.
- URL – the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) is used to specify addresses on the web for all sites, pages, links, images, audio, video, etc.
- WCAG – the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) explain how to make web content more accessible to people with disabilities and are published by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), the main international standards organization for the internet.
- Web Integrity Team – the Web Integrity Team, comprised of staff from the Department of University Communications and Marketing and the Office of Information Technology, works with units across the University to coordinate the content certification process.
- Webpage – a hypertext document on the internet. It can include text, links, images, audio, video, etc.
- Website – a compilation of a set of web pages viewed with a browser. It is a static content repository whose purpose is informational.
- Web Application – an interactive program that requires programmatic user input and data processing. It is a program that runs remotely and depends on a backend for processing and data storage.

## 6. The Policy

All official Rutgers websites must adhere to the following standards and criteria:

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## I. Website Requirements

### A. ACCESSIBILITY

In accordance with federal law, and in order for University websites to be viewed and used by the widest audience, all webpages must comply with [University Policy 70.1.5: Rutgers University World Wide Web Accessibility Policy](#).

### B. UNIVERSITY IDENTITY

1. The full name of the University—Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey—must appear on every webpage, preferably in the footer at the bottom of the page. For a suggestion on using the full name of the University, see Website Footer Requirements.
2. The Rutgers logotype, with or without the shield or an official unit signature, must appear in the top of every webpage. For more information on the Rutgers logotype and signatures, see the [Visual Identity System webpage](#).
3. The use and placement of University trademarks must follow the standards defined in the [Rutgers Visual Identity User Guide \[PDF\]](#).<sup>[FL1]</sup>

### C. LINK TO THE UNIVERSITYWIDE HOMEPAGE

The top section of all website homepages officially representing Rutgers must include an easily identifiable link to the universitywide homepage ([www.rutgers.edu](http://www.rutgers.edu)). This ensures that visitors to any University webpage can navigate, if needed, to a consistent “home base.” For examples, see [communications.rutgers.edu/linking-rutgers-homepage](http://communications.rutgers.edu/linking-rutgers-homepage).

### D. SEARCH FUNCTION

1. All official University websites must provide a search function for their sites.
2. All official University websites must provide a way to search all of Rutgers University by either adding the Rutgers search to their site or linking to the Rutgers search ([search.rutgers.edu](http://search.rutgers.edu)).

### E. CONTACT INFORMATION

Top-level pages of websites must include a clear way to contact the unit for additional information or to report problems on the webpage.

### F. WEBSITE FOOTER REQUIREMENTS

To ensure all University websites are copyright protected, comply with federal accessibility requirements, and allow visitors to navigate across the University, all University webpages must display the following information at the bottom of the page in the webpage footer:

1. A prominent link to the Universitywide homepage ([www.rutgers.edu](http://www.rutgers.edu)). And if space permits, links to these divisions within Rutgers:
  - a. Rutgers University–New Brunswick ([newbrunswick.rutgers.edu](http://newbrunswick.rutgers.edu))

- b. Rutgers University–Newark ([newark.rutgers.edu](http://newark.rutgers.edu))
  - c. Rutgers University–Camden ([camden.rutgers.edu](http://camden.rutgers.edu))
  - d. Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences ([academichealth.rutgers.edu](http://academichealth.rutgers.edu))
  - e. Rutgers Health ([rutgershealth.org](http://rutgershealth.org))
2. University accessibility statement
- a. Rutgers is an equal access/equal opportunity institution. Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to direct suggestions, comments, or complaints concerning any accessibility issues with Rutgers websites to [accessibility@rutgers.edu](mailto:accessibility@rutgers.edu) or complete the [Report Accessibility Barrier / Provide Feedback Form](#).
3. University copyright
- a. Copyright 20XX Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
    - i. The copyright year should be updated only if the website has been updated during the given year

## II. Website Content Standards

### A. CONTENT ACCURACY

The accuracy of content on Rutgers websites is critical as sites are developed and maintained.

#### 1. Content Development

- a. When developing your website, consider the information you can effectively maintain and keep up to date
- b. Proofread all content for accuracy and spelling errors before it is published
- c. An appropriate site manager(s) within the unit must be designated as responsible for ensuring that all content on the unit's Rutgers website is accurate, secure, and timely

#### 2. Content Updates and Maintenance

The frequency of updates will depend on the type of content, but websites should be reviewed at least each semester and certainly annually. Maintaining accuracy and timeliness includes:

- a. Unpublishing out-of-date content, including documents that are no longer relevant
- b. Updating old photos, videos, and images
- c. Moving older content that must be maintained on the site to an archive and/or clearly labeling it so visitors to the site can tell that the information is for historical reference

d. Regularly checking the site for broken links and updating accordingly

3. Faculty and Staff Transitions

- a. Add and delete people from directories as appropriate; look throughout the site for other places where employees might be listed and update accordingly
- b. For academic departments, consider whether a faculty member's profile should remain or be removed from your website if the faculty member retires or leaves the department
- c. A similar review should be conducted during faculty transitions for websites that reference faculty research
- d. If a profile will remain on your site when a faculty member retires, clearly indicate that ~~they are~~ ~~he or she is~~ no longer active

B. RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT OF INTERNAL, RESTRICTED, AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

All information provided through the web must be classified and appropriately managed using the parameters cited in [University Policy 70.1.2: Information Classification](#). If a website provides access to any classified or restricted information or data, the website must require a login via the University's standard authentication services to access this information.

C. ACCEPTABLE USE

All webpages must comply with [University Policy 70.1.1: Acceptable Use Policy for Information Technology Resources](#). No University webpage may contain any copyrighted or trademarked material owned by others without permission except as permitted by law. Photographs, drawings, video clips, or audio clips may not be used on a page without permission of the person who created them or who owns the rights except as permitted by law.

D. EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

All information on academic programs, including admissions requirements, program requirements, graduation requirements, and similar information must be posted on an official University website.

E. CODE OF CONDUCT

Individuals who place content on ~~u~~University websites used to conduct official University business must follow [Rutgers' Code of Ethics: General Conduct](#).

F. ADVERTISING

Rutgers does not allow advertising or sponsorships on websites that students are required to access to complete their studies, such as the web registration system, or that prospective students are required to access when seeking admission to Rutgers, such as application and financial aid forms. For more information, see [University Policy 80.1.4: Endorsements, Sponsorships, and Advertising in and on University Assets and Communication Materials](#).

## G. FUNDRAISING

Only fundraising for official University programs is permissible. The University has designated responsibility to the Rutgers University Foundation for soliciting and administering all gifts and grants from individuals as well as gifts to the University's endowment. See [University Policy 40.2.13: Donor Gift Policy](#) and [University Policy 60.1.9: Commercial and Charitable Solicitations](#).

## H. LINKING TO OTHER WEBSITES AND PAGES

1. Linking to non-Rutgers websites and pages is permitted. Links should not appear to be an endorsement or a violation of the ethics and conflict of interest policies. See [University Policy 60.4.2: Code of Ethics for Administrative and Professional Staff Members](#) and [University Policy 60.5.8 Conflicts of Interest – Faculty; Professional Activities Outside the University and Outside Employment for Academic Personnel](#).
2. Endorsements are not permitted. See [University Policy 80.1.4: Endorsements, Sponsorships, and Advertising in and on University Assets and Communication Materials](#).

## III. Website Administration and Management

For maintenance and security purposes, all Rutgers websites must only allow encrypted communication or data transmission. In addition, it is recommended that a unit utilize the University's standard authentication services for login and know who has administrative and editing access to the unit's website(s). Maintain a master list of all individuals who have administrative access and editing access. Remove people who no longer need that access.

1. Assign a permanent Rutgers employee in your department to be the website administrator. This will ensure continuity with access to, and control and oversight of, your website. This is particularly helpful if you hire students, temporary staff, or consultants to develop and maintain your site.
2. A backup person should be designated for key administrative and content editing roles.

## IV. Annual Website Certification by Administrative Leaders

1. All members of the University community must adhere to the Rutgers University Website Policy; in addition, the members of the Rutgers Administrative Council must annually certify the websites within their areas of responsibility.
2. The certification process will be coordinated through the Web Integrity Team, comprised of staff from the Department of University Communications and Marketing and the Office of Information Technology ([WebIntegrity@rutgers.edu](mailto:WebIntegrity@rutgers.edu)).

## V. Assignment of Domain Names for Rutgers Websites

1. The University standard is to use the rutgers.edu domain for all services that are administered by the University community as part of the mission of the institution.
  - a. If a University service can only be administered through an external website, the service must be provided through a website approved or contracted by Rutgers.
  - b. If a non-rutgers.edu name is needed, a request and justification must be supplied to the Network Operations Center (NOC) for review by the Office of Information



Technology and the Department of University Communications and Marketing

- i. The Office of Information Technology will define registration services for non-rutgers.edu domains.
  - ii. The Office of Information Technology will establish guidelines for non-rutgers.edu domain registrations.
2. The Network Operations Center (NOC) within the central Office of Information Technology will administer the distribution of rutgers.edu subdomain names based on the following guidelines provided by the Department of University Communications and Marketing:
  - a. The proposed subdomain name is closely related to the purpose of its website
  - b. The intent of the website will be easily understood by audience members who use the subdomain name
  - c. The subdomain name does not incorporate profanity or derogatory language
3. The Department of University Communications and Marketing will serve as an escalation point for subdomain requests that cannot be resolved at the NOC and require further review and approval.
4. If a subdomain name is no longer being used by a website, the site's owner must notify the NOC so that the domain name can be deactivated. After two years of inactivity, a website may be reviewed and possibly deactivated.
5. The University reserves the right to curtail traffic to, reclaim, or reassign a Rutgers subdomain when necessary.