Web Redesign
Journey or Trial by Ordeal?
Topics to be covered …

**Four phases of Normandale’s Web Redesign**
1) Create transparent campus web governance
   - *Key stakeholders - not the rebel alliance*
2) New content management system
   - *Balance between users needs and trending features*
3) Student centered content
   - *Coaching subject matter experts to be responsive to students’ perspectives and interests and not their own*
4) Design grounded in strategy and outcomes
   - *Avoid the pitfalls of copying other designs and appeasing stakeholders*

Watch 4 take-aways
Situation for Change

1) Web governance was dysfunctional, combative and not results driven
2) Existing content management system (CMS) was no longer supported
3) Content varied in tone, depth and was institutional in perspective
4) Design was based on noticeability (web real estate) rather than navigation and strategy
## Campus stakeholders and audience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credit</td>
<td>PSEO vs traditional vs adult students</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Degree vs non-degree seeking</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Transfer vs career degree</td>
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<td></td>
<td>New vs returning students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-credit</td>
<td>Companies vs continuing education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>Donors vs alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Potential vs current employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departments &amp; Programs</td>
<td>Faculty vs students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similar stakeholders and audience
Web Governance

Technology Policy Committee
- Develop short and long-term goals for use and implementation of technology -

Academic Technical Advisory Committee
- Review and implement hardware and software on campus as it relates to instructional and online learning -

Administrative Systems Advisory Committee
- Campus based technology, enterprise systems and policies -

Infrastructure Committee
- Network, intranet, internet, printing/copying, telecommunications and security -

Web Strategy Committee
- Web presence, policies, style guide, social media standards, web site strategy -
Web Governance

Technology Policy Committee

Web Strategy Committee
- Web presence, policies, style guide, social media standards, web site strategy

Marketing Department
- Web Content/IA/Specialist
- Director of Marketing Communications
- Dean of Enrollment & Marketing

IT Department
- Web Specialist/Architect

Web Strategy Chair
- MAPE, MMA or Faculty
Web Governance

Membership is reflective of various stakeholders on campus:

A. Membership distribution:
   
   Current: web content specialist, web support, dean of marketing and enrollment, 3 faculty members, 1 MMA student affairs member, 1 student senate representative, 1 representative from CECT, marketing, bookstore, institutional research, and online learning.

B. Three faculty members of the Committee are appointed by the faculty union and are responsible for reporting back to faculty.

C. One student member of the committee is appointed by the Student Senate and is responsible for reporting back to the Senate.

D. Member terms will be for two years, with the exception of student appointments and a Chair appointment that exceeds the two-year term.

*Exceptions due to the nature of their jobs are: web specialist dean of marketing and enrollment, CIO, web content specialist.

Committee Charge
Meeting Format
Web Governance

All content is local

- Each student affairs department has an author and approver
- Most academic departments have an author and approver
- Each campus support and facilities department has an author and approver

Web Specialist guides style, policies, user onboarding, information architecture, page creation, content, SME interviewing, etc.

Currently 155 users in our CMS system
New CMS

CMS selection is user and technical needs driven

• Build representational workgroup to manage project – PM process
• Reviewed issues of last CMS selection
• Survey sister institutions of CMS selection issues
  - CMS was driven by design vendor
  - CMS was freeware component built
  - CMS was selected by IT
  - CMS was selected by Marketing

CMS Work Group Charter
Stakeholder Interview
CMS selection is user and technical needs driven

- RFP focused on functionality not fluff
- Proposal ranking was similar to MnSCU resume rating sheets
- Vendor finalists came to campus for demonstration to current CMS users and campus
- “Sandbox” environment for users to test drive product for a few weeks
- Users voted on preferred CMS and Web Strategy Committee members forward recommendations to president’s cabinet for decision
Student centered content

Subject matter experts are not content experts – but how do we say this?

- Understand the SME’s world and viewpoint prior to asking them to change their viewpoint
Student centered content

Subject matter experts are not content experts – but how do we say this?

• Instructor: Trained to research and articulate an opinion that is original
• Acknowledge their expertise and how that’s important to the process
• Play to their love of learning – teach as a topic and not as an opinion or expertise of your own
• Highlight that the process – grounded in research – is important to their department’s overall success in reaching students
• Show the students perspective – survey or research
• Nudge – highlight any measured success of a colleague that has done student centered content – local, measurable peer pressure
Content audit findings

What information do students need?

1. **Department name and accreditation**: Departments with accredited programs begin with this section, which students didn’t mention as a high priority for them.

2. **Fact sheets**: PDFs about the program, repeat of information on landing page.

3. **Requirements for degree**: These are useful for students who’ve chosen that emphasis, but perhaps less so for undecided students.

4. **Names of dean, dean’s assistants, and department chair**: Students did not indicate that this content is important to them.

5. **Brief department overview** (no subhead, easy to miss). Cited as low-priority content by students; could be more valuable if retooled to address student priorities rather than convey a mission statement.

6. **Faculty names and numbers**: Low-priority content.

7. **Phone number to speak with Admissions or a counselor**: Some students reported they didn’t know career counseling was available.
Content audit findings

### What information do students need?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructors Content Priorities</th>
<th>Student Content Priorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department information</td>
<td>Program information (nursing, accounting, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printable version of information on page</td>
<td>Degrees and certificates offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements of degree – no description of degree</td>
<td>Career data (average pay, unemployment, skills)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean, chair and assistant</td>
<td>Coursework (course list and descriptions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty in the department</td>
<td>Department Information (accreditation, faculty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student related activities in program (clubs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Content audit findings

Talk about the degree and career field – not the department

“More than once we heard students and prospects say they wished it were easier to find concrete information on the career options for a given degree. Some researched it independently.”

A few departments include a career section in their microsite navigation, but many do not.

“The (program) homepage is the perfect place to demonstrate that you know what students care about to give them a quick preview to the most important information. Instead of talking about the department and its qualities, highlight information about degrees and careers and supplement with testimonials from current and past students to help your audience see themselves in the site.”
## Content audit findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>What it assesses</th>
<th>Academics section, excluding microsites</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>Is the message conveyed clearly and effectively?</td>
<td>61% low 24% medium 0% high</td>
<td>Many pages in the section don’t convey a clear message or don’t have descriptive subheads to guide the user; or the page is very short and doesn’t have much content. We felt the print materials did a better job of persuading prospects to consider Normandale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>Does the content contain elements that evoke a positive emotional response?</td>
<td>83% low 17% medium 0% high</td>
<td>Many pages have a flat, formal tone. Departments are described not in ways that speak to students’ interests and future lives, but in mission statement language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>Does the content focus on students’ goals and priorities?</td>
<td>25% low 64% medium 11% high</td>
<td>Some pages speak to the issues students told us mattered the most, and those tended to get high relevance ratings. Other pages seem more focused on the faculty and their interests.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We at Normandale are able to provide a broader curriculum in Anthropology than any of the other community colleges in the state. We offer much more than just a few classes in anthropology. Through the years, the anthropology staff has taught such diverse classes as Native American Cultures, Women's Studies, Men's Studies, and Visual anthropology, and we take pride in offering a service learning option in many of our courses which allows the student to participate in volunteer work in our community. Nearly all of our courses are offered online. Students also have the opportunity to join the Anthropology Club and/or the Archaeology Club, and we have also made available with Emphasis in Anthropology.

Mission Statement

Anthropology at Normandale Community College encourages awareness of human nature and society in the broadest possible perspective. Our course offerings encourage understanding of the cultural worlds - local, national, and global as well as past, present, and future - which have shaped us and which we continually shape. We encourage our students to critically analyze and to be committed to up-to-date quality courses and instruction and appropriate and timely assessment of student work. We believe in the practical lifelong importance of anthropological perspectives. Anthropology courses give a student insight into a wide variety of cultures, including our own.

Faculty in anthropology

This Department has well-trained, very involved faculty. Their interests and enthusiasms range from human origins to contemporary societies around the world. From anthropology, we have created a wide variety of courses and offers students a wider choice of classes than any other community college in the region. We have received multiple awards and innovation grants for conferences. Faculty serve as advisors to the Anthropology and the Archaeology Clubs at Normandale each semester, and we sponsor an annual Anthropology Through The Arts Festival.
Speak “to” vs. “at” students

Anthropology

About the Discipline

When you take an Anthropology class at Century College, you’ll do more than just learn about history. You’ll have the opportunity to glimpse the very core of your human self, and gain insight and understanding into the origins of human life. And that’s not all. You’ll have your worldview expanded by:

- gaining a solid understanding of evolution by natural selection.
- learning about humanity’s deep, biological history.
- discovering the universal and variable patterns of human life throughout time.
Use PDF’s Appropriately

- PDFs are printable resources
- Don’t rely on PDFs as the primary delivery method for important content (factsheets, course descriptions)
- Help users make decisions before they download (id link as PDF, file size, etc.)
- Reduce file size (limit photos)
- Make easier to navigate (bookmarks or tabs)

User Research Insight:
“If you search the needle in the haystack on the website you can find it, but it comes up as a PDF, not a nice website. You have to click through like 300 pages to find what you need.”
Information is buried

“For example, current students in our focus group frequently said it was easier to talk to someone in Admissions or a counselor, than to go to the website for information. Their preference is to go online, but they feel more likely to find a direct answer talking to someone in person.”

User Research Insight:

On (the) Normandale (website) you have to go from link to link to find things.”

“You can’t really look at the website and figure it out. I’d have to talk to someone.”
Other Findings

• Information is duplicated in multiple locations
• Content is thorough not focused
• Getting to e-Services via Records & Registration not intuitive
• Consolidate departments by degree or career fields (business, health, science, etc)
Enforcing content standards

- Content audit plus template design and navigation standards leads to a web style guide
- Web style guide used as a training tool, reference, magna carta and club during disputes
- Administrator held accountable for the quality and success of the web
- Web chair enforces large issues
Content to understand Content

• Clout: The art and science of influential web content
  Colleen Jones/ www.newriders.com

• Content Strategy: for the web
  Kristina Halvorson/Melissa Rach

• Evaluating the effectiveness of college web sites for prospective students
  Wendy Ford, Ph.D./ Journal of College Admission; SU 2011, 212, p26

•Scrolling toward enrollment: Web site content and the e-expectations of college-bound seniors
  James Tower/ Noel-Levitz
How do you select a design
How do you select a design
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How do you select a design?
Design is rooted in strategy

- Redesign RPF was reflective of content audit and technical specs of CMS
- Similar to CMS process – a web redesign workgroup was created to manage the vendor selection process
- Final design vendors presented at campus to an open campus community
- Selection was done by campus vote – Web Strategy Committee – nominations sent to president’s cabinet
Design is rooted in strategy

- BarkleyREI (BREI) was selected as finalist
- BREI based strategy on stakeholder and target market data

Four specific redesign strategies:

1. Normandale’s strengths and features should be integrated into the user experience in a very deliberate manner.
2. The primary focus of the user experience should be to proactively guide students through the entire student engagement cycle.
3. The new template structure should support employ “structured flexibility” to provide more cohesive, impactful experience on high priority pages.
4. A “product-driven” approach should be used to provide a meaningful, engaging user experience with programs, degrees, and certificates.

BarkleyREI Strategic Plan
Matching communication to implementation plan

- Vendor ran project on schedule with monthly milestone and status meetings until delay in campus decisions
- Used student affairs managerial meetings, administrative level meetings and campus employee information postings
- Campus delays during break periods – committee doesn’t meet in January, June, July and August
Design is rooted in strategy

Foundation

- Please tell us a little about the Normandale Community College Foundation.
- Who are your typical donors?
- What is the donation cycle?
- How often do you have fundraising appeals? How do you promote them?
- Why should potential donors choose to give their money to Normandale, out of all the possible worthy causes they could choose?
- On many college websites, “Giving” is a top level navigation item. We noticed that on your site it is within the alumni section, in http://www.normandale.edu/alumni/foundation.html. Was this a conscious decision, and are you open to revisiting that?
- How connected vs. separate are the Foundation fundraising activities from the Annual Fund (http://www.normandale.edu/alumni/annual-fund.html)? Is the Foundation in charge of all fundraising activities?
- Would you be open to separating Foundation pages from those targeting alumni? Combining them is a very common occurrence; however, donations are not only given by alumni, so there may be some benefit to separating the two.
- Who is responsible for keeping Foundation website content current? How often is it updated?
- Have you considered including student testimonials thanking donors for scholarship donations? How do you show donors their $ is being put to good use?
- Re: the donation form at https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?appver3=7dsNc769v1wto2PAK8RMHeGkHvCXlbou7BV1RPfz1B9FemzZ2GvPKkI9EPk2V6RWF5jCG2FKQvClVv81l8CvRP9w9ukGDiazgsT5b7Y8ThZnYTyH-JhqYwziLFmqY3u8A9DWiS3jR6MhnFTkx0bYx0fTiX2N8BnejZKSI=&ver=3, will that continue to exist as its own site (meaning, does it have anything to do with the website redesign?)
- Do you have any goal funnels set up showing what pages drive the most content to eservicepayments.com?

Discovery

- Process

Strategy

- Site Map

Wireframes

Design

- Drafts

Selection

Discovery Process Strategy Site Map Wireframes Design Drafts Selection
The new website should present programs, degrees, and certificates using a new approach that is based on helping students understand what they are getting, if it is right for them, how they will use the “product”, how much it will cost in terms of commitment, and how they should proceed if they are interested.

As discussed in our onsite Discovery Sessions and as documented in a previous report by Brain Traffic, the presentation of academic information on the current website such as what programs & degrees are offered and who supports the programs & degrees (departments) is inconsistent and not as compelling as it could be.

Based on our understanding of the situation, Normandale’s website staff has made adjustments to adapt the current site in response to the recommendations made by Brain Traffic, including the creation of more direct paths to individual programs according to interest (http://www.normandale.edu/programs-and-degrees.html) and working with academic departments to implement a more consistent way of organizing their content into department “microsites” (the landing page and group of child pages that comprise department site sections). However, there are barriers inherent in the current design of the site that have prevented Normandale from implementing a full-scale optimization of the Academics content on the site.
Design is rooted in strategy
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Design is rooted in strategy

Discovery
Process

Strategy

Site Map

Wireframes

Design Drafts

Selection
Design is rooted in strategy
Things to consider

- The department user may not be the decider for the department
- Career content should come from a neutral resource than a department
- Easier to build out 85% of the content for departments – their 15% of content can = 100% buy in
- New department heads need to know where the project is at and why
- Frank conversation with IT about hosting vs vendor hosting
- Build a photo library that is inclusive to every facet of the website
- Sync your new website with a new ad campaign
- Communicate, communicate, apologize, communicate