WEBSITE DOs and DON’Ts

This is a resource for Graduate Program Directors, faculty and staff for website optimization when creating and updating program, department or school websites. These suggestions are based on marketing research and study, and from frequently asked questions received from programs, departments and schools regarding website format.

Do:

1. **Realize** that you have 3-5 seconds to grab viewer attention and draw them in.

2. **Create** the home page as if it were a marketing page with information that will excite prospective students.

3. **Be Consistent** – use the same colors for text headers, shading of certain sections, and the same fonts throughout your program’s pages.

4. **Limit** navigation bar to seven or less buttons.

5. **Keep** content and links current! Check these monthly.

6. **Use** simple/short urls (hyperlink long urls)

Don’t:

1. **Assume** the home page should contain every detail of your program; shy away from being text heavy.

2. **Make** the viewer search through multiple tabs for basics like admissions, curriculum, and cost information.

3. **Layout** each sub navigation page in a different format as this may be confusing to the student.

4. **Limit** subnavigation options within the main tabs.

5. **Leave** inactive forms or registration for events up past the date that they occur.

6. **Place** too many links on your pages.

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**Home Page**

The home page should always include:

- Banner Photo (up to 3)
- Brief overview of the program
- Blue shaded box with 3 key words that highlight your program
- Link to the Graduate Application
- Link to Admissions
- Links to program courses
- Links to Cost

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**Information Pages**

There should be Tabs for these information pages:

- Home
- Current Students
- Future Students
- Department Page
- The Graduate School
- Contact Us

**You may want to include a Student Resources page; you are allowed to have up to 7 information pages which can also have sub-navigation options**

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The Graduate School is happy to help answer any questions that you might have about your program website! Please contact us at gradschool@gvsu.edu with questions or for more information.
Examples

Homepage

The M.A. in Applied Linguistics provides students with foundational knowledge of linguistics and its practical application to real world concerns. Graduates will be prepared to work in a variety of professional careers in applied linguistics domestically and internationally, such as second language education, adult literacy development, language assessment and evaluation, various domestic and international contexts of TESOL, language program administration, and publishing.

Comprehensive. Curriculum provides students with foundational knowledge of linguistics and its practical application to real world concerns.

Career-Focused. Graduates are prepared for domestic and international careers in applied linguistics, including second language education, adult literacy development, language assessment and evaluation.

Individual. Students have the opportunity to tailor the program to individual research and career interests through a hands-on practicum experience, and choice of a culminating thesis or project.

Admissions

The Applied Linguistics M.A. admission requirements and application for admission are available online.

The $30 application fee is waived for previous applicants of Grand Valley.

Courses Offered

The Applied Linguistics M.A. program is a minimum of 36 credits.

See the full course list.

Cost

- Tuition and Fees
- Financial Support