KENNEDY LIBRARY WEB COMMUNICATIONS

A simple guide to good web content.

Please contact Conny Liegl,
*Designer for Web, Graphics and User Experience*
with questions or comments.
cliegl@calpoly.edu or (805) 756-7544
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1. Identity

We are Robert E. Kennedy Library or Kennedy Library.

The preferred uses of the university name are:
- California Polytechnic State University
- Cal Poly

Other name derivations that may be used are:
- Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo
- Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

The full address of the university must appear as follows:
- California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

We are not REKL or Cal Poly Library or other variations.
Cal Poly may not be shortened to CP.

1.1. Mission

The mission of Robert E. Kennedy Library is to promote open and informed inquiry, foster collaboration and innovation, support the unique needs of every student and scholar at Cal Poly, and contribute to the cultural life of San Luis Obispo.

1.2. Values

The library is committed to valuing the scholar in everyone by delivering excellent service, fostering collaboration and innovation, and respecting and nurturing Cal Poly’s distinctive sense of community.
2. KEY MESSAGES

Key messages the library should convey through the website are:
- It’s all about you [the visitor].
- We empower you, we inspire you, we put you in control.
- Your research is valuable.
- We welcome your participation in shaping the library.
- The library offers a set of tools for your research needs.
- We spark/provoke your ideas.

Messages we do NOT want to communicate:
- We are everything to everybody.
- We help all users with the same information.
- We’ll give you a generic answer, whatever your problem might be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time on page</th>
<th>Call to action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In 1 second</td>
<td>Kennedy Library empowers students and helps with their research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In 10 seconds</td>
<td>Kennedy Library houses exciting study spaces, and provides research help to students. Visitors can borrow books, articles as well as tech materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In 2 minutes</td>
<td>Kennedy Library supports student &amp; faculty research and collaborates with several partners at Cal Poly. There is a digital repository, and materials not available on-site can be ordered from across the country.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All content should be simple, clear, brief and scannable. The goal is to keep users engaged by presenting the conclusion first, then explaining the issue, consequently giving more details in the last paragraphs.

Remember:

- Get to the point. Then stop.
- Use plain English.
- Express one thought at a time.
- Let the facts speak for themselves.
- Use short words and phrases.
- Never use a long word when a short one will do.
- If it’s possible to cut out a word, cut it out.

Source: bit.ly/www-write
The resources in the Data Studio give students access to a wide variety of data and allow them to use that data in novel ways. Students can tailor the Data Studio furniture and hardware to their liking to best promote effective teamwork. Through instruction, collaboration and hands-on experience, students are able to direct their own learning and explore familiar topics in new ways.

Use the fast computers and GIS software in the Data Studio for your data projects. Arrange furniture and monitors for group meetings and team tasks. We will provide help, seminars and tutorials to promote and strengthen your research skills.
4. Grammar

Use proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. Avoid abbreviations, slang and questionable language.

If you use library in a sentence it’s lowercase unless preceded by Kennedy. Do not shorten to REKL or REK library.

*The library...*

*Kennedy Library*

*Robert E. Kennedy Library*

Find the full Cal Poly Style Guide at:


8.1. Capitalization

Proper nouns, department and committee names are capitalized.

*The library’s Interlibrary Services desk is located on the first floor.*

Use sentence case for headlines, capitalizing only the first word and proper nouns.

*Mission, values and vision of Kennedy Library*

Please do not use title case anywhere on the website.

8.2. Numbers in text

When writing figures, please use the following:

For the numbers one to nine, always use words (except in dates). For 10 upwards, use figures.

*Kennedy Library has eight fishbowls and 20 study rooms total.*

8.3. Dates and times

For events, always write the date in full, with commas:

*Thursday, March 25, 2013*

Express the time using the 12 hour clock, separate the numbers with a colon, add am or pm without periods and without spaces behind the number:

*We are open from 10:00am to 5:00pm today.*
Web readers are active, not passive. Impatient users browse web content, skip paragraphs and whole pages, follow links in a random order to find information fast.

A majority of the users scans the page instead of reading word for word, focusing on headlines, summaries and captions; a quick glance at the page should present them with all valuable options already.

Use bulleted lists to split up information and make it easier to scan content, but never more than nine items at once, with a maximum of two hierarchy levels.

We offer mentoring and training in a collaborative environment where you can acquire excellent customer service and team skills as well as technology and information skills that can help you succeed in your courses and future careers.

What it is like to work at Kennedy Library:
- Collaborative
- Active mentoring and training
- Provide excellent customer service
- Build team, technology and information skills
6. TONE OF VOICE

Be direct but friendly to our visitors. Relate to them. Talk the language of students, our primary audience. Address them directly. Always look for the simplest way to say what you want, avoid tech and library speak. Students are stressed from their research, the website content should support them and make them feel motivated and inspired.

It is important to write content for readers, not yourself, using an inclusive, positive and non-offensive tone.

- Use bold text and italics sparingly. Never underline words or headlines.
- Never SHOUT at the users.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’t Use</th>
<th>Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ILL</td>
<td>Interlibrary Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron</td>
<td>Visitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check out resources</td>
<td>Borrow materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulation Desk</td>
<td>Checkout desk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LearningCommons</td>
<td>2nd floor information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodical</td>
<td>Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A/V</td>
<td>(Multi)media, tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique holdings</td>
<td>Unique items</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of our computers are in our six labs on the first and second floors. There are also open computer stations throughout the library, available to any of our patrons.

Find computers in the six labs on the first and second floor. Computers in open areas on floors one through five can be used by any visitor.
Use action words to actively involve users in the content.

Action words are simple, conversational and easy to understand. They let the user know exactly what to do next.

There are eight Collaboration Rooms available in the Learning Commons. Each is equipped with white board and a flat screen monitor (VGA connection with supported resolutions: 1920x1080, 1280x720), and each room seats up to eight people.

Use “fishbowls” for your group meetings.
- Seats up to eight people
- Large white board
- Flat screen monitor

Find the collaboration rooms on the 2nd floor, between Julian’s café and the exhibit area.

Book now!
8.1. Icons
Icons allow for a more intuitive navigation of the website. They draw attention to action words and hyperlinks, but used wrong they can distract from the content.

- Never use more than one icon per paragraph.
- Never use more than two different icons per page.
- Only use them in approved colors.

For a list of available icons, please consult the Font Awesome library at www.fontawesome.github.io/Font-Awesome/icons/

Please work with the web designer to integrate them in your page.

8.2. Emoticons
Do not use emoticons on the website. It has a more official tone than our social media sites, so smileys are not appropriate.
9. CONTENT LAYOUT AND STYLE

9.1. Layout
Since we don’t know what kind of display (PC monitor, laptop, television, mobile phone, tablet), what resolution (number of pixels that display can display), orientation (landscape, portrait) or size the user utilizes to visit the website, **we designed a site layout that is responsive to all display technologies, and adaptable to any resolution.**

Please be aware of the flexibility of the content as display sizes change. Please try not to manually fix any width sizes, as this would corrupt the mobile user experience.

Ultimately, the content rules over the design. Websites have to be accessible and usable for all visitors. Our website offers a consistent, intuitive and usable layout to engage all users.

9.2. Typography
For highlighting, use **bold** for single words or sentences in paragraphs.

Never use *italics* or *underlined* words on web pages. Italics are hard to read, and underlined words will be mistaken for clickable links.

All headlines have associated styles, which you can define in the content editor. Headlines are hierarchical elements, structured from Heading 1 (highest) to Heading 6 (lowest). Please use only Heading 2, Heading 3 and Heading 4 on your pages or in posts.

9.3. Colors
The template defines colors of paragraphs, headlines and other elements. Please do not highlight words/sentences with any additional colors.

Consult with the web designer if you need ideas to make certain information stand out more.
10. LINKS

All web pages are connected through links. To provide an enjoyable online experience and to comply with current accessibility requirements, links have to be named correctly.

- **Use descriptive language, and include all relevant words for the link:** Do not name your links “learn more”, “click here”, “here”.

- Don’t overdo it: no more than two links per sentence, new words only linked once when first mentioned.

- Please do not link to unreliable sources or questionable web pages. Consult with the web designer if you are unsure.

Fifth Annual student video competition: [Read more](#)

Our research guides ([click here](#)) are made by our college librarians.

New service: [VAST: Academic Video Online](#). VAST is cross-disciplinary. [VAST](#) is free.

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Fifth Annual student video competition: [How to enter?](#)

Our [research guides](#) are made by our [college librarians](#).

New service: [VAST: Academic Video Online](#). VAST is cross-disciplinary. VAST is free.

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The look of links is determined by our templates, and standard formatting should not be changed. Please do not underline words manually.

Links to library-wide pages are opened in the same window or tab. Links to pages outside Kennedy Library (including Cal Poly and other institutions) open in a new window or tab, which you can specify in the WordPress visual editor.
11. NAMING FILES

We are trying to establish a consistent naming scheme for any files you upload to the WordPress content management system.

Files names should be specific and descriptive rather than random or generic. Your file name will automatically generate the alternative textual description following recent accessibility requirements. This text will be read by screen readers, and can be further specified or changed in the “alternative title” field upon upload to the Media Library in WordPress.

For images and videos, please make sure you rename and resize (see chapter 12. Images) the file after you download it from the camera. File names created by the camera are usually generic and non-descriptive, like CP0123-567, and file sizes are often very large.

For PDF files or similar, we need to make sure we can tell different versions and iterations apart. We suggest to add a date to distinguish files.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’t Use</th>
<th>Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CP0123-567.jpg</td>
<td>staff-conny-liegl.jpg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaila.jpg</td>
<td>librarian-kaila-bussert.jpg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partnerlogo.png</td>
<td>ieee-logo_small.png</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sciencecafe.mp4</td>
<td>science-cafe-guayaki.mp4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>report.pdf</td>
<td>20130806_report.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hours.pdf</td>
<td>hours-summer14.pdf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have restricted the upload to accept conventional file types only (JPG, PNG, PDF, etc.) and limited the maximum file size. Should problems with your upload occur, please submit a Technical Service Request through the Cal Poly Portal.
Web content needs to load quickly. Browsers download images from a web server, making it the editors’ responsibility to provide images that download fast. Please change your image resolution to 72dpi and save it as a JPG (best for photos) or PNG (best for logos, images with transparency effects), and resize your images. Our team can help with that!

In general, please avoid using images larger than 1000px width or height on your web pages. Our responsive website template will fit your picture to any display size.

Use images sparingly. Best is to use images only for better explanations of the topic, not as “decoration”. No more than two images on a website, except when in photo galleries. Be aware that web users generally ignore irrelevant images, especially when they are animated (so-called “banner-blindness”).

Please do not overlay your images with text, and avoid having text in the image itself. Due to the responsive design, your images will adjust to any display size, and text might be unreadable to the users. Text in images is also an accessibility issue.

Please respect image copyright, and credit authors if applicable. Request written permission from Special Collections and Archives when you are looking to use an image from their collection, and ideally link back to the department.

12.1. Sidebar images
To change an image in the sidebar of our website, add your preferred photo as a “featured image”. If none is specified, your page sidebar image will fall back to the category default image that is defined for the page template.

Please use the aspect ratio of 5:1 for your image, a size of 1000px width and 250px height is ideal. A photograph is preferred over illustrations.

12.2. Slider images
Please use the aspect ratio of 5:1, ideally resize your image to 2500px width and 500px height. Since the slider image is spanning across the whole width of any device, we require a higher resolution.

To request design work for your slider image, please contact the Design Team.
Employee in work environment

Open, friendly, “we are here for you”
Less Like

- Students working individually, outdated equipment, no faces

- Bad contrast, generic, “empty” building, dull
Active help from employees, state-of-the-art equipment, bright colors

Personal, friendly, open, building filled with life
We encourage embedding of videos from Vimeo, YouTube, or similar. Our web templates also support embedding of podcasts and other audio files.

When a link is added in the visual interface of the content editor, it is automatically displayed in a video or audio player when the page is being saved. Please note: You will not see the media in the preview mode.

Please always ensure that the linked files are working correctly by saving the page and viewing the final content on the live server.

Some editor permissions restrict users from posting media content. Should WordPress remove your embedded link, please submit a Technical Service Request through the Cal Poly Portal, so we can adjust your permissions.

Please do not embed content from unreliable sources or questionable web pages. Ask for help if you are unsure.
WordPress is a free and open source blogging tool and a content management system (CMS) based on PHP and MySQL. WordPress was used by more than 22.0% of the top 10 million websites as of August 2013. (Source: Wikipedia)

In WordPress, you can create and edit either posts or pages.

14.1. Pages
The Kennedy Library website uses pages for all static content such as “about + contact,” “Special Collections and Archives,” “Faculty,” etc.

Access Pages through the link in the left-hand sidebar. You can search existing pages and edit the content by clicking “Edit”.

Please contact the web designer when planning to create new pages to set up correct sidebars, featured images and link it in the page navigation.
14.2. Posts

The most common use for posts is for blog stories that appear in chronological order on the homepage. In addition to the blog, we have created custom post types for sequential, recurring, or generally modular content like “Jobs,” “People,” “Finding Aids,” and “Policies.”

Posts can be categorized and tagged, which help to identify content, and display it on selected pages. We can “pull in” people posts from certain departments as defined by their tags, and display them on the according page, for example.

14.3. Content editor

Use the built-in what-you-see-is-what-you-get-editor by choosing the tab “visual” in any page or post. Choosing “Text” will give you the code view, if you prefer to work with HTML directly.

The editor icons offer similar functionality to editing a Word document, and give you options to use bulleted or numbered lists, add and remove hyperlinks, and define certain styles like paragraphs or headlines for your posts.
Click the last icon in the first row to show the “Kitchen Sink” and reveal more functionality.

Insert pictures by clicking “Add Media.” You can choose existing images from the Media Library, or upload new ones. Choose gallery view for multiple images.

14.4. Shortcode
Shortcode adds extended functionality to your content – without the need to code or program. Square brackets `[ ]` mark shortcode that WordPress recognizes as functional commands.

On the Kennedy Library website, shortcode is used to include expanders with custom link anchors, to insert forms or post content, and to create columns.
To create expanders, use the following shortcode in the visual or text editor:

```
[expand title="Having tech trouble?" id="tech"]

Your content goes here.

[/expand]
```

This shortcode displays “Having tech trouble?” as the headline. Users will see this, and can click to “open” the expander and display all content therein.

The ID `id="tech"` signifies a page anchor, that you can share with users to direct them specifically to this content:

http://lib.calpoly.edu/be-involved-and-give/feedback/#tech

When this link is clicked, users will be taken to the according section in the page expander, opening the expander automatically.

If you would like the expander to be opened on default at all times (users can manually close it), you can add a simple command to the shortcode:

```
[expand title="Having tech trouble?" id="tech" expanded="true"]

Your content goes here.

[/expand]
```

To create columns, you can use the shortcode generator in the editor view. You will have several different layout options, the most conventional are third or half columns that will adjust to the display size automatically.
To request editing access and writing privileges for the main website, please talk to your Executive Team representative first. Each department can allow several editors to maintain and update content of their area.

If you would like to contribute to the library blog, please contact the communications and public programs coordinator. The coordinator can also help you to “get the word out” in online communities, if applicable. For specific blogging and social media guidelines, please refer to Kennedy Library’s communications guide.

After seeking approval, please submit a Technical Service Request to create a website login through the Cal Poly Portal, and schedule a one-hour training session with the web designer. Please contact the Design Team for any graphic design needs, and the Library Information Technology group for specific technical questions. We are happy to help!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need help with?</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analytics and statistics</td>
<td>Conny Liegl, <a href="mailto:cliegl@calpoly.edu">cliegl@calpoly.edu</a> (805) 756-7544, room 510A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content and structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User testing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web design</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WordPress training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy edit support</td>
<td>Karen Lauritsen, <a href="mailto:klaurits@calpoly.edu">klaurits@calpoly.edu</a> (805) 756-7549, room 205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create new pages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Login information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical difficulties</td>
<td>Please submit a Technical Service Request through the Cal Poly Portal. Choose “Web Requests” from the dropdown list of General Issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic design</td>
<td>Design Team, <a href="mailto:lib-design@calpoly.edu">lib-design@calpoly.edu</a> (805) 756-7544, room 510A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>