**Recommended navigation for UVM units**

Academic department or program web pages play an important role in the recruitment of prospective students. Recent web traffic patterns show us that visitors are increasingly accessing program web pages directly from search engines, without navigating via the UVM homepage or even the department or college program homepage. This means that it is more important than ever to make a positive "first" impression by providing concise and current language when offering menu choices. These guidelines serve to assist in the building and maintaining of academic websites using best practices for student recruitment and retention.

**Academic department recommended navigation**

By using a common navigation prospective and current students are better able to locate information and compare programs. The following navigation follows current best practices at UVM and at other higher education institutions. **Note: we do not recommend a unit employ both the suggested and optional menu items all at once--menus should ideally not surpass 8-10 items.**

- Homepage
- Explore or Discover or About XXX (dept name)
- Undergraduate Programs
  - B.A. XXXX (degree name)
  - B.S. XXXX
  - Minor in XXXX
- Graduate Programs
  - M.A. XXXX
  - Certificate of XXXX
  - Ph.D. XXXX
- Courses
- Faculty (and Staff) and their Research
- Research Opportunities AND/OR Student Opportunities
  - Study Abroad
  - Special Research Programs
  - Hands-on Learning Opportunities
  - Internship Opportunities
- Outcomes/Careers
- Contact Us

**Optional additions**

In addition to the items listed, other navigation items may be added or included as submenu items or right quicklinks topics to the parent menu, such as: (i.e. Student Organizations, etc.).

- FAQs
• Special Programs (ie: CAP in Anthropology dept)
• Facilities
• Honors and Awards
• News
• Events
• Advising

Alternative/secondary navigation

Some departments may find it necessary to target for example, by audience. The ability exists to have a secondary navigation (it will fall below the main navigation) for calling out audience-specific content (ie: Prospective Students, Faculty, Staff, etc.) or for things that aren’t common themes among departments and therefore don’t belong in the main menu, ie. Music: Auditions and Required Tests, Lessons, Recitals and Juried Exams.

College recommended navigation

• About Us AND/OR College Mission/Profile
  o Dean's Office
  o FAQs
  o Our Faculty
• Departments, Programs and Degrees (OR Undergraduate Programs/Graduate Programs as separate menu items)
• Research (OR Faculty and Research)
• Student Services AND/OR Support
• News and Events
  o Publications
• Facilities
• Opportunities AND/OR Clinical AND/OR Internships
• Institutes AND/OR Initiatives AND/OR Partnerships
• Contact Us

Alternative/secondary navigation

Many colleges have expressed a need for an audience-directed navigation using labels such as: “Info for: Prospective Students, Admitted Students, Faculty, Staff, etc.”

Administrative unit navigation tips

Though we cannot standardize the navigation for non-academic units, there are some tried and trued menu items that appear over and over.

• About Us
• Always have a “Contact Us” and have it as a last menu item—visitors to your site are used to looking at the bottom for it.
• Don’t link to PDFs or to websites outside of your unit’s site
• 8-10 menu items max
• Keep your main menu items general so that they can grow. Ideally, when you create a new page it will fit within a main menu topic rather than BECOMING a main menu topic!