1 Overview

There are two goals of the Content Administrators Applied Group of the Earlham College Computer Science department. The first and primary goal of the Content Group is to provide and maintain a secure and reliable website for all who may use it. http://cs.earlham.edu should be a convenient and accurate source of information for the CS department's faculty and students, both current and prospective.

The second goal of the Content Group is to provide an environment conducive to educating Computer Science students on the practice of Content Administration. The professional world of web design and Content Administration is often very different than what most students will be used to; the Content Group will endeavor to make students familiar with the rigorous practices of this field.

These goals combined loosely define the structure for the Content Group. By working to teach as much as possible about the practice of Content Administration, tasks are accomplished that, in the end, improve and maintain the Computer Science department Website.

In support of these goals, the Content Group will naturally be composed of a group of people having a wide range of experiences. Therefore it falls on the most experienced members as well as the faculty advisor to guide, teach, and support the newer, less experienced, members. In some cases this means assigning tasks, starting easy and simple and gradually increasing to harder and more interesting ones. In other cases this means working together to solve an unusually elusive problem. The end result is that the novice administrators eventually take over the role of mentor.

2 Website Maintenance Policies

2.1 Security

While data security and integrity fall mainly under the jurisdiction of the System Administrators group, the Content Group will minimally release sensitive data and when it does, do so judiciously. When sensitive data must be released, such as email-addresses, it will be released in such a way as to protect the data from access by unapproved and malicious clients.

2.2 Reliability

Content Group will use a separate server for testing and make live only professional, verified pages. In addition to looking professional and being free of errors, Content Group's pages will contain only information verified to be correct and current. Major changes will be announced as far ahead of time as possible, and will not be implemented without extensive testing and comments by users. A specific release date will be announced for major changes.

2.3 Usability

Meeting the necessities of security and reliability, Content Group's main goal is to provide a convenient, thorough source of information for the intended users: the faculty and students of the Computer Science department, both current and prospective. This is accomplished with a clean site layout that is both efficient for experienced users and intuitive for newer users. Content Group will make certain that important pages can be readily accessed in relatively few steps, and all pages be found with little difficulty using basic web-navigation skills and general common sense.

2.4 Maintainability

To maximize the efficiency with which a clean and usable site can be maintained, Content Group will adhere to certain standards of organization and documentation .

2.4.1 Organization
File placement will follow a strict procedure based on file type rather than structure. Php, cgi, css, images, and the html pages themselves will each get exactly one folder of their own in the main directory. Anything more than the most minor CSS will not be placed in .css files rather than in the html pages. Orphaned and out-of-date pages will be evaluated for relevance and either deleted or updated and reincorporated into the site. Frequently modified files will be periodically formatted and cleaned of obsolete code.

2.4.2 Documentation
All modifications made to the site, regardless of impact, will be documented in the wiki changelog, which will be rotated on a bimonthly basis, saving old changelogs at the bottom of the page. Non-trivial tasks will be explained on the wiki page, and will not be considered finished until they are.

2.5 Standards and Compliance

To the extent that it does not interfere with the aforementioned goals, Content Group will endeavor to keep all of its html compliant with the latest standards. Pages will be tested and successful pages will bear the "XHTML valid" logo. XHTML validity will not be a necessity for pages currently on the live site, but all new pages will be validated before they are added.