

The University of Maine

**DigitalCommons@UMaine**

---

General University of Maine Publications

University of Maine Publications

---

2019

## Digital Communications Newsletter, January to December 2019

University of Maine Digital Communications

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/univ\\_publications](https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/univ_publications)



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [History Commons](#)

---

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in General University of Maine Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact [um.library.technical.services@maine.edu](mailto:um.library.technical.services@maine.edu).



---

## UMaine Website Owners and Managers — January 2019 update

1 message

---

**UMaine Digital Communications** <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
Reply-To: UMaine Digital Communications <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
To:

Tue, Jan 15, 2019 at 10:00 AM



[View this email in your browser](#)

# UMaine website managers

## Community update • January 2019

You are receiving this email because you have an account in UMaine's public website system, WordPress. If you no longer manage web content, please contact us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu)

---

## In this email:

- New Year, New Updates
- Upcoming training dates
- Options for publications: Resource library, Publications option
- Accessibility and PDFs

[If you have a question you would like to see answered, let us know.](#)

---

### New Year, New Updates

Happy New Year from the team here in Digital Communications! As you return from the holidays and/or winter break, please take some time to look at your website. We have very recently (Sunday, January 13) updated WordPress to version 4.9.9, and many additional features have also seen maintenance updates behind the scenes.

While our office has tested these updates over the last week and found no problems, the UMaine website is very large, with tens of thousands of pages. Please take a

moment to review your website this week. If you find anything that is not behaving as expected, send us an email at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu), and include a link to the page for support.

### **UMaine Maps Update**

We are rolling out improvements to the UMaine map feature on Wednesday, January 16. When editing an individual map point, you can now increase or decrease the zoom level of the map. Display of multiple map points in a category remains unchanged.

---

### **Upcoming training dates**

*Training is conducted in the Marketing and Communications conference room on the second floor of Alumni Hall (next to Fogler), suite 213*

#### **UMaine WordPress Basics:** Thursdays, 10 - 11:30 a.m.

January 17, 24 & 31, February 7, 14, 21 & 28

This 90-minute session covers the basics of using WordPress at UMaine — how to log in, create pages, and edit header, footer and sidebar elements. We welcome anyone and everyone to join us for an orientation or refresher. Walk-ins are fine, but if you can let us know you are coming that's always a good idea. Just email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to give us a heads up.

#### **SEO Workshops:** Alternating Thursdays, 2 - 3 p.m.

January 24 booked

February 7 & 21 available

What is SEO? This jargon is an abbreviation for "search engine optimization," and our SEO workshops will explain what you should focus on to improve how your web pages are found by users of Google, Bing and our own UMaine site search. For each workshop we will focus on a participant's website, identifying changes to content and structure that can have a positive impact. These workshops are intended for small groups, so please email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to express interest and get your spot saved for an upcoming date.

#### **UMaine Map Training:** Alternating Wednesdays, 10 - 11 a.m.

January 16 & 30, February 13 & 27

If you need to depict points of interest on campus, across the state, or around the globe, our UMaine map feature is worth exploring. In this training you will learn how to create individual map points, categorize map points together in a single map, and customize the map points by adding icons for easy visual identification. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to schedule one of the upcoming dates.

#### **NEW Using Monsido to Improve Your Website:** Alternating Thursdays, 9 - 10 a.m.

January 24, February 7 & 21

The University of Maine System has provided a website tool to aid in the important task of managing the quality and accessibility of web content. Monsido has been scanning UMaine websites, and interactive reports are now available.

If you want to learn more about Monsido's reports and how you may use its information to fix broken links, find misspellings, and find where content updates are most needed, we are providing 1-hour overview sessions to share what we know about this tool and how you can use it. If you have not yet begun using Monsido, Digital Communications can set you up with an account; email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to get started, and review your site's scan results.

---

## Options for publications

Content on your website should appear as text on your web pages in most circumstances. At the same time, there are legitimate reasons why a document needs to be uploaded to your site, and to list those documents we provide additional options.

### Using the built-in resource library

We cover the basics of using the "Resource" content type in our WordPress Basics training. Resources are used to manage the documents you upload to your website, and allow you to update those documents quickly and easily without breaking links on your pages. Did you know that those resources can be accessed in a searchable feature as well? [Here is an example of a resource library on the Office of the President website](#), where budget materials, forms, and organizational resources are listed. For most websites, this is available by appending "resource" to your website address.

### Optional publications feature available

If you have a need to list publications in a bibliography-like manner, we have an optional feature that can be switched on for your website. This feature adds a "Publications" content type to your site, and these can be used to list recent publications, viewable by publication type and author. [An example of this feature can be seen on the VEMI Lab website](#). If you are interested in adding this feature to your website, please contact us for support at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu).

### Thesis archive/listings with search

This feature was developed for the Honors College, but can be enabled for any site that needs to record, archive and list student theses. [You can see this in place on the Honors College website](#). If you are interested in adding this to your website, please contact us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu).

---

## Accessibility and PDFs

PDF (Portable Document Format) files are a handy way to share documents that can be viewed, printed, and shared while preserving the original's format. Most PDFs are created using office tools such as Google Docs or Microsoft Office, publishing software such as Adobe InDesign or QuarkXPress, or as images from scanned documents using network-connected copy and fax machines.

If you make PDFs available on your public website, these files must adhere to our web accessibility guidelines. Web accessibility has always been a requirement for UMaine websites, and Digital Communications is increasing our efforts to improve the accessibility of web content on [umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu).

### Should you use a PDF?

The first question for any document you are making available on your website is "should I add this as a PDF?" If you can avoid using PDF for a document, this is usually the best option. By taking text out of a PDF and adding it directly to a web page, you ensure that visitors finding this information via web search will see it in the context of your UMaine website. When content is only available within a PDF, Google will send a search visitor directly to that document, circumventing any site navigation as well as any additional information you provided around that content. If you are unsure if PDF is a good fit for a particular document, please contact us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) and we will be happy to evaluate and discuss your options. In some cases, we may advise that you provide a web page-based version of your content alongside a PDF to accommodate accessibility needs.

### How do I make a PDF accessible?

An accessible PDF has features that provide engagement tools for someone who relies on assistive technology: text is searchable, the document's language is specified, and there are document structure tags with a logical reading order that allow a computer to help the reader navigate the file.


If you are making PDFs available on your website, you should be using the full, paid version of Adobe's Acrobat software (at the time of this writing, that is Adobe Acrobat DC). This software includes tools that allow you to check a document for accessibility, and create the important tags that are needed for screen readers.

Our team here in Digital Communications has some experience working with PDF documents for web accessibility, but we are always looking to improve our understanding of these tools. In particular, the document tagging that is required for accessible PDFs can be cumbersome and confusing, even to seasoned users of Adobe Acrobat. If you have direct experience with these tools, [we want to hear from you](#)— if there is enough interest in this topic, we may create an Accessible PDF User Group across our campus so our peers can share expertise and improve capabilities

together.

---

We hope you have found this update from Digital Communications helpful. Feel free to forward this newsletter to a colleague:

 Forward this newsletter

## University of Maine

Orono, ME 04469  
207.581.1865  
[umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu)

The University of Maine is an EEO/AA employer, and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Sarah E. Harebo, Director of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5754, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

---



---

## UMaine Website Owners and Managers — February 2019 update

1 message

---

**UMaine Digital Communications** <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
Reply-To: UMaine Digital Communications <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
To:

Tue, Feb 19, 2019 at 9:59 AM



[View this email in your browser](#)

# UMaine website managers

## Community update • February 2019

You are receiving this email because you have an account in UMaine's public website system, WordPress. If you no longer manage web content, please contact us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu)

---

## In this email:

- New training, "Beyond the basics"
- Upcoming training dates
- Known issues (events, content syndication)
- How to: Update your site footer
- Prioritizing Accessibility

[If you have a question you would like to see answered, let us know.](#)

---

### **New training, "Beyond the basics"**

Our weekly WordPress training is a great starting point for anyone who needs to maintain a UMaine website, but even 90 minutes is not enough to cover all of the features we have available.

Beginning March 2019, we will offer a biweekly training for additional website features for those who are ready to move beyond the basics.

This training will cover the following topics:

- Web forms
- Event calendars
- Maps
- Sidebar content

The first session will be held Wednesday, March 13 from 10 - 11 a.m., here in our conference room on the second floor of Alumni Hall (next to Fogler). Please email us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) if you plan to attend an upcoming date (additional dates below in the training schedule).

---

---

## Upcoming training dates

*Training is conducted in the Marketing and Communications conference room on the second floor of Alumni Hall (next to Fogler), suite 213*

**UMaine WordPress Basics:** Thursdays, 10 - 11:30 a.m.

February 21 & 28, March 7, 14, 21 & 28

This 90-minute session covers the basics of using WordPress at UMaine — how to log in, create pages, and edit header, footer and sidebar elements. We welcome anyone and everyone to join us for an orientation or refresher. Walk-ins are fine, but if you can let us know you are coming that's always a good idea. Just email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to give us a heads up.

**NEW UMaine WordPress Beyond the Basics:** Alternating Wednesdays, 10 - 11 a.m.

March 13 & 27

If you need to create web forms, maps, or event calendars on your website, this training is for you. In this hour we go beyond the basics of creating pages and posts, and focus on additional features you may find useful. The WordPress Basics training is a prerequisite. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to schedule one of the upcoming dates.

**SEO Workshops:** Alternating Thursdays, 2 - 3 p.m.

February 21 booked

March 7 & 21 available

What is SEO? This jargon is an abbreviation for "search engine optimization," and our SEO workshops will explain what you should focus on to improve how your web pages are found by users of Google, Bing and our own UMaine site search.

For each workshop we will focus on a participant's website, identifying changes to



content and structure that can have a positive impact. These workshops are intended for small groups, so please email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to express interest and get your spot saved for an upcoming date.

### **Using Monsido to Improve Your Website:** Alternating Thursdays, 9 - 10 a.m.

February 21

March 7 & 21

The University of Maine System has provided a website tool to aid in the important task of managing the quality and accessibility of web content. Monsido has been scanning UMaine websites, and interactive reports are now available.

If you want to learn more about Monsido's reports and how you may use its information to fix broken links, find misspellings, and find where content updates are most needed, we are providing 1-hour overview sessions to share what we know about this tool and how you can use it. If you have not yet begun using Monsido, Digital Communications can set you up with an account; email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to get started, and review your site's scan results.

---

### **Known Issues**

The UMaine website design— 'theme' in WordPress terms— is complex, and there are known issues you may encounter:

#### **Importing events into website calendar**

We license a "content aggregator" feature for our events calendar software, which works to import events in a shared Google calendar as event web pages you may list in a [umaine.edu](#) calendar list content block. This feature stopped functioning for our websites in mid-January. Our team has been working with the software vendor to identify and resolve this problem, but as of this newsletter the issue is ongoing. The workaround is to manually create events within the WordPress calendar feature.

#### **"Repost to UMaine News" and "Repost to UMaine Calendar" feature**

Our website has a content syndication feature for news and events— if you view a published news post or event detail page, the WordPress "admin toolbar" at the top of the page has a text link that states "Repost to UMaine News" or "Repost to UMaine Calendar." This feature creates a copy of your post or event, and submits it to the appropriate website in an unapproved "incoming" state for Marketing & Communications staff to review and publish.

Recently this feature has incorrectly given an error when it is used: instead of stating "Reposted" the message is "Try again? Failed to repost to" for either UMaine News or Calendar. The content is still being copied over, but because of this error your own site will not indicate that this has been done.

The workaround is to not believe this particular error message when you see it. We hope to have this issue resolved soon.

## How to: Update your site footer

**Training Site**  
123 Training Avenue  
Bangor, ME 04473

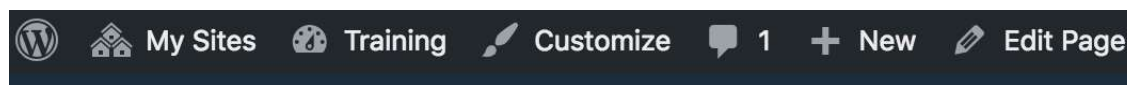
Tel: 207.581.1865  
um.weboffice@maine.edu



Most content updates on your website are fairly straightforward— you can navigate to a page, click "edit" in the top toolbar, and make your changes. But what if the content appears on every page of your website?

The "Appearance" category of features in your WordPress dashboard is where you can edit content that appears on more than one page. This includes your website header image, your site navigation, content for the sidebar area of your news posts, and the footer information at the bottom of your site.

The footer information is updated through a WordPress feature called the Customizer. You can find the Customizer as an option within the Appearance category in your dashboard, and there is also a direct link to the Customizer in the top admin toolbar if you are browsing or previewing your website content.



Once you click on the "Customize" feature, the page will reload with a preview of your web page on the right, and available options on the left. The third option, "Site Footer" is where you can set footer options.

There are five footer options available:

- **Full Footer:** This includes both contact information on the left and the menu you have chosen for your site navigation on the right.
- **Menu Only:** This option includes only your site navigation as clickable links.
- **Address & Contact Only** (most popular option): This option, pictured above, will center your contact information with physical address on the left, and email/phone/fax on the right.
- **Address & Custom Text:** This option must be configured by the Digital Communications team; custom text in a footer is limited to a plain text message, no links or image options are available.
- **None (hide):** This option hides the site footer altogether, leaving only the global navigation footer.

As mentioned above, the option that displays only the address & contact information is most popular.

The text fields underneath these options contain the address and contact information for your site, and each field is optional— if you leave one blank, it will simply not appear.

One last bit of advice: the "Department Email" field should contain only a single email address, the website will turn this into a clickable link that will not work if multiple addresses are present. If you need to display more than a single email address, we recommend you use a "Contact us" page that gives guidance for who should be contacted for various topics.

---

## Prioritizing Accessibility

Web accessibility has always been a requirement for UMaine websites, and Digital Communications has been increasing efforts to improve the accessibility of web content on [umaine.edu](https://umaine.edu). The term "accessibility" refers to our efforts to remove barriers that prevent access to websites by people who have a disability. This month, we acknowledge this can be an intimidating topic to address, and provide some guidance on how to prioritize your efforts.

### Where to begin?

If you have looked at web accessibility reports for your website (using Monsido or other tools), you may wonder where to start— every page likely has items that should be reviewed, and these tools rarely differentiate between the easy fixes and systemic content issues.

#### 1. Focus on top traffic pages

If you have access to your web analytics, single out the top 10 pages of your site by web traffic. If you do not have any idea how much traffic your web pages get, just look at your home page and pages directly linked from your site navigation.

#### 2. Talk to your contributors/editors

Make your life easier by getting accessible content for your website when it is created. If you have someone new who is taking photos or providing a news update, make sure they understand that web accessibility is a requirement. The best time to create the "alt text" for a photo on your website is when it is fresh content— it is far easier to remember who is in a picture taken last week than one you stumble upon years later.

#### 3. Fix your content, not the template

Software that evaluates your website for accessibility cannot distinguish between the content that you have created and the content that is part of the

UMaine website design. Because of this, there are many items an accessibility checker will ask you to review that have already been reviewed by our office. As one example, there are over 100 links contained in the global header and footer of [umaine.edu](https://umaine.edu) websites, and all of these have appropriately descriptive link text. Accessibility checkers do not know that, and will list these links as potential issues for review.

### What to fix first?

When you work to fix a page for accessibility, there are three items you can review that will address the majority of potential problems:

#### 1. Add alt text to images

[We discussed the importance of "alt text" in our September 2018 newsletter.](#)

This is always a good place to start with a web page, and will have real positive impact for anyone who relies on a screen reader to hear your content read aloud.

#### 2. Review link text for descriptiveness

If you have links on your website that are simply clickable web addresses (example: <https://umaine.edu/inauguration>) these should be updated so the link text is readable and descriptive (example: [Inauguration website](#)).

#### 3. Review links for redundancy

A screen reader will read links to a user in a list form for their convenience, but that convenience is lost if those links have the same descriptive text. If your link text does not make sense when read aloud by itself, you should add text to that link to better describe it. Examples of problematic link text:

- click here (better: click here for \_\_\_\_)
- PDF (better: Annual Report 2018 PDF)
- Word (better: Annual Report 2018 Word document)
- website (better: University of Maine website)

---

We hope you have found this update from Digital Communications helpful. Feel free to forward this newsletter to a colleague:



Forward this newsletter

### University of Maine

Orono, ME 04469  
207.581.1865  
[umaine.edu](https://umaine.edu)

The University of Maine is an EEO/AA employer, and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's

5/25/22, 10:10 AM

University of Maine System Mail - UMaine Website Owners and Managers — February 2019 update

status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Sarah E. Harebo, Director of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5754, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

---



---

## UMaine Website Owners and Managers — March 2019 update

1 message

---

**UMaine Digital Communications** <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
Reply-To: UMaine Digital Communications <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
To:

Tue, Mar 19, 2019 at 9:59 AM



[View this email in your browser](#)

# UMaine website managers

## Community update • March 2019

You are receiving this email because you have an account in UMaine's public website system, WordPress. If you no longer manage web content, please contact us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu)

---

### In this email:

- Changes in training
- New service for faculty websites
- Upcoming training dates
- Accessibility with links

[If you have a question you would like to see answered, let us know.](#)

---

### Happy Spring recess

March 18 - 24 is our Spring recess, but Digital Communications is on the job and ready to support your web needs.

### Changes in training

In our previous newsletter, we debuted our "Beyond the basics" training class. A big thank you to everyone who turned out for our first session, where we frankly realized there was not enough time to adequately cover the training topic. Going forward,

"Beyond the basics" training will be covering web forms, event calendars, and sidebars. Maps will return to a stand-alone training session.

### **What this means for you**

Thursdays will still be a WordPress training day from 10 - 11:30 a.m. here in our conference room on the second floor of Alumni Hall (next to Fogler). Instead of the same training every week at that time, we will alternate between our "WordPress basics" and "Beyond the basics" training. Walk-ins are still welcome, but it will be important to note which week's training you are walking into:

- The next "WordPress basics" session will be Thursday, March 21 from 10 - 11:30 a.m.
- The next "Beyond the basics" session will be Thursday, March 28 from 10 - 11:30 a.m.

Our stand-alone training for maps will continue to be held on alternating Wednesdays, 10 - 11 a.m. (next session on March 27).

Please email us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) if you plan to attend an upcoming date (additional dates below in the training schedule).

---

### **New service for faculty websites**

Historically, our support for the website needs of faculty has included two solutions:

- A faculty bio page within a college, school or unit website
- A lab site to contain the work done by a faculty member alongside students

Some faculty have in the past found that their web needs fall between these two solutions; they have more information to share than what fits in a faculty bio page on a website, but creating a lab site mischaracterizes their work.

We have contracted with a WordPress service provider named CampusPress to offer a new solution for faculty websites at [faculty.umaine.edu](http://faculty.umaine.edu) web addresses. The above two options remain available. This new solution utilizes WordPress but is not integrated with the UMaine public website environment. Brand standards and web accessibility remain requirements with this new service, but the websites are intended to have more design autonomy for faculty professional content. Login to this service is tied to your UMS / portal login.

[If you are interested in getting started with a website on faculty.umaine.edu, please email us at \[um.weboffice@maine.edu\]\(mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu\).](#)

---

## Upcoming training dates

*Training is conducted in the Marketing and Communications conference room on the second floor of Alumni Hall (next to Fogler), suite 213*

**UMaine WordPress Basics:** Alternating Thursdays, 10 - 11:30 a.m.

March 21, April 4 & 18

This 90-minute session covers the basics of using WordPress at UMaine — how to log in, create pages, and edit header, footer and sidebar elements. We welcome anyone and everyone to join us for an orientation or refresher. Walk-ins are fine, but if you can let us know you are coming that's always a good idea. Just email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to give us a heads up.

**NEW UMaine WordPress Beyond the Basics:** Alternating Thursdays, 10 - 11:30 a.m.

March 28, April 11 & 25

If you need to create web forms or event calendars on your website, this training is for you. In this 90-minute session we go beyond the basics of creating pages and posts, and focus on additional features you may find useful. The WordPress Basics training is a prerequisite. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to schedule one of the upcoming dates.

**UMaine Map Training:** Alternating Wednesdays, 10 - 11 a.m.

March 27, April 10 & 24

If you need to depict points of interest on campus, across the state, or around the globe, our UMaine map feature is worth exploring. In this training you will learn how to create individual map points, categorize map points together in a single map, and customize the map points by adding icons for easy visual identification. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to schedule one of the upcoming dates.

**SEO Workshops:** Alternating Thursdays, 2 - 3 p.m.

March 21 booked

April 4 & 18 available

What is SEO? This jargon is an abbreviation for "search engine optimization," and our SEO workshops will explain what you should focus on to improve how your web pages are found by users of Google, Bing and our own UMaine site search. For each workshop we will focus on a participant's website, identifying changes to content and structure that can have a positive impact. These workshops are intended for small groups, so please email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to express interest and get your spot saved for an upcoming date.

**Using Monsido to Improve Your Website:** Alternating Thursdays, 9 - 10 a.m.

March 21, April 4 & 18

The University of Maine System has provided a website tool to aid in the important



task of managing the quality and accessibility of web content. Monsido scans UMaine websites, and interactive reports are available. If you want to learn more about Monsido's reports and how you may use its information to fix broken links, find misspellings, and find where content updates are most needed, we are providing 1-hour overview sessions to share what we know about this tool and how you can use it. If you have not yet begun using Monsido, Digital Communications can set you up with an account; email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to get started, and review your site's scan results.

---

## Accessibility with links

Web accessibility has always been a requirement for UMaine websites, and Digital Communications has been increasing efforts to improve the accessibility of web content on [umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu). The term "accessibility" refers to our efforts to remove barriers that prevent access to websites by people who have a disability. This month, we talk about the challenges and opportunities with link text.

### How links work

A link on a web page has at least two elements: what the reader sees to click on, and the destination to which that click takes them. The destination is usually a web page or email address, but in some cases (such as mobile devices) a link may launch a phone call or other mobile app. In all situations, there needs to be an indication that the link exists (such as text, an image, or button), and that indication should be helpful to the reader.

With a basic link, there is underlined text that invites a reader to click. In many cases, a web address can get automatically converted into a clickable link (this happens in email quite frequently), for example:

<https://umaine.edu>

However, the web address does not need to be displayed— the link destination and the text for the link are separate attributes, and almost always it is better to use the text of a link to describe where that link will take someone:

[This link will take you to the UMaine website](#)

### Why is it better to use descriptive text for a link?

There are two very important reasons to use descriptive text for your links:

1. Screen reader users can generate a list of links on a page, and navigate them alphabetically. A screen reader will spell out a web address letter-by-letter, which is not helpful and frustrating for long web addresses.
2. Search engines use link text to better understand the topic of the page to which that link refers.

For both of these reasons, it is better to use phrases as your link text, and not single words.

### **Common link text to avoid (note, these examples are not clickable links)**

- [PDF](#)  
Instead, include the document name: [2018 Annual Report PDF](#)
- [Here](#)  
Instead, include more text: [You can find the the Fall 2018 syllabus here](#)
- [More](#)  
Instead, include more text: [Click here for additional registration details.](#)
- [http://...](#) (a website URL)  
Instead, replace the web address with the name of the website.

### **Image links**

Images may also be used in place of link text. When an image functions as a link, the image alt text must serve the purpose of link text. In this case, it is fine for the image alt text to describe the link destination instead of the image that is being displayed.

If an image needs to be described for screen readers, and that description does not serve for good link text, avoid using the image itself as a link.

### **Links to email addresses**

When you are using link text around an email address, it is acceptable to display the email address as the link text. For example: [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) is fine.


### **Hidden link text**

For the Article and Event List content blocks, there is an option to add a "More" link — a link that will take the reader to more articles or more events than are listed. In these situations our website system is creating additional, hidden link text that allows screen readers and search engines to receive suitably descriptive link text.

One hidden link text feature you can see for yourself are our "jump to" links at the top of every page. If you use the tab key on your keyboard upon visiting a UMaine web page, you will see "Skip to main navigation" appear on screen as a link. This link is in place explicitly for screen readers to allow for skipping to main navigation, site navigation, or page content, but is otherwise hidden.



We hope you have found this update from Digital Communications helpful. Feel free to forward this newsletter to a colleague:

 Forward this newsletter

### University of Maine

Orono, ME 04469  
207.581.1865  
[umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu)

The University of Maine is an EEO/AA employer, and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Sarah E. Harebo, Director of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5754, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)



---

## UMaine Website Owners and Managers — June 2019 update

1 message

---

**UMaine Digital Communications** <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
Reply-To: UMaine Digital Communications <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
To:

Tue, Jun 18, 2019 at 9:59 AM



[View this email in your browser](#)

# UMaine website managers

## Community update • June 2019

You are receiving this email because you have an account in UMaine's public website system, WordPress. If you no longer manage web content, please contact us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu)

---

## In this email:

- Web forms and email notifications
- Page layout advice coming soon
- Upcoming training dates
- Accessibility and tables

[If you have a question you would like to see answered, let us know.](#)

---

### Web forms and email notifications

If you have web forms on your site, please take a moment to review their notification settings. By default, web forms are set to email a form submission to the "admin email" for your site, which is usually our office. This should always be changed:

- If you do not view the dashboard of your website daily, the web form notifications should be set to send to an appropriate email address for follow up.

- If you review your web form entries through your website's dashboard, please turn off the default admin notification.

**If you have set up a web form but did not configure its notification settings, you will not be notified when visitors fill out your form.**

When Digital Communications receives these default admin notifications, it is unclear what website sent them, especially when the form's name is "subscribe" or "contact form." Therefore, we ask your help to reduce the volume of unnecessary emails.

---

## Page layout advice coming soon

This summer, Digital Communications will be updating our [online user guide](#) to better illustrate page layouts you can use for your content. These examples will show how you can combine images, lists, menus and text together for your own website in a way that works well on both desktop and mobile screens. Look for more information about this in our July newsletter.

Later this summer, a new workshop topic will be introduced, "website consultations." Similar to our ongoing SEO Workshops, these sessions will be available for individuals and groups working on the same website, in order to focus the time on changes or improvements you can make to your content. We expect to have more detail on this in our August newsletter.

---

## Upcoming training dates

*Training is conducted in the Marketing and Communications conference room on the second floor of Alumni Hall (next to Fogler), suite 213*

**Note: Our summer schedule for training dates is abbreviated, but we are available for support during this time.**

**UMaine WordPress Basics:** Alternating Thursdays, 10–11:30 a.m.

June 27, July 25

This 90-minute session covers the basics of using WordPress at UMaine — how to log in, create pages, and edit header, footer and sidebar elements. We welcome anyone and everyone to join us for an orientation or refresher. Walk-ins are fine, but if you can let us know you are coming that's always a good idea. Just email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to give us a heads up.

**UMaine WordPress Beyond the Basics:** Alternating Thursdays, 10–11:30 a.m.

June 20 & August 1

If you need to create web forms or event calendars on your website, this training is for you. In this 90-minute session we go beyond the basics of creating pages and posts, and focus on additional features you may find useful. The WordPress Basics training is a prerequisite. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to register for one of the upcoming dates.

**UMaine Map Training:** Alternating Wednesdays, 10–11 a.m.

June 19, July 3 & 17

If you need to depict points of interest on campus, across the state, or around the globe, our UMaine map feature is worth exploring. In this training you will learn how to create individual map points, categorize map points together in a single map, and customize the map points by adding icons for easy visual identification. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to register for one of the upcoming dates.

**SEO Workshops:** Alternating Thursdays, 2–3 p.m.

June 27, July 25

What is SEO? This jargon is an abbreviation for "search engine optimization," and our SEO workshops will explain what you should focus on to improve how your web pages are found by users of Google, Bing and our own UMaine site search.

For each workshop we will focus on a participant's website, identifying changes to content and structure that can have a positive impact. These workshops are intended for small groups, so please email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to express interest and reserve your spot for an upcoming date.

**Using Monsido to Improve Your Website:** Alternating Thursdays, 9–10 a.m.

June 27, July 25

The University of Maine System has provided a website tool to aid in the important task of managing the quality and accessibility of web content. Monsido scans UMaine websites, and interactive reports are available. If you want to learn more about Monsido's reports and how you may use its information to fix broken links, find misspellings, and discover where content updates are most needed, we are providing 1-hour overview sessions to share what we know about this tool and how you can use it. If you have not yet begun using Monsido, Digital Communications can set you up with an account; email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to get started, and review your site's scan results.

---

## Accessibility and tables

Web accessibility has always been a requirement for UMaine websites, and Digital Communications has been increasing efforts to improve the accessibility of web content on [umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu). The term "accessibility" refers to our efforts to remove barriers that prevent access to websites by people who have a disability. This month,

we explain how to address accessibility in tables.

### Do not use tables for layout

Before we detail how to create an accessible table, it's important to note that tables should be used sparingly on a website. For layout needs such as columns of text, it is more appropriate to use content blocks on the page instead of tables.

### When to use tables

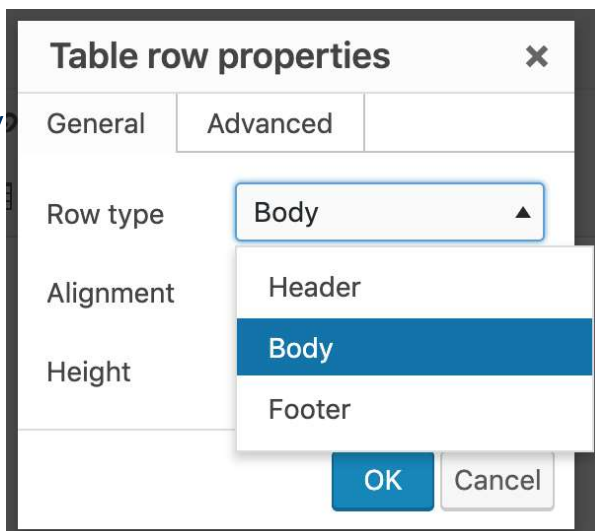
Tables should be used when it's necessary to present information in a grid, where columns and/or rows have a consistent topic or meaning. These tables can be added to a page using this button in the text editor toolbar:



This tool works much the same as it does in Google Docs or Microsoft Word, offering a visual grid for selecting the number of rows and columns.

### Identify row and column headers

To help readers understand the information in your table, headers are required, and those need to be properly identified as headers. Once your table is created, put your cursor in a cell that you want to designate as a header, and select either the "Cell" or "Row" option in the table drop-down menu. Both of these sub-menus will have a "properties" option you can set (example at right).



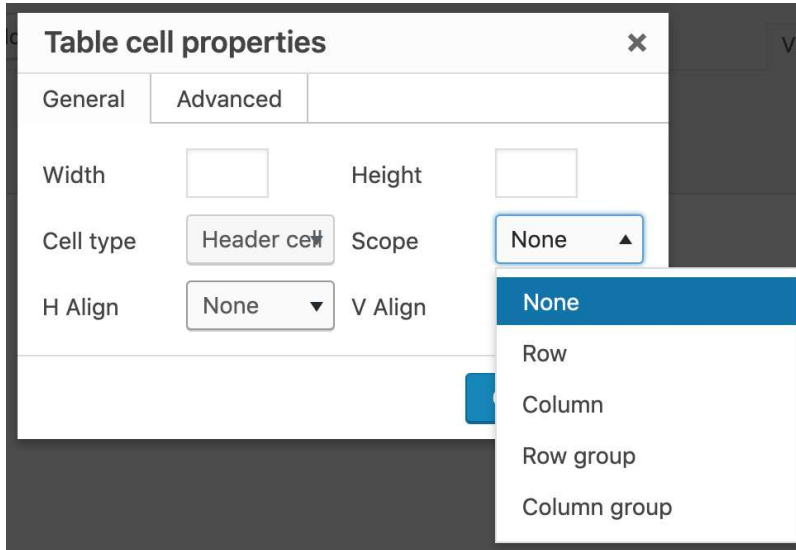
Note: If your table has headers at the top of columns, all in a single row, select "Table row properties." If your table's headers are at the left or right of rows, all in a single column, you must individually set each cell in that column to be a header by choosing "Table cell properties."

### Designate the scope of the table headers

The "scope" setting identifies whether a table header is a column header or a row header. It tells the screen reader what is associated with the table header:

- Select "Row" for a header when it applies to all the cells in that row
- Select "Column" for a header when it applies to all the cells in that column

- Select "Row group" or "Column group" in advanced situations where you have headers that span multiple columns or rows.




### Pay attention to mobile view

If your table needs to be as wide as your web page when viewed on your desktop, it will likely be a poor experience for someone viewing the table on a mobile device. To check for this, simply reduce the width of your web browser window to a narrow width. You will notice that the website header and footer change layout to accommodate the smaller screens of mobile devices. If your table cannot also narrow to that same width, any content that falls over the right margin will be unavailable. When this happens, consider presenting your content without using a table. An alternative to a table would be a series of bulleted lists, with each table row presented as its own set of bullets (where each bulleted item would have appeared in a column of the table).

If you find yourself struggling to make your table both accessible and usable on a mobile device, [please contact us](#)— we are here to help.

---

We hope you have found this update from Digital Communications helpful. Feel free to forward this newsletter to a colleague:

 Forward this newsletter

### University of Maine

Orono, ME 04469  
207.581.1865  
[umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu)



The University of Maine is an EEO/AA employer, and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Sarah E. Harebo, Director of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5754, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

---



---

## UMaine Website Owners and Managers — August 2019 update

1 message

---

**UMaine Digital Communications** <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
Reply-To: UMaine Digital Communications <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
To:

Tue, Aug 20, 2019 at 9:59 AM



[View this email in your browser](#)

# UMaine website managers

## Community update • August 2019

You are receiving this email because you have an account in UMaine's public website system, WordPress. If you no longer manage web content, please contact us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu)

---

### In this email:

- Welcome back reminders
- UMaine website updates and bug fixes
- New workshop, "Website consultation"
- Upcoming training dates
- Accessibility and color

[If you have a question you would like to see answered, let us know.](#)

---

### Welcome back reminders

Another academic year is upon us. With the start of our next year of monthly newsletters, now is a great time to remind everyone what Digital Communications offers for faculty and staff web needs on campus.

**Campus WordPress environment:** This is our most common solution. Websites are set up on a WordPress multisite that has a single, branded theme that all sites work

within. The WordPress theme has a unified global header and footer that our team maintains, and we support the theme and improve its usability as new features are needed. [To request a new website in our campus WordPress environment, please fill out this form.](#)

**Faculty WordPress environment:** This is our newest solution, that was implemented to provide the type of ad hoc website space that faculty would use for hosting content they want to make available professionally yet isn't directly tied to a lab site or program. The websites are all hosted at [faculty.umaine.edu](http://faculty.umaine.edu) and the site URL is the faculty member's name. The advantage of the Faculty WordPress environment is it offers more flexibility in look and feel, has unlimited storage, and has reasonable limitations (no custom plugins, php code, etc allowed). [Faculty interested in this new service should contact Mike Kirby.](#)

For web content that is not a good fit for maintaining in WordPress, [please contact us](#) and we will be happy to brainstorm other options.

---

## UMaine website updates and bug fixes

In early August, our campus WordPress environment was upgraded to the latest version of WordPress (5.2.2). As detailed in our December newsletter, we will continue to utilize the "Classic editor" alongside our own content blocks feature for the foreseeable future.

Over the coming year, we will be working with UMS IT to create a new page editor experience that utilizes the newer "Gutenberg" content editor option that is now part of WordPress 5.x and beyond. This newsletter will continue to keep our community updated on that progress.

### Bug fixes

A number of minor issues with our WordPress template have been addressed over the summer. A bug with content syndication (Repost to UMaine News, Repost to UMaine Calendar) has been addressed, and our image content block can now have a centered text overlay even when the image is expanded to the full width of the page. There have also been some minor tweaks made to the automated people directory available to UMaine websites, including the ability to designate a specific page URL for the directory and customize the name of the directory. [If you utilize this feature and are interested in what is new, please get in touch with us.](#)

---

## New workshop, "Website consultation"

Is your website helping you meet your goals? Do you want to make improvements,

but do not know where to begin? We now offer "office hours" style website consultation workshops, where we can meet to focus on your content and brainstorm improvements that can be made. Two one-hour sessions are available biweekly on Fridays in our conference room: 1:30 - 2:30, and 2:30 - 3:30 pm. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to express interest and reserve one of these slots.

---

## Upcoming training dates

*Training is conducted in the Marketing and Communications conference room on the second floor of Alumni Hall (next to Fogler), suite 213*

**UMaine WordPress Basics:** Alternating Thursdays, 10–11:30 a.m.

August 22, September 5 & 19

This 90-minute session covers the basics of using WordPress at UMaine — how to log in, create pages, and edit header, footer and sidebar elements. We welcome anyone and everyone to join us for an orientation or refresher. Walk-ins are fine, but if you can let us know you are coming that's always a good idea. Just email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to give us a heads up.

**UMaine WordPress Beyond the Basics:** Alternating Thursdays, 10–11:30 a.m.

August 29, September 12 & 26

If you need to create web forms or event calendars on your website, this training is for you. In this 90-minute session we go beyond the basics of creating pages and posts, and focus on additional features you may find useful. The WordPress Basics training is a prerequisite. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to register for one of the upcoming dates.

**UMaine Map Training:** Alternating Wednesdays, 10–11 a.m.

August 28, September 11 & 25

If you need to depict points of interest on campus, across the state, or around the globe, our UMaine map feature is worth exploring. In this training you will learn how to create individual map points, categorize map points together in a single map, and customize the map points by adding icons for easy visual identification. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to register for one of the upcoming dates.

**SEO Workshops:** Alternating Thursdays, 2–3 p.m.

August 22, September 5 & 19

What is SEO? This jargon is an abbreviation for "search engine optimization," and our SEO workshops will explain what you should focus on to improve how your web pages are found by users of Google, Bing and our own UMaine site search.

For each workshop we will focus on a participant's website, identifying changes to content and structure that can have a positive impact. These workshops are

intended for small groups, so please email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to express interest and reserve your spot for an upcoming date.

**Using Monsido to Improve Your Website:** Alternating Thursdays, 9–10 a.m.  
August 22, September 5 & 19

The University of Maine System has provided a website tool to aid in the important task of managing the quality and accessibility of web content. Monsido scans UMaine websites, and interactive reports are available. If you want to learn more about Monsido's reports and how you may use its information to fix broken links, find misspellings, and discover where content updates are most needed, we are providing 1-hour overview sessions to share what we know about this tool and how you can use it. If you have not yet begun using Monsido, Digital Communications can set you up with an account; email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to get started, and review your site's scan results.

**NEW: Website consultation workshops:** Alternating Fridays, 1:30—2:30 p.m., 2:30—3:30 p.m.

September 6 & 20

Is your website helping you meet your goals? Do you want to make improvements, but do not know where to begin? We now offer "office hours" style website consultation workshops, where we can meet to focus on your content and brainstorm improvements that can be made. Two one-hour sessions are available biweekly on Fridays in our conference room: 1:30 - 2:30, and 2:30 - 3:30 pm. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to express interest and reserve one of these slots.

---

## Accessibility and color

Web accessibility has always been a requirement for UMaine websites, and Digital Communications has been increasing efforts to improve the accessibility of web content on [umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu). The term "accessibility" refers to our efforts to remove barriers that prevent access to websites by people who have a disability. This month, we discuss how the use of color can impact accessibility.

### Considering color blindness

Using color photographs in UMaine web pages is encouraged as a way to create visual interest and break up a text-heavy page. The overwhelming majority of site visitors will experience color in a consistent, predictable way. A number of these visitors (about 4.5%) will have some kind of color insensitivity or "color blindness." Consideration must be given toward how the use of color could impact their experience.

### Color contrast

The most common consideration in regards to color on your website is in regards to

features such as our image content block, which allows for a text overlay on the image. In general darker, simple images provide better contrast for the white text. Such text does not read well when superimposed on busy, lighter images. If an image does not work well with a text overlay, an option is available to display that text underneath the image— this is always a good, accessible option to use.

If you are using color elsewhere on your web pages (such as shaded backgrounds to table cells), ensure that the colors have a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1. This ensures that the text is still readable to those who may have color blindness. [There are online tools to check color contrast ratio such as this one provided by WebAIM.](#)

### **Color should not convey meaning by itself**

Because color blindness affects how some visitors experience color, you should not rely on it to convey meaning without additional visual cues. A common example is the use of **red text** to indicate important information; if there is no indication aside from a color, you will not get the attention of a colorblind person. In web forms we indicate required fields with a red **\***; the red color combined with the special character ensures that everyone can see that the form field is required.

If you have used color as an attention-grabbing tactic, consider also making the text **bold**, *italic*, or include additional characters or formatting to set the message apart. An underline treatment should be reserved for links in the text.

Special note: If you are using multiple colors on a page to convey different meanings, each color should be accompanied by a *unique* treatment to reduce confusion. For example:

\* indicates a **required** class

† indicates a **prerequisite** is required

° indicates a class that is offered **online**

If you have any questions about web accessibility, or want to see us cover an accessibility topic in a future newsletter, please get in touch with us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu).

---

We hope you have found this update from Digital Communications helpful. Feel free to forward this newsletter to a colleague:



Forward this newsletter

## University of Maine

Orono, ME 04469  
207.581.1865  
[umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu)

The University of Maine is an EEO/AA employer, and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Sarah E. Harebo, Director of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5754, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

---



---

## UMaine Website Owners and Managers — September 2019 update

1 message

---

**UMaine Digital Communications** <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
Reply-To: UMaine Digital Communications <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
To:

Tue, Sep 17, 2019 at 9:59 AM



[View this email in your browser](#)

# UMaine website managers

## Community update • September 2019

You are receiving this email because you have an account in UMaine's public website system, WordPress. If you no longer manage web content, please contact us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu)

---

## In this email:

- UMaine website updates and bug fixes
- Managing PDFs and other documents
- Friday consultations expanding
- Upcoming training dates
- Testing for web accessibility

[If you have a question you would like to see answered, let us know.](#)

---

### UMaine website updates and bug fixes

We are making some minor changes to content blocks that you may notice, revising the names of some blocks, and adjusting the naming of options for clarity and consistency across campuses. Functionality of content blocks should not change, [if you notice anything working differently in October please let us know.](#)

### Bug fixes



A longstanding bug in our event calendar was fixed recently— importing events from a Google calendar had stopped functioning in January due to changes in the underlying software of our website calendar. Over the last month an update was made which offers a fix to this problem. If you had utilized this feature in the past (event import from a Google calendar), [please get in touch and we will apply the fix to your website.](#)

---

## **Managing PDFs and other documents**

Do you upload PDFs or other documents to your website? If so, you will benefit from using our website's "resource" feature. Resources are files and web links (URLs) intended for reuse across the site. They can be associated with a specific page, and a link can be displayed in a page or post using a content embed.

### **Why not use the media library for documents?**

The media library in WordPress is the default area for "static content" — documents, images, and other files that are not actively updated or modified by WordPress when they are accessed. WordPress offers the media library for both images and documents by default, but in practice the media library does a poor job of document management. While you can upload a PDF in the same way as images, linking to a file in the media library is not dynamic; if you need to update that PDF in the future, you must track down links to the old document and update those to point to the new one. Search engines that may have indexed the old content will continue to find it unless you actively track down and delete the older copy that is still in the media library.

### **Use resources to better manage your website's documents**

Resources can be thought of as a container for a document. If you find that a document needs to be updated, you can then open that container and replace the document. Links to that container will point to the new document, keeping links up to date, and old versions of files off the website.

### **How to create a new resource**

Use the Resource menu on the left column of the WordPress dashboard to create a new resource. You can then name the resource in the same way you name pages and posts. If you have a number of resources to maintain and list, an optional feature allows you to designate a resource category. In the Location block, you can upload the document. Unlike the media library's 1MB file size restriction, resources have a maximum file size of 50MB.

Note, you may instead specify an external URL/link for a resource. In this case, the resource acts as a redirect to the URL you have set.

All of the resources you have created and published are made available in a searchable "resource library." [An example of a resource library can be found on the Office of the President website.](#)

### **Adding a resource to a page or post**

Once you have created your resource, you may add a link to it to any page or post. The most common way to do this is to use the link tool in the text editor. The link tool can be used to search your content by title— simply type in the name you had given your resource, and it should be selectable as the link destination.

Another way to add a resource to a page or post is through the "Add post element" button above the text editor toolbar. If you use this method, the resource will be added in a way that uses the name you had given it, and the resource displays in a large grey highlighted box with a clickable button to go to the resource (view or download a file, or go to the URL).

[More information about resources may be found in our user guide.](#) If you have any questions about using resources, [please email us at um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu).

---

### **Friday consultations expanding**

Over the course of this past year, Digital Communications has expanded our training topics, and we have become a heavy user of the Marketing and Communications conference room. While our WordPress basics trainings are regularly attended, more specialized sessions on search engine optimization, UMaine maps, and Monsido are more appropriate for on-demand consultations.

Beginning October 1, we are discontinuing the recurring schedules for these more specialized topics, and instead we will offer these as part of our Friday consultations. To make scheduling easier, our Friday consultation slots will be available every week.

Consultation slots are currently available every Friday in October. If you are interested in a website consultation on any of our training topics, or simply want to review your website and brainstorm improvements, [please email us at um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) and we will work together to find a convenient available date.

---

### **Upcoming training dates**

*Training is conducted in the Marketing and Communications conference room on the second floor of Alumni Hall (next to Fogler), suite 213*

## Thursday training sessions (10–11:30 a.m.)

**UMaine WordPress Basics:** Alternating Thursdays, 10–11:30 a.m.

September 19, October 3, 17 and 31

This 90-minute session covers the basics of using WordPress at UMaine — how to log in, create pages, and edit header, footer and sidebar elements. We welcome anyone and everyone to join us for an orientation or refresher. Walk-ins are fine, but if you can let us know you are coming that's always a good idea. Just email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to give us a heads up.

**UMaine WordPress Beyond the Basics:** Alternating Thursdays, 10–11:30 a.m.

September 26, October 10 and 24

If you need to create web forms or event calendars on your website, this training is for you. In this 90-minute session we go beyond the basics of creating pages and posts, and focus on additional features you may find useful. The WordPress Basics training is a prerequisite. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to register for one of the upcoming dates.

## Other training topics (by appointment effective October 1)

**UMaine Map Training:** Wednesday, September 25, 10–11 a.m.

by Friday appointment effective October 1

If you need to depict points of interest on campus, across the state, or around the globe, our UMaine map feature is worth exploring. In this training you will learn how to create individual map points, categorize map points together in a single map, and customize the map points by adding icons for easy visual identification. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to register for one of the upcoming dates.

**SEO Workshops:** Thursday, September 19, 2–3 p.m.

by Friday appointment effective October 1

What is SEO? This jargon is an abbreviation for "search engine optimization," and our SEO workshops will explain what you should focus on to improve how your web pages are found by users of Google, Bing and our own UMaine site search.

For each workshop we will focus on a participant's website, identifying changes to content and structure that can have a positive impact. These workshops are intended for small groups, so please email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to express interest and reserve your spot for an upcoming date.

**Using Monsido to Improve Your Website:** Thursday, September 19, 9–10 a.m.

by Friday appointment effective October 1

The University of Maine System has provided a website tool to aid in the important

task of managing the quality and accessibility of web content. Monsido scans UMaine websites, and interactive reports are available. If you want to learn more about Monsido's reports and how you may use its information to fix broken links, find misspellings, and discover where content updates are most needed, we are providing 1-hour overview sessions to share what we know about this tool and how you can use it. If you have not yet begun using Monsido, Digital Communications can set you up with an account; email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to get started, and review your site's scan results.

**Website consultation workshops:** Fridays, 1:30—2:30 p.m., 2:30—3:30 p.m.  
September 20, October 4, 11, 18 and 25

Is your website helping you meet your goals? Do you want to make improvements, but do not know where to begin? We now offer "office hours" style website consultation workshops, where we can meet to focus on your content and brainstorm improvements that can be made. Two one-hour sessions are available on Fridays in our conference room: 1:30 - 2:30, and 2:30 - 3:30 pm. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to express interest and reserve one of these slots.

Effective October 1, our UMaine Map training, SEO workshop, and Monsido workshop will be available as topics for the appointment.

---

## Testing for web accessibility

Web accessibility has always been a requirement for UMaine websites, and Digital Communications has been increasing efforts to improve the accessibility of web content on [umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu). The term "accessibility" refers to our efforts to remove barriers that prevent access to websites by people who have a disability. This month, we discuss how you can test for web accessibility on your pages.

## Monsido

The University of Maine System adopted [Monsido](#) as a service that provides insight into web pages across our campuses. Digital Communications offers training in the use of Monsido, and beginning October 1, 2019 you may set an appointment with us on any upcoming Friday to learn more about Monsido and review the reports for your website. This tool is a good way to identify accessibility issues that you should address, such as adding alt text to images.

## WebAIM WAVE Accessibility Checker

WebAIM (Web Accessibility In Mind) has provided comprehensive web accessibility solutions since 1999, and their free online service is available to anyone for free use to evaluate a web page. Simply navigate to the [WAVE web accessibility evaluation tool website](#), and enter your web page address.

WebAIM also provides [WAVE browser extensions](#) which can be used directly within the Chrome and Firefox browsers to run their web accessibility checkers more easily.

### A note about automated checkers

Both Monsido and the WAVE service are automated checkers, and provide a good first pass to identify potential problems with your web page's accessibility. These checkers can expose items that you should address, but may also identify issues that are outside of your control. Digital Communications routinely works to update our website and improve accessibility, with a focus on issues within the overall template used by [umaine.edu](#).

Should you find an issue identified by a web accessibility checker and believe it is within the website template, [please send us a note and we will look into the issue](#).

If you have any questions about web accessibility, or want to see us cover an accessibility topic in a future newsletter, please get in touch with us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu).

---

We hope you have found this update from Digital Communications helpful. Feel free to forward this newsletter to a colleague:



Forward this newsletter

## University of Maine

Orono, ME 04469  
207.581.1865  
[umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu)

The University of Maine is an EEO/AA employer, and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Sarah E. Harebo, Director of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5754, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)



---

## UMaine Website Owners and Managers — October 2019 update

1 message

---

**UMaine Digital Communications** <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
Reply-To: UMaine Digital Communications <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
To:

Tue, Oct 15, 2019 at 9:59 AM



[View this email in your browser](#)

# UMaine website managers

## Community update • October 2019

You are receiving this email because you have an account in UMaine's public website system, WordPress. If you no longer manage web content, please contact us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu)

---

### In this email:

- Looking toward the future of UMaine website 2020
- Friday consultations — remote videoconferencing available
- Upcoming training dates
- Training topics by appointment
- Web accessibility and headings

[If you have a question you would like to see answered, let us know.](#)

---

### Looking toward the future of UMaine website 2020

The current design of [umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu) launched at the start of the 2015 academic year, and introduced a solid platform that allowed for consistency in navigation yet offered flexibility to meet individual website needs. We have continued to expand upon the capabilities of our website over the last several years, introducing features such as online maps alongside feature tweaks and improvements. Our current website is a mature platform; at the same time, newer WordPress developments such as the

"Gutenberg" editor and new video capabilities are not yet supported in our current design.

In these last months of 2019, Digital Communications is looking forward, making plans for improvements and new features for the UMaine website. The primary effort in our 2020 website development will focus on the newer Gutenberg editor in WordPress 5. Our evaluation of this feature has found that it is a fundamental change to how web content is edited. We are proceeding carefully and deliberately to ensure our website manager community has proper training and a smooth transition. If you are comfortable using our existing content block system, you will be able to continue using it next year and into 2021. As our website begins to allow for the use of the Gutenberg editor, we will offer training sessions focused on its use (this new training will likely be available in the Fall 2020 semester).

Because the adoption of this new feature is fundamental to WordPress, we will use this opportunity to identify improvements that can be made to the UMaine theme in regards to web accessibility, search optimization, and new features. These improvements will be announced in this newsletter as they take shape— and we want our UMaine website managers to have a voice in this process. Our November newsletter will have a survey to request feedback on the current website, and input into our 2020 website improvement efforts.

---

## Friday consultations — remote videoconferencing available

Digital Communications now has office hours! Two 1-hour time slots are available every Friday afternoon at 1:30 and 2:30. If you are interested in a website consultation on any of our training topics, or simply want to review your website and brainstorm improvements, [please email us at um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) and we will work together to find a convenient available date.

If it is not convenient for you to travel to meet with us in person, zoom videoconferencing is available with our team. We can even conduct a hybrid meeting in our conference room with both in-person and remote attendees.

---

## Upcoming training dates

*Training is conducted in the Marketing and Communications conference room on the second floor of Alumni Hall (next to Fogler), suite 213*

**UMaine WordPress Basics:** Alternating Thursdays, 10–11:30 a.m.

October 17 and 31, November 14

This 90-minute session covers the basics of using WordPress at UMaine — how to

log in, create pages, and edit header, footer and sidebar elements. We welcome anyone and everyone to join us for an orientation or refresher. Walk-ins are fine, but if you can let us know you are coming that's always a good idea. Just email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to give us a heads up.

**UMaine WordPress Beyond the Basics:** Alternating Thursdays, 10–11:30 a.m.  
October 24, November 7 and 21

If you need to create web forms or event calendars on your website, this training is for you. In this 90-minute session we go beyond the basics of creating pages and posts, and focus on additional features you may find useful. The WordPress Basics training is a prerequisite. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to register for one of the upcoming dates.

---

## Training topics by appointment

These training topics are available for our Friday consultations on request, and can be held in our conference room or remotely via zoom videoconferencing.

### UMaine Map Training

If you need to depict points of interest on campus, across the state, or around the globe, our UMaine map feature is worth exploring. In this training you will learn how to create individual map points, categorize map points together in a single map, and customize the map points by adding icons for easy visual identification. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to schedule.

### SEO Workshop

What is SEO? This jargon is an abbreviation for "search engine optimization," and our SEO workshops will explain what you should focus on to improve how your web pages are found by users of Google, Bing and our own UMaine site search. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to schedule.

### Using Monsido to Improve Your Website

The University of Maine System has provided a website tool to aid in the important task of managing the quality and accessibility of web content. Monsido scans UMaine websites, and interactive reports are available. If you want to learn more about Monsido's reports and how you may use its information to fix broken links, find misspellings, and discover where content updates are most needed, email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to get started, and review your site's scan results.

### Website consultation workshop

Is your website helping you meet your goals? Do you want to make improvements, but do not know where to begin? We now offer "office hours" style website consultation workshops, where we can meet to focus on your content and brainstorm



improvements that can be made. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to schedule.

---

## **Web accessibility and headings**

Web accessibility has always been a requirement for UMaine websites, and Digital Communications has been increasing efforts to improve the accessibility of web content on [umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu). The term "accessibility" refers to our efforts to remove barriers that prevent access to websites by people who have a disability. This month, we discuss how you can use headings in your web content to benefit both web accessibility and search optimization.

Headings are usually larger in comparison to the overall text of a web page, and in the UMaine website these display as blue text in the "Roboto slab" serif font. All pages in the UMaine website have at least one web heading, the name of your website is the top heading for every web page. Headings within your web content are considered sub-headings, and follow a hierarchy of h2-h6 (h1 being your site name as the top heading). By default, most web pages display the name of the web page as the h2 sub-heading, though pages using content blocks do not display this unless you add a heading block.

### **Headings can benefit all readers**

Headings help organize a web page and give all readers a sense of its structure. Many web readers are scanning your pages quickly, and headings can help them find a section of information on your page more easily.

### **Headings can benefit the visually impaired**

Readers who rely on screen readers can navigate a page according to its headings — they can listen to a list of headings on a page, and skip to a heading to read the section underneath. In fact, almost 70% of screen reader users prefer to use headings on a page to read content ([2017 WebAIM survey](#)).

### **Headings can benefit your content in search engines**

Adhering to accessibility best practices is helpful in many ways, including how your website content is found in search engines. These services will pay attention to the headings on your web page in order to better characterize content. Using headings in your content can drive more traffic to your web pages for this reason.

### **How to use headings**

As mentioned earlier, headings follow a hierarchy with sub-headings h2 - h6 underneath the page's h1 heading. The most important topic of the page should be the h2 heading, and sub-sections should be h3 headings within the page. If a page has multiple to-level topics on your website, it is appropriate to have multiple h2

headings for each of these main topics. Sub-sections within an h3 heading would be h4 headings, and so on.

Important: Do not skip levels of headings; you should not have an h4 heading on your page unless there is an h3 heading earlier in the page (and that h3 heading should have the page title's h2 heading above it). Think of headings as the outline of your page, where you can jump "back" to a higher level heading when the topic changes. Here is a visual example:

H1: Name of your website (controlled by UMaine design)

- H2: Name of your web page
  - H3: Sub-topic on this page
  - H3: Another sub-topic on this page
    - H4: Sub-topic of this sub-topic
      - H5: Sub-topic of this sub-topic
  - H3: Another sub-topic of this page

...and so on. Very rarely are the h5 and h6 headings used (typically in very long, complex pages).


### What not to do

- Do not use headings to make a paragraph of text stand out. Instead, put a heading over the text to characterize it better.
- Do not use **bold** instead of a heading. Both screen readers and search engines will not recognize this as a heading, and the benefits of having the heading are diminished.

If you have any questions about web accessibility, or want to see us cover an accessibility topic in a future newsletter, please get in touch with us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu).

---

We hope you have found this update from Digital Communications helpful. Feel free to forward this newsletter to a colleague:

 Forward this newsletter

**University of Maine**

Orono, ME 04469

207.581.1865

[umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu)

The University of Maine is an EEO/AA employer, and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Sarah E. Harebo, Director of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5754, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

---



---

## UMaine Website Owners and Managers — December 2019 update

1 message

---

**UMaine Digital Communications** <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
Reply-To: UMaine Digital Communications <um.weboffice@maine.edu>  
To:

Tue, Dec 17, 2019 at 9:59 AM



[View this email in your browser](#)

# UMaine website managers

## Community update • December 2019

You are receiving this email because you have an account in UMaine's public website system, WordPress. If you no longer manage web content, please contact us at [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu)

---

### In this email:

- Happy Winter Break
- Website 2020 Survey Reminder
- Upcoming training dates (holiday/break dates)

[If you have a question you would like to see answered, let us know.](#)

---

#### Happy Winter Break

The team here at UMaine Digital Communications (in the Division of Marketing and Communications) wishes everyone a happy winter break. May we all use this time between semesters to recharge, and tackle the challenges and opportunities of 2020 with renewed focus.

---

#### Website 2020 Survey Reminder

Digital Communications needs your input! Our website survey for 2020 is underway, and we will collect responses through Winter Break. This survey is available to everyone in our WordPress community through Friday, Jan. 17.

## Take the Survey

---

### Upcoming training dates (holiday/break dates)

*Training is conducted in the Marketing and Communications conference room on the second floor of Alumni Hall (next to Fogler), suite 213*

**UMaine WordPress Basics:** Alternating Thursdays, 10–11:30 a.m.

January 9 & 23

This 90-minute session covers the basics of using WordPress at UMaine — how to log in, create pages, and edit header, footer and sidebar elements. We welcome anyone and everyone to join us for an orientation or refresher. Walk-ins are fine, but if you can let us know you are coming that's always a good idea. Just email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to give us a heads up.

**UMaine WordPress Beyond the Basics:** Alternating Thursdays, 10–11:30 a.m.

December 19, January 2 & 16

If you need to create web forms or event calendars on your website, this training is for you. In this 90-minute session we go beyond the basics of creating pages and posts, and focus on additional features you may find useful. The WordPress Basics training is a prerequisite. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to register for one of the upcoming dates.

**Friday consultations:** Every Friday

1:30 - 2:30, 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. (two 1-hour sessions)

December 20 & 27, January 3, 10 & 17

Two 1-hour time slots are available every Friday afternoon at 1:30 and 2:30 if you are interested in a website consultation on any of our training topics, or simply want to review your website and brainstorm improvements. [Email us at um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) and we will work together to find a convenient available date. Zoom videoconferencing is available for these sessions. We can even conduct a hybrid meeting in our conference room with both in-person and remote attendees.

---

### Training topics by appointment

These training topics are available for our Friday consultations on request, and can

be held in our conference room or remotely via Zoom videoconferencing.

### **UMaine Map Training**

If you need to depict points of interest on campus, across the state, or around the globe, our UMaine map feature is worth exploring. In this training you will learn how to create individual map points, categorize map points together in a single map, and customize the map points by adding icons for easy visual identification. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to schedule.

### **SEO Workshop**

What is SEO? This jargon is an abbreviation for "search engine optimization," and our SEO workshops will explain what you should focus on to improve how your web pages are found by users of Google, Bing and our own UMaine site search. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to schedule.

### **Using Monsido to Improve Your Website**

The University of Maine System has provided a website tool to aid in the important task of managing the quality and accessibility of web content. Monsido scans UMaine websites, and interactive reports are available. If you want to learn more about Monsido's reports and how you may use its information to fix broken links, find misspellings, and discover where content updates are most needed, email [mike.kirby@maine.edu](mailto:mike.kirby@maine.edu) to get started, and review your site's scan results.

### **Website consultation workshop**

Is your website helping you meet your goals? Do you want to make improvements, but do not know where to begin? We now offer "office hours" style website consultation workshops, where we can meet to focus on your content and brainstorm improvements that can be made. Please email [um.weboffice@maine.edu](mailto:um.weboffice@maine.edu) to schedule.

---

We hope you have found this update from Digital Communications helpful. Feel free to forward this newsletter to a colleague:



Forward this newsletter

## **University of Maine**

Orono, ME 04469  
207.581.1865  
[umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu)

The University of Maine is an EEO/AA employer, and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's

5/25/22, 10:06 AM

University of Maine System Mail - UMaine Website Owners and Managers — December 2019 update

status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Sarah E. Harebo, Director of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5754, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

---