General

- Who are the internal and external stakeholders for this site

Content Strategy

Websites tend to grow slowly over time in their content, sometimes getting too large for their current structure. As we consider a possible new organization for a site, it's also a good time to identify areas of immediate and future growth. If we know that a new piece of content will be added in the near future, we can build the site structure with room for that growth.

- Rule of Thumb - Cut content in half, then cut in half again
- Content Type Definition - What do you want your site to do? e.g. News, Blog, calendar, etc.
- Who is your audience
- What is your message

Site Organization

The organization of a site is about both the priority of information, as well as the experience a visitor has in navigating the site. Determining a solid organization and navigation scheme is one of the most challenging aspects of building a website, and also one of the most important pieces.

- What kind of feedback do you get about your web content?
- Is there anything in the current organization that really works well?
- Tools to outline your site organization
    - Use a card sort which is a tool to allow website users to organize your content into a navigation that makes sense to them.
    - Conduct usability testing.
    - Create an outline of your future site

Design and Marketing

The visual presentation of a website includes graphic design, multi-media features, photography, etc. Design should be a harmonious relationship between the site owner, the user and the technology. Simply put, design and function must be considered together to achieve the best product. Bringing a design that you are not willing to adjust to utilize the capabilities of the technology will be a frustrating experience for all.

Our approach is to begin with the needs of mobile device users as a basis and then build from there. Over 50% (and growing) of web traffic is from a mobile device such as an iPhone, iPad, or Android device. Accessibility is another of our guiding principles as we discuss site design.

- What do you dislike about current design?
- Look and feel of new site?
- Branding: Do you have logos or wordmarks you want to use? Should the site be visually similar to any other sites on campus?
- Are there sites you have seen from peer institutions that you like?
- Are there any other marketing or communication efforts to take into account with this site/project?

Technical & Infrastructure

The technical issues surrounding websites are a small but important part of the project. Most work will focus on the content and presentation. During scoping, it's important to identify any major technical or infrastructure issues.

- What is the plan for distributed maintenance of site content? Who will add content? Will it need to be approved
- Who needs access to site analytics and data
- Are there any other applications or databases your current site leverages?
    - Who else uses these apps/databases?
    - Any other systems that you want to integrate with?

Schedule & Critical Dates

- Are there any critical deadlines that need to be met
- Are there any times during the year that are particularly difficult
- Are there any people specific schedule related issues we should be aware of?