



# Website and Domain Policy

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<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Chief Information Officer, James Johnson
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# Website Usage Policy and Guidelines

## Purpose

The Saint Mary's College website is a key resource for communication of the college's brand, mission, and values. Saint Mary's College seeks to ensure all official college websites and web resources align with the college's brand identity standards and strategic goals; provide a consistent navigation and user experience; and comply with all user accessibility applicable state and federal requirements.

## Responsibilities of Key Departments

### **Leadership from Marketing & Communications:**

1. Spearheads strategic initiatives to cater to the evolving needs of the College's web environment.
2. Shapes a cohesive brand strategy for official College websites, emphasizing web design guidelines.
3. Grants approval for new college-level web endeavors and allocates official College domain addresses.
4. Exercises authority over official subdomain assignments under the stmarys-ca.edu domain.
5. Upholds compliance of all College web entities with this policy.
6. Facilitates a yearly forum for campus employees with official web-related responsibilities.

### **Information Technology Services (ITS):**

1. Maintains and supports the official College web framework, encompassing content management system, themes, templates, and development.
2. Sets stringent standards for ensuring the security of College websites.
3. Takes prompt action to remove any College website displaying signs of a security breach.
4. Manages the hosting arrangements for College resources.
5. Ensures alignment of third-party technologies with College standards.

### **Website Publishers:**

1. Ensures that websites, web resources, and content within their purview align with College policies and meet state and federal requirements.

2. Approves and assigns new web addresses within their respective unit's web architecture.
3. Addresses and resolves compliance issues in coordination with relevant campus offices.

## Web Framework

The Saint Mary's College Web Framework is developed and maintained by the Department of Marketing & Communication in partnership with the Department of IT Services. The framework serves to establish brand cohesion, compliance with government regulations, and oversight of usage.

## Content Management Systems

A content management system (CMS) is a platform that allows users to create, manage, and modify digital content on a website without requiring technical expertise.

### Drupal

Saint Mary's primary content management system is Drupal. Drupal is designed to be easy to use for technical or non-technical users, with interchangeable components for webpage customization. The IT Services department supports a single branded Drupal theme for official college websites that represent academic and business units.

### Google Sites

Google Sites is a website creation tool that allows users to easily create and customize websites. Faculty wishing to create a public website for personal projects or classroom instruction should create a Google Site using their Saint Mary's College account.

Website owners must abide by [FERPA requirements](#) and the [SMC Web Privacy Policy](#).

### Unofficial College Websites

The creation of content management systems outside of the Saint Mary's College Drupal instance and Google sites for public Saint Mary's College business and academic operations is highly discouraged. Any department requesting an external CMS must submit a ticket indicating their purpose to [stmarys-ca.edu/ITS](mailto:stmarys-ca.edu/ITS). Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by IT Services and the Department of Marketing & Communications. **This includes but is not limited to Wordpress, Canva, Wix, GoDaddy, etc. All sites have to adhere to Saint Mary's policies see below.**

While unofficial College websites aren't directly overseen, adherence to campus, state, and federal policies is encouraged. The College holds no liability for unauthorized activities on unofficial websites.

## Security Considerations

Collecting data for Saint Mary's College of California, on non-approved websites, involves several cyber risks. These risks can affect not just the individual involved but also the broader institution. Here are some of the key risks:

1. **Data Breach and Privacy Violations:** Collecting data from non-approved websites might involve accessing information that is not meant to be publicly available or is protected under privacy laws (like FERPA in the U.S., which protects student educational records). Unauthorized access or distribution of such data can lead to privacy violations and legal repercussions.
2. **Malware and Phishing Risks:** Non-approved websites may not follow stringent security measures and could be a source of malware, ransomware, or phishing attacks. Downloading data from these sites can inadvertently introduce malicious software into the institution's network, compromising not only the individual's device but also the broader IT infrastructure.
3. **Compromised Credentials:** Engaging with non-approved websites increases the risk of credential theft, where attackers could gain unauthorized access to institutional accounts. This is particularly concerning for educational institutions where access to sensitive student data and intellectual property is at stake.
4. **Network Vulnerabilities:** Accessing and collecting data from non-approved websites can expose the network to vulnerabilities. Attackers can exploit these vulnerabilities to gain unauthorized access, disrupt services, or conduct other malicious activities against the institution's network.
5. **Legal and Compliance Issues:** Educational institutions are subject to various regulatory and compliance requirements. Collecting data from non-approved sources could violate these regulations, leading to legal issues, fines, and damage to the institution's reputation.
6. **Reputational Damage:** Engaging in activities that compromise data security can harm the reputation of the individual and the institution. Trust is critical in educational environments, and any incident that undermines this trust can have long-lasting effects.

## SMC Institutional Website Eligibility

Saint Mary's College website areas can be created by and for (but not limited to):

- Schools, departments, and their subordinate organizations
- Administrative offices and their subordinate organizations
- Institutes, Labs and Centers
- Official events, campaigns and conferences.

New website area requests should be submitted to Ashley Rose, Director of Web and Digital Marketing Strategy at [ajr5@stmarys-ca.edu](mailto:ajr5@stmarys-ca.edu).

## User Roles

The Saint Mary's College website is managed by a collaborative effort from the Office of Marketing & Communications, IT Services, and each department, division, and college.

### User Roles

- Administrators: Administrator roles are limited to IT Services and Office of Marketing & Communications
- Website Administrators: Administrator roles are limited to the Office of Marketing and Communications
- Website Publishers & Editors: Limited to employees and student workers in the Office of Marketing and Communications
- Area Publishers: Limited to employees and graduate student workers in each area.
- Area Editors: Recommended for undergraduate student workers in each area.
- News & Events Publishers: Limited to employees and graduate student workers in each area.
- News & Events Editors: Recommended for undergraduate student workers in each area.

### User Responsibilities

Attend the annual campus-wide web professionals meeting to discuss prevalent issues and concerns impacting the College's web environment. As owners of the website's content, website publishers from each unit are responsible for creating, updating, and removing content on their respective website(s).

# Compliance

## **Incorporation of Disclaimer**

In line with the College framework, all official College website footers must include a link to the [College privacy statement](#).

## **Ensuring Compliance**

Every website, resource, page, and/or document is mandated to comply with College policies, covering aspects like computer use, privacy, and human resources. Specific requirements are outlined below.

## **Adherence to Copyright Standards**

All websites, resources, pages, and/or documents must respect and comply with the College's copyright statement.

## **Privacy Protocols**

To safeguard against legal implications, all websites, resources, pages, and/or documents must comply with applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to FERPA, HIPPA, GDPR, and the official [College privacy statement](#).

## **Stringent Website Security**

Ensuring compliance with ITS security standards and current [College security policies](#) is obligatory for all websites, pages, and/or documents.

## **Authorized Revenue-generating Activity and Advertising**

Engaging in revenue-generating activity, especially those involving online payments, necessitates prior authorization from the Business Office or Strategic Partnerships and Advancement Department (SPA).

## **Exemptions for Legacy Web Resources**

Legacy web resources may be granted exemptions, subject to approval from Marketing & Communications and evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## **Zero Tolerance for Unlawful Content**

Straying from compliance with state law, federal law, or College policies is strictly prohibited and will result in the immediate removal of content.

# Commitment to Accessibility

In alignment with the College's [electronic accessibility requirements](#), all websites, resources, pages, and/or documents should prioritize accessibility

## Legal and Regulatory Compliance

Ensures adherence to California data privacy laws, accessibility standards, and required compliance documentation. This includes the crucial aspect of web accessibility, which is governed by both federal and state regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the California Unruh Civil Rights Act. **Web accessibility** is not just a legal requirement but also a critical component of an inclusive educational environment. The college commits to ensuring its digital resources, including websites, are accessible to all individuals, including those with disabilities.

### Risks of Non-Compliance:

- **Legal and Financial Consequences:** Failure to comply with web accessibility standards can result in significant legal and financial repercussions for the college. This includes potential lawsuits, legal fees, and fines, which could negatively impact the college's resources and reputation.
- **Barrier to Education:** An inaccessible website can create barriers for students, faculty, and staff with disabilities, hindering their access to information, resources, and opportunities for learning and engagement. This not only affects individual experiences but also contradicts the college's mission to provide inclusive and equitable education.
- **Reputational Damage:** Non-compliance with accessibility standards can lead to negative publicity, affecting the college's reputation among potential students, staff, and the wider community. It may also impact partnerships and funding opportunities.

### Accessibility Evaluation Methods:

- **Automated Tools:** We utilize the WAVE toolbar (available at [www.webaim.org](http://www.webaim.org)) for an initial assessment of web accessibility. This tool helps us identify and rectify issues such as:
  - Errors in HTML and JavaScript code.
  - Missing or problematic alternative text (alt tags) for images.
  - Disassociated form labels and radio buttons.
  - Inadequate contrast ratios between text and background colors.
- **Manual Testing:** Beyond automated tools, we conduct manual testing to ensure our web content and classroom software are fully accessible:
  - **Keyboard Navigation:** We verify that all web products and sites can be navigated using a keyboard alone, ensuring access for users who cannot use a mouse.



- **Non-Visual Access:** We confirm that information is accessible and usable without sound, catering to users who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- **Screen Reader Compatibility:** Our products and sites are tested for compatibility with screen readers, such as JAWS, to support users with visual impairments.
- **Mobile Accessibility:** For products and sites intended for mobile use, we ensure navigability with VoiceOver for iOS devices, in addition to compliance with WCAG 2.0 AA standards.
- **Implementing Accessibility Standards:** This policy mandates the integration of accessibility considerations into the development, procurement, and deployment of web-based products and classroom software. Through diligent evaluation and adherence to established guidelines, we aim to foster an inclusive digital environment accessible to all users, regardless of their abilities or how they choose to access our digital content.

## Addressing Non-Compliance and Misconduct

Prompt action will be taken for any website, page, and/or document displaying security risks or engaging in misconduct. Relevant College offices will address faculty, staff, or student misconduct accordingly.

### Ensuring Compliance across the Board

1. **New Websites:** Compliance is mandatory for all official College websites created after the effective date of this policy.
2. **Existing Websites:** Within eighteen months from the effective date, all existing official College websites must fully comply.
3. **Extension Option:** Site authorizers foreseeing challenges meeting the deadline may apply for an extension, subject to case-by-case evaluation.
4. **Non-Compliance Process:** For existing websites, corrective action may be taken by Offices of Marketing & Communications and IT Services in case of non-compliance of mandatory requirements.

## Visual Identity

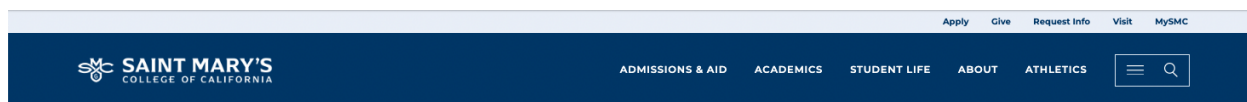
The Saint Mary's College website represents the reputation of the college as an internationally recognized institution, and each department's reputation and identity is shaped by its association with the college. All SMC associated websites should be consistent and reflect our

shared brand and strategic goals. The easiest way to achieve compliance with visual identity standards is to utilize Saint Mary's Drupal based CMS.

## Logo & Website Header

The Saint Mary's College logo and word mark must be at the top of all official Saint Mary's College websites. The logo and word mark are designed to confer direct association with the college, and provide access to central UA web services. The logo and word mark must always link to Saint Mary's homepage at [stmarys-ca.edu](http://stmarys-ca.edu).

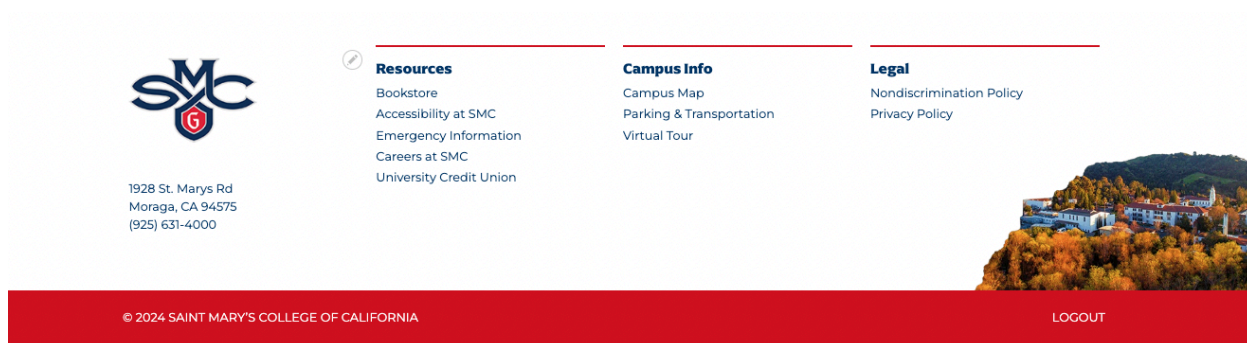
All academic and administrative department logos are provided by the Office of Marketing & Communication. No changes in color, content, or function maybe made to the word mark and logo. No content is to appear above the logo, with the exception of a utility menu containing links to apply, request info, and visit.



## Website Footer

The Saint Mary's College Footer must be placed at the bottom of all official college websites. In concert with the SMC branded header, it connects users to vital compliance information and other services.

No changes in color, content, or function are to be made by site developers or authorizers.



## Typography

- H1 & H2 headings should use Arpona Bold, Saint Mary's primary typeface.

- H3, H4, H5, and body copy should use Montserrat, Saint Mary's secondary web typeface.

### Typography Usage Guidelines

- **Font Hierarchy:** Select from the predefined font sizes. Use headings in cascading order to improve the users ability to scan the text.
- **Underlines:** Don't use underlines for emphasis. Underlines are reserved for text links only. To add emphasis to words, use *italics*.
- **Line Length:** Don't let paragraph widths get too thin or too long. Lines should be limited to 45 to 90 characters per line.

### Color

Website colors must comply with the Saint Mary's College [brand guidelines](#). All structural and accent elements on an official college website are required to use the approved college brand colors. All colors must comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), which require a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1 for normal text and 3:1 for large text to achieve Level AA compliance.

### Icons

Icons may be downloaded in the light weight from [FontAwesome Icon Library](#) and converted pngs in Saint Mary's branded Lasallian Navy HEX #143257 before being uploaded to the website.

## Copywriting

Web content should follow Saint Mary's [editorial style guide](#), with varying levels of formality may vary depending on the focus and audience of your site. Proper spelling, punctuation, and style are critical in ensuring credible for our users.

## Timeliness and Content Life Cycles

Keeping website content up to date is crucial for ensuring visitors receive accurate information, maintaining institutional credibility, and increasing search engine visibility. All official College websites must undergo a regular review by the site publishers, ensuring alignment with this policy.

## Other Resources

- [Brand Identity Guidelines](#)
- [Brand Templates & Toolkit](#)
- [Photography Image Library](#)
- [Editorial Style Guide](#)

## Domain Name Services Policy

### Purpose

Saint Mary's College of California has a vested interest in the use of its name and associated trademarks, including those contained or portrayed in domain names. This policy is designed to ensure that domain names available through the domain name system provided by SMC promote the College, its programs, and activities while adhering to [NIST](#) standards.

### Overview

Domain names are unique and readable addresses users type into a browser that help translate easy-to-remember names into the actual locations (IP addresses) of websites or services. Consistent and accurate domain names reinforce brand recognition and ensure that users can easily identify and remember the website associated with a particular brand or organization.

Saint Mary's domain name stmarys-ca.edu is part of the college's identity and communicates the college's image, reputation, and strategic goals to the public.

To ensure that domain names are assigned and used appropriately and in alignment with institutional goals, the college has established a policy for governing domain name registrations.

### Policy Specifics

To ensure that domain names are assigned and used appropriately and in alignment with institutional goals, the college has established a policy for governing domain name registrations. SMC ITS reserves the right to disconnect DNS that do not strictly comply with all policies.

### Primary Domain

Saint Mary's College of California uses the primary domain of stmarys-ca.edu. All IP resources associated with the college utilize this domain.

Note: Accredited institutions are restricted to a single domain within the .edu domain, as per the regulations set forth by EDUCAUSE, the governing body responsible for overseeing all .edu domains.

## Subdomains

A subdomain or “third-level” domain name, contains a second name before the primary domain, such as *catalog.stmarys-ca.edu*, *admissions.stmarys-ca.edu*, or *campusrec.stmarys-ca.edu*. Subdomains are used to separate and organize content outside the primary Saint Mary’s College website.

### Subdomain Request

A dean, chair, vice president, or vice provost of an academic or administrative unit of the College may request a third-level domain name by submitting a ticket to [stmarys-ca.edu/ITS](https://stmarys-ca.edu/ITS).

The Office of Marketing & Communications is responsible for approving domain name requests where the primary domain name is stmarys-ca.edu.

### Subdomain Request Requirements

Requested subdomain names must meet the following requirements in order to be approved:

- Subdomain requests may be made for:
  - Schools
  - Departments
  - Centers
  - Institutes
  - Administrative organizational unit of the College
- The requested name should accurately describe the activity or program to which it refers and be easily recognized as word(s) or abbreviation(s).
- The requested name represents the unit or service used by the entire college community.
- The unit must expect to provide these services on an ongoing basis.

## Domain Name Standards

- Conforms closely to your entity’s name to enhance search engine performance.
- Specific, descriptive word that would not easily apply to multiple areas within the College. (e.g. *education.stmarys-ca.edu*)
- Length is between five and 20 characters long.
- Does not use any special characters. (e.g. *biology-.stmarys-ca.edu*)
- Does not contain trademarked or copyrighted names owned by non-College entities. (e.g. *disney.stmarys-ca.edu*)

- Does not reflect obscene, offensive, misrepresent their purpose or detrimental to the University's reputation. (e.g. *dummy.stmarys-ca.edu*)

## Domains Pointed to Third-Party Services

Any SMC domain name pointed to a third-party service provider (example: *digitalcommons.stmarys-ca.edu*) must be approved by SMC ITS, following appropriate branding, security, and data use/retention policies.

## External Primary Domains

The purchase of external domains, such as .org, .college, .com, .net, .info, .io and others for Saint Mary's College business and academic operations is prohibited and must go through an approval process. Any department requesting an external domain must submit a ticket indicating their purpose to [stmarys-ca.edu/ITS](https://stmarys-ca.edu/ITS). Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by IT Services and the Department of Marketing & Communications.

If the external primary domain request is approved, **IT Services must execute the domain purchase**. Purchase of an external domain name by any department other than IT Services is prohibited. If a domain purchase lands in the Business Office without proper approval it will be routed to IT Services for review. Any domain name purchase must go through the IT Services Department to ensure domain name renewals do not lapse.

Note: Should a rogue domain name (not purchased by IT Services) lapse in renewal, an external entity (not affiliated with SMC) might acquire the domain and assume control of its content (and possible ransom), potentially necessitating legal action by the college to regain ownership of the domain. Domain owners needing to reclaim domains are responsible for all associated costs.

It's important to recognize that domain name registration carries with it an annual cost to the college. While IT Services will purchase the domain on behalf of a department, the department will be charged the annual fee (so consider into your budget, a GL will need to be provided). For each domain it will be necessary to confirm, on an annual basis, that the domain name is still wanted and actively in use.

All external sites will be reviewed by the Department of Marketing and Communications for branding and content compliance.

## Domain Policy Compliance

- All domain names must comply with this policy.
- In the event that a domain is acquired without the approval and awareness of IT Services, access to the Domain Service Provider must be granted to IT Services.
- A College Web Property that does not adhere to compliance standards may undergo quarantine, meaning it will be temporarily removed from the internet until corrective actions are implemented to address the issue.
- Dehosting is an option for continued noncompliance.
- Domains will undergo annual evaluations to determine their current usage status.
- Domains that are inactive will not be renewed.

## External Website Compliance

The creation of external websites for Saint Mary's College business and academic operations is prohibited and must go through an approval process. Any department requesting an external website must submit a ticket indicating their purpose to [stmarys-ca.edu/ITS](https://stmarys-ca.edu/ITS).

Any approved external website must follow the Saint Mary's College approved [brand guidelines](#), include an [approved logo mark](#) in the website header and footer, and links to stmarys-ca.edu in both the website header and footer.

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## Glossary

**Accessibility:** Web accessibility is governed by both federal and state regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the California Unruh Civil Rights Act. **Web accessibility** is not just a legal requirement but also a critical component of an inclusive educational environment. The college commits to ensuring its digital resources, including websites, are accessible to all individuals, including those with disabilities.

**Authorized Domain Name Servers (DNS):** Servers that are permitted by SMC's central IT departments to operate within the SMC network, managing domain name system operations.

**Brand Guidelines:** All digital resources, including the website, should follow the SMC [brand guidelines](#) for logos, color, editorial style, etc.

**Content Management System (CMS):** A content management system (CMS) is a platform that allows users to create, manage, and modify digital content on a website without requiring technical expertise.

**Department of Marketing and Communications:** The department responsible for approving domain name requests and overseeing marketing and communication strategies at SMC.

**Domain Name:** A unique, human-readable address used to access websites on the Internet.

**Domain Name Registration:** The process of obtaining a domain name under the authoritative DNS managed by SMC.

**Domain Naming Guidelines:** Rules and principles for choosing domain names that reflect SMC's educational mission and comply with its policies.

**Drupal:** Saint Mary's primary content management system (SMC) is Drupal.

**External Domains:** Domain names that are outside the @stmarys-ca.edu namespace, typically managed by third-party providers.

**Google Sites:** Google Sites is a website creation tool that allows users to easily create and customize websites. Faculty wishing to create a public website for personal projects or classroom instruction should create a Google Site using their Saint Mary's College account.

**Information Technology Services (ITS):** The department responsible for maintaining the security and operational standards of technology services at SMC.

**NIST Standards:** Guidelines and standards set by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, particularly relevant to cybersecurity and technology policies.

**Primary Domain:** Saint Mary's College of California uses the primary domain of stmarys-ca.edu.

**Subdomains:** Lower-level domains under a primary domain, used to organize and navigate different sections of a website. A subdomain or "third-level" domain name, contains a second name before the primary domain, such as *catalog.stmarys-ca.edu*, *admissions.stmarys-ca.edu*, or *campusrec.stmarys-ca.edu*.

**Third-Level Domain Names:** A specific type of subdomain that is used for college-wide websites, applications, and services at SMC. A subdomain or "third-level" domain name, contains a second name before the primary domain, such as *catalog.stmarys-ca.edu*, *admissions.stmarys-ca.edu*, or *campusrec.stmarys-ca.edu*.



## Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as needed to reflect changes in technology, business requirements, and NIST standards, ensuring ongoing alignment with the goals and values of Saint Mary's College of California.

Submit all inquiries and requests for future enhancements to the policy owner at:

Saint Mary's College of California

1928 St. Marys Rd.

Moraga, CA 94575

## Revision History

This standard shall be subject to periodic review to ensure relevancy.

Date	Description of Change	Reviewer
1/1/26	Publish	James Johnson