

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

Request for Proposals

Brandeis University Students and Enrollment Website

10/2/2012

Proposals Due:	12 PM EST, October 19 th , 2012
Send all submissions to:	Carolina Figueroa Associate Vice President for Students and Enrollment carolfig@brandeis.edu

Brandeis University of Waltham, MA is accepting proposals to design, develop, and maintain the main website for the Division of Students and Enrollment.

Request for Proposals

Brandeis University Students and Enrollment Website

Summary

Brandeis University of Waltham, MA is accepting proposals to design, develop, and maintain the main website for the Division of Students and Enrollment. This will be a concept to completion production and the end product will be hosted by the university.

A number of departments within the division already have their own web sites and these sites will not be part of the RFP. The new main site will have a student resource focus and will point students to resources across multiple departments some of which report to other divisions.

Proposal Guidelines

Proposals must be received before 12:00 pm/noon EST, Friday, October 19th, 2012. Proposals received after this date will not be considered.

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized office or agent of the company submitting the proposal and must include a sample contract for the proposal.

The price you quote should be inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

The price should be broken out to separately indicate the cost of design, development, and maintenance. The university reserves the right to accept specific portions of the proposal and may choose to pursue the design separate from the development and maintenance of the site. Discussions during the requirements and design phase of the project will help the university decide on a maintenance strategy for the new site.

Contract Terms

Brandeis University will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts may be subject to review by Brandeis University legal counsel and the agreement or contract must outline terms, scope, budget and any other necessary items.

Purpose, Description, and Objectives

Purpose

The Division of Students and Enrollment currently has a web presence that reflects an outdated organizational structure and lacks clear student service focus. The purpose of this project is to create a new main site for the division that helps guide students to the appropriate resources while also portraying the division's mission and its role in student success.

Description

Create an intuitive, informative, easy to maintain web site that is focused on presenting content for student life at the university. Structure the site in a way that presents the most critical and sought after information in the best accessible format. The main site will need to point existing sites for a large majority of the content as well as content that is newly developed as part of this project.

Develop the new site with a user-friendly, web-based, database-driven Content Management System (CMS) that allows key non-technical personnel to easily update content including text, streams, and pictures. Although, there is no requirement for the use of a specific CMS, consideration will be given to the tool selected for flexibility and ease of use. The proposal should include training for the use of the CMS. The university currently maintains some sites using the Cascade CMS and also has the capability to use WordPress. Although the use of Cascade or WordPress is not a requirement for this project, there may be limitations as to what the university can host without obtaining additional licenses.

Brandeis University will maintain ultimate editorial control of the content. All content, coding, and graphics will become the sole property of Brandeis University. Upon completion of the project, the university may assume full responsibility for web site content maintenance and administration. However, the university is seeking proposals for maintenance as part of this project.

Objectives

The primary objective is to structure our web presence with a focus that enables student success. To achieve this, the new site must:

- Present ways to access the most critical and desired information on its main page
- Have a navigation framework that is intuitive and minimizes the effort to get information
- Present the ability to easily find services and offices by function, name, or question
- Gives multiple ways for students to access information about the student resources
- Seamlessly consolidates information about the various student resources
- Makes logical connections to existing web sites for a variety of services and departments
- Effectively communicates the division's structure and its role in student services
- Easily integrates social media components such as Facebook, twitter, and YouTube feeds
- Provides a comprehensive user-friendly Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page

The university expects to have an end product that is creative and visually appealing. However, in addition to stating how your proposed site meets the primary objective, the site must also:

- Meet ADA requirements under section 508 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act
- Be easy to maintain and update by non-technical personnel
- Make use of tracking tools to allow traffic reporting via Google Analytics.

Timeline

This RFP is dated October 1st, 2012.

Proposals are due not later than 12:00 pm/noon EST, Friday, October 19th, 2012. Send all submissions electronically to Carolina Figueroa (carolfig@brandeis.edu).

Proposals will be evaluated immediately thereafter. During this time, we may require meetings or phone calls to go over the proposal or follow up questions. You will be notified if this is requested.

The name of the candidate firm who has been selected will be decided on or about November 2nd, 2012. Negotiations will begin immediately with the successful candidate.

New site must be completed and live by January 14th, 2013.

Organizational Information and Scope

The Division of Students and Enrollment is headed by the Senior Vice President for Students and Enrollment, Andrew Flagel. The SVP reports directly to the university's president, Fred Lawrence. The division is comprised of various departments that comprise student affairs, enrollment management, and the career center.

The current website (<http://www.brandeis.edu/oncampus/index.html>) represents only a portion of the division and does not provide easy access to all the available student resources. This is the main site to be replaced as part of this project. The redesigned site will serve as a new front door for student life at Brandeis.

At a minimum, the new site will be comprised of a new student life page, the underlying pages necessary to streamline organization and navigation of services, and a new Frequently Asked Questions site with search capability.

The following table shows each department that reports to the division. The websites for each individual department will not be redesigned as part of this project. However, the new main site should incorporate links to each department.

Department or Office	Website
Athletics	http://www.brandeisjudges.com/landing/index
Department of Community Living	http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/dcl/
Department of Community Service	http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/communityservice/index.html

Health Center	http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/health/
Intercultural Center	http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/icc/
Interfaith Chaplaincy	http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/chaplaincy/
Psychological Counseling Center	http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/counseling/index.html
Department of Student Activities	http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/activities/index.html
Department of Student Rights and Community Standards	http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/srcs/index.html
Hiatt Career Center	http://www.brandeis.edu/hiatt/
Office of Student Financial Services	http://www.brandeis.edu/sfs/
Undergraduate Admissions	http://www.brandeis.edu/admissions/

In addition, there are a number of critical student services that are outside of the department. The following table shows the additional services that the new site should also incorporate.

Additional Student Services	Website
Dining Services	http://www.campusdish.com/en-US/CSNE/Brandeis/
Clubs and Organizations	http://my.brandeis.edu/clubs/
Department of Public Safety	http://www.brandeis.edu/publicsafety/
Disability Services and Support	http://www.brandeis.edu/acserv/disabilities/
Academic Services	http://www.brandeis.edu/acserv/
Student Clubs	http://my.brandeis.edu/clubs/
Library and Technology Services	http://its.brandeis.edu/
Office of the University Registrar	http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/index.html
Events (Museum, Campus, Student Groups, etc...)	http://www.brandeis.edu/rose/events.html http://www.brandeis.edu/now/events/index.html http://my.brandeis.edu/btime/list-view?date=2012-10-01

Audience

Although the site will primarily focus on student services and resources, there are additional audience groups in addition to current students. The site should also be transparent and friendly to prospective students, parents, and donors who may not be as familiar with the Division of Students and Enrollment and the resources available for Brandeis University students. Therefore, it is important that visitors are able to find services by function, department, or name.

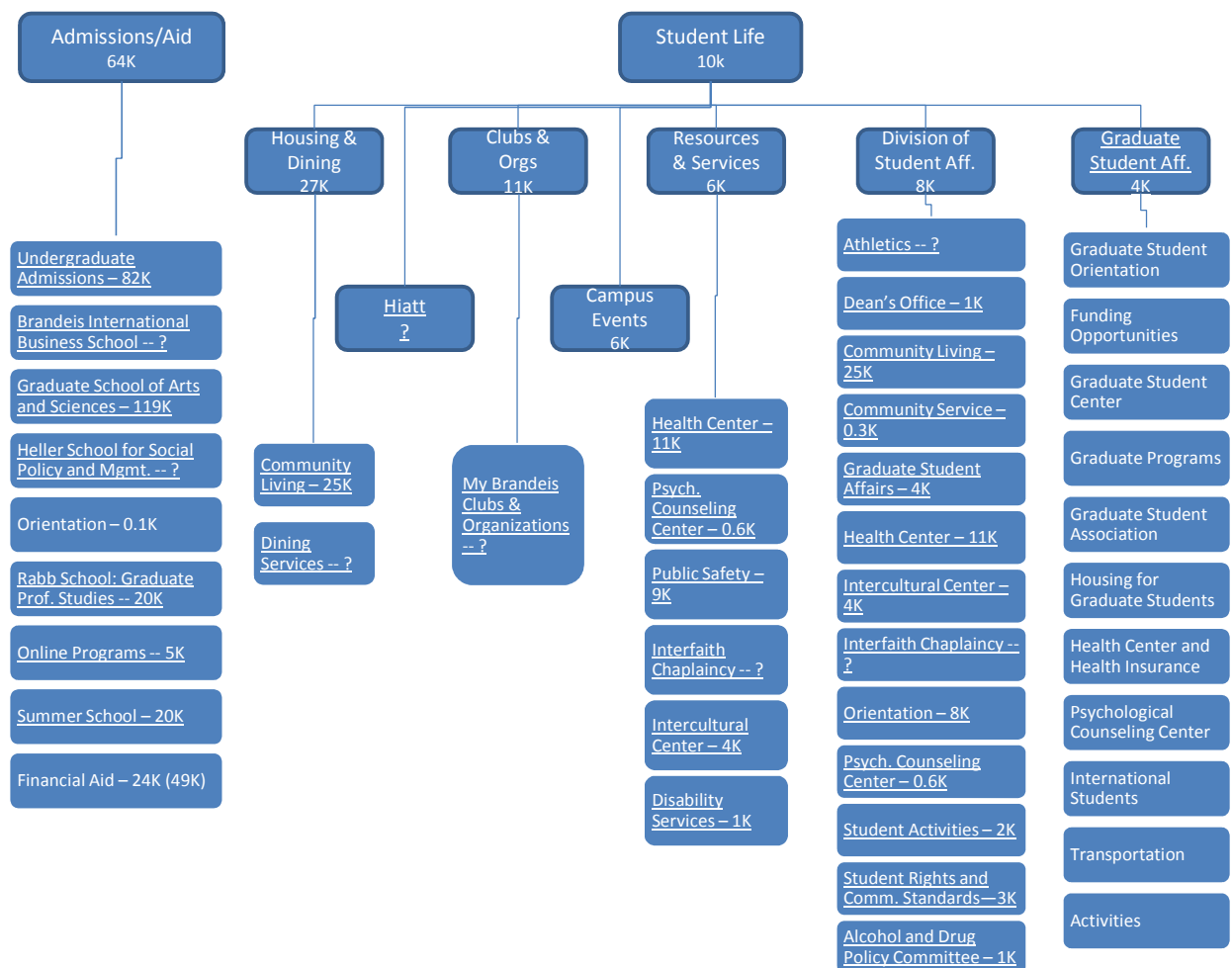
Stakeholders and Resources

The Senior Vice President for Students and Enrollment, Andrew Flagel, is the executive sponsor of this project and primary stakeholder. The project lead who will be responsible for key decisions, scope management, and keeping project on schedule and within budget will be the Associate Vice President

for Students and Enrollment – Carolina Figueroa. The SVP and the AVP will work closely with students and other staff to make sure the end product meets the division’s objectives.

Current Site Visit Analysis

The diagram below outlines the current web site organization and the total number of visits each site received over the last year:



Competitors

Below is a sampling of Student Life sites for peer institutions as well as some notes on what we like or dislike about each site. This is provided merely as a guide of what we would like to see on our new site.

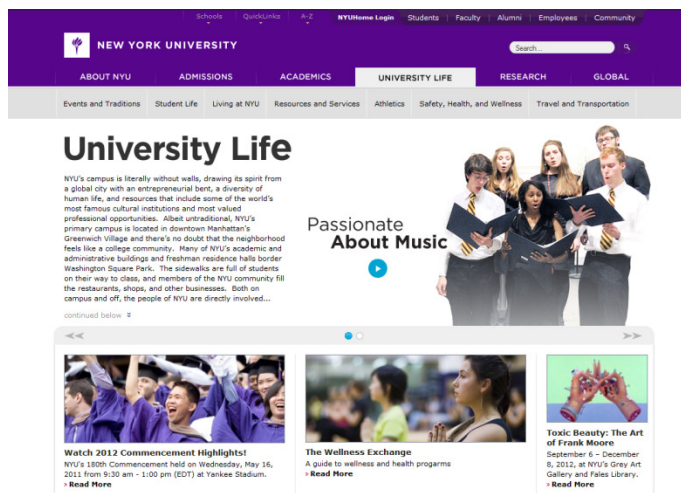


University of Rochester

<http://www.rochester.edu/studentlife/>

Visually appealing. Focused on student services.

Lacks FAQ. Uses too much real state on video spotlights and photo galleries.

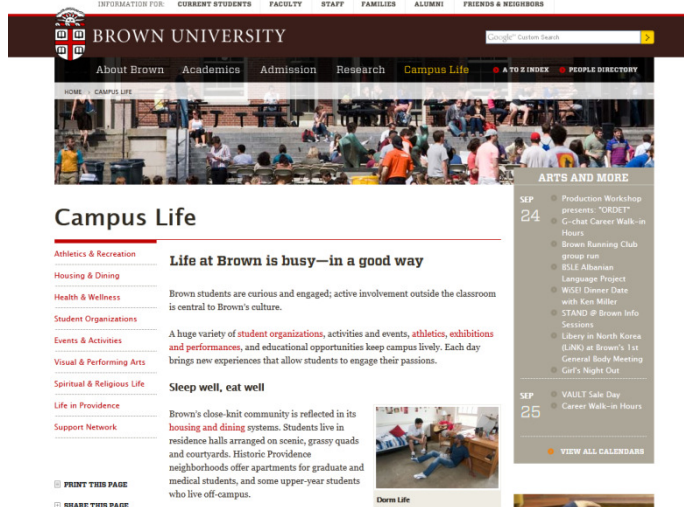


New York University

<http://www.nyu.edu/life.html>

Good balance of pictures and text. Focused on “the experience” of living in NY as well as showing critical services.

Navigation is a bit confusing since main menu does not show what each link leads to.

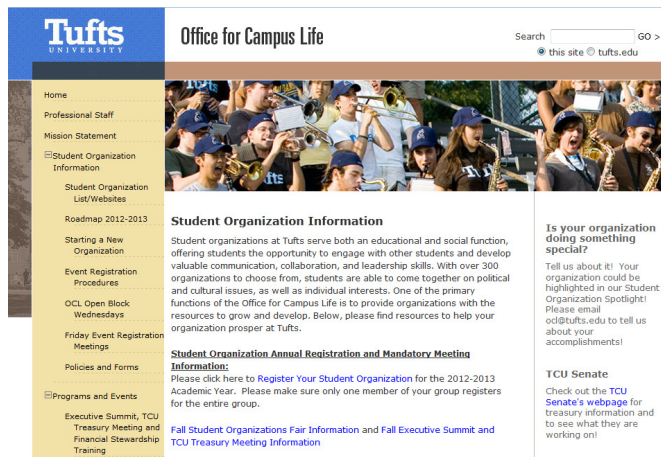


Brown University

<http://www.brown.edu/campus-life>

Services seem intuitively organized. Focused on “the Brown experience”

Not very visually appealing. Calendar clashes with the rest of the page.



Tufts University

<http://ocl.tufts.edu/student-organization-information/>

There seem to be a number of Student Service oriented sites. This is just one of them and it is poorly organized and not appealing.

The menu tree is unattractive and not that helpful.

Qualifications

The candidates submitting proposals should include the following information about the experience and capacity to perform the work for this project:

- List the top 3 websites your firm has produced in the last 5 years that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project and indicate the role your firm played on each project (e.g., design, development, expansion).
- Provide current reference information for 3 former or current clients.
- Describe your firm’s organizational capacity and availability to produce the new website.
- List the staff that would work on this project, their role, and amount of time in hours expected to be spent on the project.

Format for Proposals

Please use the following as a guideline to format your proposal:

Title Page: Brandeis University – Division of Students and Enrollment, Website Development Proposal, your company name, address, website address; name, telephone number, and email address of primary contact person.

Cover Letter: Signed by the person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of the company. This should give a brief background of the company and summarized the reasons the company should be selected to complete the project.

Proposal: Provide a mock-up of your proposed solution and discuss how this particular design would meet the objectives outlined above. The mock-up does not have to be detailed but it should showcase the proposed new main site. It should portray the features, benefits, and uniqueness of your solution. Also discuss your ability to deliver the project in the timeframe noted above.

Qualifications: Provide the information requested in the Qualifications section of this document.

Budget and Fees: List the budget as requested in the Proposal Guidelines of this document. Indicate whether the fees are flat, hourly, and what is included or excluded as part of the costs.

Sample Contract: Include a sample contract outlining the terms for the work under the scope of the proposal.

Technical Considerations

As stated above, the university uses the Hannon Hill Cascade Server web content management and may also use WordPress. Although using Cascade is not a requirement, it is a main consideration for the development of the site.

In addition, the following guidelines should be observed for the design and development of the new site when applicable:

General:

- Separate presentation from structure and functionality – CSS for presentation; XHTML for structure; JQuery for client-side dynamic functionality
- Avoid the use of PHP or other server-side code
- Ensure browser support for Firefox 3+, IE 7+, Chrome, Safari 5+ - both Mac (except IE) & Windows
- Use Google CSE for Search - there is an existing CSE search engine that searches all Brandeis sites

XHTML Standards:

- Use XHTML 1.0 Transitional or greater - pages must validate

- Use UTF8 character encoding
- Include Title, Keywords, Description meta elements
- Avoid frames; use iframes only if necessary for integration with external services
- Use div tags and CSS for page layouts; not tables – tables should be reserved for tabular data
- Use CSS instead of presentational tags (e.g., center), presentational attributes (e.g. align) or inline styles (e.g. style=)
- Implement navigation with unordered lists & CSS, not JavaScript (we use the Son of Suckerfish technique)
- Avoid spacer gifs – use CSS instead
- Avoid placing text in images (except perhaps for the site logotype)
- Avoid image maps
- Ensure image have alt tags for accessibility
- Provide editable Flash content (e.g., text, hot links, images) as XML and load into Flash movies, so content can be modified without the need for Adobe Flash software or expertise
- Brand the Google CSE search box according to Google's terms of service.

CSS Standards:

- Use CSS 2.1/CSS 3 depending on browser support - Style Sheets must validate
- Use external Style Sheets rather than internal Style Sheets or inline styles
- Avoid browser-specific styles or Style Sheets (e.g. IE specific Style Sheets)
- Include a print Style Sheet
- Organize Style Sheet – place related styles in close proximity
- Keep Style Sheet up-to-date: remove deprecated rules
- Combine rules, e.g. h1, h3 {color: red}
- Use relative (percentages and ems) rather than pixels for font sizes
- Use absolute positioning only when necessary

JavaScript Standards:

- Use the JQuery JavaScript library for cross-browser
- Use JQuery to separate functionality from
- Place JQuery and JavaScript functions in external files
- Load JQuery from the Google Ajax API Content Delivery Network