I. PURPOSE

The Feinberg Office of Communications is charged with maintaining a consistent online presence throughout a rapidly growing network of Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine websites.

This policy is intended to:
- Create a more comprehensive, centralized understanding of Feinberg’s online presence
- Ensure that Feinberg’s visual identity and name are correctly and consistently portrayed and all Feinberg-associated sites comply with current University-wide and federal guidelines
- Avoid any unnecessary costs incurred by outsourcing web development projects to third-party vendors

II. PERSONS AFFECTED:

Feinberg faculty, staff, students and trainees.

III. POLICY STATEMENT

Units that are fully or partially part of the medical school must coordinate web projects with the Feinberg Office of Communications. A unit is defined as a:
- Department, institute, center, program or core with leaders who have Feinberg appointments
- Lab or research project maintained by faculty with Feinberg appointments

Feinberg units must not engage outside vendors, build their site internally and/or use commercial platforms (e.g., Squarespace, Weebly), unless they have documented permission from Feinberg Communications to do so.

Personal sites and sites not displaying Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University or Northwestern Medicine marks or logos are exempt from this policy.

IV. PROCEDURE STATEMENT

All Feinberg units must work with Feinberg Office of Communications to find an appropriate platform for their online presence. Online presence is defined as any web environment wherein Feinberg-generated content is housed, including websites and digital newsletters and their archives (e.g., Mail Chimp or Constant Contact-driven newsletters). It does not include unit social media accounts.

To engage Feinberg Communications, units must submit the Request a Project Form.

Develop Site in Cascade
All Feinberg department-, center- and institute-dedicated websites must be built and maintained in Cascade, the University’s web content management system. This allows for consistent branding and
long-term support from the Office of Communications. Feinberg owns the trademark and the Feinberg Dean’s Office reserves the right to administer content as necessary.

Feinberg core, program and lab sites can be built in the Feinberg Cascade template, though these projects will be addressed within the Office of Communications’ production queue.

**Faculty Listings in Cascade**

All Feinberg department websites include an A-Z faculty list, which is an alphabetical list of all active faculty appointed in the department, as recorded in the faculty database maintained by the Faculty Affairs Office. Chairs may request an alternative faculty list limited to the names of faculty who contribute most centrally to the department’s mission areas. The creation of such a list must meet the following parameters established by Feinberg.

*General Requirements*

All units must include an A-Z list of faculty on their website.

Departments may additionally choose to display a list that contains the subset comprising their “core” or “principal” faculty. Faculty will be included in this list based on their appointment type, and Feinberg has set a minimum standard for the appointment types that must be included in this list (see next section). Departments can expand the list to include additional appointment types, but Feinberg does not permit the creation of a custom faculty list assembled by choosing a select group of individuals across varying appointment types. **Everyone who has the same appointment type must receive the same treatment on the department website.**

*Core/Principal Department Listings*

When implementing a limited faculty list, departments can choose the label “core faculty” or “principal faculty.” All departments who opt to show such a faculty list must include faculty who meet these conditions:

- Status = Active
- Appointment Type = Primary
- Category = Regular
- Basis = FT or PT-G (the latter means part-time with 50% or more effort)
- Rank = Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor

Departments may include more faculty on the list, but cannot subtract from it. When adding, all individuals in a group must be given the same treatment (e.g., if a department wants to add one person who has a secondary appointment, then all secondary appointments need to be included).

**Develop Site in NUSites**

NU Sites ([https://sites.northwestern.edu/](https://sites.northwestern.edu/)) is a WordPress-based solution for building and managing websites and blogs. It is free of charge to University faculty and staff and offers and comprehensive training documentation to assist a unit with the development of a site. Feinberg’s Office of Communications staff can offer technical support and back-up maintenance support to site owners who use this solution.

Please note: As of January 2021, maintenance issues with NU Sites have been identified and are in the process of being addressed. This option is still available to faculty, staff and students, but be aware that
this option is probably best for small, informational sites that do not have special technical requirements.

A site manager must adhere to the following:

- Representatives from Feinberg’s Office of Communications will have Administrator access to your site.
- Feinberg’s Office of Communications reserves the right to change content to align with the medical school’s naming conventions, style or messaging.
- The site name **must not** include the words department, division, center or institute without approval from Feinberg Communications. Contact medweb@northwestern.edu to coordinate approvals.

Develop a Clinical Site
Clinically-focused, patient-facing sites must not be built in Cascade or NU Sites. Individuals work with the Office of Communications to coordinate the appropriate solution.

Maintaining a Emeritus Faculty Sites
Emeritus Faculty with websites built on University platforms (Cascade or NU sites) can maintain the web presence as long as they have an active NetID. Feinberg Communications is not responsible for maintaining access to legacy sites built outside of these platforms. Should an emeritus faculty member have a website hosted on a University server, but not in Cascade or NU sites, they must migrate their research website information to NU sites. When a faculty member’s NetID is deactivated, their website will be removed from University platforms.

Custom Domains
The URL structure of Feinberg-affiliated sites must follow a standard structure.

- All department and center sites at Feinberg follow the same URL structure: feinberg.northwestern.edu/sites/NAME.
- Lab sites can follow the standard Feinberg Lab URL structure (https://labs.feinberg.northwestern.edu/NAME) or stay with the default structure provided by NU sites (sites.northwestern.edu/SLUG).

Sites with established custom domains prior to the adoption of this policy are not required to change to the standard format.

Logo Usage
Correct usage of the Feinberg logo is built into the Cascade template. Outside of Feinberg Office of Communications-managed templates, the NM/Feinberg logo must not be used on any website, including in conjunction with other logos or as a decorative element, without documented permission from the Feinberg Office of Communications.

Northwestern University has a permissions process for using Northwestern logos on third-party websites. While permission is assessed on an individual basis, the use of University marks and logos is typically limited to events sponsored by the school and electronic or print communications produced by the school.
Requests for approval must be sent to medweb@northwestern.edu.

**Connecting Website to the Faculty Profile**

Faculty may include links to their professional websites in their faculty profiles, if the site is approved by the Faculty Affairs Office. FAO and the Office of Communications reserve the right to remove any site that does not meet any of the following faculty site guidelines.

1. Only sites predominantly focused on research or education topics with a direct connection to Northwestern University and/or Feinberg will be considered (not personal clinical sites, not sales sites, etc.).
2. The site should not be primarily about selling books/videos/anything for personal gain — those types of sites can exist, they just should not have a Northwestern University and/or Feinberg connection.
3. The site can, but does not need to be, Northwestern University and/or Feinberg branded.
4. If the site includes a Northwestern University and/or Feinberg logo, it must be reviewed by Office of Communications for approval.
5. The site will need to meet the Office of Communications general content guidelines/comply with the Feinberg patient care content directive/be clearly labeled as a lab or education site.
6. If the site includes a link for donations, the link must go to the Feinberg giving site, not directed to personal research.

Requests to add a site to a faculty profile should be sent to fao@northwestern.edu.

**V. OUT OF SCOPE**

Consortiums wherein faculty hold leadership positions do not need to adhere to this policy. Any site developed outside of internal options are not supported by Feinberg Office of Communications, even if hosted on Northwestern servers. Sites built outside of internal solutions must not use any components of the Feinberg or Northwestern visual identity (e.g. logos or university seal).

**VI. POLICY UPDATE SCHEDULE:**

Policy review to occur one year after initial implementation and every three years thereafter.

**VII. REVISION HISTORY:**

1/16/20 – New policy effective.
8/12/20 – Additional faculty listing clarification
2/18/21 – Faculty Profile linking information added; acknowledgement of current technical limitations of NU sites; digital newsletters included in scope of policy.

**VIII. RELEVANT REFERENCES:**

Policy for Linking Personal Websites to Faculty Profiles

Publications Policy