

# Building an Academic Web Presence

## Job Market Edition

Rochelle Terman

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# Game Plan

1. Basic Planning: Goals and Capacities
2. Locating Your Site
3. Builders and Software
4. Content Architecture, Navigation, Design
5. Best Practices, Analytics

# Communication Goals

- Why do you want a web presence?
  - To market yourself during the job search.
- Who will be visiting your website?
  - Search committee members, faculty, and graduate students at interview site.
- What do you hope to communicate to these visitors?
  - That you're a smart, professional candidate with excellent qualifications.
- What kinds of content do you imagine present?
  - Brief bio, picture, CV, contact info, research and teaching portfolios.

# Capabilities

- What is your budget?
- How much time are you willing to devote?
- What is your coding / design / development skill level?

Would your department profile suffice?

**Rule of thumb:**

Occupy your department profile, make a separate site.

# Locating your site

- Where will your site live? (**hosting**)
- How will people get to your site? (**domain**)
- What tools will you use to build your site?  
(**builder**)

# Options for Hosts + Domains

1. Bundled, Free (Subdomain, e.g. rochelle.wordpress.com)

*Since they're free, includes ads and/or restrictions.*

2. Bundled, Paid (Full service, e.g. wordpress.com, Sparespace)

*Must use their builder / content management system.*

3. Separately (Custom domain, custom hosting, open-source builder)

*Many companies (e.g. Dreamhost) offer free domain with a hosting account.*

# The 3 best solutions

	Wordpress.com Premium Account	UChicago Voices	Custom domain / hosting + open-source software.
Costs	\$5 / month	Free**	\$3–15 / month
Pluses +	Easy, custom domain.	Cheap, Easy	Flexible, total control.
Minuses -	Costs, inflexible.	Lose it when you leave, inflexible, no custom domain**	Technical difficulty.
In a nutshell	Easiest	Biggest value	Greatest flexibility



# Content Architecture

## Required

- Biography + Photo
- Published Research
- Teaching Activities
- CV
- Contact info

## Optional

- Data
- Working Papers
- Teaching Materials / syllabi / evaluations

## Frowned Upon

- Travel photos
- Hobbies
- Non-academic links

# Navigation

- Refers to how visitors move around the site.
- Primary menu (usually horizontal but sometimes vertical) organizes the site's content.
- Expect that people will spend on average about 30 seconds on your site – make your menus simple and intuitive.

# Navigation

- ❑ Limited depth: 3 clicks rule
- ❑ Less than 5-6 menu items
- ❑ Content split into big blocks (About Me, Research, Teaching, Resources)
- ❑ Items Brief and Standard
- ❑ Use headings for more specific information (Current Publications, Past Courses).
- ❑ Simple and easy to read – stands out

# Navigation



**Rochelle Layla  
Terman**

[CV](#)

[Research](#)

[Teaching](#)

[Code / Data](#)

**Hi.**

I am a Provost's Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago, where I'll begin as Assistant Professor in Fall 2020.

My research examines international norms, gender and advocacy, with a focus on the Muslim world. I am currently working on a book project that examines resistance and defiance towards international norms. The manuscript is based on my dissertation, which won the 2017 Merze Tate (formerly Helen Dwight Reid) Award for the best dissertation in international relations, law, and politics from the American Political Science Association. (Read more about my research [here](#).)

I teach computational social science at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, including [Machine Learning for Political Science](#) at Stanford and [Introduction to Computational Tools and Techniques](#) at Berkeley. I'm a certified instructor with [Software Carpentry](#) and [Data Carpentry](#). See my [teaching page](#) for information and materials.

# Design



## Guest Lecture

February 02, 2009

I really, *really* enjoyed seeing Web design education take the spotlight in *Issue No. 276* of *A List Apart*. It's a topic that I feel strongly about and one that doesn't get nearly enough attention from those of us working in the industry. While I've had the pleasure of meeting the authors of both articles, I was particularly moved by Leslie Inman's grass roots call to action in "*Elevate Web Design at the University Level*".

When you drive, bike, or scooter to work each morning, do you pass a university? If so, contact the web educator at the university and see what you can do to help connect the school to you, your company, and your

WELCOME TO M



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Submit

Jason Beard is a digital media artist specializing in both print & website design. Jason currently resides in Columbia, SC with his beautiful wife, Amy  
-read more

# Design

- ❑ Be consistent
- ❑ Use simple typography:
  - ❑ No more than 2 different fonts
  - ❑ Use readable, web-safe fonts such as Verdana or Helvetica
  - ❑ 12 or 14 pt sizes
  - ❑ use italics or bold sparingly and consistently.
- ❑ Limit use of color:
  - ❑ white or neutral background
  - ❑ a black or charcoal font color
  - ❑ limited (1-2) accent colors for your menus and links.
- ❑ Design like it's a billboard, not a newspaper
- ❑ Limit the amount of details such as lines, graphics, and frames

# Best Practices

- ❑ Don't link to a download without warning.
- ❑ Make sure images are not distorted.
- ❑ Open external links in a new window.
- ❑ Don't paste from Word into a WYSIWYG.

# Analytics

- Track visits to your site.
- User location, network, page views.
- Beware of robots (bounces).
- Beware of psychological impact.