Suggested Best Practices for Program Websites

Our Shared Mission

- Graduate program faculty and staff are the knowledge experts for their programs, and graduate program websites are the primary provider of program information.
- Refer to Rackham’s website for Rackham admissions information, for example:
  - Official transcripts
  - English language proficiency
  - Paying your application fee and fee waivers
  - Immigration documents

Program Information

Every program website should include the following information.

- Degrees offered
- Application deadlines
- Application code
- Faculty listing

How to Get Help

Every program website should include the following information.

How to Contact the Program for Help

Include contact information appropriate for your communication workflow.

- Mailing address
- Email
- Phone number
- Fax number
- Social media
Business Hours and Closures

- Business hours
- Include a listing of holiday and season days
- Set service expectations during holiday, severe weather, and emergency closures.

Example Wording

“Rackham Graduate School will close for the winter holiday at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 22. We will return at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 2. During the holiday, there will be no processing of application materials and no updates to Wolverine Access accounts. After we reopen, there will be a delay in processing application materials. Thank you for your patience as we process the high volume of materials.”

When and How to Contact CollegeNET/ApplyWeb

Provide information on how to contact CollegeNet/ApplyWeb if applicants have technical problems with the application.

- While creating an account
- Logging in
- Using the application

Example Wording

“If you or your recommender need technical assistance regarding the application or recommendation systems please email ApplyWeb at help@applyweb.com. Include the following information: user name, full name, email address, and phone number. Please allow 24 hours for a response.”

Rackham’s Website

Program sites should refer to Rackham’s website for specific topics such as:

Rackham Admissions

- Official transcripts
- English language proficiency
- Paying your application fee or fee waivers
- Immigration documents
The Application

Show the Steps
Show the steps and active parties during the application process.  
http://www.rackham.umich.edu/admissions/overview-application-process

Application Fee Waivers
- Provide information on fee waivers offered by your program.
- Provide a link to Rackham’s Application Fee and Payment page.  
  http://www.rackham.umich.edu/admissions/application-fee-and-payment

Application Requirements
List your program’s application requirements.

- Provide details about GRE requirements or minimum test scores to apply (Rackham does not require the GRE).
- Will you accept required materials, including test scores, after the application deadline? Does your program accept updated CV, letters of recommendation, statements, and etcetera? Include instruction on how to submit them to your program.
- Will you accept more than three letters of recommendation? Include instruction on how to submit them to your program.
- Provide a link to Rackham’s Minimum Requirements to Apply page  
  http://www.rackham.umich.edu/admissions/minimum-requirements
- Provide a link to Rackham’s Tests page.  
  http://www.rackham.umich.edu/admissions/tests

Transcripts
- Provide clear instruction on your program’s transcript requirements.
- Does the applicant send official transcripts at the time of application or after the decision to recommend them for admission?
- Do applicants need to submit an updated transcript after their grades post? Include instruction on how to submit them to your program.
- Indicate if your program wants non-degree transcripts uploaded with the application or mailed to the program.
• Provide links to Rackham’s transcript requirements.  
  http://www.rackham.umich.edu/admissions/transcripts and  
  http://www.rackham.umich.edu/admissions/required-credentials-from-non-us-institutions

After Application Submission
• Provide instruction on how to verify application information. For example, should applicants use Wolverine Access or the program’s system?
• What will appear in Web App Status for those programs using the department set-up in Web App Status and not Rackham?
• When should applicants expect a decision from the program on their application?
• Describe the program’s review process, including how to add a degree, COL, and readmission.

Example Websites
Example websites that include many of these suggestions:

Physics  
https://lsa.umich.edu/physics/graduate-students/application.html  

Psychology  
https://lsa.umich.edu/psych/prospective-students/graduate/application-procedures.html  

Romance Languages and Literatures  
https://lsa.umich.edu/rll/graduates/admissions.html  

Chemistry  
https://lsa.umich.edu/chem/graduates/phd-program/how-to-apply.html  

Industrial Operations Engineering  
https://ioe.engin.umich.edu/academics/graduate/mse-applications