



Procedures and Guidelines

Firefly Portal

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INTRODUCTION

The Wichita Area Technical College portal, or **Firefly**, provides a personalized intranet for students, faculty, and staff. This document contains guidelines for utilizing the three different methods of targeting content to specific Wichita Area Technical College audiences. These methods include groups, targeted announcements and channels.

For questions concerning this document, contact Firefly@watc.edu.

Core Principles for the Firefly portal

Best practices for web portals such as **Firefly** are as follows:

- The default number of tabs for any particular role (e.g., student, faculty, staff, or first year student) should be between five and seven.
- The default number of channels on any particular tab should be at least six. Exceptions may be made by the **Firefly** steering committee in the interest of site design and attractiveness.
- Channel content should not duplicate content stored elsewhere in the WATC web site.
- Content directed at internal audiences only (the roles in the **Firefly** portal) should reside within the portal. Content directed at external audiences or at both internal and external audiences should be stored on the main WATC web site.
- Content in tabs and channels should be oriented around end user tasks rather than offices or organizational charts.
- Tabs are the most important components of content in the **Firefly** portal. Great care and diligence must be taken to ensure that all content guidelines (particularly regarding horizontal scrolling and the default number of tabs for users) are followed.

All criteria for content should reflect these principles.

Portal Steering Committee

The Firefly Portal Steering Committee is an advisory committee composed of a cross section of College users including Faculty and Staff representatives. The Portal Steering Committee exists to govern the use of the portal by providing direction and advice for content, administration

and user issues.

TABS

- The **Firefly** Portal Steering Committee will make final decisions regarding the tabs that will be included in the portal, the channels included in the tabs, and the people or groups who are tab owners.
- The **Firefly** implementation team has created a set of default tabs. Those tabs are: Student, Student Life (student role), Faculty (faculty role), Employee (staff/faculty roles), Home, About WATC (all roles). Channel content should be examined for inclusion in one of these default tabs before creating a new tab in the default portal layout.
- Suggestions for tab content may be made in writing to the chair of the **Firefly** Portal Steering Committee. Suggestions must include the proposed tab name, target audience, proposed default channels, and why existing tabs are inappropriate for the proposed tab content.
- Tabs should be role-based and oriented around the key roles of student, faculty, and staff. Additional roles (e.g., prospective students or alumni) may be accorded tabs as long as the other tab content criteria are met. Exceptions may be made if content in a proposed channel or group of related channels exceed the guidelines for an effective channel.
- Subgroups of the main **Firefly** roles (student, faculty, and employee) should not be defined with separate tabs, especially with several equivalent subgroups. Instead, create targeted (role-based) channels for these subgroups. College-specific content falls into this category. Exceptions may be made if there are compelling reasons to create a separate tab in support of the College's mission or key indicators.

CONTENT GUIDELINES OVERVIEW

- All content inclusion is ultimately decided by the **Firefly** Portal Steering Committee.
- All content must follow the appearance and style guidelines set forth by the **Firefly** Portal Steering Committee.
- All content must adhere to standing College policies and/or applicable laws. These include but are not limited to the Student Code of Conduct, and US copyright laws.
- Content in violation of College policy will be removed and appropriate action will be

taken.

- Content should not be duplicated. The **Firefly** Portal Steering Committee will review content and ask owners to delete or compress content that duplicates existing content unless a case can be made to keep both.

Content Managers

- Anyone with the authority to post content in **Firefly** is a “Content Manager” (CM).
- Three methods are available to deliver content via **Firefly**; Groups, Targeted Announcements and Channels.
- Utilize one or more of the three methods of targeting content to specific **Firefly** audiences.
- Must attend training. Sessions include a basic introduction to **Firefly** and a session specific to the method(s) used for content delivery.
- Must be familiar with and adhere to these guidelines.
- Content Managers should not edit other CM content.

General Guidelines

Please observe these guidelines when using any content method within **Firefly**.

- Submitted material must be professionally presented and thoroughly proofread.
- Submitted material must be verified for accuracy by a knowledgeable party and/or by someone in an appropriate College office.
- All submitted material should include the name of the originating office and contact information, including a phone number.
- If you link to a URL, be as specific as possible. Example: If you are linking to an online article, do not go to the main page of the Web site that links to that article, but link to the article itself.
- Avoid controversial topics.
- No personal advertising of products or services.

- Abide by the [United States Code Section 508](#) standards for accessibility, especially as it relates to web-based content, to ensure all users, including those with disabilities, have equal access to your content.
- Whenever possible, avoid sending paper copy after distributing in **Firefly**.
- DON'T USE ALL CAPS as this is difficult to read and is often construed as 'yelling' in an electronic format.
- Be considerate of your readers. Choose the correct distribution lists. To learn more about how to target specific audiences, refer to the "Targeted Announcements Overview" section of this document.
- Content Managers should not modify content or messages sent by others, unless given permission by the original sender.
- Always review your posted materials before logging out of the **Firefly** system to verify your submission is displayed correctly to your viewers.
- The **Firefly** administrators reserve the right to make minor modifications to message placement and presentation, in order to ensure quality.

TARGETED ANNOUNCEMENTS OVERVIEW

Through the **Firefly** portal, we can communicate with groups of users using Targeted Announcements. In order for this service to be effective, it must be regulated. Training on the use of this feature is mandatory to become a Target Announcement Administrator (TAA). Campus departments should be limited to 2 individuals having this access.

There are two types of Targeted Announcements:

1. Campus Announcements which are targeted to the entire campus community
2. Personal Announcements which are targeted to specific audiences

Appropriate Use of Targeted Announcements

Although Targeted Announcements are "internal" in the sense that they are only received by faculty, staff, and students of the College, care should be taken to ensure that text is composed using an appropriate tone or attitude. Announcements are meant to be both informative and cordial in their composition. Blunt statements and brash directives must be avoided. Users who

create announcements are responsible for their content and must also consider the appropriate use of the media. In general, announcements should not be made for activities or events concerning entities, clubs, or organizations not chartered or approved by the College. Messages that are fraudulent, harassing, defamatory, obscene, threatening, or in violation of state laws must not be posted.

Campus Announcements Guidelines

Campus Announcements appear as a channel within the **Firefly** home page and are intended for the entire College community. The Campus Announcements channel cannot be deleted from the home page.

Who is authorized to send Campus Announcements?

Campus Announcements are reserved for use/approval by Targeted Announcement Administrators (TAAs). TAA's must go through training for sending Targeted Announcements. All **Firefly** users see these messages.

Guidelines for creation and sending

1. This channel is intended for quick messages that affect the entire College community. To correct a message, edit the sent message, then resend. After that, delete the first message.
2. There should be no more than 12 total active Campus Announcements at any time.
3. First in-first-out: When someone posts a message after your message, your message moves down in the list.
4. Campus Announcements cannot be sent as e-mails.
5. Title – The title of the message should be short (50 characters or less), yet clear enough to convey the subject of the message linked to it. Since it is a title, proper punctuation rules should apply. Content for the announcement should be included. For example, "Attention all English majors..."
6. Announcement –The text of the announcement should be brief (5-75 words) and include all necessary items such as time, location, room, etc. A point of contact (name, department, and phone or College email address) for more information should always be included as well as a "by line" stating who posted the message. Example: *Posted Wednesday, September 12, 2005 by Charles A. Brown.* The "by line" should be the last sentence of the message.
7. Expiration – All messages must have an expiration date no longer than 5 days after posting or not past the date of the event, deadline, or activity being advertised.

APPROPRIATE USE

- Designed for use only by certain offices.
- Messages should be appropriate for all **Firefly** users: students, faculty and/or employees.

Personal Announcements Guidelines

Personal Announcements appear as a channel within **Firefly** home page and can be sent as e-mail. These are text-only messages with space formatting and should not sit on the system for more than five (5) days unless announcement necessitates being posted for a shorter/longer period of time. The Personal Announcements channel cannot be deleted from the home page.

Personal Announcements are messages targeted to specific audiences like “faculty” or “students”, or even “Students in XX Major” or “XX Class”. Additionally, this section is where students automatically receive messages from the Banner system about holds, registration, etc.

Currently, you may target your Personal Announcement in the following ways:

By Role:

- All Students
- All Employees (includes faculty and staff)
- All Faculty

By Major:

- Students with certain majors.

By Class:

- Students in individual disciplines.
- Students in individual classes.

By Imported Group:

In addition to groupings identified above, **Firefly** includes the capability to send messages to additional groups, called “Imported Groups”, from data captured by Banner. Requests for Imported Groups are handled by **Firefly** system administration on a case-by-case basis. Contact Firefly@watc.edu for more information.

Two examples of Imported Groups are:

- All current employees who have been employed for 15 years or more by the College.
- All current students who have submitted an application for financial aid and who have not completed a scholarship application.

Who is authorized to send Personal Announcements?

Access to and responsibility for the coordination, approval and dissemination of Personal Announcements resides with the TAAs as designated by the division administrator/vice president.

GUIDELINES FOR CREATION AND SENDING

1. This channel is meant for targeting certain populations within the College community. Therefore, College-wide announcements should not go here. (See Campus Announcements above).
2. Personal Announcements can be sent either to the Personal Announcements channel, as e-mail, or both if the information is critical in nature or requires action (i.e. holds or deadlines).
3. Expiration dates apply only to messages posted to “My Announcements”. All messages must have an expiration date no longer than 5 days after posting or not past the date of the event, deadline, or activity being advertised. Messages sent by email do not expire.
4. Scheduling: it is possible to schedule the delivery and expiration dates of Personal Announcements well in advance. To alert people to an upcoming event, consider placing your message 1-2 weeks in advance, then re-placing your message closer to the event. Again, please limit that message to 5 days.
5. The title of the message should be short (limited to 50 characters), but clear enough to convey the subject of the message linked to it. The title will also serve as the subject for Personal Messages that are sent as email.
6. Body text should not be too long, as only 16% of users typically read long messages online, word for word. Consider placing a link to more information within your Personal Announcement. Limit text to 5-75 words. Include all necessary items such as time, location, room, etc., A point of contact (name, department, and phone or College email address) for more information should always be included as well as a “by line” stating who posted the message. Example: *Posted Wednesday, September 12, 2005 by Charles A. Brown.* The “by line” should be the last sentence of the message.
7. To correct a message, edit the sent message, then resend. After that, delete the first message.
8. First in-first-out: When someone posts a message after your message, your message

moves down in the list. Do not modify the order of messages in the system.

9. Ignore messages that have the headline "Personal Message". These are system messages sent automatically to specific users when certain events appear in Banner. Do not delete or manage these in any way, or users may not get their vital information.
10. Personal announcements are limited in length, are available for a limited time and are not archived. The content for them should be of a less critical nature. Notices of such things as holds or critical deadlines should be sent via email, which is more permanent. A brief notice to check email accounts for official College correspondence is a valid use of personal announcements.

METHOD OF DELIVERY

By default, Personal Messages are to be sent for display in the "My Announcements" channel. This method should be used for most messages which announce activities or other general information. Email should only be used when the announcement requires the recipient to take action, respond, or meet a deadline, etc. Posting announcements to both email and the "My Announcements" channel is redundant and should be avoided.

APPROPRIATE USE

Following are examples of appropriate and timely targeted messages:

- Upcoming College events and activities sent to certain people.
- Class cancellations sent by someone within the College.
- Messages to students in a specific major.
- Changes to College policies and procedures.
- Upcoming professional development and training announcements.
- System messages. (These are sent automatically from Banner).

CHANNEL DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

Channels constitute chunks of primary content below each tab of the portal. Channels are designed to present stable, high-demand content, and interactive applications to a significant user base.

In the **Firefly** portal, channels usually share space on a page with other channels. This structure creates interdependence beyond the traditional department Web site. Channels must present a

cohesive look and feel. (See style guidelines.)

It is important to remember that with a few exceptions there is no captive audience at

Firefly; the user is in control of the content placed into his or her pages. So developing a channel for **Firefly** is no guarantee that your content will reach your intended audience. Success here will depend on matching your content with what a user needs and wants, and then getting the word out.

Because it is personalized and customizable, **Firefly** is perfect for targeted content. Do not try to be all things to all people. You will have much better success if you focus on providing just what is needed, without an irrelevant link or word in your block of space.

Types of Channels

IMAGE CHANNEL

Images as channels can stand alone in the channel, link to larger images, or can link to external content. A mix of image and non image channels is desired for visual interest.

Link Channel

The links channel type is one the most widely used and consists of a series of links serving a common purpose. One example would be a channel dedicated to Student Self Service (i.e. Web for Students). Each option in Web for Students would be a link in the Student Self Service channel. Limit the number of links to 5 to 7 per channel. There is always an option for a "more ..." link to outside content.

RSS Feeds Channel

RSS feeds are XML-described content (news or sports tickers, for example) formatted and presented in the same style as other content within the **Firefly** portal. Feeds provided by the College (e.g., a UT News feed) should provide no more than ten to twelve items, with each item in an RSS a link to a fuller article. RSS feeds should be considered for frequently updated items, such as news releases.

LOCK-DOWN CRITERIA

Channels and tabs in the **Firefly** web portal can be:

- Locked Down (cannot be moved or removed). Some tabs are locked down for particular roles (e.g., the My Courses tab for the student and faculty roles).
- Movable (can be rearranged but not removed)

- Removable (subscribed by default but can be removed)
- Subscribable (not subscribed by default).

Tabs and channels should be locked down only when, in the interests of the College

- to support official policies and procedures, or
- for job-related channels (e.g., self-service channels related to your role at the College).

For example, all channels on the home tab are locked down. All other channels and tabs in **Firefly** should be made removable by the end user. End users may rearrange all channels except the communication channels.

Process for development/monitoring

Submit a request to develop a channel via the “Suggest a Channel” channel in the portal. Submit produced channel for content/design review prior to Firefly@watc.edu

- The system administrator will publish the approved channel.
- All channel content will be reviewed for relevancy and maintenance every week by the content owner/manager for the channel.
- All content must follow the appearance and style guidelines set forth by the Firefly Steering Committee. Content in violation will be removed and appropriate action taken.
- The Firefly Steering Committee, division VP, administrator of each campus, MIS and registrar will monitor channels.
- Outdated channels will be removed.

ELIGIBLE TO DEVELOP PORTAL CONTENT

- Official departments and units of the Wichita Area Technical College.
- Registered student organizations.
- Designated College affiliate.

NOT ELIGIBLE TO CONTRIBUTE CONTENT

- Commercial ventures affiliated with the Wichita Area Technical College, unless sponsored by an official Wichita Area Technical College department or unit.
- Any organization not directly affiliated with a Wichita Area Technical College department or unit.
- Student groups not recognized by Wichita Area Technical College.
- Individuals, whether affiliated with the Wichita Area Technical College or not.

Criteria for approval of channel request

Content should appeal to an audience larger than 100. A Group (see Groups below) can be created to deliver targeted content for smaller audiences;

- Guidelines for Accessible Websites <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/stdspdf.htm>
- Note: Channels are publicly accessible based on a user's role. Groups maybe either public or private.
- Content must not duplicate already available channels.
- Content should sensibly require creation of a new channel, rather than inclusion in an existing channel.
- Ability to maintain the channel over time (minimum of one year) should be apparent or a plan for handing off the maintenance should be included with the request.
- Web development capabilities must be assured by the requester (support for channel development is limited).
- Channel development specifications must be met (See below).

GROUP DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

The Groups application gives students, faculty, and staff at the Wichita Area Technical College the ability to create and manage group homepages for clubs, workgroups, committees or other affiliations and interests. These homepages include chat, threaded discussions, photo archives, news and more.

- Groups must be authorized and may be established in **Firefly** only if they meet the general criteria below.
- Groups can be Public (open to any subscriber) or Restricted (open to subscribers who meet unique criteria defined by the Group owner).

GENERAL CRITERIA

- The Group must be composed of students ("Student Groups"), or faculty and staff of the College ("College Groups") and must be used for activities related to College functions.
- Groups must not promote or support activities that are illegal, commercial in nature (unless associated with the College), or that violate the rights of others.
- **Student Groups** may be created by official student organizations registered with the Coordinator, Programs and Activities.

When operating a Student Group, including the use of the group e-mail, message board and chat functions, a registered student organization is responsible for conducting its affairs in a responsible manner consistent with the policies and procedures of the college, including the Student Code of Conduct policy

http://www.watc.edu/user/file/LS%2014_0%20Policy%20LS%20Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct.PDF.

College Groups may be created for recognized groups at the college, such as Faculty Senate, recognized clubs and organizations, as well as work groups and committees, for the purpose of facilitating official College information and /or work on specific projects defined by the College.

Requesting a Group

Students:

- You must seek a College sponsor, such as an instructor in your Academic Department.
- The club or organization sponsor registered with Coordinator, Programs and Activities can submit a request for creation of a group. The Create New Group request form can be accessed from within **Firefly** by clicking on the 'Groups' application icon, then click on the 'Create Group' button to access the Create New Group online form. Once submitted, you will be notified of the status of your request.

Faculty/Staff:

- **College Governance Groups** may be created for College employee governance groups, such as, collective bargaining units, the Faculty Council, etc. for the purpose of facilitating communications on College governance issues.

- **College Departmental Groups** may be created for College departments to facilitate communication within a department group.
- **College Sponsored Groups** may be sponsored by a member of the College community and may be comprised of any group of students, faculty or staff.

Application for a group will be submitted to System/Group Administrator. Upon approval the application will be forwarded to the **Firefly** Portal Steering Committee for final approval and creation.

To submit a request for creation of a group, log in to **Firefly** and click on the 'Groups' application icon, then click on the 'Create Group' button to access the Create New Group online form. Once submitted, you will be notified of the status of your request.

Allow approximately 3 business days for a decision regarding your group submission.

Lack of Activity

Any Group may be deleted from **Firefly** due to a lack of maintenance, content that is out-of-date by 90 days or more, or if there is no activity (defined as no usage in a 90 day time frame) in the Group's area or account.