

Web Site Policies and Procedures, Rev. Feb. 25, 2003

The Valley Forge Military Academy and College (VFMAC) Web Site, accessible via the following addresses (with or without the “www”)

valleyforgemilitaryacademyandcollege.org	vfmac.edu	theforge.net
valleyforgemilitaryacademyandcollege.com	vfmac.org	vfma.net
valleyforgemilitarycollege.org	vfmac.net	vfma.org
valleyforgemilitarycollege.com	vfmac.com	
valleyforgemilitaryacademy.org		
valleyforgemilitaryacademy.com		

is created and maintained by the VFMAC Web Team of the Information Technology Department. Members of the Web Development Team include:

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Web Application Developer:

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Internet

The **Internet** is a worldwide system of computer networks in which users at any one computer can, if they have permission, get information from any other computer. The **Internet** refers to outward-facing systems and is a public, cooperative, and self-sustaining facility accessible to hundreds of millions of people worldwide.

Intranet

An **Intranet** is a private network contained within an enterprise, with the main purpose being to share information among those internal of the enterprise. For example, VFMAC is the enterprise, and the intranet is available only to those on-campus computer users, such as students, faculty and staff.

For the purposes of this document, policies and procedures are presented in regards to the use of the VFMAC web site as it pertains to *Internet* users only. Policy development and interpretation regarding the use of VFMAC web site resources is solely the responsibility of the Web Development Team. Ensuring the web site's continued development and improvement, as well as managing the overall appearance and navigational systems of the web site are also the responsibility of the Web development Team. The Web Development Team makes all decisions regarding the VFMAC web site; no materials, services and/or programs will be incorporated into the VFMAC site without the consent of the Web Development Team.

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the contents of this web site without the express written permission of Valley Forge Military Academy and College is prohibited. Any rights not expressly granted herein are reserved.

Mission and Purpose of this Statement

The World Wide Web offers Valley Forge Military Academy and College the opportunity to provide a broad spectrum of institutional information to a large number of people. Because of their high visibility factor, institutional web pages must follow some basic style and content guidelines in order to represent the institution in a coherent and appropriate manner. Therefore this statement of policies and procedures has been established to provide an overview of guidelines used in creating and maintaining VFMAC's web site. All web pages must adhere to the applicable standards defined in this document.

Purpose and Use of VFMAC Web Site

The purpose of the VFMAC web site is to serve as a marketing tool and data resource for official institutional information. VFMAC web site resources are used only for the dissemination of information or communications related to the institution. The institution will not host a web site for any for-profit group or enterprise. Any VFMAC WWW resource must be consistent with VFMAC policies and local, state, and federal laws.

Home Page and Second-Level Pages

VFMAC's home page is the doorway into the institution's web site and sets the tone both visually and navigationally for the rest of the site. The second-level pages, which are a series of cross-referenced index pages, are gateways to subsequent layers of the institution's site.

From the home page, five fast-track site navigators are available. The five tracks available for fast-track navigation are as follows:

- *Academy* (aimed at potential students for the Academy)
- *College* (aimed at potential students for the College)
- *Parents* (aimed at parents of potential students)
- *International* (aimed at potential students from other countries)
- *News & Events* (providing news items and calendar of events)

A Navigation Bar appears along the left margin of every page, with links to the following second-level pages:

- *About Valley Forge*
- *Academy*
- *Administration*
- *Admissions/Apply*

- *Alumni*
- *Campus Tour*
- *College*
- *International*
- *Musical Programs*
- *News & Events*
- *Parents*
- *Parents' Association*
- *Philanthropy*
- *Summer Camp*
- *Visiting Valley Forge*

At the base of the Navigation Bar are the following links that appear on every page:

- *Contact Us*
- *Search*
- *Site Map*
- *Home*

Beneath the fast-track navigators are links to features, such as articles and other items of interest. These may be changed periodically. The current features are:

- *The Forge Magazine*
- Employment Opportunities
- Faculty & Staff Directory
- Photo Scrapbook
- *The Legionnaire*
- Subscribe to E-Mail Alerts
- *The Forge*
- Send an e-postcard
- Bookmark this page
- Calendar of Events
- Copyright Notice
- Privacy Statement

Footer of Home Page

- Copyright Notice with year 2003
- Last updated -- On the home page, a date appears that indicates when the site was last updated. The statement appears as follows (with appropriate date):

Site last updated: Friday, February 23, 2003

- Disclaimer -- Advises users that the site best viewed with MS Internet Explorer 4.0 or greater.

Content and Design Standards

Editorial Content Guidelines

The following are requirements, standards, and guidelines regarding the editorial content of information on VFMAC web sites and pages.

- Identification of the school is necessary on every page so that visitors can recognize the page's affiliation.
- Title/name of page – Header graphic will indicate content of page and/or corresponding department.
- VFMAC links – Navigation bar is provided with links to other areas of VFMAC web site; Home page must be accessible from every page of the site.
- Footer containing links to sub-pages within the particular area of the web site currently displayed will be provided.

Graphic Guidelines

Web pages house various design and graphical features such as pictures, photos, and borders, as well as various type sizes and styles. The following are general guidelines for the design of each web site/page.

Page Elements

- School identification – The school's name is displayed across the top-most portion of each page.
- Header element – Each page has a header element. The main header element will indicate the area of the web site currently displayed
- Footer element – Likewise, each page has a footer element. Elements in the footer should include other links within that sub-section of the site.
- Navigation Bar – Each second-level page has the navigation bar along the left margin.

Text Elements

- Only readable fonts are utilized.
- Fonts of expository text will be uniform in size and type.
- Headings and sub-headings may be slightly larger than that of the expository text.

Graphic Elements

- Using graphics – Use of graphics is kept simple. Scale of the graphic element and its relationship to other graphic elements and to the text is considered before any graphic elements are added to a page. Appropriateness of an image is decided upon by the Web Development Team.
- Graphic size – Lowest common denominator is used when considering what type of graphics to include on a page.
- File size – Use of large, complex images is avoided. This allows for quicker page downloads.

Design Considerations

- Simple but elegant – Web sites will remain simple but elegant. Large graphics, special effects, and backgrounds are used sparingly. This is because many of the site's visitors may be using slow modems and basic browser utilities. Therefore, it may take them a long time to download graphics, and many basic browsers do not take full advantage of most of the more advanced technology used in creating web pages.
- Sub-page design – The graphic design of the VFMAC web site integrates unity and variety. Unity is attained through consistency, that is, by utilizing common elements on every page of the site (i.e. header graphics, navigation bars, footers). If one or more of these common elements is shared among pages of the site, the user is less likely to become disoriented. If the site contains a subsite such as a multi-page online publication or directory, the appearance of the subsite will be consistent within itself but also contain one or more graphic or textual elements in common with the main site.

Submitting Material for the Web Site

- The VFMAC Web Site provides two on-line forms for submitting data to the Web Team for publication on the VFMAC web site. They are as follows:
 - 1) /athleticform.htm – targeted to members of the Athletics Department for their submission of news regarding athletic events, i.e. results of competitions, tournaments, achievements made by VF athletes.
 - 2) /websubmission.htm – for any and all other text submissions to the Web Team. Any accompanying images would need to be sent separately via email.
- Any and all data submitted to the Web Team for publication on the VFMAC web site that does not utilize these forms must still be in electronic format. The Web Team will not be responsible for retyping documents manually or creating elements (such as .pdf's) from scratch. Any documents that VFMAC uses in its operation and business practices originate from a computer; therefore, it is more than possible for the document(s) to be provided to the Web Team in electronic format.

Technical Guidelines

The following are technical guidelines and standards for the development of VFMAC web sites/pages.

Compatibility

- Browser Testing – Visitors to VFMAC's web pages view the site using a variety of web browsers. The appearance of pages sometimes varies from browser to browser. Although we will strive to accommodate all browsers used to view the site, it will be best viewed with Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 or above, Netscape Navigator 6.0 or above, and Netscape Communicator 4.0 or above. The appearance and operability of the site's pages will be tested via Netscape and Microsoft browsers of the aforementioned versions.
- Link Integrity – Pages will be kept free of non-working links. Each link will be tested manually and periodically to ensure its proper connectivity.

Consistency

- Consistency of appearance, organization, and navigation of any publication or interactive media are qualities that help strengthen an institution's identity. For web pages, these attributes aid users in identifying the origins and relationships of individual web pages. The application of basic visual/graphic design principles to page layouts contribute significantly to the readability and ultimate meaningfulness of the published information. The web site benefits from consistent use of colors, icons, logos, and text styles. For these reasons, the VFMAC web site is developed and maintained to keep a consistent organization, navigational system and graphical appearance.
- The Web Development Team has developed a visual and navigational design for the VFMAC web site. Further development of the web site will be ongoing and every attempt will be made to reflect advances in web design and technologies, as well as changes taking place within the institution.

Maintaining Up-to-Date Information

- In order to keep the web site current and fresh, every attempt is made to update the pages on a regular basis. It is the responsibility of departments with a web presence to review the pages sponsored by their department and provide updated information to the Web Development Team.
- The submission of information is encouraged by the Web Development Team for publication and presentation on the web site. This information is reviewed by the Web Development Team. Voluntary submissions will be accommodated based on priority, space availability, accuracy, and functionality; and will be edited for content before presented on the web site. The Web Development Team reserves the right to make necessary changes to any submitted material that is deemed appropriate by our standards.

Prohibited Elements

The following items are not permitted for display on the VFMAC web site:

- Services, resources and/or programs will not be incorporated into or linked from the VFMAC web site without the expressed approval and consent by the Web Development Team;
- Use of the official home pages for personal or commercial gain;
- Linking official home pages to personal pages;
- Harassment or libelous statements toward others;
- Posting links to commercial vendors for personal or commercial gain;
- Advertising of any kind for any product, service, or brand name;
- Posting or linking to obscene materials;
- Posting or linking to other items which detract from the school's image, integrity or mission.

Exceptions and requests for changes to standards

Any desired exceptions or changes to these design standards must be submitted to the Web Development Team of the Information Technology Department for review and approval prior to materials being posted on a VFMAC site.

As Internet and web technology is a dynamic and altering medium, these standards and policies will be reviewed periodically and revised accordingly.