Building an Academic Web Presence

Rochelle Terman

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THIS IS FINE.

Game Plan

1. Planning: Goals and Capacities

2. Locating Your Site

3. Builders and Software

4. Content Architeture, Navigation, Design

5. Best Practices, Analytics

Communication Goals

Why do you want a web presence?
- To market yourself to the academic community (e.g., for the job market).

Who will be visiting your website?
- Search committee members, academic colleagues, potential collaborators, etc.

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?
- Brief bio, professional photo, CV, research and teaching portfolios, contact information.

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—

Populate your department profile.

Then make a separate site.

Locating your site

- Where will your site "live"? (hosting)

- How will people get to your site? (domain)

  - subdomain (rochelleterman.site.com)

  - custom domain (rochelleterman.com)

- What tools will you use to build your site? (builder)

The 3 Best Solutions

	Wordpress.com Personal Account	UChicago Voices [Built on wordpress]	Custom domain / hosting + open-source CMS.
Costs	$4 / month	Free**	$3-15 / month
Pluses +	Easy, beautiful, custom domain.	Cheap, Easy	Flexible, total control.
Minuses -	Cost, somewhat inflexible.	Lose it when you leave, inflexible, subdomain.**	Technical difficulty.
In a nutshell	Best for most.	Biggest value.	Greatest flexibility.

Other Options

1. **Wordpress-like CMS**

   ▪ SquareSpace, Wix, Weebly, etc.

   ▪ Free (ads / restrictions / subdomains) or Premium Accounts (with domain).

2. **Github + Static Site Generators**

   ▪ Hosting is **free** with subdomain (rochelleterman.github.io);

   ▪ For custom domain, purchase separately ($10-20 per year) and set up DNS.

   ▪ Very trendy (Rochelle has *feelings*.)

3. **Google Sites**

   ▪ Surprisingly underutilized.

   ▪ Hosting **free** with subdomain, custom domain can be mapped as above.

4. **Raw HTML / CSS; Academia.edu**

   ▪ Not recommended!

Content Architecture

Required

- Biography + photo
- Published research
- Teaching activities
- CV
- Contact info

Recommended

- Data
- Working papers
- Teaching materials / syllabi.

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: 2 clicks rule.

❏ 5 of fewer menu items.

❏ Split big blocks (About, Research, Teaching, Contact).

❏ Items should be brief and standard.

❏ Use headings for more specific information (Current Publications, Past Courses).

❏ Simple and easy to read – stands out.

Navigation

Rochelle Layla Terman

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 Computational Tools for Social Science at University of Chicago. I'm a certified instructor with Software Carpentry and Data Carpentry. See my teaching page for information and materials.

I received my Ph.D. in Political Science with a designated emphasis in Gender & Women's Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Before coming to Chicago, I was a post-doc at the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University.

Contact.

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Office Hours: By appointment.

Navigation

Rochelle Layla Terman

CV
Research
Teaching
Code / Data

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Design

Design

❑ Be consistent.

❑ Use simple typography.
    ❑ No more than 2 different fonts.
    ❑ Use readable, web-safe fonts such as Verdana or Helvetica.
    ❑ 14 or 16 pt sizes.
    ❑ Use italics or bold sparingly and consistently.

❑ Limit use of color.
    ❑ White or neutral background.
    ❑ Black or charcoal font color.
    ❑ 1-2 accent colors for 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 pyschological impact.