

## NEACUHO Website Review Taskforce

**Goal:** To review the current status of the NEACUHO website while comparing it to other ACUHO-I Regional websites in order to determine what changes need to be made for the future.

**Research:** With the help of Joseph Murphy, Residence Hall Director at Skidmore College, and Ryan Young, Residence Director at UMass Amherst, two tasks were conducted to determine what changes needed to be made to the NEACUHO website.

### Task One – Survey of NEACUHO Executive Board Members

The first task involved surveying the current NEACUHO Executive Board on their thoughts, opinions, and usage of the existing NEACUHO website. A series of seven questions were asked (see below):

1. How often do you visit the NEACUHO website?
2. When you do visit the website, what is your reason for visiting?
3. What do you find most helpful on the website?
4. How would you describe the current layout of the website? (User friendly, organized, cluttered, confusing, etc.)
5. What changes would you like to see made to the website?
6. What information would you like to see added to the website?
7. Please provide any additional feedback you feel would be helpful to the maintenance of the website.

### Results from Task One – Survey of NEACUHO Executive Board Members

*(Survey participants: Lenny Zeiger, Nancy Smith, Cindy Long Porter, Trixy Palencia, Steve Prue, Jen Golojuch, Carol Sacchetti, Katie Orlando, Donna Rogalski, Sabrina Tanbara, and Jen Hapgood)*

The average executive board member visits the NEACUHO website once a week (ranges from once a week to monthly to three times a semester). The reasons vary but for the most part, Board Members visit for new and current information, retrieve documents, post/edit material, and seek contact information. Most currently like how new information is posted on the main page; they also like the documents, conference materials, and contact information that can be found on the website. There are several ideas for changes including a more modernized site (more pictures, different style layout); a password protected section that can be used for paying fees online; better organized site (concerning navigation) that is easier to navigate; materials updated sooner; and more interaction for members (the idea of online chats, message boards, blogging). New other new item include a search feature; password protected

section where members can opt to include contact information; an archive of NEACUHO history; links to “sister” sites including ACUHO-I & NEACURH; e-board member bios; member schools broken down by region; active communication (like a blog or message boarding); a calendar section; training for executive board members on how to use the website; create a more personalized and welcoming website (adding pictures, welcome messages from DC’s, more interactivity); and creating a better system for posting job openings.

### **Task Two - Survey and Review of Regional Affiliated Websites**

The second task involved surveying the other Technology Coordinators/Web Masters of the different regional affiliated websites. The goals were to determine which interface/program is used to design other websites and to establish what the main purpose of their website is. The two following questions were asked:

1. NEACUHO is currently using a system called Joombla! 2.0 for inputting our information to add to the webpage. What type of interface are you using to launch the webpage for your organization?
2. What does your organization see as the main purpose of the webpage? (membership, updates of events/conferences, professional resource, etc.)

Additionally, a person review of the other regional affiliated websites was conducted to determine features that would be beneficial on the NEACUHO website.

### **Results from Task Two – Survey and Review of Regional Affiliated Websites**

*(Affiliated Websites Reviewed and Surveyed: MACUHO, AIMHO, GLACUHO, NWACUHO, OACUHO, SEAHO, SWACUHO, UMRACUHO, WACUHO)*

(Note: Each Regional Affiliate Section will include the responses to the survey questions and features that were liked and are recommend for the NEACUHO Website)

**MACUHO** (Mid-Atlantic College & University Housing Officers) -

<http://www.macuhoweb.org/index.html>

*Survey:* No Response from Joe Russo, Webmaster

*Website Review:* Very professional looking; utilizes a calendar feature; well organized task bar at the top for easy navigation; pictures directly on the front page; section that includes past awards winners.

**AIMHO** (Association of Intermountain Housing Officers) - <http://www.aimho.org/>

*Survey:* No Response from Webmaster

*Website Review:* Very bland; looks to utilize flash enabling drop down boxes; offers a private wiki section (*websites that can be modified by members about terms, information, etc – Like Wikipedia, but for AIMHO*); online program proposal form and submission

**GLACUHO** (Great Lakes Association of College & University Housing Officers) - <http://www.glacuo.org/>

*Survey:* Responded by Rudy J. Braydich III

- We utilize an online content management system, ADX Studio which allows myself and other authorized users to edit our webpage anywhere they can get internet access! We are currently working with ThinSolutions based out of Cleveland in conjunction with OWEBtech in the management and development of our webpage.
- “Real quickly-I would say it is our primary ‘vehicle’ to deliver professional development across the region. This is where our membership finds professional development opportunities and services that they can receive outside of the annual conference and in addition obtain information about the upcoming conference which complements the developments provided throughout the year.”
- “Basically it is all about better communication with the membership so that we can provide professional development opportunities.”

*Website Review:* Beautiful website; used color and pictures; looks to utilize flash allowing rotating pictures; drop down boxes for further navigation; uses personal biography sections for each Executive Board Member; offers a site map feature for fast and easy navigation; spotlights member testimonials from programs, conferences, and events

**NWACUHO** (Northwest Association of College & University Housing Officers) -  
<http://nwacuho.org/>

*Survey:* Responded by Pat Cunningham

- We currently use modified wiki that only allows authenticated users to edit the site. It is basically something I have hacked together from the ground up. I have used Joomla before but found it not to have the flexibility I desired as a web developer.
- We as an organization don't have formal documents describing what we want our website to be but utilize it as a place to place information for our members. I hope that in the near future, we can expand it to have some blogs and more directed information for our membership. This summer I also hope to redesign the CMS behind the site to be more suited for our needs.
- I would love to chat more about this or speak with anyone who has specific questions. If you would like to chat on the phone you can reach me at 541-346-8237

*Website Review:* Bright and colorful; pop-up menus; features Executive Board members with a photo; section that includes past award and scholarship winners; direct link to Facebook Group; users can add themselves to the Yahoo! List Serve directly from the website without logging onto Yahoo!

**OACUHO** (Ontario Association of College & University Housing Officers) -  
<http://www.oacuho.com/home.htm;jsessionid=685758A906F8D5A8224461C554FCEC09> (our Canadian Friends)

*Survey:* Responded by Carol Ford

- The website is a Content Management System, which was custom developed for us by Orbis Communication.
- The website has two purposes, membership and events/conferences.

*Website Review:* By far the most attractive, eye-catching website; uses pictures; offers job posting on homepage; personal log-in for every user/member; member only section; search bar at the top of page for extremely easy navigation; marketing section for recruiting member that outlines the benefits; offers direct registration to conferences

**SEAHO** (Southeastern Association of Housing Officers) - <http://www.seaho.org/>

*Survey:* No Response from Azfar Mian

*Website Review:* Picture on homepage; each section has a different banner picture; drop down menus; personal member log-in for a member only section; offers a webmail feature for members; Great leadership manual resource; highlights past award winners; offers search feature for easy navigation; offers a support section to make suggestion changes to the website

**SWACUHO** (Southwest Association of College & University Housing Officers) - <http://www.swacuho.org/>

*Survey:* No Response from Hayley Jobe

*Website Review:* Beautiful design with colors and pictures; Spotlights members on homepage; personal member log-in for member only section; offers a job placement section for open positions in the region;

**UMRACUHO** (Upper Midwest Region Association of College & University Housing Officers) - <http://www.umn-acuho.org/>

*Survey:* No Response by Missy Burgess

*Website Review:* Neutral color design; ; personal member log-in for member only section; offers a job posting section for open positions in the region; offers membership application form and submission directly online; online program submission forms;

**WACUHO** (Western Association of College & University Housing Officers) - <http://www.wacuho.org/>

*Survey:* Responded by Drew Chesen

- We use a very low tech interface. Members email updates or new web pages to me or our Technology Coordinator. We verify the pages and then ftp them onto the web host we contract with.
- Good question! I think the WACUHO webpage's main purpose is to disseminate information for such things as conferences and programs, newsletters, scholarship applications, executive board and committee applications, and job postings.

- Last year, Executive Board of WACUHO looked into hiring a professional to redesign our website. We hoped to make it more user friendly (i.e. easier to navigate and update). We solicited proposals and conducted interviews, but the project did not move forward (probably for financial reasons although I was not in the loop). I don't have the time to perform significant maintenance of the website. I have been the webmaster for nearly ten years, and remain in the position because no one else has volunteered to assume the responsibility.

*Website Review:* Very basic design and colors; scrolling bars hide certain sections; personal private log-in for membership directory; offers job listing for open positions in the region