Introduction to WordPress

I. Introduction: What is WordPress?
   WordPress is a free, online and open-source content management tool that allows you to create your own personal website in the easiest and most powerful way. You can make as many sites as you want, manage editing permissions and control privacy. This handout introduces WordPress to you and provides step-by-step instructions on how to create a basic website.

II. WordPress at Mount Holyoke College
   Mount Holyoke College provides access to WordPress for students, staff and faculty for websites and blogging. In order to access WordPress at MHC, you can visit commons.mtholyoke.edu and use your MHC credentials to log in.

III. Working in WordPress

1. What is a site?
   A site is a location or a place where something is happening. In WordPress, the thing that is happening can be dynamic (posts) or static (pages). Usually, when we think of a dynamic site, we are thinking of a blog. This handout will focus on the creation of a static site in WordPress, better known as a website.

2. How to create a WordPress site
   To create a site visit commons.mtholyoke.edu and login using your MHC credentials.

   - Click “My Sites” located in the top left header area of your screen. You should then see the “Create a New Site” option on the diagram on the right.
   - Click “Create a New Site”
   - You will then be able to enter a “Site Name” and create a custom URL for your site.
   
   **Note:** Site Name must be at least 4 characters—letters and numbers only. This will be the end of the URL for your site. You can add a Site Title too! This can be descriptive of the site and can contain letters, numbers, spaces and other characters. If you enter something incorrectly, you will get a message about it!

   **TIPS**
   For help, click on the “Help” button on the top right corner of the screen. You’ll see help relevant to the content you are viewing!
- Choose your own privacy option.
  - “Allow search engines to index this site” option will either fully allow or fully prohibit search engines.
  - “Visible only to …” options will allow only those indicated to see the site.
- Now click “Create Site”

3. Dashboard Layout

Every site has its own dashboard, which is the first screen you see when you log into the administration area of your site. The idea of the dashboard is to give you a place where you can get an at-a-glance overview of your site. You can catch up on the latest news from WordPress, create a quick draft for a post, view the total number of posts and pages on your site, and so on.

On the left side of the screen is the main navigation menu describing each of the administrative functions you can perform such as Media, Pages, Comments, etc. Within each major function, the sub-menu expands (fly-out) when hovered over, and expands fully if an item clicked.
“My Sites” is where you can manage all the sites that you create. It allows you to go to Dashboard, New Post or Manage Comments of a site.

If you would like to see how your site look:
- Click on “My Sites”
- Hover your mouse over the site that you want to see
- Choose “Visit Site”

TIPS
To go back to Dashboard after you visit your site, you may:
When click on “Visit Site”, right click and choose “Open link in new tab”
OR
Depending on the theme, find the Meta tags at the bottom or on the sidebar, click on “Login”. This option will take you back to the Dashboard.

4. Settings
The Settings Administration Screen displays all of the settings that define your website as a whole. These settings decide how your site works, how you interact with your site, and how your audience uses and interacts with your site.

a. General Settings
The General Settings controls the most basic settings for your site including your Site Title, Tagline, Email Address, Time and Date.

b. Reading Settings
- With these settings, you can choose whether you want Posts, or a static Page displayed as your front page. You can also adjust the number of posts displayed.
- Most importantly, you can manage the Site Visibility in this setting.

c. Discussion Settings
- Discussion Settings allow you to manipulate settings regarding incoming and outgoing comments.
- If you wish to allow comments to your posts, check “Allow people to post comments on new articles.” If you do not want to allow comments on your posts, uncheck this setting.
d. Media Settings
You are able to determine the sizes of images, documents and other media files when uploaded.

5. How to delete your WordPress site
- To delete your WordPress site, go to “Tools” on the Main Navigation menu.
- Click on “Delete Site”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOTICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Once you delete your site permanently:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Your site CANNOT be restored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The deleted site name can NEVER be used again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- If you wish to continue to use the site name, you will have to change the content of the site rather than delete the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Check the box and choose “Delete My Site Permanently”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Creating New Pages
a. Posts versus Pages: WordPress is built around two basic concepts: Posts and Pages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSTS vs PAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posts are typically blog entries. A series of articles, listed (usually) reverse-chronologically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pages are used for more static content (i.e. content that doesn’t change or changes infrequently). An ‘About us’ page is an example of a Page on a typical website. In most cases you’ll find that the content in the ‘About us’ page doesn’t change all that frequently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Create a new page
There are 2 ways to create a new page:
- Hover your cursor over “New” on the toolbar at the top, then choose “Page”
- Hover your cursor over the “Pages” menu option in the left-hand navigation menu, click “Add New”
The procedure is similar when you want to create a new post; just choose “Post” instead of “Page”.

7. Edit pages
   a. Edit a page
   In the Dashboard, locate the Pages menu on the left side. The Pages menu will lead you to a list of Pages that your site contains. Within a page, you will see a Page Title, the Author, Number of Comments and either the Date Published or the Date the Page was Last Modified.

   At the top of the page, there is information about total pages you have in your site and status of those pages: Published or Draft.

   To edit a page, click the name of the page or hover the cursor on the title of the page. A few options will be presented:
   - **Edit:** allows you to edit page’s title, content, status of the page, feature images, and page attributes
   - **Quick Edit:** allows you to edit basic information such as Title, Date, etc.
   - **Trash:** moves your page to Trash. After the trash is emptied, the page is deleted.
   - **View:** Display the page in its final result. If the page is not published, Preview is seen instead of View

   You can also filter the pages displayed using the dropdown list and the Filter button.

   b. Adding media:
   Adding media files to WordPress is simple. Images, videos and documents can be uploaded and stored in Media Library. To insert media into your page:
   - Click on the page that you want to edit
   - Choose **Add Media**, the **Insert Media** tab will appear:
     - **Upload Files** tab: upload new media by dropping files into the window or choosing Select Files
- **Media Library**: insert files that are previously uploaded to the site

c. **Adding slideshows:**
First you’ll need to create a new slideshow:
- Choose the “Slideshow” button on the left-side menu → Click on Add new
- As you be presented with a screen like the above, first enter a title for the slideshow
- Add image, text, or video slides using the buttons in the “Slides List” box
  You can change the order of the slides by moving the slides below the “Slides List” box up and down.
- Then adjust the slideshow settings to your preferences. There are settings for animation (transition, duration of each slide), display (width and height of the slideshow, title and description display), and some other control settings.
- When finished, click the “Publish” button on the right.
  You can always make changes to your slideshow by clicking the “Slideshow” button on the left-side menu, and then choosing a slideshow from the list to edit.

Now that you have created a slideshow, you need to insert it into one of your pages:
- Go to “Pages” on the left-side menu, then choose a page to edit
- Put the cursor where you want to put the slideshow, then click on the “Insert Slideshow” button

- Choose the slideshow that you want to put into your page
- Then click the “Update” button to apply the changes to your page

**d. Insert links into a page**
- Go to Pages and choose a page to edit
- Put your cursor where to want to insert the link
- Click the “Insert/edit link” icon on the editing toolbar
- You’ll see the dialog box below. Now put in the text that you want to display on your page and the URL that it will point to. Then click “Add link”.

![Insert/edit link dialog box]

8. Appearance

a. Theme
   - Click on the “Appearance” menu option and the Themes screen will appear.
   - The theme that is currently active is shown at the top left of the screen.
   - To Preview another theme (that is not currently active): click the “Live Preview” button associated with each theme.
   - To change your site to another Theme: hover your cursor over the theme you would like to activate and click the “Activate” button that appears beneath the Theme.
   - While the preview screen is displayed, you can click your site links to view your pages in the new theme layout as well as make some theme changes. You can click the “Save & Activate” button in the top left corner of the window to activate the theme.
b. Customizing your theme
- Clicking the “Customize” button allows you to update various settings such as layout, colors, header images, etc. while also previewing those changes.
- Until you click the “Save & Publish” button, only the theme preview window is updated, not the theme on your live site.
- **Note:** All the themes that Mount Holyoke provides are responsive themes, which mean that their layouts adjust to your device's screen size. It provides an optimal viewing experience, easy reading and navigation on mobile phones, tablets, laptop and desktop computers.

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![Customizing your theme](image)

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9. **Background**
- The **Background** menu option is another theme specific menu. It allows you to choose a background image for your site.
- Click the **Background** menu option will take you to the **Background Image** option in the **Customizer**.
- Choose “Select Image” to get one of your previously uploaded images or you can upload a new image.
- To save your changes, click the “Save & Publish” button at the top of the page.
- Depending on the theme you’re currently using you may or may not have this Background option.

9. **Page Attributes:**
This box allows you to reorder pages, set page parents and template. It can be found on the right side of the page editor under Publish module.

**Parent:** With this option, WordPress integrated features for you to arrange your pages in a hierarchy.
For example: You can have a parent page called “About me”, which contains “Biography” and “Portfolio” pages. There are no limits for how deeply you can nest pages. Some themes do not display pages in a hierarchy. You may use Custom menu feature to create subpages and customize navigation menu.

**Order:** In the Order section, you may rearrange the display of your pages.

10. Permissions and Sharing

a. **Users**
   - Subscriber: Somebody who can only manage their profile on your site
   - Contributor: Somebody who can write and manage their posts on your site but not publish them
   - Author: Somebody who can publish and manage their own posts on your site
   - Editor: Somebody who can publish and manage posts and pages as well as manage other users' posts, etc on your site.
   - Administrator: Somebody who has access to all the administration features on your site

b. **Add a new user**
   - To add a new user, click on the **Add New** at the top of the page or hover your mouse over the person icon and click on **Add New** as shown.
   - Once the below page is displayed, simply fill in the various fields as required. You should click **Add Existing User** if you want to add someone who has a WordPress account already or click the **Add New User** button if you want to create a new account for you or someone else.
c. Delete a user
- Go to the users page
- Check any user that you want to delete
- Hover your mouse over Bulk Actions and a list should show up
- Click Apply button and then Confirm Removal button

Can’t find the help you need with the dropdown “Help” menu? Click on “My sites” at the top left corner of your window, hover your mouse over the "The Commons at Mount Holyoke College" and choose “Visit site”, then select "Consult the help guide”. You may also visit the Information Commons Desk or contact the helpdesk at x2600 or by email at helpdesk@mtholyoke.edu

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References:
Mount Holyoke College WordPress Documentation