

## UC Merced Connect Content and Communication Guidelines

UC Merced Connect is our digital campus platform that offers necessary, timely, and useful information for our students, faculty, and staff, as well as prospective students, external partners and the general public. UC Merced Connect offers our campus and audiences a cohesive, streamlined digital experience that allows them to quickly access critical information and personalized content, while also creating a central communications platform through which our individual campus stakeholders can communicate with their specific audiences. This is managed via a hybrid approach to content oversight, design, and maintenance that aims to reduce approval bottlenecks.

- Centralized: planning, design, content governance
- Decentralized: access, content creation and maintenance, opt-in communication channel management

## Purpose

These guidelines are designed to govern UC Merced Connect content and communication creation and management to ensure our offerings through the new platform are relevant, cohesive, accessible, and useful to our intended audiences.

### Connect Roles & Responsibilities

- *Content Editor* – Assigned a module(s)/workspace(s) within Modo to create and maintain
- *Administrator* – Has access to all content, including overarching campus-wide hierarchical components such as landing pages for personas, navigation, categories, premium communications groups, and user attributes.
- *Governance*
  - **During Implementation:** The governance group will ratify content standards, acceptable-use agreements, and any other policies and guidelines created by the implementation team.
  - **After Platform launch:** The governance group will represent key campus groups and users to monitor platform use, policy change requests, and major content and functionality additions.

## Content Management

### Content Standards

In order to be published to the platform, content must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Must promote or require **interaction** (responding to information, logging into other applications and accessing information) with the platforms and/or information that drives the primary activities associated with the user (for students, learning; for staff, working; for faculty, research and teaching)

- Must be **required** for a user’s good standing with the University or for continued access to University resources (ie student account, Identity Management, etc.)
- Must **add value** to the experience of studying, teaching, researching, or working at the University (ie information about dining options, campus resources, etc.)
- Must answer **critical**, frequently asked questions
- Must **contribute tangibly to the sense of community** experienced by users or to the mission of enhancing enrollment or increasing philanthropic support of the institution.

### Branding

Colors, logos, and the overall look and feel of the application and desktop portal must conform to the [UC Merced Brand Standards](#). Themes are defined by the UC Merced Marketing team and any changes to the themes will follow the process defined below.

### Content Prioritization & Organization

At the Home Screen (1<sup>st</sup>) level, UC Merced Connect content is organized into themes based on audience personas (currently Student, Staff, Faculty, and Friends with the expectation of expanding to more audiences).

Content is further organized by navigation hierarchy within each Home Screen theme. Content placement is determined by the requirements of 2<sup>nd</sup>-, 3<sup>rd</sup>-, or 4<sup>th</sup>-level navigation within the theme (see below). New content in the form of standalone modules (accessible at the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of the app) will generally not be added to the platform unless it is a critical tool/link/module within that theme. Final ruling on these types of matters will be determined by the UC Merced Connect governance group.

	<b>Student</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Faculty</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Level</b>	MyMerced (login req’d) Study Eat Live Explore Campus Resources	MyMerced (login req’d) Eat Live Explore Campus Resources	MyMerced (login req’d) Eat Teach Explore Campus Resources
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Level</b>	Critical, universal tools within each theme (ie CatCourses, Checklist)  Modules/groupings that house other modules/links (ie Academic Resources)	Critical, universal tools within each theme (ie email, box)  Modules/groupings that house other modules/links (ie Purchasing, Travel)	Critical, universal tools within each theme (ie email, ACRS)  Modules/groupings that house other modules/links (ie Grad, Research)
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Level</b>	Individual modules or links  As necessary, another	Individual modules or links  As necessary, another layer of groupings (ie	Individual modules or links  As necessary, another layer of groupings

	layer of groupings (ie Residential Life)	Campus Requests to house things like Facilities, Dining, IT)	
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Level</b>	As necessary, individual modules or links	As necessary, individual modules or links	As necessary, individual modules or links

Publication

New content, modules, and workspaces will be put into a queue and reviewed by the UC Merced Connect system administrator and the UC Merced Governance group prior to its initial deployment into the platform. The governance group meets monthly, so the process to be approved for deployment can take up to 6 weeks. For more on this process, see Change Management below.

## Change Management

Changes to existing content

Campus content editors are able to make small changes to existing content in their modules/workspaces at their discretion, provided that they follow the guidelines outlined in this document. (Note that any graphic or image changes require consultation with and approval of Marketing representative.) Small changes are defined as adjustment to existing platform content that make a comparatively small impact to the current user experience on that page/module and do not require technical/xmodule development (ie link updating, new text or blocks, etc).

Campus stakeholders who would like to request **small** changes to current UC Merced Connect content (ie additions that make comparatively few changes to the current user experience on that page/module and do not require technical/xmodule development) can do so by submitting a request to the Connect application administrator via this form: <https://airtable.com/shrGEPNBEZJAb6ZfX>

New content requests

Campus stakeholders who would like to request **small** additions to current UC Merced Connect content (ie additions that make comparatively few changes to the current user experience on that page/module and do not require technical/xmodule development) can do so by submitting a request to the Connect application administrator via this form: <https://airtable.com/shrGEPNBEZJAb6ZfX>

Small enhancement requests will be reviewed monthly with the UC Merced Connect Governance group and, upon approval, added to the UC Merced Connect platform during the next deployment cycle.

Campus stakeholders who would like to request **significant** additions or changes to current UC Merced Connect content (ie additions of new pages/modules that add to or significantly change the current user experience of the platform which may or may not require technical/xmodule development) can do so by submitting a request to the Connect application administrator via this form: <https://airtable.com/shrGEPNBEZJAb6ZfX>.

Content is typically created via a **module or screen** that is linked to existing UC Merced Connect content. All modules/screens should demonstrate a clear use that relates directly to a campus

unit or university-related function, generally over an extended period of time. Requestor should be able to answer the following questions:

- What group of individuals composes the target audience?
- How will the envisioned module/content make the portal experience better for its audience?
- How will the module/content enhance customer service operations, such as delivering information more efficiently or providing useful functions?
- Note: The content owner/requestor must have staff who can support information updates on an ongoing basis. If a data feed or technical resource is necessary for content, the content owner/requestor must have staff who can support technical functionality on an ongoing basis.

### General Connect Process for the Creation & Approval of New Content

1. Submit a request to the Connect application administrator via this form: <https://airtable.com/shrGEPNBEZJAb6ZfX>
2. Create desired content in this content template and identify resources for content creation and maintenance
3. Meet with the Connect application administrator and Marketing (creative) representative to review desired content, clarify functionality, and establish content creation timeline
4. Content editor(s) designated in step 2 complete basic Modo training modules
5. Marketing creates template for new module(s)/screen(s) as agreed
6. Content editors review and do a final edit on their newly created content
7. New content is deployed to UC Merced Connect test platform
8. UC Merced Governance group reviews & approves new content
9. New content is deployed to the live UC Merced Connect platform

## Communication via Connect

### Modes and Delivery

The UC Merced Connect platform offers unique communication opportunities for campus academic and administrative units: the chance to build an engaging platform that all campus units have a stake in supporting and growing. The more our campus supports and drives our users to the Connect platform, the bigger the audience and engagement possibilities for all campus communications that are delivered via Connect.

1. Push notifications - These are highly regulated by Internal Communications and typically only used for campus-wide alerts or critical, time-sensitive information. For users that don't have Push enabled or who are using the Connect desktop, these messages appear in the user's Connect inbox.

2. Banner notifications – These are small messages that appear on particular screens to catch user’s attention as they browse the platform.
  - a. Sender can elect for this type of message appear on particular screens for all users (regulated by Internal Communications)
  - b. Sender can elect for this type of message appear on particular screens for users who have opted-in to their channel
  
3. Inbox-only messages – These messages only appear in users Connect inbox, and are indicated by a number bubble on the person icon at the top of the screen.
  - a. These can be sent to all users in a particular persona (ie Staff, Faculty, Students, Friends, etc.)
  - b. These can be sent to all users subscribed to a particular opt-in channel

### Connect Communications – Quick Reference

<i>Type of Message</i>	<i>Delivery</i>	<i>Who can create?</i>	<i>Who can send?</i>	<i>Audience</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Public Personal	- Push - Inbox (desktop/ user who don’t enable push)	Internal Communications or Marketing	Internal Communications or Marketing	Students, Faculty, Staff, and/or Friends	>5 messages per week
Public Personal	- Banner on selected screen(s) - Connect Inbox	Any Connect Communicator can submit a message for approval	Module owners (ie SFC for MyMerced Banners)	Users of that persona/ screen	1 banner per screen per message duration, >5 message per week
Opt-In	- Banner on selected screen(s) - Connect Inbox	Any Connect Communicator can submit a message for approval	Opt-In Channel Communicator	Users who have opted-in to that channel	Unlimited

### General Message Guidelines

#### Message Length

Connect messages should be short messages informing users of key information or of an event/opportunity. Recommended message length via Connect is no more than 150 words; the Connect message can link out to more information on a web page or within a Connect module/screen as necessary.

#### Image

All messages should include a high-quality image if possible.

### Message Links

Messages should either link to a specific Connect screen or web page on which a user will get more information or be able to take a specific action, or to an event listing with more information.

### Message Start & End Dates

All messages must also have a designated start and end time which allows the Connect inbox to remain uncluttered for our users. End time should typically be no more than 1 week after the message start time; messages that remain in user inboxes for multiple weeks will discourage Connect users from engaging with their messages as frequently.

### *General Message Management*

The calendar for deployment of Public messages of all types (Push, Banner, or Inbox) and Personal messages is managed by UC Merced Internal Communications in accordance with UC acceptable use policies. **All requests for use of the public messaging systems must be co-signed by a cabinet member.**

### *Opt-In Channel Creation*

Campus academic and administrative units can request a Connect Opt-In channel be created for their use via this form [link to be inserted]. Please note the following requirements:

1. The academic or administrative unit in question must identify a resource who will undergo Connect Communicate training before being granted platform access to create and manage messaging for that channel.
2. It is the requesting unit's responsibility to alert Internal Communications and/or the Connect application administrator when Communicators need to be added or removed to an existing channel.