

**WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXECUTIVE POLICY MANUAL**

Executive Policy #21
Approved October 10, 2003
Reviewed February 4, 2020

University Domain Name Policy

BACKGROUND

Internet addresses, including domain names, are an important part of electronic communications practices. The structure and use of domain names by University entities and officially associated organizations reflect their relationship with the University.

PURPOSE

Washington State University has a legal interest in the use of its name and associated trademarks, including those contained or portrayed in domain names. This policy is intended to ensure that domain names available through the WSU domain name service promote WSU, its programs, and activities.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Only specific servers directly authorized by central information technology departments (WSU IT in Pullman, Information Services in Spokane, Tri-Cities, Vancouver, College of Nursing, etc.), hereafter referred to collectively as Central IT/IS, will be allowed to operate on the WSU network as Domain Name Servers (DNS). Central IT/IS reserves the right to disconnect Domain Name Servers that do not strictly comply with all policies.
2. Only primary domain names of wsu.edu or .org shall be registered within the authoritative Domain Name Server at Washington State University. All other primary domain names such as .com, .net, .biz, etc., will not be registered in the WSU domain name server.
3. Central IT/IS is responsible for approving domain name requests where the primary domain name is wsu.edu.
4. In general, domain names that support activities tied to WSU's educational mission shall be of the form wsu.edu. Other websites must qualify for inclusion as a .org as outlined in #6 and #7 below. Those that fail to qualify shall not reside in the WSU domain name server.
5. Domain names of the form xxxxx.wsu.edu (or xxxxx.xxxx.wsu.edu) should be used by all official University websites, including those of colleges, departments, and other units of the University, as well as faculty or staff performing University functions for use on the Internet. Domain names should accurately describe the activities or programs to which they refer.
6. The Domain Name Review Committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending approval or disapproval to the appropriate Central IT/IS manager for domain name requests where the primary domain name is .org. The committee will also serve in an advisory capacity to the appropriate Central IT/IS manager as needed.

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POLICY STATEMENT (cont.)

7. Domain names of the form .org must meet the following criteria:
 - Directly serve the mission of Washington State University.
 - Not a for profit entity.
 - Follow all federal, state, local, and University laws or policies.
 - Represent a legitimate organization with a bona fide relationship to WSU (e.g. ASWSU-sanctioned club, etc.).
 - Do not qualify under the criteria for wsu.edu as stated in #5 above.
8. All existing domain names outside of the wsu.edu name space must comply with this policy. Owners of domain names not within the scope of the policy must either seek an exception to this policy, request a new sub-domain name within the wsu.edu name space (e.g. wsu-department.com might change to department.wsu.edu), or remove their services from wsu.edu.
9. Domain forwarding as provided by an external service provider is not specifically excluded. Those utilizing this methodology are cautioned to ensure that any on-campus resources that are accessed comply with all applicable laws and policies to include Appropriate Use (*Executive Policy #4*), the ethics laws of the State of Washington, and do not result in liabilities to the University.
10. Any domain name registered in the WSU DNS that is not accessed by network query for two months may be terminated.
11. Washington State University reserves the right to rescind any listing within its authoritative domain name server. Network service may be removed from the machine(s) that host the domain name(s) in question pending review. See University Network Policies (*Executive Policy #16*).

PROCEDURES

1. **To request a new wsu.edu domain name** – Contact the appropriate Central IT/IS manager. He/she is responsible for approving/disapproving initial requests.
2. **To appeal a denied wsu.edu domain name** – The requestor should submit additional written information or clarification in support of the request to the appropriate IT/IS manager and request a review by the Domain Name Review Committee.
3. **To request a new .org domain name** – Submit a written request to the appropriate IT/IS manager. He/she will send the request to the Domain Name Review Committee. The Committee will inform the IT/IS manager of their recommendation within 30 days of the date of the request.

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DEFINITIONS

Domain forwarding – Domain forwarding occurs when a registered domain name such as example.org is entered into a DNS server that is external to the actual location of the web site associated with the domain name. The external DNS server forwards web requests to the computer system actually hosting the web site. For example, if example.org was a registered domain name and was associated with a particular DNS server for forwarding purposes, then a user trying to view example.org would have his request "forwarded" to a second computer where the actual web site exists. The domain forwarding DNS server acts a middleman to redirect traffic to a computer system that does not have its own DNS server.

Domain name – The common, word-based identifier for a specific computer system. Examples would be wsu.edu, microsoft.com, or redcross.org. The right-most portion (.edu, .com, or .org) is called the primary domain name or top-level domain name. Other primary domain names include .biz, .info, .mil, .gov, etc. The portion to the left of the primary domain name is called a second-level domain name. In the example above, wsu, microsoft, and redcross are second-level domain names. Second-level domain names are registered with various governing associations. Moving further to the left would result in sub-domain names. Example of sub-domain names would be stat.wsu.edu, ansi.wsu.edu, vancouver.wsu.edu, or spokane.wsu.edu. The registered owner of the second-level domain name that it is associated with controls sub-domain names.

Domain Name Review Committee – The appropriate IT/IS manager will chair the committee, with a representative from WSU Marketing and Creative Services and the Attorney General's Office as members.

Domain Name Server (DNS) – A computer system running a Domain Name Service. Often, such computers are dedicated to DNS activities and are simply referred to as DNS servers or just *the DNS*. Many registered holders of second-level domain names will operate and maintain their own DNS server. The computer at WSU identified as *centaur* (IP address 134.121.2.54) is the primary WSU DNS server. Entries into the DNS are used to match up common alphabetic domain names such as stat.wsu.edu or example.org with the unique numeric identifier, which allows outside computers to connect and establish web activity.

Domain Name Service – A special computer application that translates domain names into a unique numeric identifier, which is used for computer-to-computer communications. Because domain names are alphabetic, they're easier to remember. The Internet however, is really based on worldwide, unique numeric identifiers (IP Addresses). Every time you use a domain name, a DNS server must translate the name into the corresponding IP address. For example, the domain name *www.example.com* might translate to *192.0.34.166*.

IT/IS Manager – The person responsible for servers directly authorized by IT/IS departments (WSU IT in Pullman, Information Services in Spokane, Tri-Cities, Vancouver, College of Nursing, etc).

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DEFINITIONS (cont.)

Name space – Name space, or domain name space, is an inverted tree containing a set of nodes, such as com, edu, org, net, gov, mil, arpa, etc. Each node represents a domain. Everything below a node falls into that domain. WSU belongs to the edu node/domain. Similarly, anyone at WSU that uses wsu.edu as part of its host name falls into the WSU domain/node and is part of WSU's domain name space.