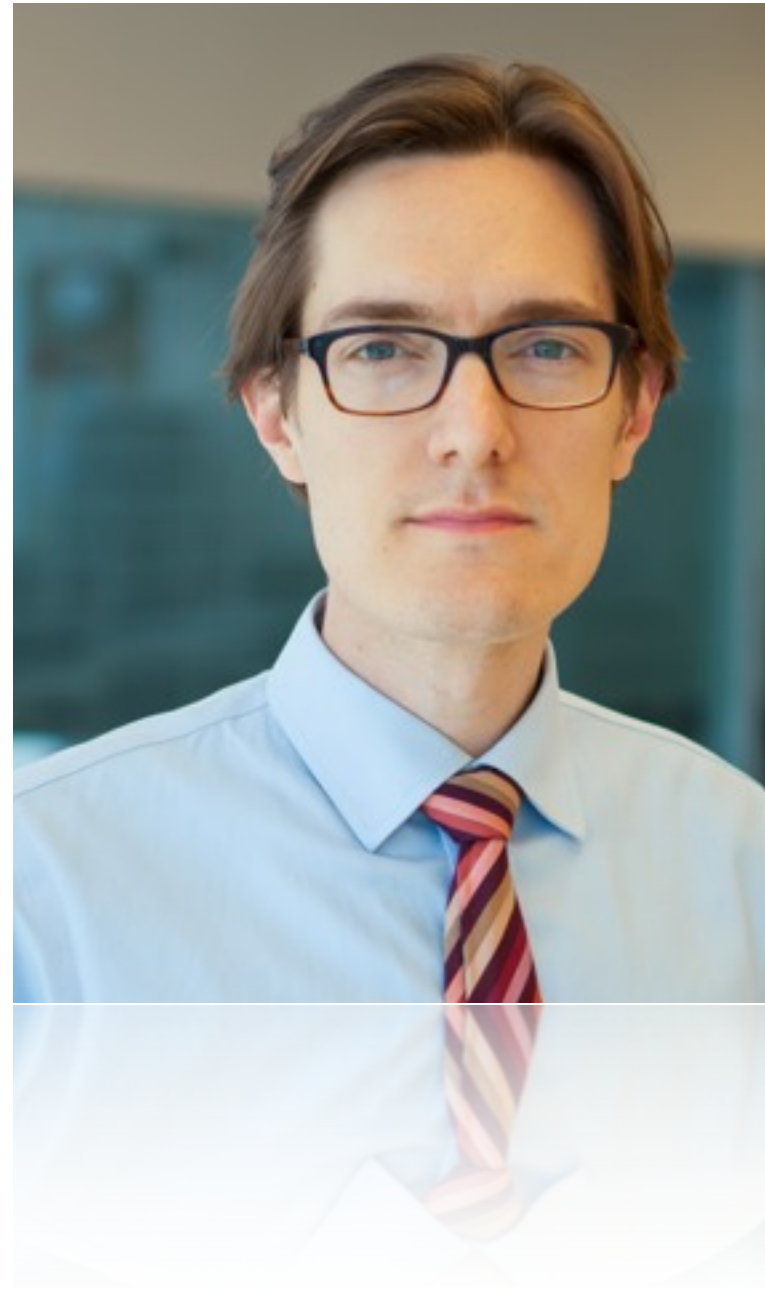


WordPress Goes to College: A Case Study

WordCamp Chicago 2013

About Me

Name: **Gordon Wright**
Age: **37**
City: **Chicago, IL**
Hometown: **Austin, TX**
Married: **8 years**
Kids: **Two (2yo, 4yo)**
Pets: **None**



erikson

graduate school in child development

I work in Higher Education.

Erikson's story. A case study.

Erikson Case Study

I'm going to tell you:

WHY we switched to WordPress.

HOW we built it.

WHAT our current set-up is.

WHY

Old CMS

BAD Proprietary, boutique.

WORSE Expensive to upgrade.

WORST Unstable.

~~Unstable~~

~~Insane~~

PSYCHOTIC

Getting Started

- Start **platform agnostic**
- **Talk** to people (Informal RFP)
- Find a developer/agency/firm **you can work with**

Find a Developer

- Friends
- Peers in similar organizations
- Referrals
- Search online

Find a Developer

CodePoet.com

Found Joachim Kudish

Had a vision for our site.

Easy to work with.

Good portfolio.

<DIV>Q: HOW DO YOU ANNOY A WEB DEVELOPER?

With web designers,
WYSIWYG

Find a Developer

WYSIWYG

Know your web designer's
limitations.

Prioritize the **skills & strengths**
your project needs.

Why WordPress?

- Found a developer I liked.
- Affordable. (Free is never free.)
- Large and growing developer community.
- Internal expertise at Erikson.
- Now much more than a blogging platform — bona fide CMS.

HOW

Higher ed sites have a
lot of parts.

Complex Website

- Static pages
- News
- Events
- Degrees
- Courses
- Faculty
- Staff
- Publications & presentations
- Research projects
- Continuing education
- Donations

News



Posts

Easy.

WP's native blog posts, just like other university newsrooms use.

Events



Plugin: Events Calendar PRO

Worth going pro for full customization.
Well-built plugin with a good API.

<http://tri.be/shop/wordpress-events-calendar-pro/>

Continuing Education



Plugin: WooCommerce

Also a well-built plugin with a good API for customization.

<http://www.woothemes.com/woocommerce/>

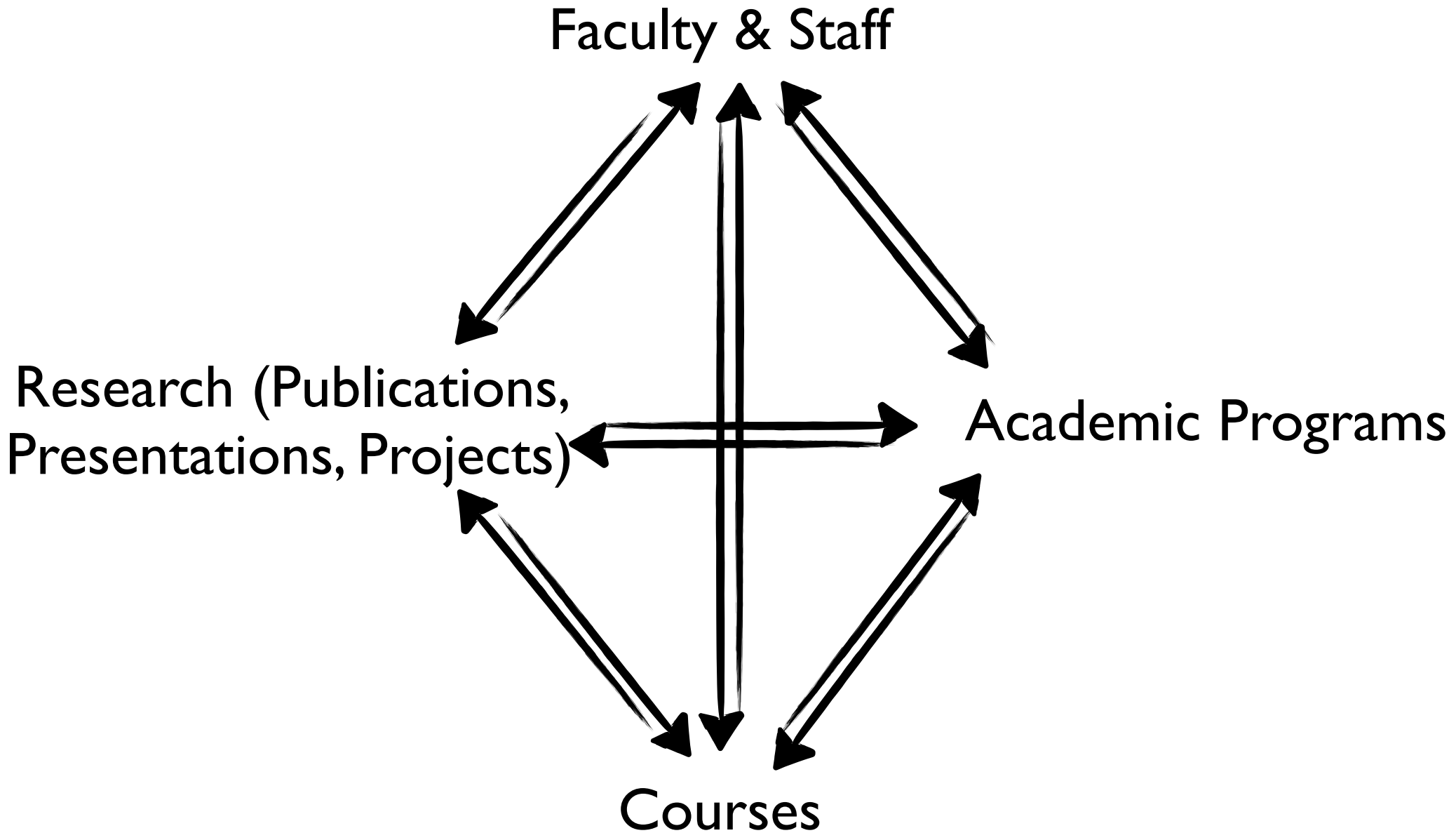
Faculty & Staff
Research (Publications, Presentations, Projects)
Academic Programs
Courses



WP Custom Post Types
Custom Taxonomies

This is really where WordPress stretches out from being a blog to being a full-fledged CMS.

CMS = Dynamic Connections



CMS = Dynamic Connections

Plugin: Posts 2 Posts

Creates many-to-many connections
between any posts or pages.

<http://scribu.net/wordpress/posts-to-posts/>

CAUTION

No longer being maintained.

Have experienced developer on call for big WP updates.

CMS = Dynamic Connections

Plugin: Posts 2 Posts

Creates many-to-many connections
between any posts or pages.

Automations are **tricky**. Just because you **can** automate
doesn't mean you **should**.

Curation, Not Automation

Plugin: Zone Manager (*aka Zoninator*)

<http://wordpress.org/plugins/zoninator/>

For sites that aren't *set-and-forget*.
Custom curation made easy.

Donation Form



GravityForms

Another well-built plugin, with a fairly intuitive form-building tool.

<http://www.gravityforms.com/>

Donation Form

COMPLICATED

GravityForms doesn't work with our payment processor.

No plugin extensions out on the market.

Hired *another* developer to build a plugin extension for us.

Choosing Plugins

- Plugin developer's track record
- Updated recently? (or rationale)
- A little **money** goes a long way — don't be afraid to spend for a good plugin.

WHAT

Priorities for Our Set-Up

1. Security

2. Uptime

3. Multiple Admins

Multiple Admins

Collaboration



EditFlow

<http://editflow.org/>

Documentation



WP Help

<http://wordpress.org/plugins/wp-help/>

Uptime



CloudFlare

<http://www.cloudflare.com/>

Provides a CDN, email obfuscation, profound caching.
Even if your site is **down**, they'll put up a cached version.

Uptime



WP Engine

<http://wpengine.com/>

Great caching, great uptime, great support.

Security



CloudFlare

<http://www.cloudflare.com/>

Protects against spammers, DDOS, SQL injection.
(Allow CNAME sign-up.)

Security



WP Engine

<http://wpengine.com/>

Anti-hacking guarantee.
Regular automatic backups (i.e., **data security**).
Costs more, but worth it.

(Data) Security



VaultPress

<http://vaultpress.com/>

“Realtime, continuous **backup & synchronization** of every post, comment, media file, revision and dashboard setting.”

(Data) Security



GitHub

<http://github.com/>

Version control is essential, especially when working with multiple developers.

Priorities for Our Set-Up

1. Security

2. Uptime

3. Multiple Admins

Priorities for Our Set-Up

1. Security

2. Uptime

3. Speed (SEO)

4. Multiple Admins

Speed



WordPress



WP Engine



CloudFlare



MORAL

Morals from Erikson's Story

1. **Work with good people.** Find a developer you can work with.
2. **Free is never free.** A little money goes a long way.
3. **Curation, not automation.** Think about your content.