SEO Cheat Sheet

Goal
Search engine optimization (SEO) makes your webpage the most appealing to search engines, thereby improving your search engine rankings. SEO is a free way to garner more relevant traffic to your website.

Keywords
Keywords are the words or phrases that people might search for to find your site. For example, you might target the keyword phrase “english doctoral program nyc” so people are more likely to find the GC’s Ph.D. program in English page.

Determine the keywords (or keyword phrases) you want to target by:
- Think like your page visitors – what are they searching for?
- Manually cull keywords based on your webpage – how would you describe the information on your page?
- Check out your competitors’ sites
- Look at possible keywords’ popularity (using a tool like Google Trends or Ubersuggest) – you do not want a keyword that is too popular or it gets diluted, but you also do not want a keyword that is not popular at all; look for a keyword that ranks high in search volume but is not too competitive

Target a few keywords/phrases per page. The keywords you decide upon should be:
- Extremely relevant to your page
- Frequently searched for but not overused by competitors
- Powerful enough to draw people in
- Be relevant to your page

On Page SEO
Incorporate the keyword into your content without “stuffing” it into your content. Google will recognize if you are just trying to mention your keyword as many times as possible – instead try to seamlessly integrate it into your content. Your content needs to be relevant or Google will quickly learn that it is unrelated and lower your ranking accordingly making it harder for search engine users to find your page. Content must address the intent of keyword searchers.

A few ways to incorporate keywords:
- Include in your page Title and URL
In Kentico, when you create a page, you give it a “Page name” which is the Title, and the title is automatically part of the URL (with the exception of news/event/policies & procedure items, due to the use of “Detail” pages).

- Include in your image file names and “alt” tags

  - In Kentico, when you add an image (or edit an image already on the page), you can include an “Alternate text”
With a distinguished faculty of scholars and writers, a dynamic cohort of graduate students, and an abundance of cultural resources in New York City, the Ph.D. Program in English provides students with a stimulating environment in which their intellectual interests can thrive.

**A Wide-Ranging Curriculum**

We offer over 50 seminars a year in both established and emerging fields—everything from medieval literature to digital humanities. Particular strengths of our wide-ranging curriculum include feminist, gender, and sexuality studies; critical theory; poetics and aesthetics; critical race studies; popular culture; life writing; and Composition and Rhetoric.

Our large faculty features prominent scholars, creative writers, biographers, cultural critics, digital humanists, and memoirists. We encourage our students to follow individualized and interdisciplinary courses of study. Many students take courses in other doctoral programs at the Graduate Center or complete one of the Graduate Center’s Certificate Programs. Through the Interuniversity Doctoral Consortium, students can register for courses at such institutions as Columbia University, Princeton University, New York University, and Rutgers University.

Other info to note:

- **Include in your headers/subheads - <h1> <h2> <h3> tags**
  - In Kentico, you can select Heading 1, Heading 2, or Heading 3 when you are editing your text. Highlight the text you want to be a heading and select it from the “Styles” or “Format” dropdown.

- **The meta “Description” tag is often used as the snippet in search results pages (160 characters)**
  - “Description” can be viewed and altered in Kentico via the Properties > Metadata tab. It is listed as “Page description” and by default inherits the GC description. If you’d like to alter the Description, unclick Inherit and type in a new Description.
- The meta “Keywords” should be relevant, but they no longer have the impact they used to in regards to SEO
  o “Keywords” can be viewed and altered in Kentico via the Properties > Metadata tab. It is listed as “Page keywords (separated by comma)” and by default inherits the GC keywords. If you’d like to alter the Keywords, unclick Inherit and type in a relevant Keywords.

- Text links should be descriptive, e.g. don’t use “Click here” but instead “Read about The Graduate Center’s Psychology Faculty”
- Content “size” matters – ensure you have a decent amount of copy on your page (at least 300 words is recommended) and it is all relevant to the topic at hand
- Content quality matters – check for spelling and grammar, make your content unique and keep it current with regular updates
- Add links between pages within your site

**Additional Off Page SEO**
- Encourage other sites to link to your site using descriptive words/keywords as the anchor link text
- Links from “trusted sites,” eg .edu sites, government sites, newspapers, weigh more than from typical sites