Building & Hosting a Simple Academic Website
Using Hugo, GitHub Pages and UM personal space

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Contents

- How to **create a website** using Hugo and the Academic theme;
- Two ways to **host your website**:
  - GitHub Pages;
  - UMich personal space.

Disclaimer

- You won't learn anything that will make you a better statistician and researcher;
- It is still relevant professionally.

Why have a personal academic website

- **Professional goals**
  - Host a public resume
  - List your publications, research interests, experience, etc.
  - Allows people to find you and contact you
  - Have an easy way to point to you
- **Exposure for your work & research**
  - Build workshops, courses and tutorials for everyone to access
  - Present your research in alternative ways (other than articles, talks, posters, etc.)
- **Host content for courses**
  - e.g. Canvas may have some limitations that a website might not have
  - Make your teaching content public

Why have a personal academic website (cont'ed)

Have a website **before** you need one:

- ▶ It is a tidy place to keep track of your publications, talks, accomplishments, etc.
- ▶ You don't want to spend time building a website when you're looking for internships/jobs/grants/contributors/etc.

It is also a **humbling experience**:

- ▶ The first time you set up your own website, you will most likely have very few things to put on it;
- ▶ Additional pressure and incentive to building your image and career.

Other uses for simple website

- Research group page
- Student organization
- Documenting a software or package you developed
- Online book
- Artist portfolio
- Blogging

A quick primer on (static) websites

- ▶ Static `html` pages;
- ▶ Multiples pages arranged into a tree; leaves are the visible pages;
- ▶ No one should write `html` themselves:
  - ▶ use tools and other languages to generate it;
- ▶ `index.html` has a special status within a folder
  - ▶ `site/subdir/` automatically loads `site/subdir/index.html`

About Hugo

- Framework for developing websites;
- `Markdown` and `toml` > `Go engine` > `html`;
- Multiples themes for different kind of websites.

Markdown file front matters

The top part of any `.md` file contains a **front matter** defining:

- ▶ a high-level description of the page,
- ▶ the type of page to specify to the Hugo compiler,
- ▶ some details about indexing and referencing across pages.

Example:

```
---
# Front matter
title: "MyFirstPost"
subtitle: ""
summary: ""
authors: []
tags: []
categories: []
date: 2019-10-04T18:18:52-04:00
lastmod: 2019-10-04T18:18:52-04:00
featured: false
draft: false
---
<!-- Body of the file -->
The content of the post goes here
...
```

The Academic theme for Hugo

The Academic theme which is one of the **more complete theme** and is particularly **well-suited for an academic website** (as the name suggests!) Here are some of the things Academic allows:

- ▶ Blog posts
- ▶ Documentation
- ▶ Publications
- ▶ Talks
- ▶ Projects
- ▶ Multiple authors
- ▶ General pages
- ▶ Home page with widgets structure

More Hugo themes

- ▶ Resume-type themes
  - ▶ Resume theme is another slick theme I found.
- ▶ Documentation-type themes (many equivalent options)
- ▶ Portofolio-type themes (many equivalent options)
- ▶ Blog-type themes (many equivalent options)

Alternatives to Hugo

- ▶ HTML from scratch
  - ▶ Highly not recommended
- ▶ Jekyll
  - ▶ Very similar to Hugo (all content is `Markdown`, similar `shell` commands)
  - ▶ Slightly more complicated, but has slightly more features
  - ▶ I have not found a theme that matches the capabilities of Academic for Hugo (see e.g. Jekyll Academic and its demo site)
  - ▶ GitHub Pages built-in themes (using Jekyll) can be up in a few clicks

Alternatives to Hugo (cont'ed)

- ▶ WYSIWYG editor
  - ▶ WordPress
  - ▶ Google Sites
  - ▶ WiX
  - ▶ and many others
- ▶ More advanced alternatives
  - ▶ Grav
  - ▶ Drupal

Alternative hosting

- ▶ Netlify (linked with a GitHub repository, auto-deployment)
- ▶ WordPress and WiX offers free hosting options
- ▶ Any other web host ($, e.g. AWS)

Main takeaways

- Creating your own website is **easy** and you should definitely do it soon.
- People have made it easy for you to display your work; **make use of all the tools available**!
- **Creating the content** for your website, **not building and deploying it**, should consist most of the work you have to do.
- Hugo & the Academic theme are simple and powerful, but other ways are also interesting!

To the workshop