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Carnegie Mellon University
4000 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

March 26, 2014

Frank Pfenning
Jordan Harrison
Jennifer Landefeld
Computer Science Department
Carnegie Mellon University
4000 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Dear Frank, Jordan, and Jennifer:

The last time we met on February 24th, we shared the information we gathered about the Computer Science Department websites at other schools. You should have a copy of this information in our report, Behind Enemy Lines: A Benchmarking Report of Competitor Websites. Based on that information, we designed and conducted User Tests on the current CSD website. The goal of our tests was to uncover the intuitive groupings and labels your users expect to find when navigating your website. We are excited to share our findings from this study.

Enclosed with this letter is our report explaining the tests we implemented and the findings of those tests. Please review this report for a better understanding of the shortcomings and successes of your current website in terms of intuitive navigation. In addition, the report as covers some design considerations that we inquired about during testing. These considerations include first impressions of the CSD homepage and data on devices used to access a website. This information will guide some future design decisions about the look of the new website.

We will be using our findings, as well as our previous two reports, as the foundation for the initial wireframes we design. We willing then return to our users for additional testing on our wireframe solutions. We appreciate any feedback or input you can give us on our findings thus far. Thank you and it's a pleasure to work with you this semester.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Corry, Mu-Hwa Kuo, and Therese Joseph

Enclosure: How People Think: Investigating the Users of the CSD Website

HOW PEOPLE THINK

Investigating the Users of the CSD Website

Lindsay Corry
Therese Joseph
Mu-Hwa Kuo

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We gathered twelve user testers in order to evaluate the intuitive groupings and labelling of information expected by users of a website like CSD's. The people we gathered vary in their familiarity with computer science and they come from both inside and outside the CMU community. They represented some of the different user groups of the CSD website defined in our report, *Who Is This For? A User Centered Analysis of the Website of the Computer Science Department at CMU*.

Six user testers completed a card sorting test, where each card was labeled with page titles from the CSD website. Six user testers completed a multiple choice label test and a first impressions test. The labels test presented the participant with a question a user might ask while trying to complete a common task, and the participant had to click the label where they believed they could find more information to answer the question. The first impressions test recorded the user's responses to several questions while viewing the CSD homepage for the first time.

With successful labels, users were able to identify the content within this area or made groupings similar to these content areas. Successful labels included Research, Faculty List, Administrative Staff, and Bachelors. Most users were confused by the labels CSD on the Road and Who's Who. History was labeled most often as some variation of "About Us." Users expect Master's and Ph.D. to be grouped together under the heading, "Graduate." When looking for Dissertations, people want to look under Publications.

Trends in intuitive groupings included: About Us, Prospective Students/Apply, Current Students, Undergraduate, Graduate, Research, Jobs, and People. Participants from outside the CMU community identified and separated prospective students from current students. Participants from inside the CMU community think in terms of degree levels, separating undergraduate and graduate as two groups. When available, most of our testers expected to find financial aid information under the Prospective Students/ Apply grouping. They also expect to find career information easily. Research was only important to half of our user testers. We suspect that the participants' current displacement from an higher level academic setting could possibly explain that half that did not emphasize Research within their groupings.

Participants felt that the website was lacking visually, using words like "very plain," "bland," "boring," and "lacks color" to describe how they felt about the website. Based on first impression, the arrangement of the navigational links caused people to feel that the website would be easy to navigate. However, the other portions of our testing indicated that this assumption is not true. For devices used to access a website, users mostly use a laptop, a computer, or a smartphone.

INTRODUCTION

User testing during a website redesign is crucial. We know that the architecture of the Computer Science Department's website does not work and that the current design is confusing, but before user testing, we wouldn't know exactly why. Before this phase we can only rely on educated guesses based on our own experiences with effective and ineffective websites. This report looks into how people are currently interacting with the CSD website and what problems they are encountering by quantifying what is and is not working through a series of tests. Through these tests, we also get a feel for the kind of content people expect out of an academic department's website, which provides a framework as we move forward to the next phase of this project.

We gathered twelve people with varying degrees with familiarity with computer science. These people come from both inside and outside the CMU community and they represent some of the different user groups of the CSD website. After a multiple choice labels test, a card sorting test, and a first impressions test, we determined which existing labels are unintuitive and confusing and discovered the ways the structure and design fail to match up to the expectations of the website users.

Our multiple choice label test tested the pure language of the headers and links in the site's navigation. Our card sorting test tested the content groupings and the current site map that, with all the data compiled, found patterns and trends in the ways people expect to find content. Finally, our first impressions test gathered data about how people perceive the website, what they expect to find on a site, and their initial judgements on the aesthetics of the homepage.

METHODOLOGY

Who Did We Test?

8 (out of 12)
were from inside CMU

4 (out of 12)
were from outside CMU

Our twelve participants come from both inside and outside the CMU community. The participants who come from inside the CMU community are current students, faculty, and staff. The participants who come from outside CMU are made up of prospective students and a parent of a prospective student.

We chose to have a mix of insiders and outsiders to better represent the user groups that make up the visitors of the CSD website. The user groups represented are:

Insiders

Current Undergraduates: 2
Current Masters: 2
Current Ph.D: 1
Current Staff: 1
Current Faculty: 1
Alumni: 1

Outsiders

Prospective Undergraduates: 2
Prospective Masters: 1
Parent of Prospectives: 1

Being an insider has a few different implications: They are familiar with the content management system (CMS) of CMU websites and they bring with them an academic frame of mind, which means they have very specific expectations about what they want to find and where they expect to find it.

Being an outsider, on the other hand, means that they are not versed in the language of computer science or academia. They have no expectations of anything specifically CMU; they just know, through their own logic and experiences, that certain content tend to be in certain places—and that as prospective students, they have to find it.

METHODOLOGY

How Did We Test Them?

Pre and Post-Test Questions

We had brief interviews before and after the tests took place with each participant. The Pre-Test Questions helped us gain an understanding of their role in the CMU community and their adeptness with technology. The Post-Test Question was meant to gauge their familiarity in the field of computer science, determining their prior experience with the terminology and the standards of the field.

These questions, in relation with the data from the card sort and the label test, gave us context for the findings of that particular participant. For instance, a prospective undergraduate will be less concerned about research and faculty information than current students or prospective Ph.D. students.

The Pre-Test Questions are:

1. Are you currently a member of the CMU community? [If yes, continue to question 2, 3, and 4.] [If no, continue to question 5.]
2. What is your department and role(s) within that department (student, faculty, TA, staff, etc)?
3. What are the CMU websites that you visit?
4. How many times per day/week do you visit each of these websites? [proceed to question 6.]
5. Have you ever visited a college website before? If yes, how recently have you visited that kind of website?
6. What devices do you use to access a website? Cell phone (basic), tablet, smart phone, laptop, e-reader, computer. [Circle one.]

The Post-Test Question is:

1. Are you experienced in any way with the field of computer science? If yes, please explain how.

Card Sorting

Card sorting was a way for us to discover trends in the ways people expect to find content. By stripping away the existing groupings on the CSD website, we can give our participants the pure content to do with what they will. We let the participants sort the cards into categories they created and nest items under each of the categories.

METHODOLOGY

The participants would create categories and groupings with the existing CSD website content based on their expectations and their varying familiarity with computer science. We then compared these to the existing groupings on the CSD website. How closely the participants align their groupings with the current organizational architecture of the site indicates how well the CSD website is anticipating the expectations of its users.

We used only the content currently found on the website, and we kept as close to the original wording as possible. We put one piece of content on each flash card (i.e. “Curriculum,” “Undergraduate Research,” “job listings,” etc.) and shuffled them so that the order of the content for the participant is random.

The card sort had four parts:

1. For the first sort, we had the participants use only the content cards provided to create groupings based on what they perceive as like items. We allowed them to label their groupings with a category name of their choosing.
2. For the second sort, we had participants duplicate cards as needed. For example, if they thought there should be multiple content cards about “research,” then they are allowed to duplicate that card and put it with the appropriate grouping.
3. For the third sort, we let participants create new content.
4. For the fourth sort, we allowed the participants to delete content. If they thought that some cards were odd, misplaced, or does not belong in any of the groupings, they were allowed to take those cards away.

There were 44 cards in total:

Vision	course schedule	Information about Carnegie Mellon University
Missions	Who’s Graduating?	Student Handbook
Distinguishing Characteristics	Doctoral Review Committee	curriculum
History	Some Advice on Giving A Talk	Introduction
news	Fellowships and Scholarships	Curriculum
Teaching Track Opportunities	job listings	Financial Aid
Mark Stehlik Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship	Professor Manuel Blum’s Advice to a Beginning Graduate Student	Dissertations
calendar	Overview of BS in Computer Science	Specialization Programs

METHODOLOGY

Online Application	Internal Transfer and Dual Degree Guidelines	Admission
Information on CSD Graduate Programs	Advanced Placement (AP) Policy	faculty research guide
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog	Would you like to visit the Computer Science Department?	areas of research
Online Application	Information about Pittsburgh	undergraduate research
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU-Portugal in Computer Science	Pittsburgh Accommodations	publications
who's who	administrative staff	CSD On the Road
faculty list	grad student directory	

Label Test

The Label Test tested the pure language of the CSD website headings. We used a total of 17 labels, all of which are found on the CSD homepage. These are all exactly the choices that the website users are confronted with when they visit the CSD website.

This test purposefully strips away the context so that the participants are tested without any knowledge of these labels being on a computer science department's website. The participants are asked 25 questions and given 17 choices to choose from. Only 11 of the choices have the right answers.

These are the questions in the label test:

[History]
What is the vision of the program?
What year was the school founded?
How many girls are in the program?

[Ph.D. in CS]
Where can I find fellowship information?
Who is the student representative leader?
Where can I find job listings?

METHODOLOGY

[Bachelors]
What can I minor in?
Can I have an additional major in Computer Science?

[Masters]
Where can I find information about an accelerated graduate program?
Where can I find the TA evaluation form?
Where can I find information about visiting Pittsburgh

[Doctoral Catalog]
Where can I find a list of recent dissertations?
Where can I find more on the curriculum for postgraduate study?

[Faculty Research Guide]
Where can I find all the professors who are interested in web servers?
Where projects are Scott Fahlman working on right now?

[Areas of Research]
Where can I find a description of work within robotics?
I'm interested in security and privacy! Where can I find more information?

[Undergraduate Research]
Where can I find information about applying to the Senior Research Thesis Program?
Who can I contact for help finding an advisor for my Senior Research Thesis Program?

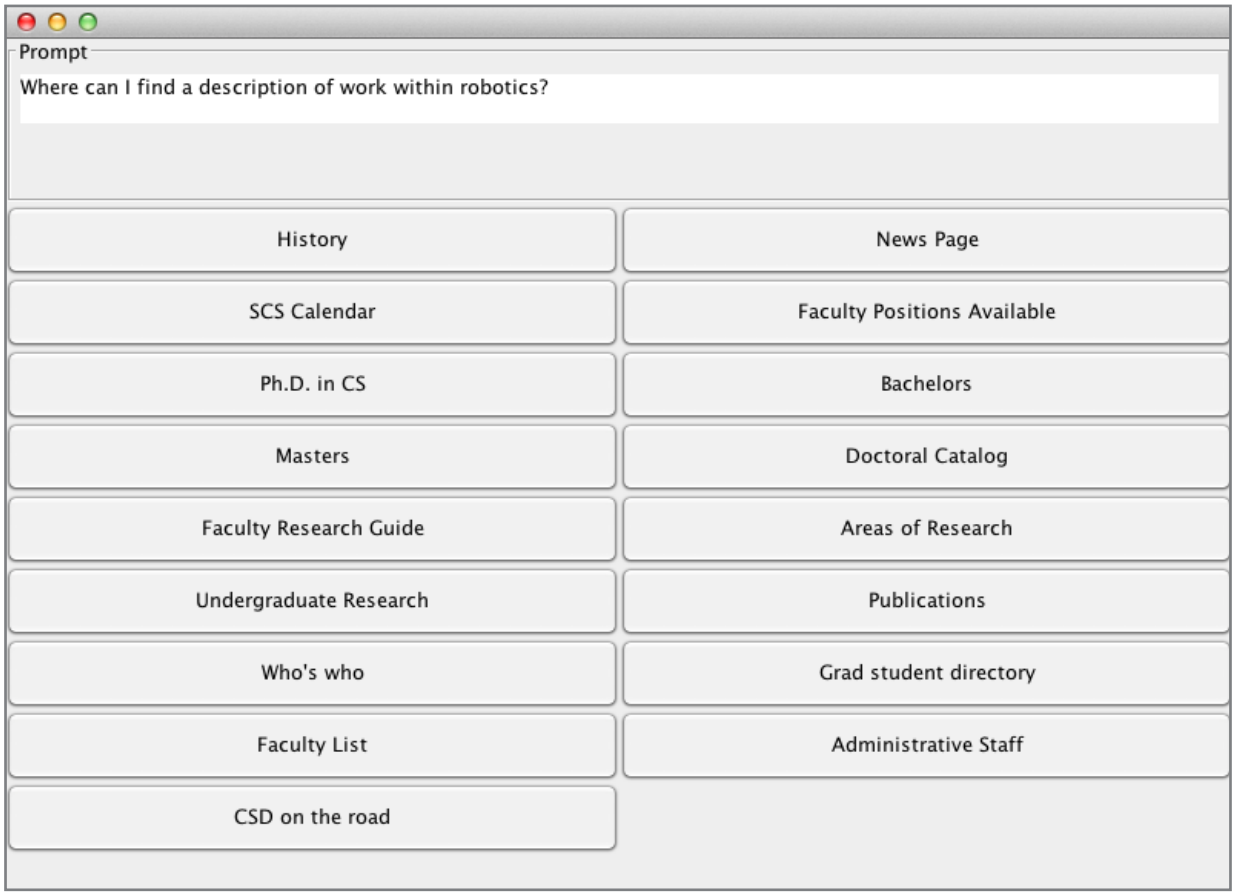
[Who's who]
How can I get ahold of the Main Desk Reception?
Who is the head of the CSD Department and how can I get ahold of them?

[Faculty List]
How can I find out more information on my new teachers this semester?
What is the phone number of my project manager?

[Administrative Staff]
Who can I email with a question about my application?
What office do I go to when I turn my timesheet in?

METHODOLOGY

Here is an example of the label test interface:



First Impressions

For the test, we pulled up the CSD website homepage in front of the participants and asked them these four questions:

1. Where does your eye go first?
2. What are your first impressions of the website?
3. What do you think this website might help you do?
4. Is there anything else you haven't said yet that you'd like to mention about the website?

METHODOLOGY

The first impressions test is meant to gauge the user's initial judgements of the CSD website. Aesthetics and design are only a small part of what we want to understand from this test; what we really wanted to find was how the site user perceives the homepage (the representation of the CSD on the internet), and what they think the website can help them do. How confidently or positively the users answer these questions helps us understand two things: how easily the design helps the user access information, and how pleasurable the user experience for the website visitor is currently.

How Did We Calculate Results?

For label testing results, we used three formulas. These formulas used a four-point scale where 1, 2, and 3 represent the number of tries and 4 represents that they did not get the response. The first formula averaged the number of tries across the 6 users for 1 questions. The second formula averaged the number of tries across the 6 users for multiple questions for the same response. The final formula calculated the standard deviation of the responses given. Results were also manually reviewed for trends in use of language.

For card sorting, we analyzed and grouped like occurrences across the card sorts amounting to 50% agreement or more. Anything less than 50% agreement was not considered a trend. Cards were manually reviewed for trends in use of language.

For first impressions, we accumulated the comments into one description. When there was a disagreement of impression over a particular feature, we opted chose the impression that had the larger share of user agreement.

LIMITATIONS

This study attempted to include several of the user types of the CSD website. However, because of the limited number of participants, each user type is usually only represented by 1 person. To form a better understanding of the preferences of each specific user type, this study would need to be conducted with a larger participant pool.

In addition, the participants tested from inside and outside the CMU community were chosen via a convenience selection. To achieve a more representative sample of users, a random selection would need to be utilized.

It was discovered after the fact that Card Sort P.4 was given 42 cards instead of the full 44 cards. The cards that were missing included “Grad Student Directory” and “Publications.” This omission did not seem to skew the results of the card sort as the user added the card “Student Directory” in Sort 3, replacing the missing “Grad Student Directory.”

KEY FINDINGS

Intuitive Labelling

1 "Ph.D in C.S." is better than "Doctoral Catalog"

We found in our label test results that more participants prefer the wording of "Ph.D in C.S." to "Doctoral Catalog." When they were asked questions about post graduate study, most participants chose to go with "Ph.D in C.S." over "Doctoral Catalog." We concluded that more people find the term Ph.D to be more familiar than Doctoral.

2 "Masters" and "Ph.D" should be grouped together

At least on the top levels. In card sorting, participants consistently create two categories: Undergraduate and Graduate. Under the latter category, they group all the content related to Master and Ph.D level programs.

3 People look for dissertations under "Publications"

On the CSD website, information about dissertations are found under "Doctoral Catalog." However, our participants consistently look for it under "Publications" in label testing. The vague wording of "Publications" lends itself to confusion among the participants, especially since it is a choice available on the top layer of the website and not nested under the author type. As Participant 3 mused, "Perhaps they didn't get published..."

4 "CSD on the Road" & "Who's who" are confusing

Make that really, really confusing. Consistently in both label testing and card sorting, our participants were confused with the vague or over-broadness of the two labels. In label testing, two participants decided to use "CSD on the Road" as a throwaway for questions they don't understand. In card sorting, almost all of the participants wondered why "Who's who" existed in the first place.

KEY FINDINGS

5 "History" is a mixed bag

When participants had to pick where they would find what year the school was founded, all of them chose "History." When they were confronted with other questions, such as where they would find the department's vision and where they would find how many girls were in the program, they never picked "History" even though that is precisely where they would find them on the CSD website. "History" seems to be a misnomer that encompasses more than people had anticipated.

6 People like "Research," "Faculty List," "Administrative Staff," and "Bachelors."

During label testing, these were the ones that participants consistently chose the correct answers for. We concluded that these were the most self-explanatory; unlike other available labels, these ones are both the content heading and the content. (It also helps that the questions we asked about the Bachelors section had to do with finding majors and minors, which are two things specific to Bachelors degrees.)

KEY FINDINGS

Expected Architecture

1 The same categories appeared over and over again

When we asked our participants to create overarching categories for the groups of content they created, they tend to create the same ones over and over again. They're called different things—the "About Us" category is sometimes called "Overview" or "Basic Characteristics of College Websites"—but they contain the same types of content. This means that visitors to the CSD website, no matter which user group they're from, expect to see these (or something like these) groups on a college website:

	About Us	Prospective Student/ Apply	Current Students	Undergraduate	Graduate	Research	Jobs/ Career	People
P.1	About Us	Apply	Current Student Info	Undergrad	Graduates	Research	Jobs	X
P.2	Homepage AKA Useless	Interested Students	Current Student	X	X	X	X	Stalking Page (contact)
P.3	About Us	Prospective Students	Current Student	Undergrad	Graduate	Research	X	People
P.4	Overview	Info for Prospective Students	Info for Current Students	X	X	X	Employment Opportunities	People
P.5	About Carnegie Mellon	Applying to CMU	Links for Students	Undergraduate Programs	Graduate Programs	Research	Job Opportunities	About our Community
P.6	Basic Characteristics of College Website	X	X	Undergraduate	Graduate	X	X	X

KEY FINDINGS

2 Outsiders identify and separate "Prospective Students" from "Current Students"

Our card sort testers from outside the CMU community tend to separate content related to admissions, applications, and prospective students from content related to current student activities, such as Internal Transfers. This means that people looking to apply do not know too much about the nuances among the degree levels; they're looking for prospective student information, and they don't have much use for current student information.

3 Insiders think on levels, tend to separate "Undergraduate" from "Graduate"

In card sorting, the current students are more versed in the differences between degree levels. After separating the prospective student information from the current student information, they tend to split current student information into two more groups, "Undergraduate" and "Graduate." It is worth noting that they also group "Masters" and "Ph.D" information under "Graduate."

4 People expect to find "Financial Aid" under "Prospective Students"

No matter what they call the "Prospective Students" group, our participants always expected to find financial aid information within it. The CSD website currently buries the financial aid information within the degree program pages, but our card sorting data suggests that people expect to find it way higher in the hierarchy.

KEY FINDINGS

5 People also expect to find career information easily

Most of our participants created a category about finding employment opportunities or a new content area about jobs. It makes sense that people would be career oriented, especially if they are prospective students in computer science. This also suggests that the current organization of the site, where job listings are buried within the degree pages, is not working. It is also worth mentioning that, if career information remains buried, industry hiring managers will be hard pressed to find information they need.

6 "Research" is important to exactly half of users

50% of our participants did not create a category to put "Research" content; these participants are our prospective undergraduate students and our alumni. We suspect that this is because these testers are not officially part of the higher education social sphere. Research will not be on their minds unless it is showcased to them.

KEY FINDINGS

Unexpected Content

During the card sort, we asked our participants to take out cards that they did not think belonged to any of the categories. There were three stand-outs: “CSD on the Road,” “Distinguishing Characteristics,” and “Who’s Who.” These were the cause of much confusion among the participants, who consistently stated that these headers were overly broad or vague.

Other deleted cards tend to be redundant cards within categories—such as “Pittsburgh Accommodations” when “Information about Pittsburgh” is already present—or cards that had content the participants wouldn’t think to look for on a school’s department website.

Missing Content

We asked our participants to add their own, unique content to the categories they created in the card sort. Some added content like “Contact” or “Maps of Campus” but there were no real trends in this area.

Design Considerations

Based on first impression, participants felt that the site would be easy to navigate. P.2 stated, “I like that on the side everything is pretty nice and orderly. Easy to get to everything.” P.6 likewise stated about the navigational links, “I like the more general headings, like general inform, education, research, and people.” Participants also felt that the website was lacking visually, using words like “very plain,” “bland,” “boring,” and “lacks color” to describe how they felt about the website.

5 out of 6 participants say that their eye is first drawn to the center of the page where CSD currently tries to highlight research projects. P.5 was the only participant that did not respond the center research image. Instead, P.5 stated that the portrait of the faculty member caught her eye “because it was the only thing that isn’t a shade of blue or red. It stands out as a brighter color. There’s more interest.” In this case, the image used to represented the research project used blue and red colors that matched the blue and red used as accent colors on the homepage.

When asked if they had any additional comments on the website, P.5 stated that the featured news section looks “daunting.” As she explained, “On the right, the big paragraph. It would be hard to get through.” P.6 stated, “There seems like there is a

KEY FINDINGS

lot of negative space here, so I feel like they could do more. Have these headings and links spread out to the left and more information in the center."

Participants agreed that this site could help them find information about the Computer Science Department. 3 out of 6 of the participants stated that they could find information about programs. Two participants stated that you could find out information about research that is happening within the department.

For devices used to access a website, users mostly use a laptop, a computer, or a smartphone. With the knowledge that a user could access the CSD website from their smartphone, the new website should be flexible and responsive to be able to adjust to the smaller screen size.

CONCLUSIONS

1 Existing groups on the homepage are not enough

When we looked at the data from the card sorting and analyzed what the users expected to find on a website like CSD's, we realized that they are demanding more groupings than the ones that are available on the current homepage. Instead of the broad range "General," "Education," "Research," and "People," our user testing participants tend to favor more audience-specific labels like "Prospective Students" or "Current Students"—and they tend to favor more than just four.

2 Employment should be more easily accessed

Whether they labeled it "Employment," "Career," or "Jobs Opportunity," our users consistently expected to find an easy, close-to-top-level access to job listings. There should also be a way for industry hiring managers and other outsiders to look up students and their projects from the homepage for employment purposes.

3 Research should be highlighted

Exactly half of our participants don't know to look for Research. The other half did look for it expecting to find it, but it wasn't there. Even though the participants who were not part of the CMU community and have been out of higher education for a while did not expect to find a showcase of research on the page, there is still value in highlighting it.

4 Missing that WOW factor

From the underwhelming responses of our First Impressions test, we can safely conclude that the CSD website is missing the "wow factor" that the CSD has in spades. Moving forward towards the design phase of this project, our team will dedicate a lot of our energy into showcasing the spirit of the CSD, showing off all the great work they do and try to convey through the website why CMU's CSD is number 2 in the nation.

APPENDIX I: CARD SORT

The following 26 pages consist of the card sort results from our participants.

The first two pages consist of the original site map of the CSD website. We used this site map as a comparison against the user-created content architectures we gathered from our participants during this test.

The card sort had four parts:

1. For the first sort, we had the participants use only the content cards provided to create groupings based on what they perceive as like items. We allowed them to label their groupings with a category name of their choosing.
2. For the second sort, we had participants duplicate cards as needed. For example, if they thought there should be multiple content cards about "research," then they are allowed to duplicate that card and put it with the appropriate grouping.
3. For the third sort, we let participants create new content.
4. For the fourth sort, we allowed the participants to delete content. If they thought that some cards were odd, misplaced, or does not belong in any of the groupings, they were allowed to take those cards away.

For the user-created site maps:


The bolded rectangles indicate a category heading.

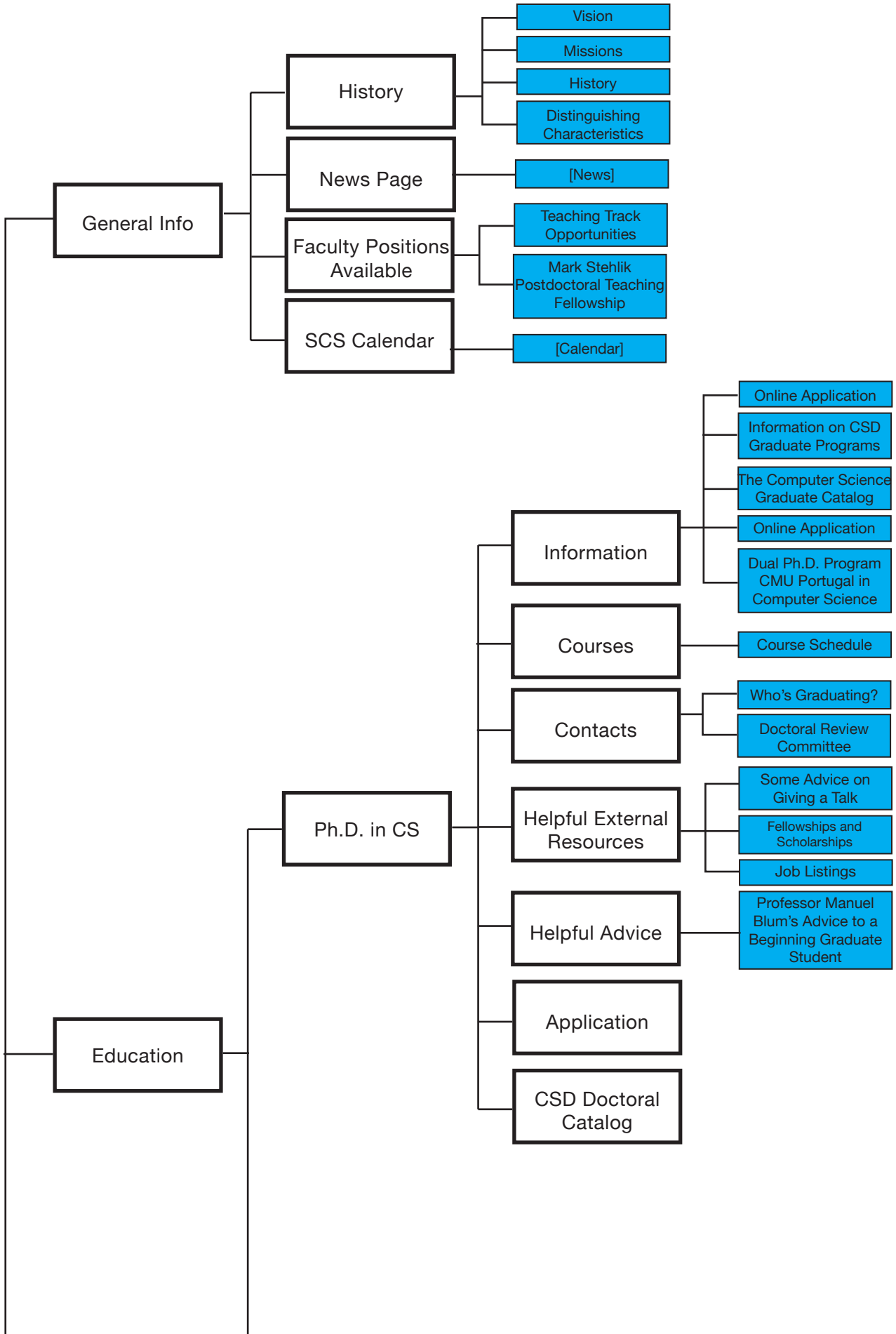

The green rectangles indicate a content card the participant duplicated.

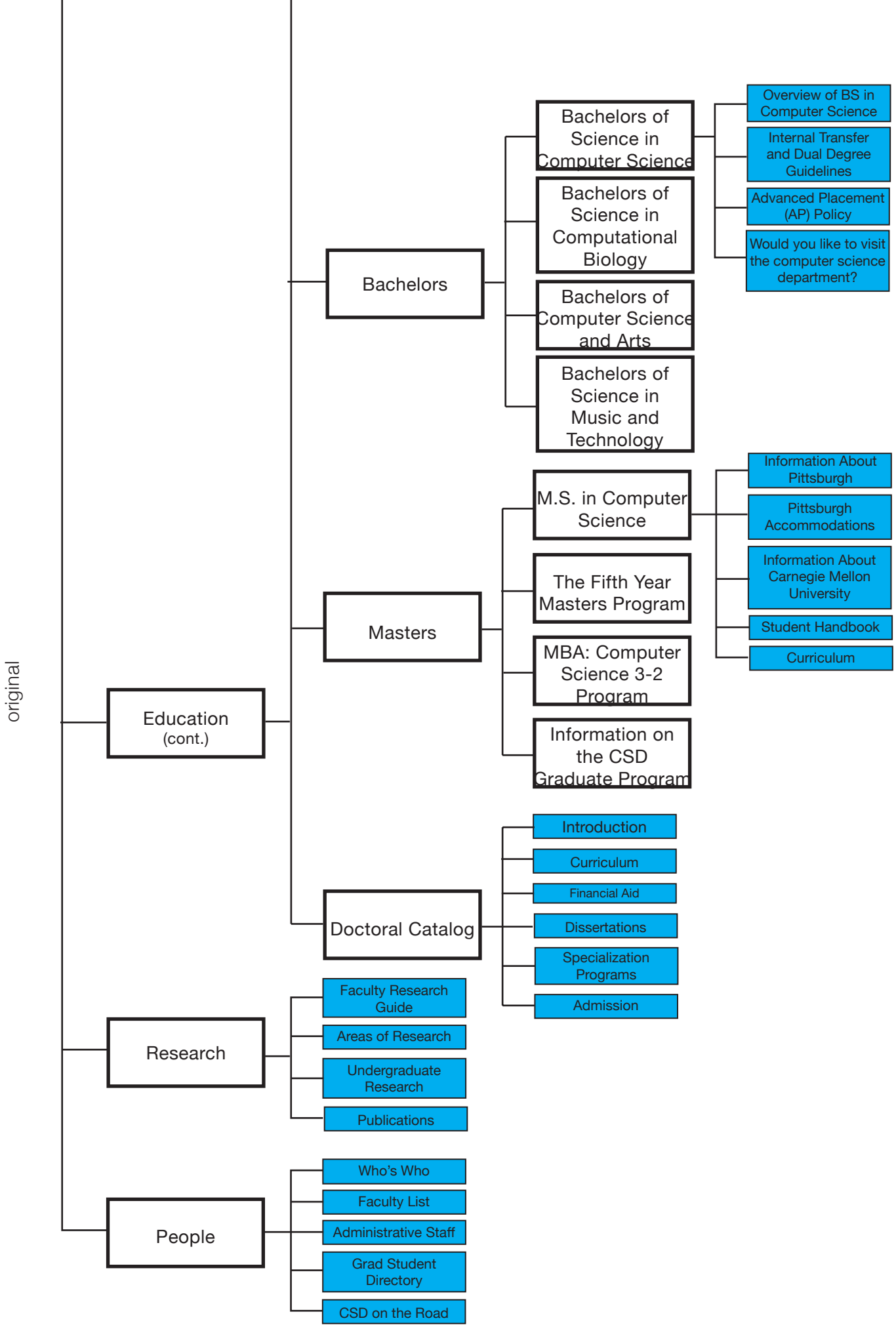

The yellow rectangles indicate a unique content card they created.


The red crosses indicate content they deleted.

CSD Architecture

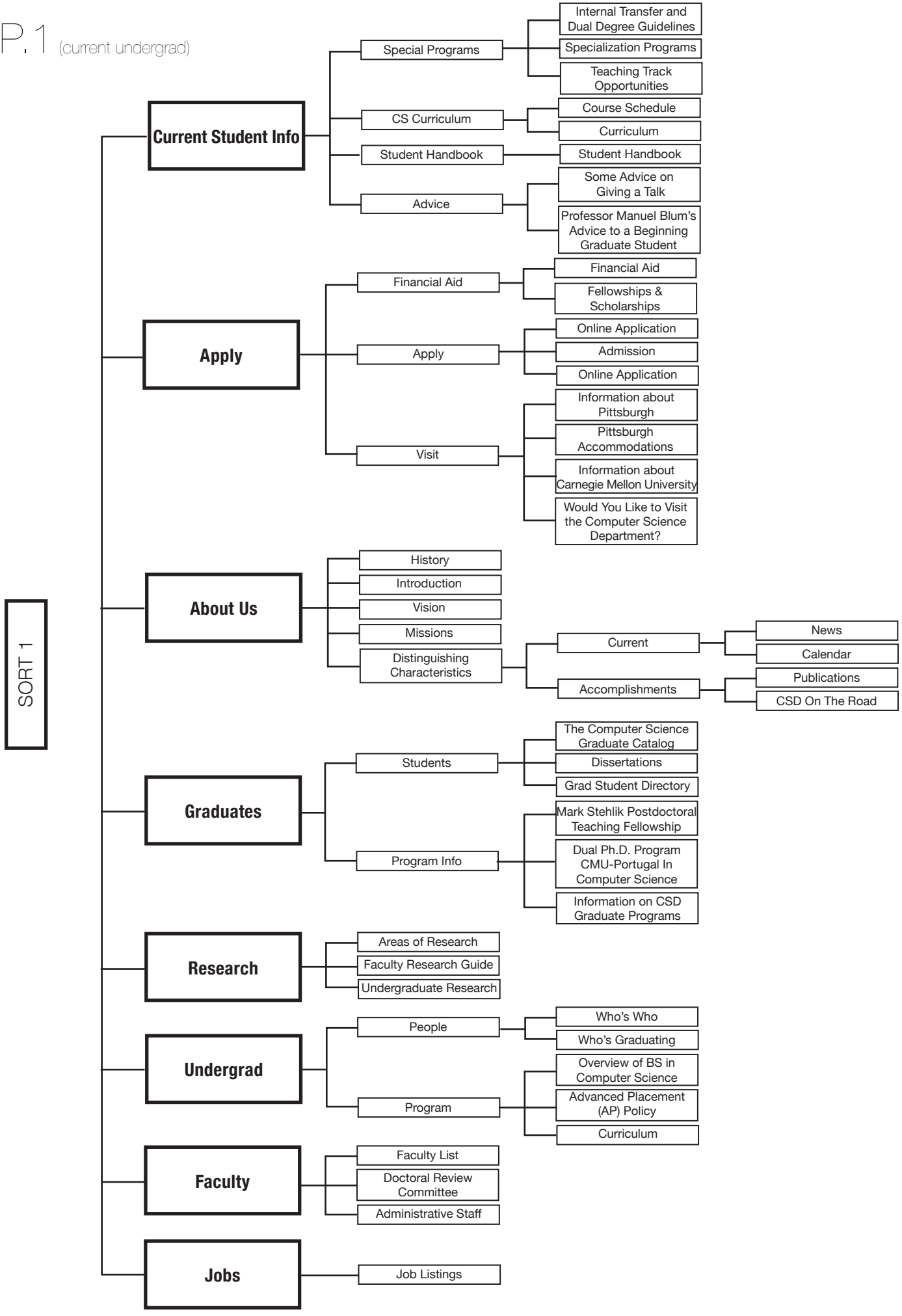
original




original
Education
(cont.)
Bachelors
Bachelors of Science in Computer Science
Overview of BS in Computer Science
Internal Transfer and Dual Degree Guidelines
Advanced Placement (AP) Policy
Would you like to visit the computer science department?
Bachelors of Science in Computational Biology
Bachelors of Computer Science and Arts
Bachelors of Science in Music and Technology
Masters
M.S. in Computer Science
Information About Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh Accommodations
Information About Carnegie Mellon University
Student Handbook
Curriculum
The Fifth Year Masters Program
MBA: Computer Science 3-2 Program
Information on the CSD Graduate Program
Doctoral Catalog
Introduction
Curriculum
Financial Aid
Dissertations
Specialization Programs
Admission
Research
Faculty Research Guide
Areas of Research
Undergraduate Research
Publications
People
Who's Who
Faculty List
Administrative Staff
Grad Student Directory
CSD on the Road

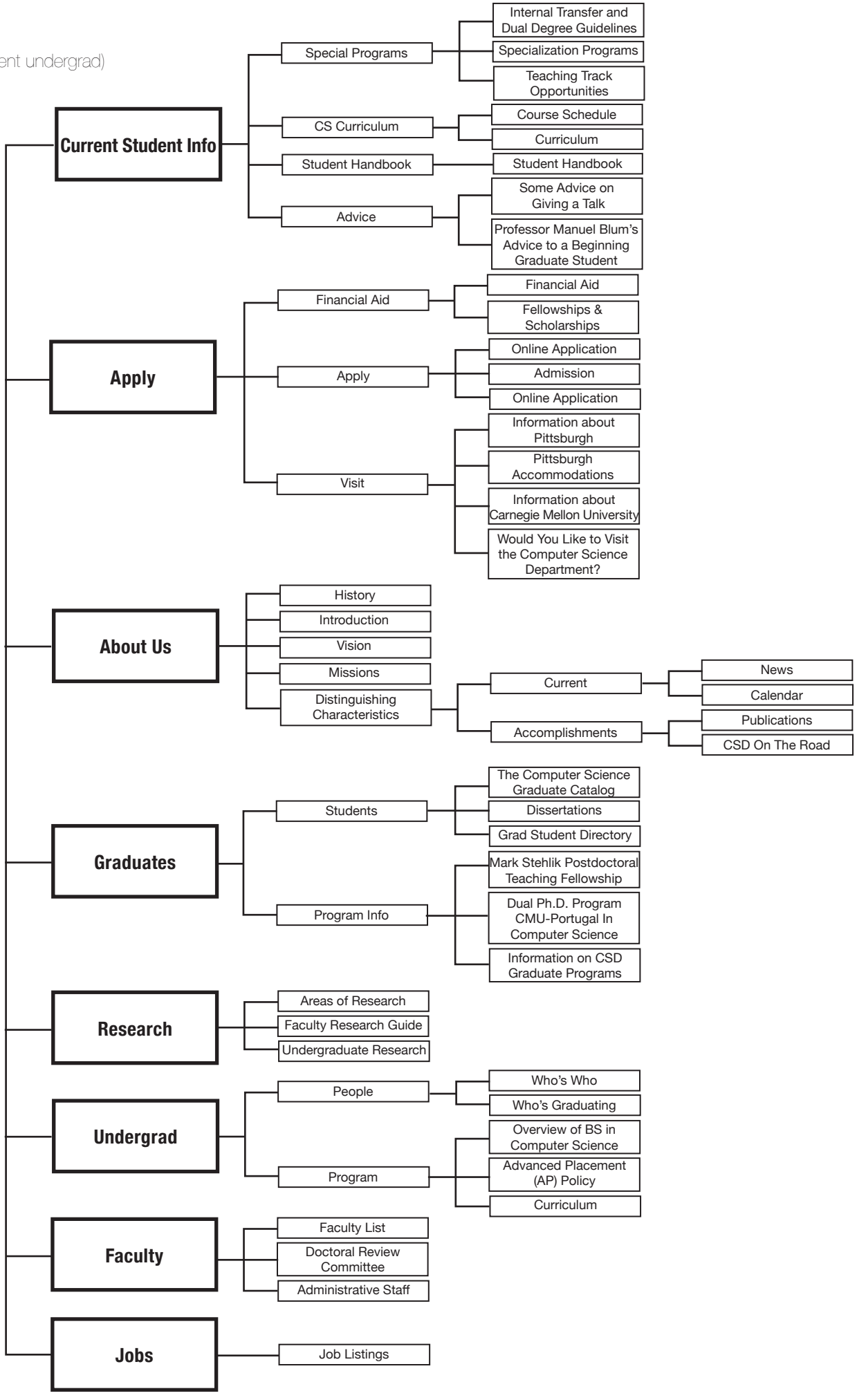
P.1 (current undergrad)

SORT 1



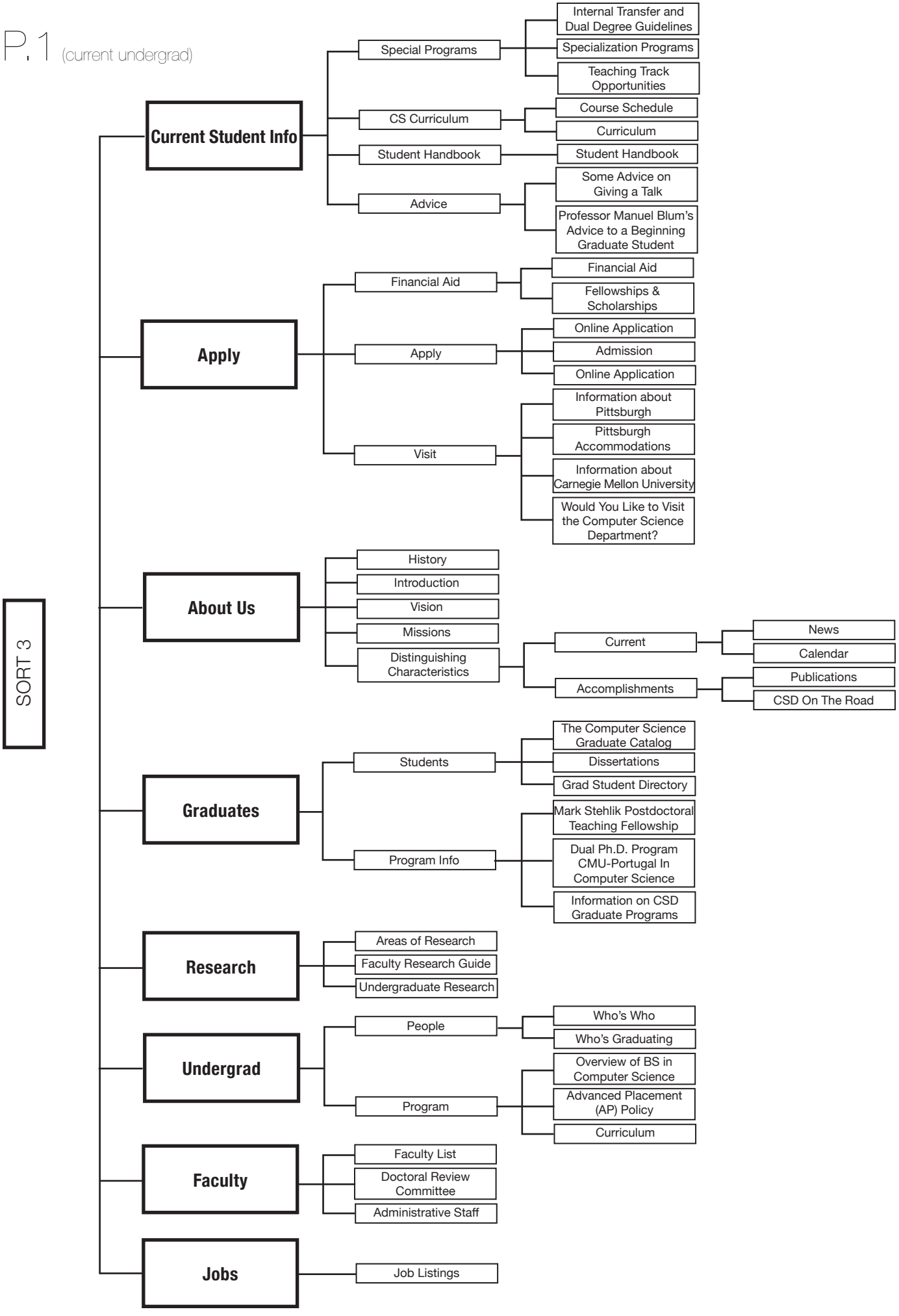
P.1 (current undergrad)

SORT 2

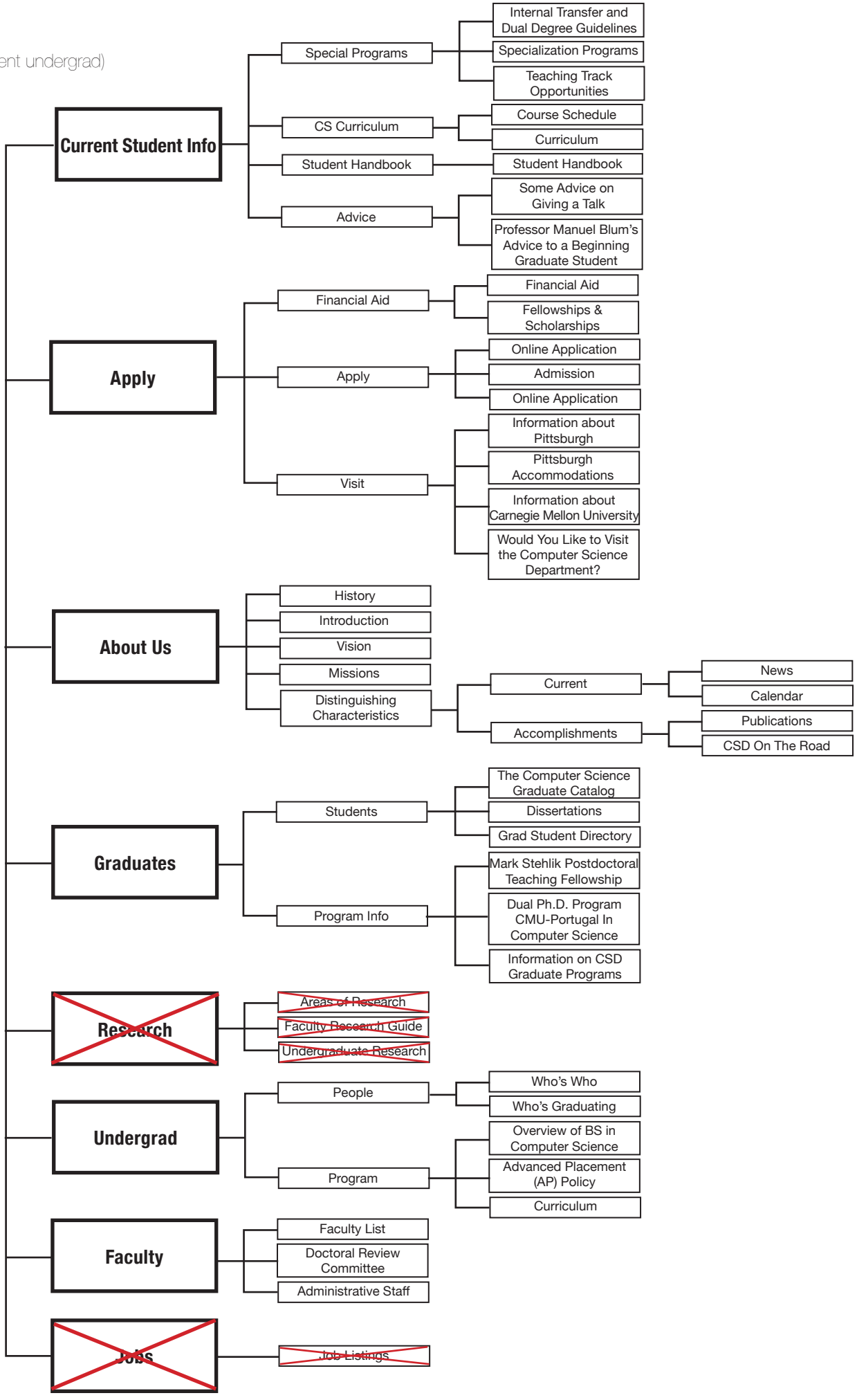


P.1 (current undergrad)

SORT 3



SORT 4


Current Student Info
Special Programs
Internal Transfer and Dual Degree Guidelines
Specialization Programs
Teaching Track Opportunities
CS Curriculum
Course Schedule
Curriculum
Student Handbook
Student Handbook
Advice
Some Advice on Giving a Talk
Professor Manuel Blum's Advice to a Beginning Graduate Student
Apply
Financial Aid
Financial Aid
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Online Application
Admission
Online Application
Visit
Information about Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh Accommodations
Information about Carnegie Mellon University
Would You Like to Visit the Computer Science Department?
About Us
History
Introduction
Vision
Missions
Distinguishing Characteristics
Current
News
Calendar
Accomplishments
Publications
CSD On The Road
Graduates
Students
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog
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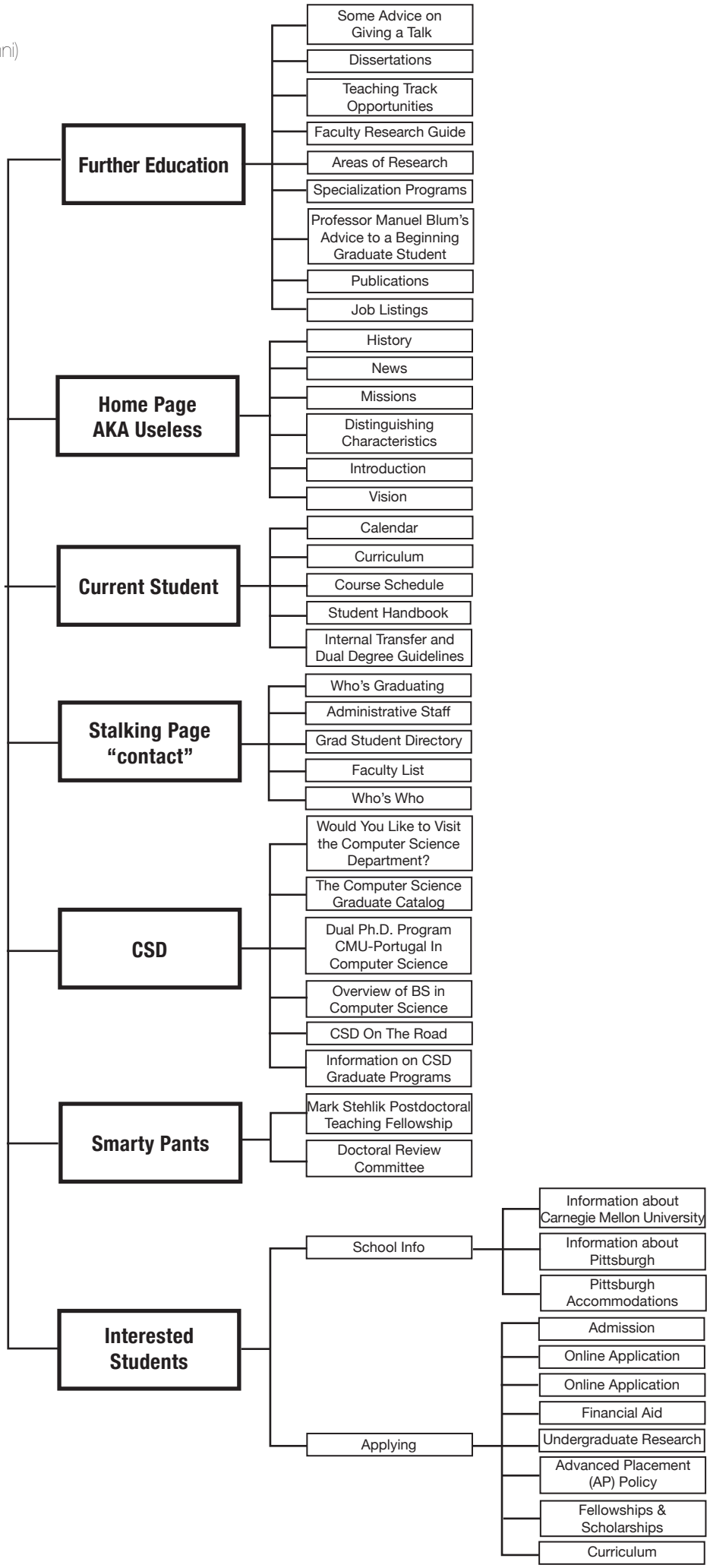
Mark Stehlik Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU-Portugal In Computer Science
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
Research
Areas of Research
Faculty Research Guide
Undergraduate Research
Undergrad
People
Who's Who
Who's Graduating
Program
Overview of BS in Computer Science
Advanced Placement (AP) Policy
Curriculum
Faculty
Faculty List
Doctoral Review Committee
Administrative Staff
Jobs
Job Listings

P.2 (alumni)

SORT 1



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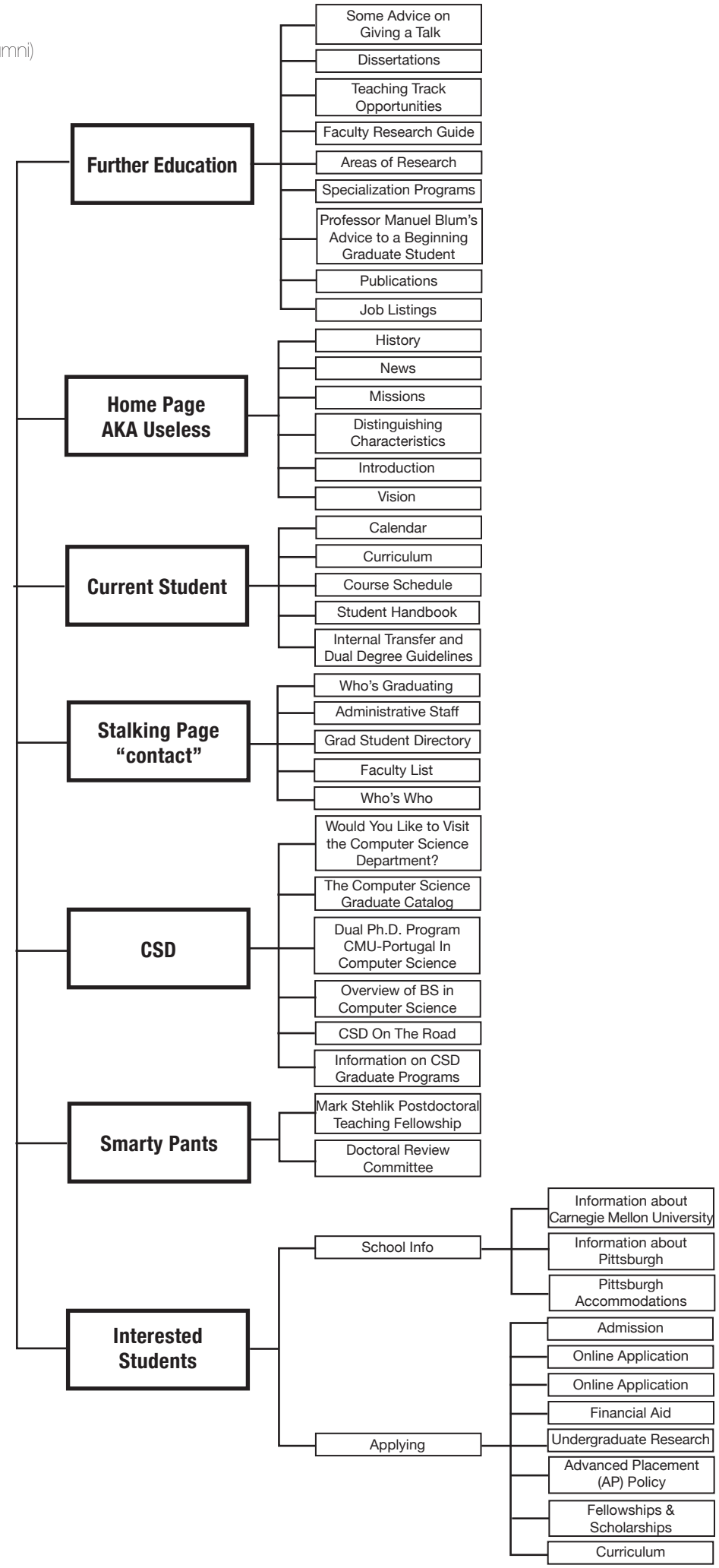

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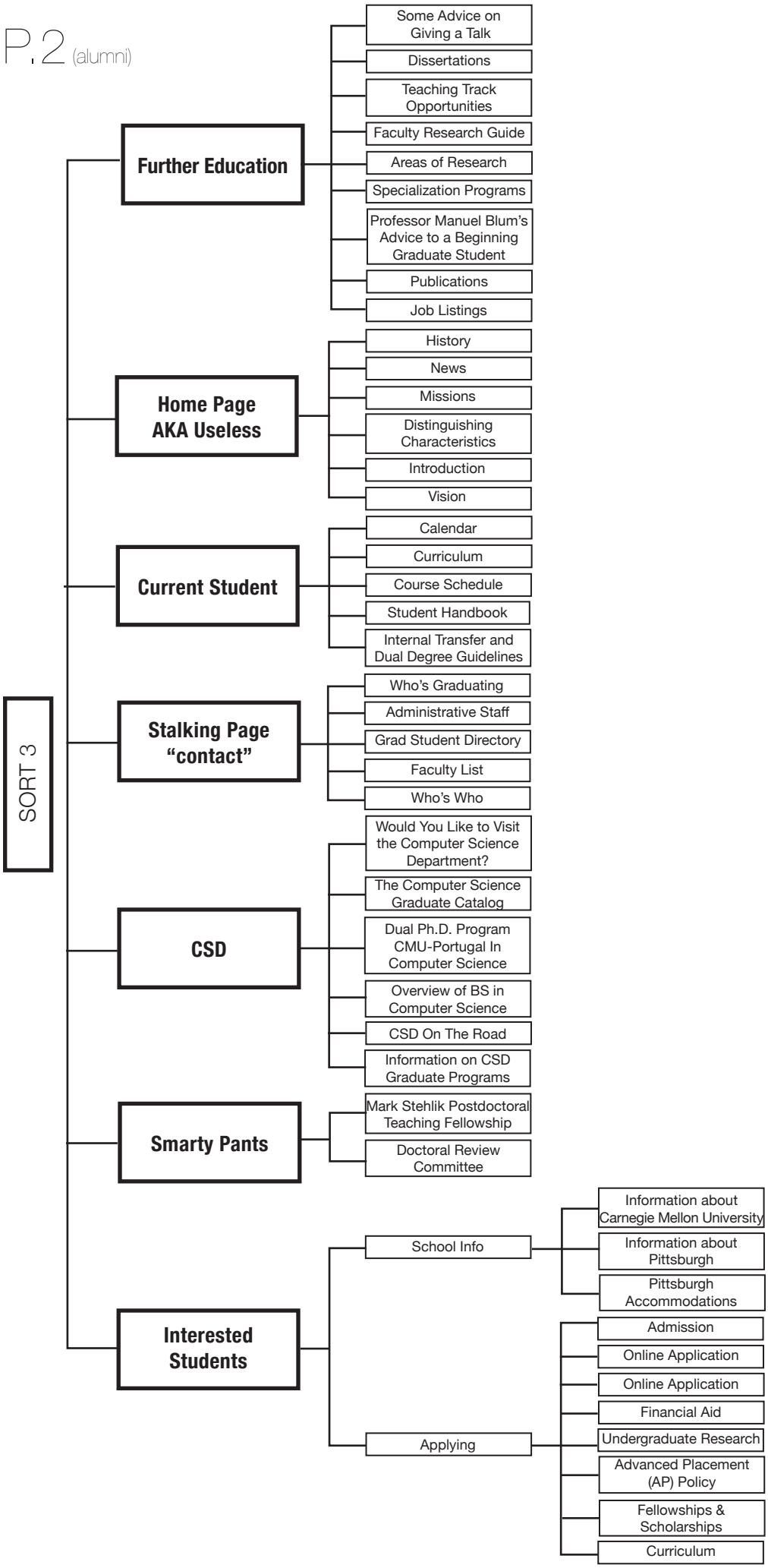
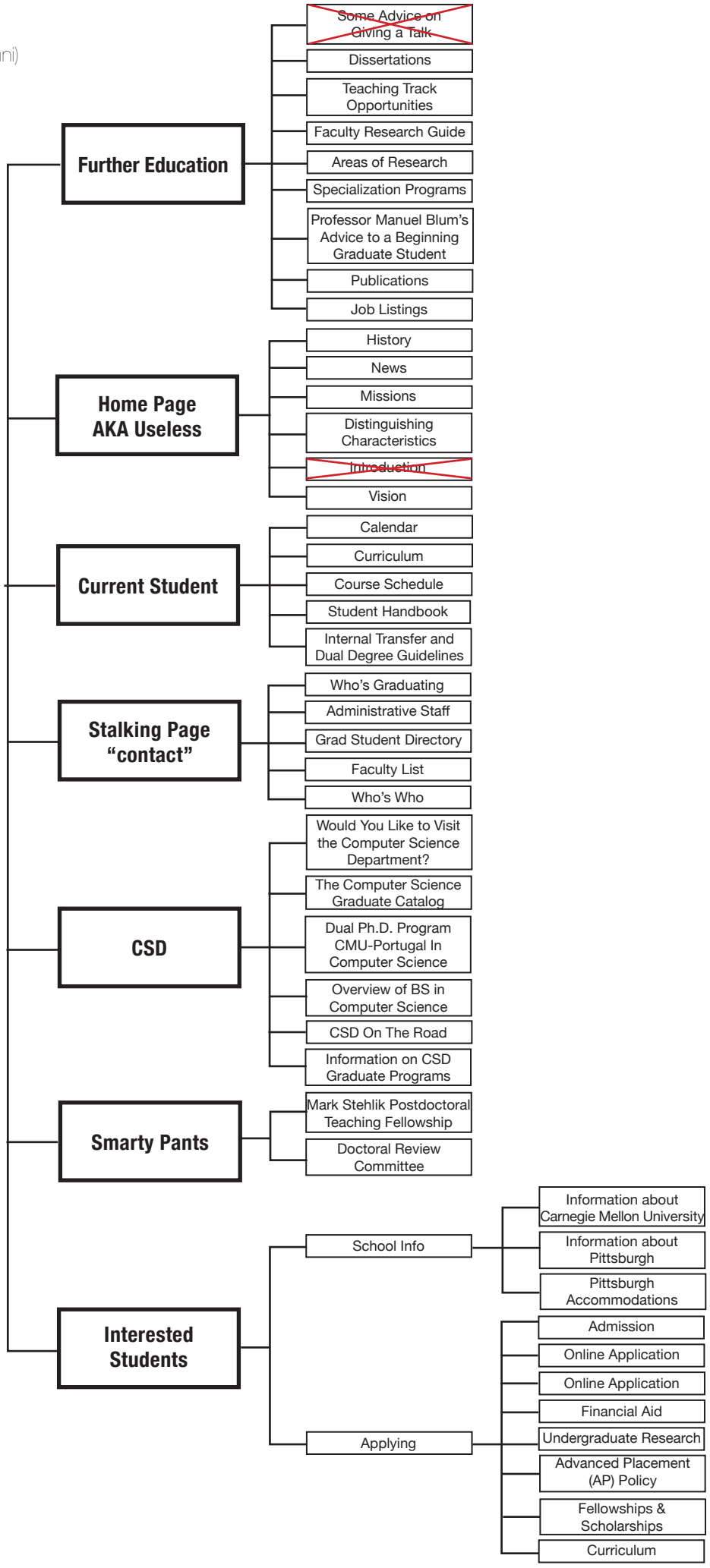
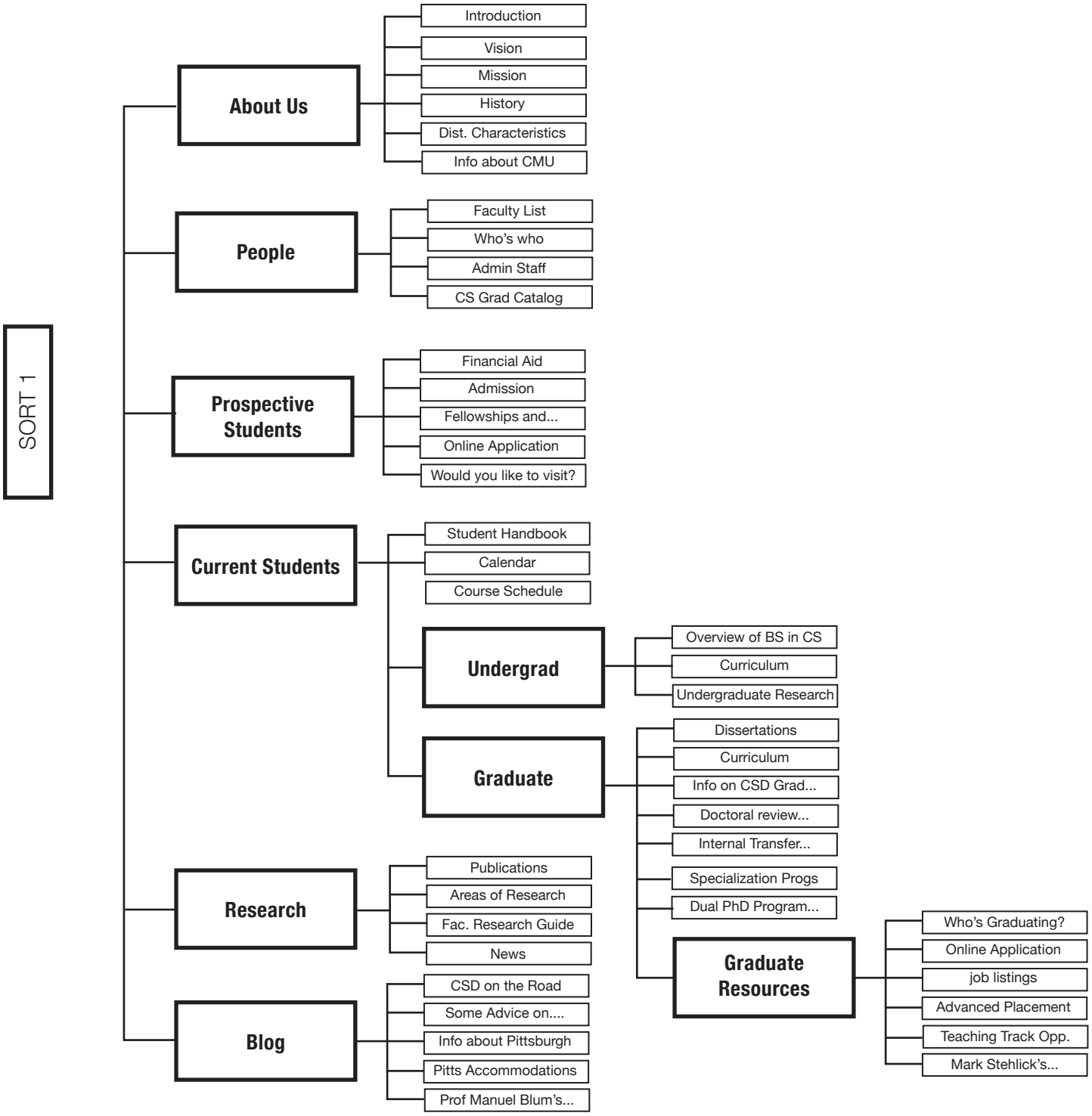

SORT 3
Further Education
Some Advice on Giving a Talk
Dissertations
Teaching Track Opportunities
Faculty Research Guide
Areas of Research
Specialization Programs
Professor Manuel Blum's Advice to a Beginning Graduate Student
Publications
Job Listings
Home Page AKA Useless
History
News
Missions
Distinguishing Characteristics
Introduction
Vision
Current Student
Calendar
Curriculum
Course Schedule
Student Handbook
Internal Transfer and Dual Degree Guidelines
Stalking Page "contact"
Who's Graduating
Administrative Staff
Grad Student Directory
Faculty List
Who's Who
CSD
Would You Like to Visit the Computer Science Department?
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU-Portugal In Computer Science
Overview of BS in Computer Science
CSD On The Road
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
Smarty Pants
Mark Stehlik Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship
Doctoral Review Committee
Interested Students
School Info
Information about Carnegie Mellon University
Information about Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh Accommodations
Applying
Admission
Online Application
Online Application
Financial Aid
Undergraduate Research
Advanced Placement (AP) Policy
Fellowships & Scholarships
Curriculum

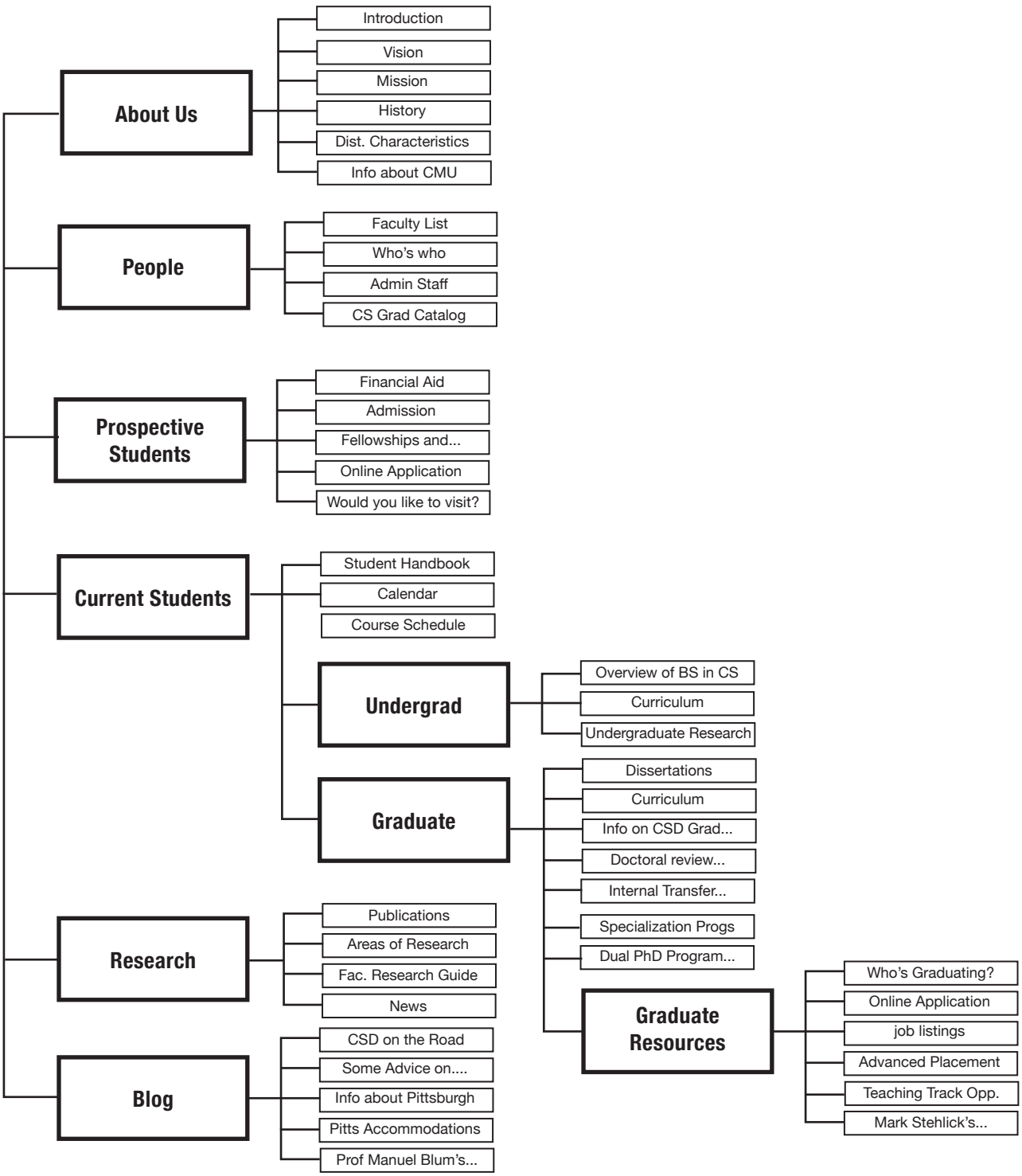
P.2 (alumni)

SORT 4



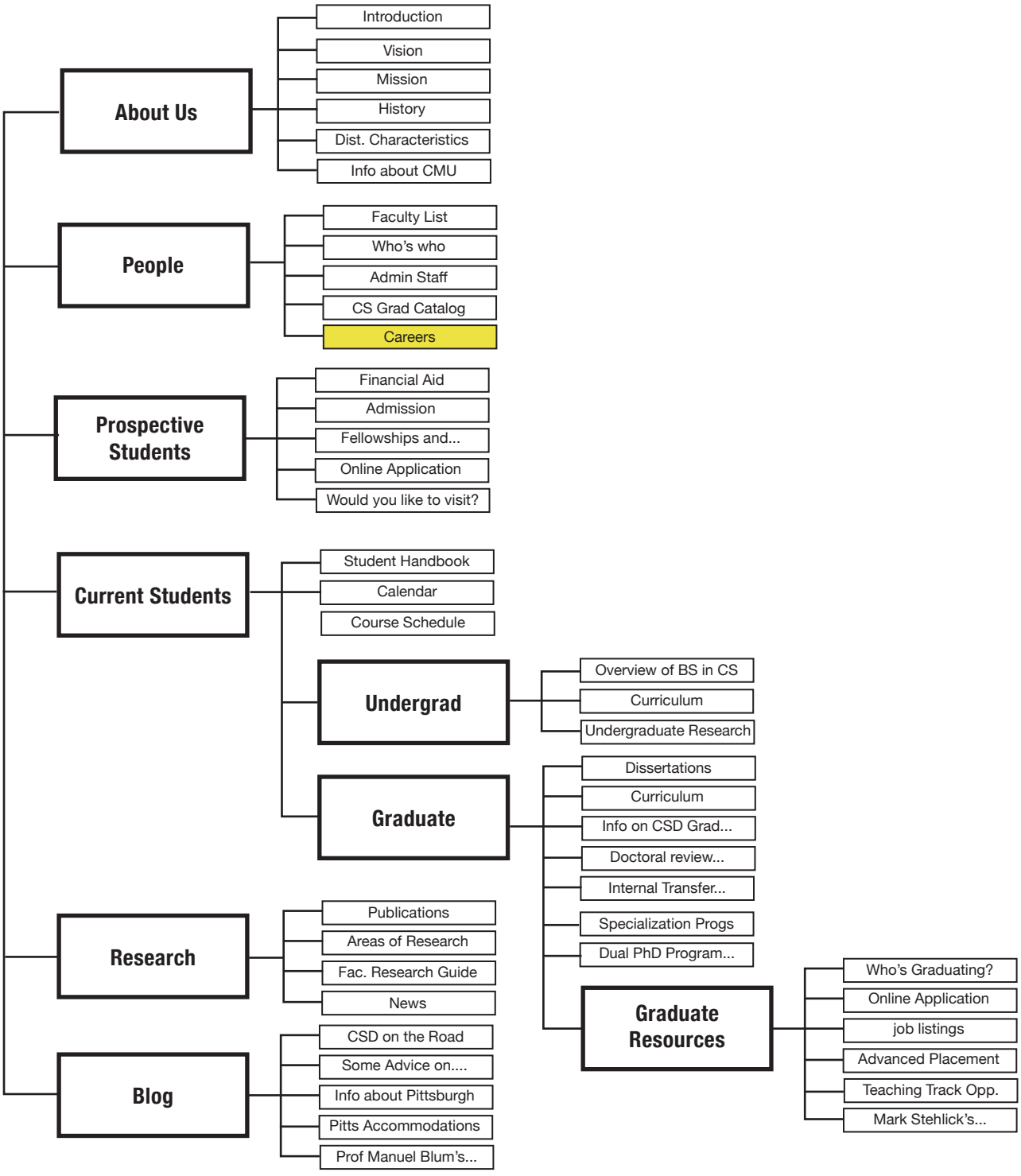

SORT 1
About Us
Introduction
Vision
Mission
History
Dist. Characteristics
Info about CMU
People
Faculty List
Who's who
Admin Staff
CS Grad Catalog
Prospective Students
Financial Aid
Admission
Fellowships and...
Online Application
Would you like to visit?
Current Students
Student Handbook
Calendar
Course Schedule
Undergrad
Overview of BS in CS
Curriculum
Undergraduate Research
Graduate
Dissertations
Curriculum
Info on CSD Grad...
Doctoral review...
Internal Transfer...
Specialization Progs
Dual PhD Program...
Graduate Resources
Who's Graduating?
Online Application
job listings
Advanced Placement
Teaching Track Opp.
Mark Stehlick's...
Research
Publications
Areas of Research
Fac. Research Guide
News
Blog
CSD on the Road
Some Advice on....
Info about Pittsburgh
Pitts Accommodations
Prof Manuel Blum's...

SORT 2


About Us
Introduction
Vision
Mission
History
Dist. Characteristics
Info about CMU
People
Faculty List
Who's who
Admin Staff
CS Grad Catalog
Prospective Students
Financial Aid
Admission
Fellowships and...
Online Application
Would you like to visit?
Current Students
Student Handbook
Calendar
Course Schedule
Undergrad
Overview of BS in CS
Curriculum
Undergraduate Research
Graduate
Dissertations
Curriculum
Info on CSD Grad...
Doctoral review...
Internal Transfer...
Specialization Progs
Dual PhD Program...
Graduate Resources
Who's Graduating?
Online Application
job listings
Advanced Placement
Teaching Track Opp.
Mark Stehlick's...
Research
Publications
Areas of Research
Fac. Research Guide
News
Blog
CSD on the Road
Some Advice on....
Info about Pittsburgh
Pitts Accommodations
Prof Manuel Blum's...

P.3 (current Ph.D student)

SORT 3



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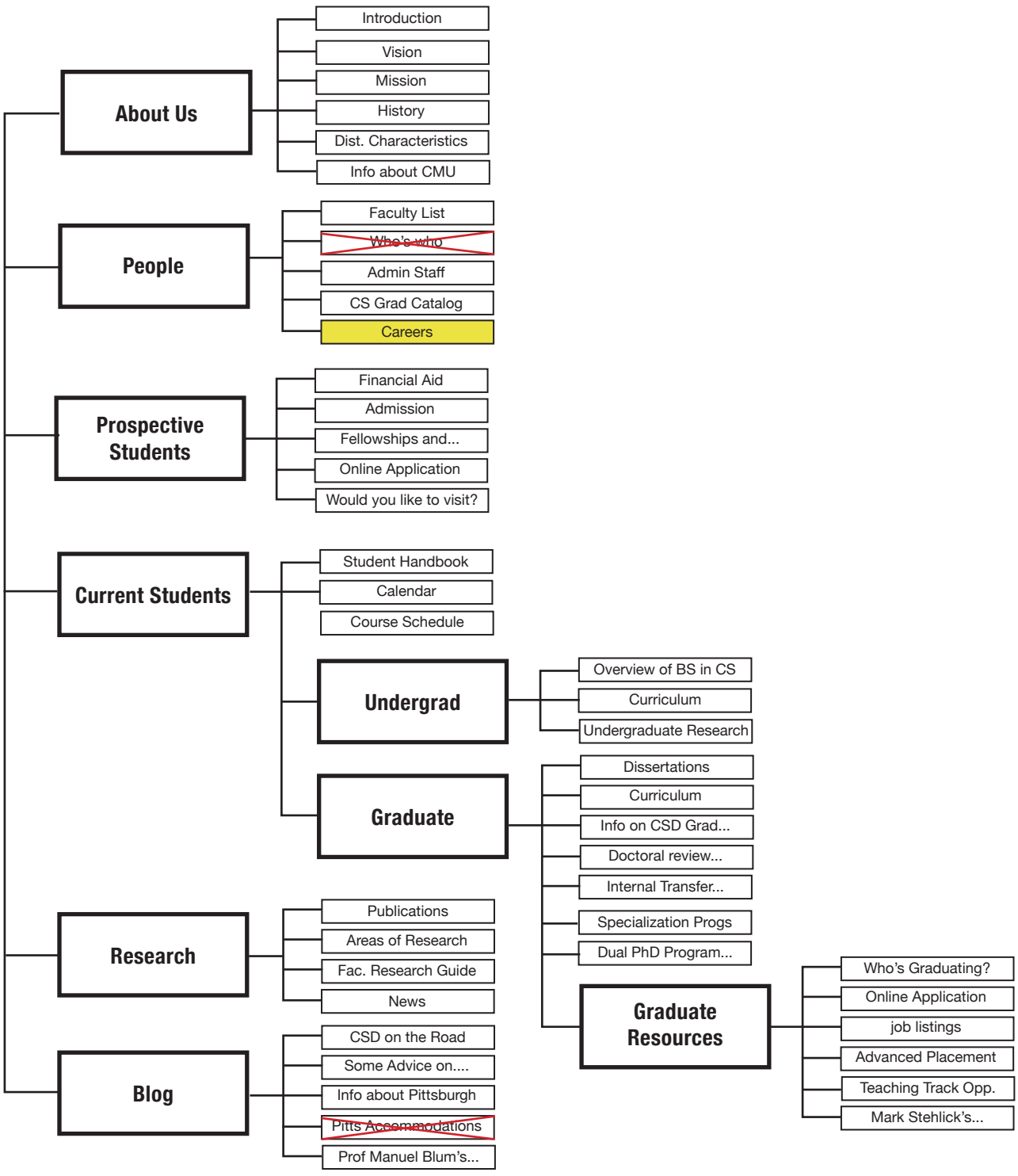
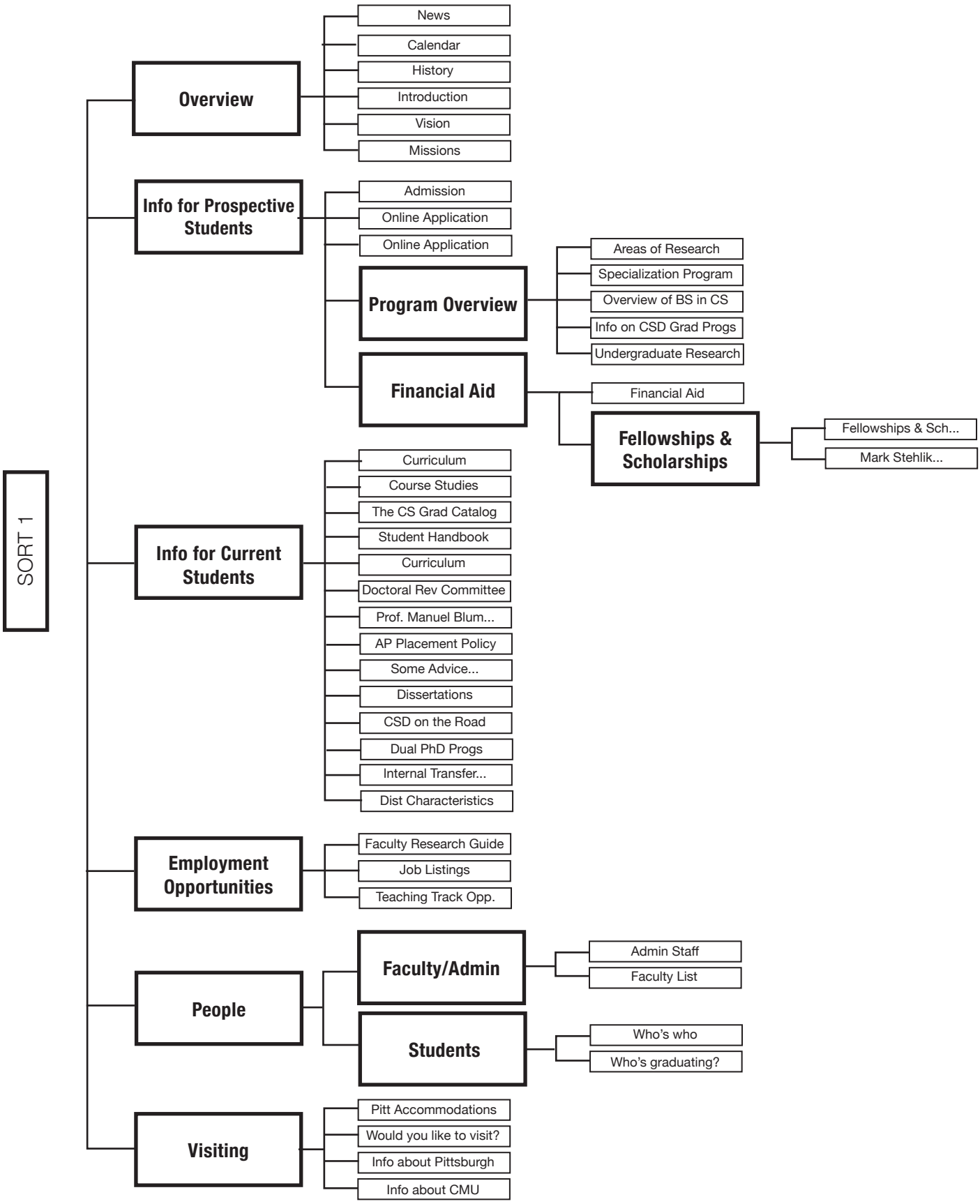
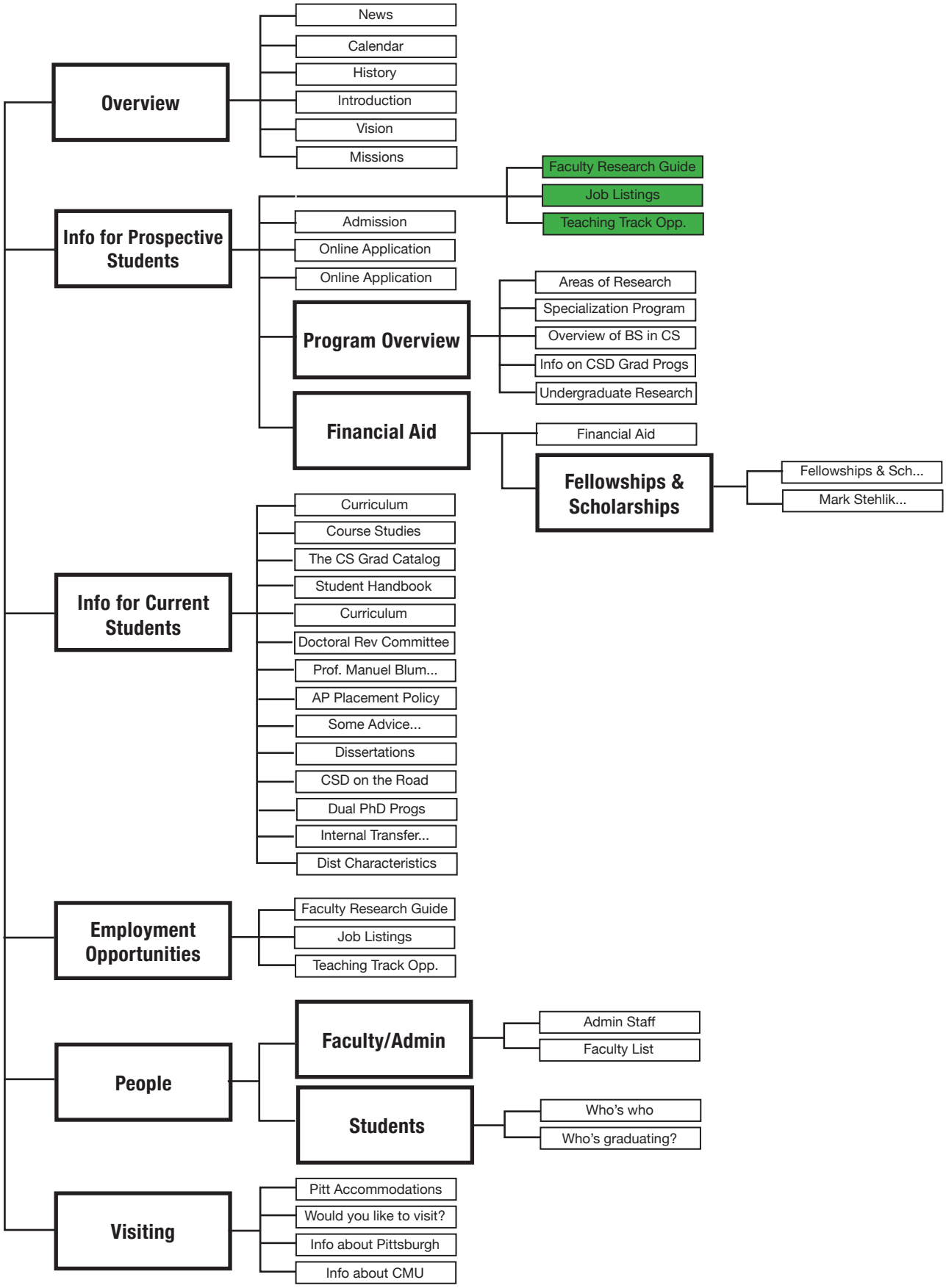
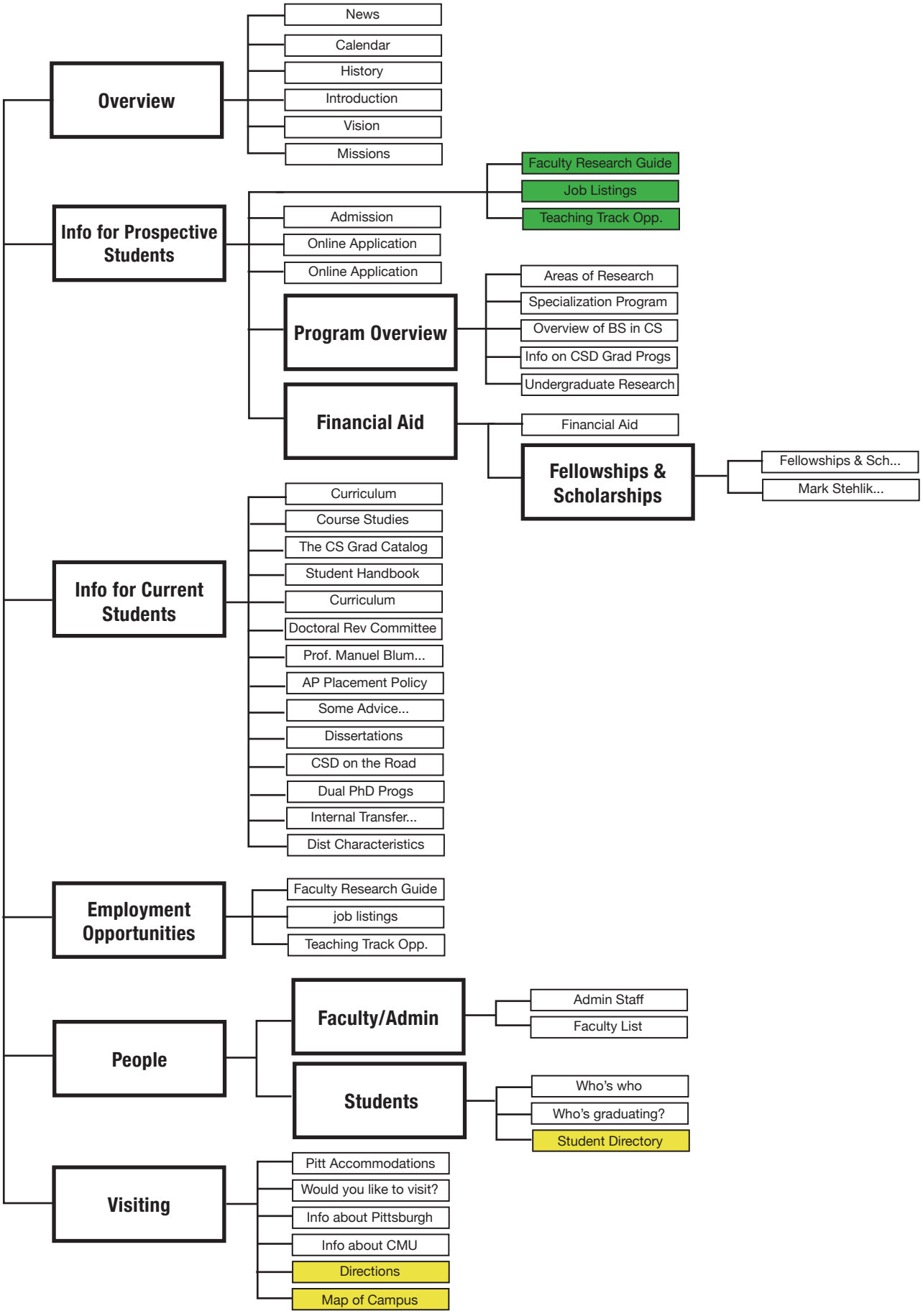

About Us
Introduction
Vision
Mission
History
Dist. Characteristics
Info about CMU
People
Faculty List
Who's who
Admin Staff
CS Grad Catalog
Careers
Prospective Students
Financial Aid
Admission
Fellowships and...
Online Application
Would you like to visit?
Current Students
Student Handbook
Calendar
Course Schedule
Undergrad
Overview of BS in CS
Curriculum
Undergraduate Research
Graduate
Dissertations
Curriculum
Info on CSD Grad...
Doctoral review...
Internal Transfer...
Specialization Progs
Dual PhD Program...
Graduate Resources
Who's Graduating?
Online Application
job listings
Advanced Placement
Teaching Track Opp.
Mark Stehlick's...
Research
Publications
Areas of Research
Fac. Research Guide
News
Blog
CSD on the Road
Some Advice on....
Info about Pittsburgh
Pitts Accommodations
Prof Manuel Blum's...


SORT 1
Overview
News
Calendar
History
Introduction
Vision
Missions
Info for Prospective Students
Admission
Online Application
Online Application
Program Overview
Areas of Research
Specialization Program
Overview of BS in CS
Info on CSD Grad Progs
Undergraduate Research
Financial Aid
Financial Aid
Fellowships & Scholarships
Fellowships & Sch...
Mark Stehlik...
Info for Current Students
Curriculum
Course Studies
The CS Grad Catalog
Student Handbook
Curriculum
Doctoral Rev Committee
Prof. Manuel Blum...
AP Placement Policy
Some Advice...
Dissertations
CSD on the Road
Dual PhD Progs
Internal Transfer...
Dist Characteristics
Employment Opportunities
Faculty Research Guide
Job Listings
Teaching Track Opp.
People
Faculty/Admin
Admin Staff
Faculty List
Students
Who's who
Who's graduating?
Visiting
Pitt Accommodations
Would you like to visit?
Info about Pittsburgh
Info about CMU

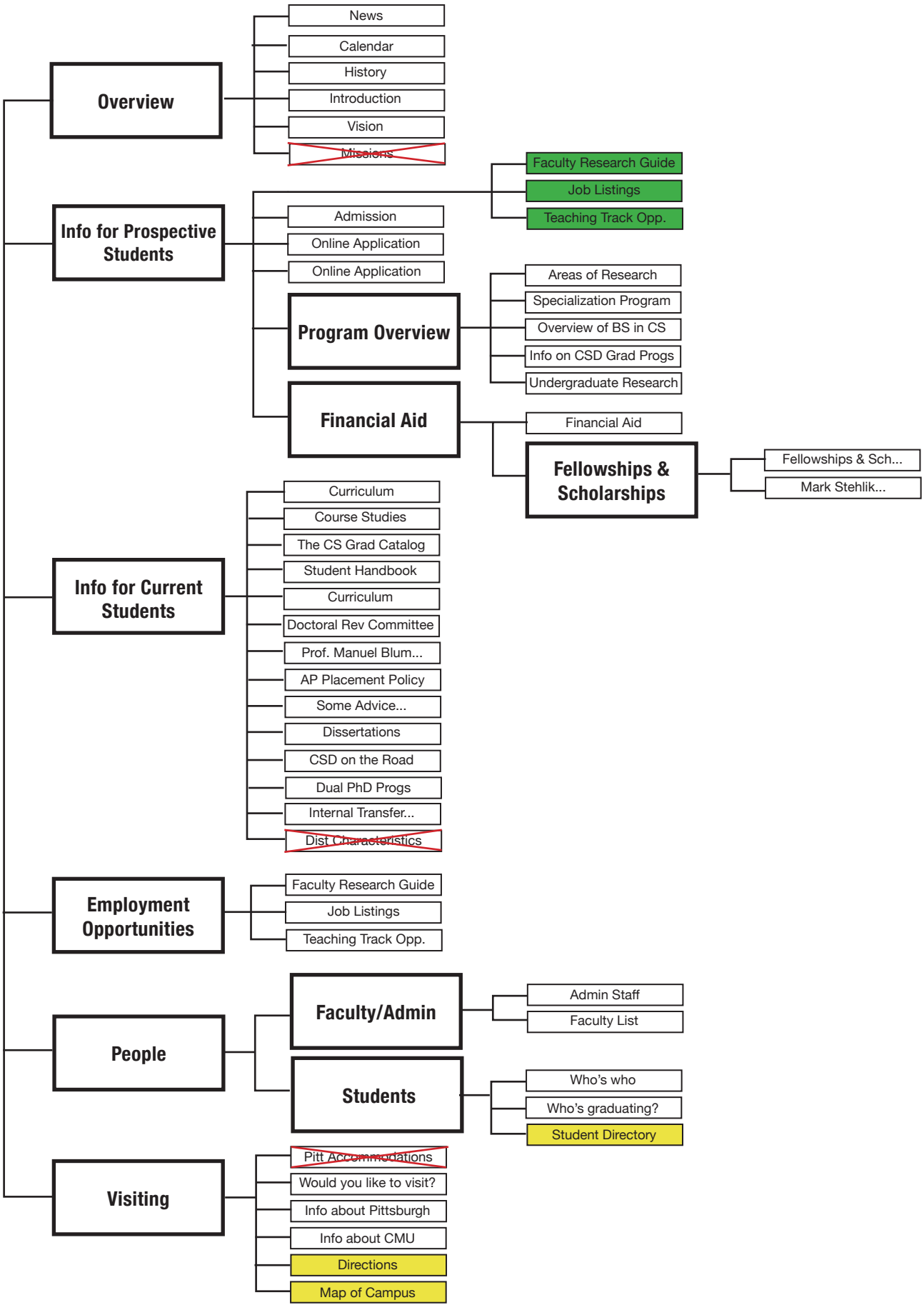
SORT 2


Overview
News
Calendar
History
Introduction
Vision
Missions
Info for Prospective Students
Faculty Research Guide
Job Listings
Teaching Track Opp.
Admission
Online Application
Online Application
Program Overview
Areas of Research
Specialization Program
Overview of BS in CS
Info on CSD Grad Progs
Undergraduate Research
Financial Aid
Financial Aid
Fellowships & Scholarships
Fellowships & Sch...
Mark Stehlik...
Info for Current Students
Curriculum
Course Studies
The CS Grad Catalog
Student Handbook
Curriculum
Doctoral Rev Committee
Prof. Manuel Blum...
AP Placement Policy
Some Advice...
Dissertations
CSD on the Road
Dual PhD Progs
Internal Transfer...
Dist Characteristics
Employment Opportunities
Faculty Research Guide
Job Listings
Teaching Track Opp.
People
Faculty/Admin
Admin Staff
Faculty List
Students
Who's who
Who's graduating?
Visiting
Pitt Accommodations
Would you like to visit?
Info about Pittsburgh
Info about CMU

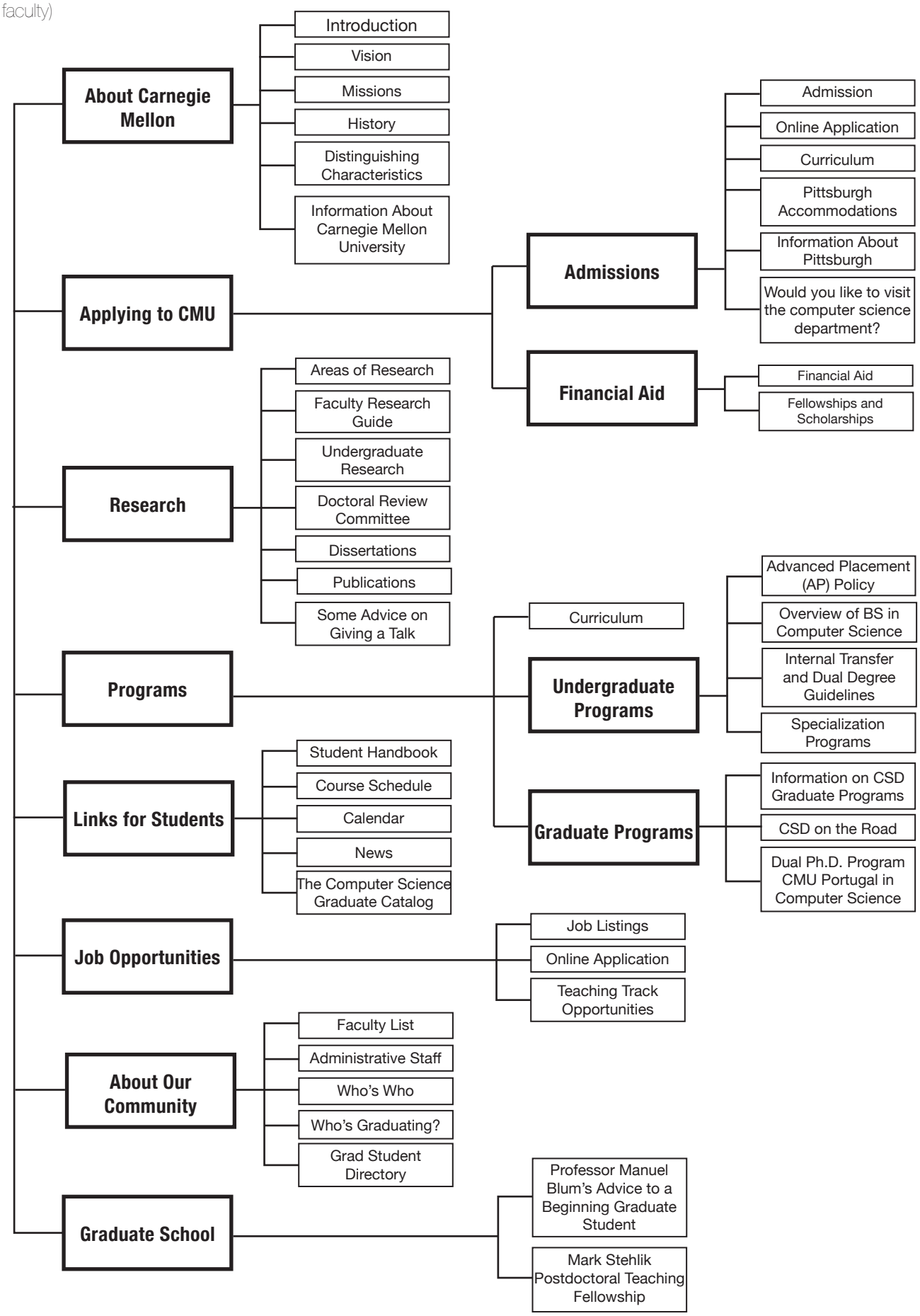
SORT 3


Overview
News
Calendar
History
Introduction
Vision
Missions
Info for Prospective Students
Faculty Research Guide
Job Listings
Teaching Track Opp.
Admission
Online Application
Online Application
Program Overview
Areas of Research
Specialization Program
Overview of BS in CS
Info on CSD Grad Progs
Undergraduate Research
Financial Aid
Financial Aid
Fellowships & Scholarships
Fellowships & Sch...
Mark Stehlik...
Info for Current Students
Curriculum
Course Studies
The CS Grad Catalog
Student Handbook
Curriculum
Doctoral Rev Committee
Prof. Manuel Blum...
AP Placement Policy
Some Advice...
Dissertations
CSD on the Road
Dual PhD Progs
Internal Transfer...
Dist Characteristics
Employment Opportunities
Faculty Research Guide
job listings
Teaching Track Opp.
People
Faculty/Admin
Admin Staff
Faculty List
Students
Who's who
Who's graduating?
Student Directory
Visiting
Pitt Accommodations
Would you like to visit?
Info about Pittsburgh
Info about CMU
Directions
Map of Campus

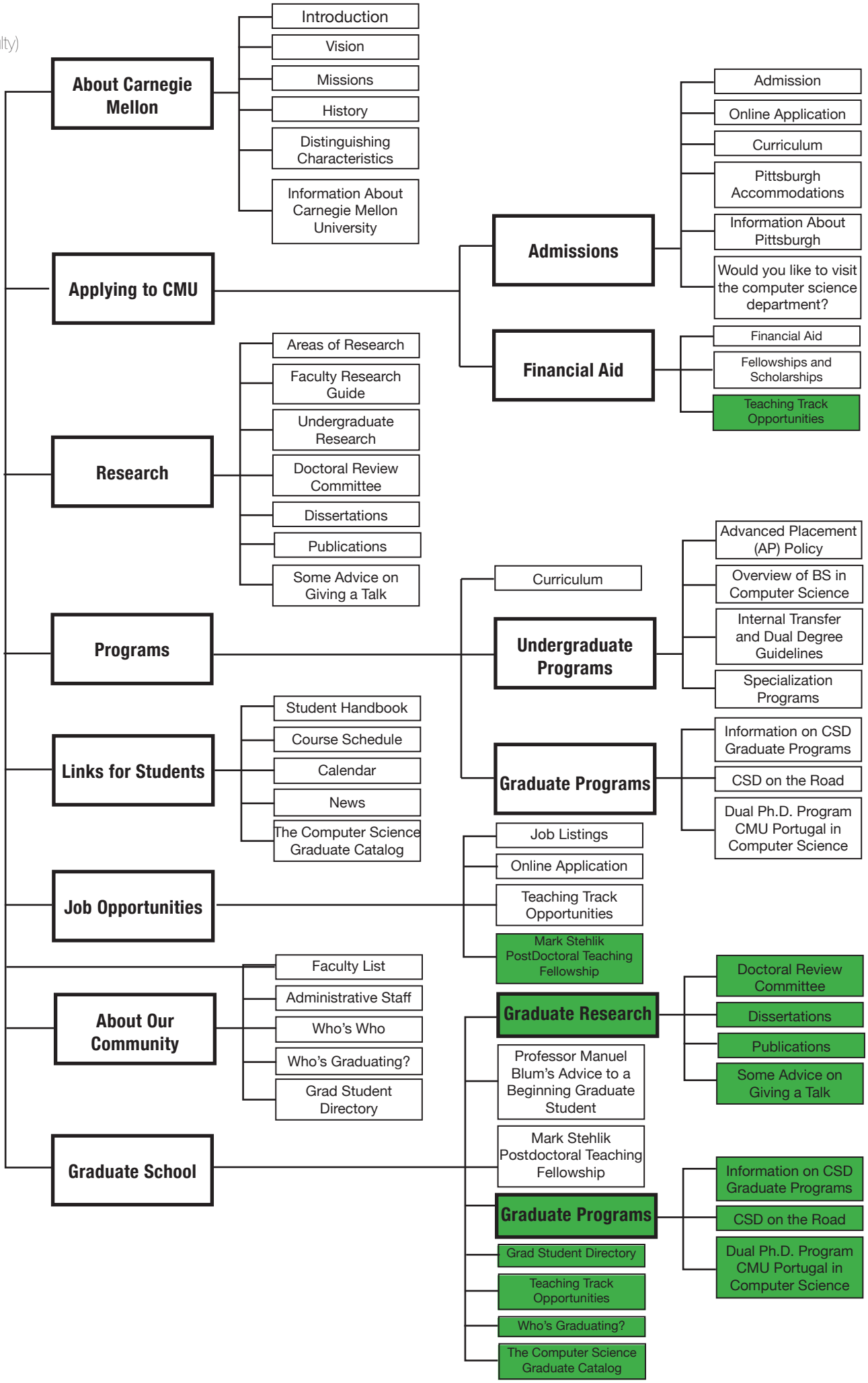
SORT 4


Overview
News
Calendar
History
Introduction
Vision
Missions
Info for Prospective Students
Faculty Research Guide
Job Listings
Teaching Track Opp.
Admission
Online Application
Online Application
Program Overview
Areas of Research
Specialization Program
Overview of BS in CS
Info on CSD Grad Progs
Undergraduate Research
Financial Aid
Financial Aid
Fellowships & Scholarships
Fellowships & Sch...
Mark Stehlik...
Info for Current Students
Curriculum
Course Studies
The CS Grad Catalog
Student Handbook
Curriculum
Doctoral Rev Committee
Prof. Manuel Blum...
AP Placement Policy
Some Advice...
Dissertations
CSD on the Road
Dual PhD Progs
Internal Transfer...
Dist Characteristics
Employment Opportunities
Faculty Research Guide
Job Listings
Teaching Track Opp.
People
Faculty/Admin
Admin Staff
Faculty List
Students
Who's who
Who's graduating?
Student Directory
Visiting
Pitt Accommodations
Would you like to visit?
Info about Pittsburgh
Info about CMU
Directions
Map of Campus

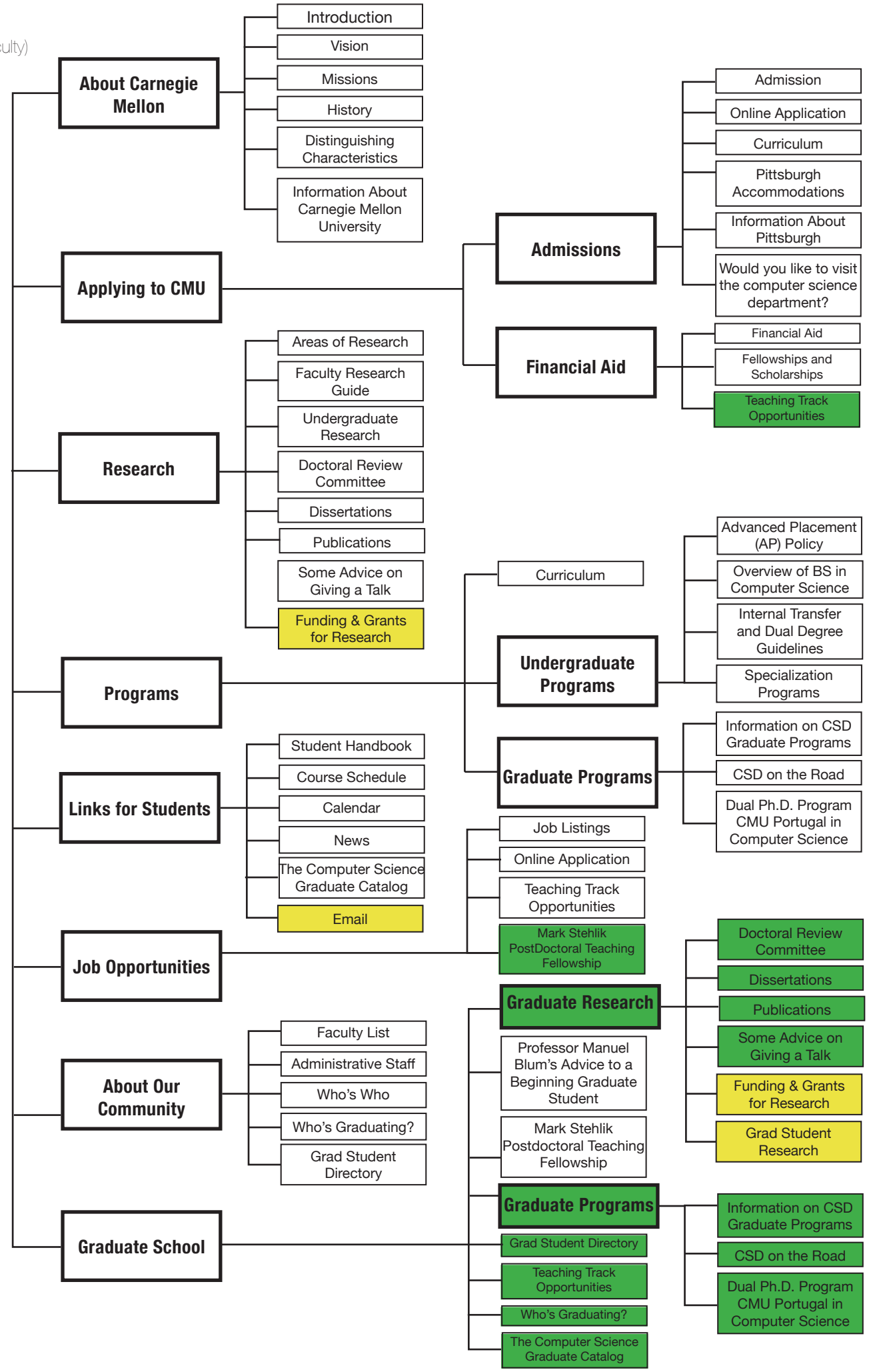
SORT 1


About Carnegie Mellon
Introduction
Vision
Missions
History
Distinguishing Characteristics
Information About Carnegie Mellon University
Applying to CMU
Admissions
Admission
Online Application
Curriculum
Pittsburgh Accommodations
Information About Pittsburgh
Would you like to visit the computer science department?
Financial Aid
Financial Aid
Fellowships and Scholarships
Research
Areas of Research
Faculty Research Guide
Undergraduate Research
Doctoral Review Committee
Dissertations
Publications
Some Advice on Giving a Talk
Programs
Curriculum
Undergraduate Programs
Advanced Placement (AP) Policy
Overview of BS in Computer Science
Internal Transfer and Dual Degree Guidelines
Specialization Programs
Graduate Programs
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
CSD on the Road
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU Portugal in Computer Science
Links for Students
Student Handbook
Course Schedule
Calendar
News
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog
Job Opportunities
Job Listings
Online Application
Teaching Track Opportunities
About Our Community
Faculty List
Administrative Staff
Who's Who
Who's Graduating?
Grad Student Directory
Graduate School
Professor Manuel Blum's Advice to a Beginning Graduate Student
Mark Stehlik Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship

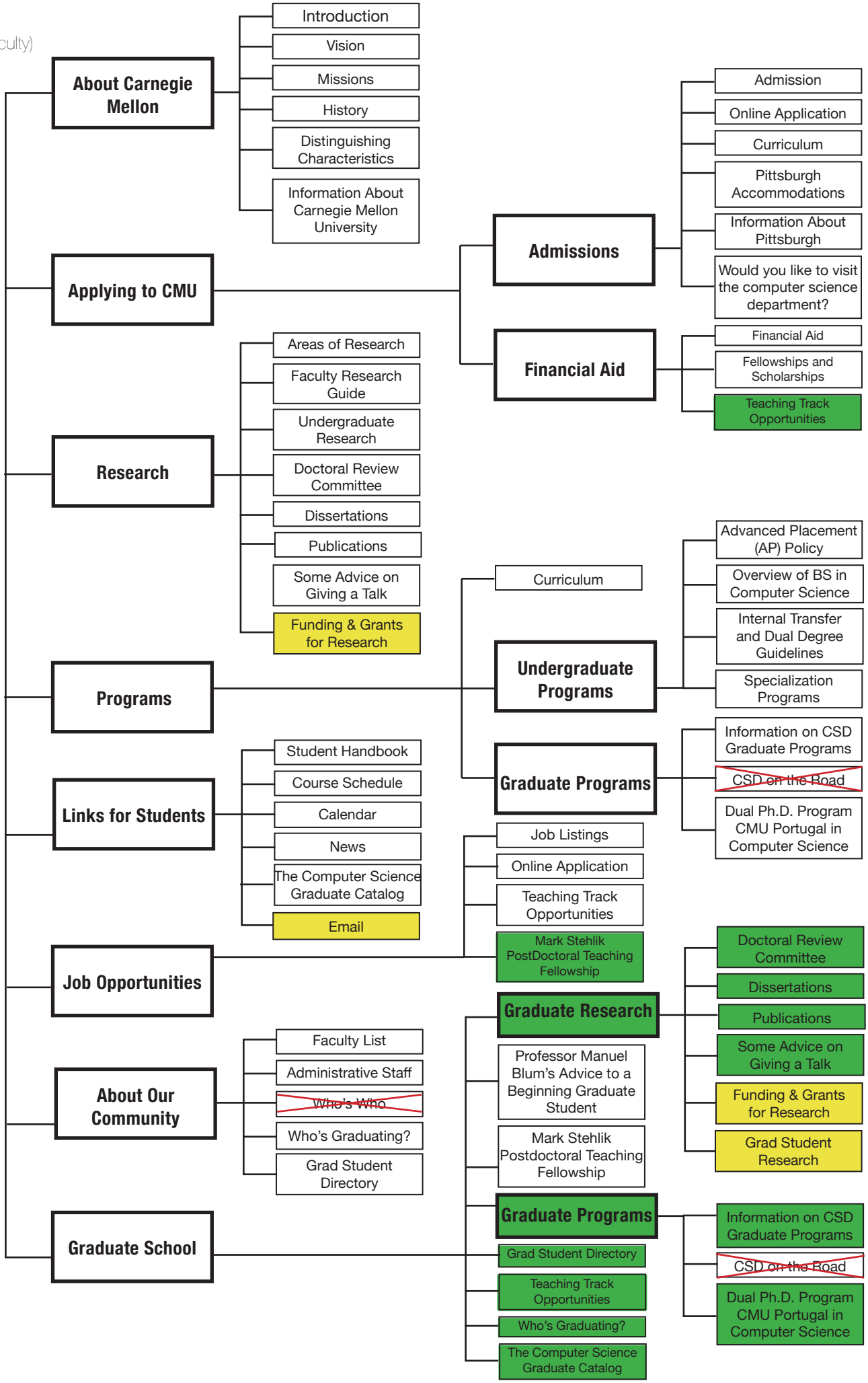
SORT 2


About Carnegie Mellon
Introduction
Vision
Missions
History
Distinguishing Characteristics
Information About Carnegie Mellon University
Applying to CMU
Admissions
Admission
Online Application
Curriculum
Pittsburgh Accommodations
Information About Pittsburgh
Would you like to visit the computer science department?
Financial Aid
Financial Aid
Fellowships and Scholarships
Teaching Track Opportunities
Research
Areas of Research
Faculty Research Guide
Undergraduate Research
Doctoral Review Committee
Dissertations
Publications
Some Advice on Giving a Talk
Programs
Curriculum
Undergraduate Programs
Advanced Placement (AP) Policy
Overview of BS in Computer Science
Internal Transfer and Dual Degree Guidelines
Specialization Programs
Graduate Programs
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
CSD on the Road
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU Portugal in Computer Science
Links for Students
Student Handbook
Course Schedule
Calendar
News
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog
Job Opportunities
Job Listings
Online Application
Teaching Track Opportunities
Mark Stehlik PostDoctoral Teaching Fellowship
About Our Community
Faculty List
Administrative Staff
Who's Who
Who's Graduating?
Grad Student Directory
Graduate School
Graduate Research
Doctoral Review Committee
Dissertations
Publications
Some Advice on Giving a Talk
Professor Manuel Blum's Advice to a Beginning Graduate Student
Mark Stehlik Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship
Graduate Programs
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
CSD on the Road
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU Portugal in Computer Science
Grad Student Directory
Teaching Track Opportunities
Who's Graduating?
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog

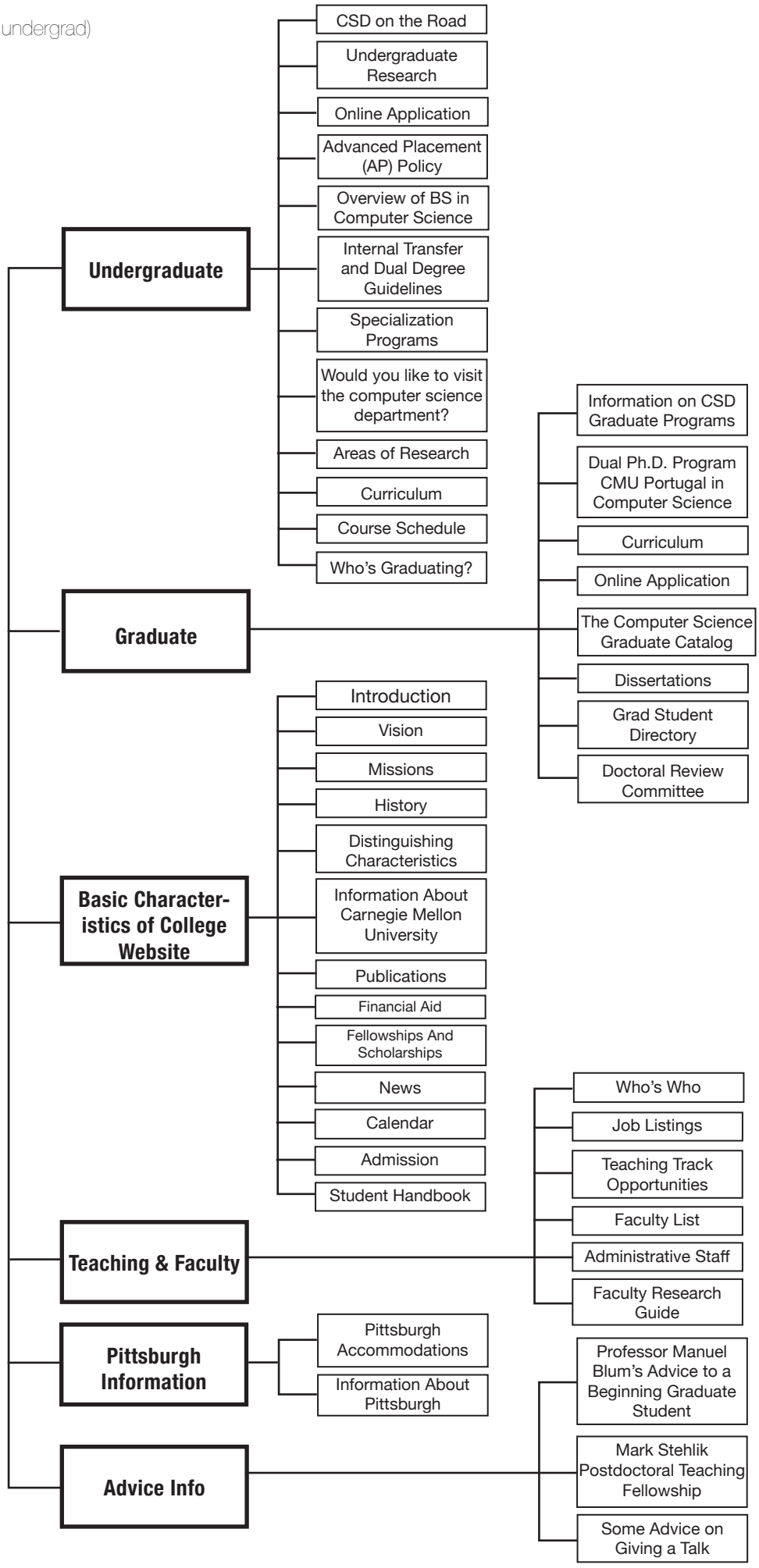
SORT 3


About Carnegie Mellon
Introduction
Vision
Missions
History
Distinguishing Characteristics
Information About Carnegie Mellon University
Applying to CMU
Admissions
Admission
Online Application
Curriculum
Pittsburgh Accommodations
Information About Pittsburgh
Would you like to visit the computer science department?
Financial Aid
Financial Aid
Fellowships and Scholarships
Teaching Track Opportunities
Research
Areas of Research
Faculty Research Guide
Undergraduate Research
Doctoral Review Committee
Dissertations
Publications
Some Advice on Giving a Talk
Funding & Grants for Research
Programs
Curriculum
Undergraduate Programs
Advanced Placement (AP) Policy
Overview of BS in Computer Science
Internal Transfer and Dual Degree Guidelines
Specialization Programs
Graduate Programs
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
CSD on the Road
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU Portugal in Computer Science
Links for Students
Student Handbook
Course Schedule
Calendar
News
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog
Email
Job Opportunities
Job Listings
Online Application
Teaching Track Opportunities
Mark Stehlik PostDoctoral Teaching Fellowship
About Our Community
Faculty List
Administrative Staff
Who's Who
Who's Graduating?
Grad Student Directory
Graduate School
Graduate Research
Doctoral Review Committee
Dissertations
Publications
Some Advice on Giving a Talk
Funding & Grants for Research
Grad Student Research
Professor Manuel Blum's Advice to a Beginning Graduate Student
Mark Stehlik Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship
Graduate Programs
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
CSD on the Road
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU Portugal in Computer Science
Grad Student Directory
Teaching Track Opportunities
Who's Graduating?
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog

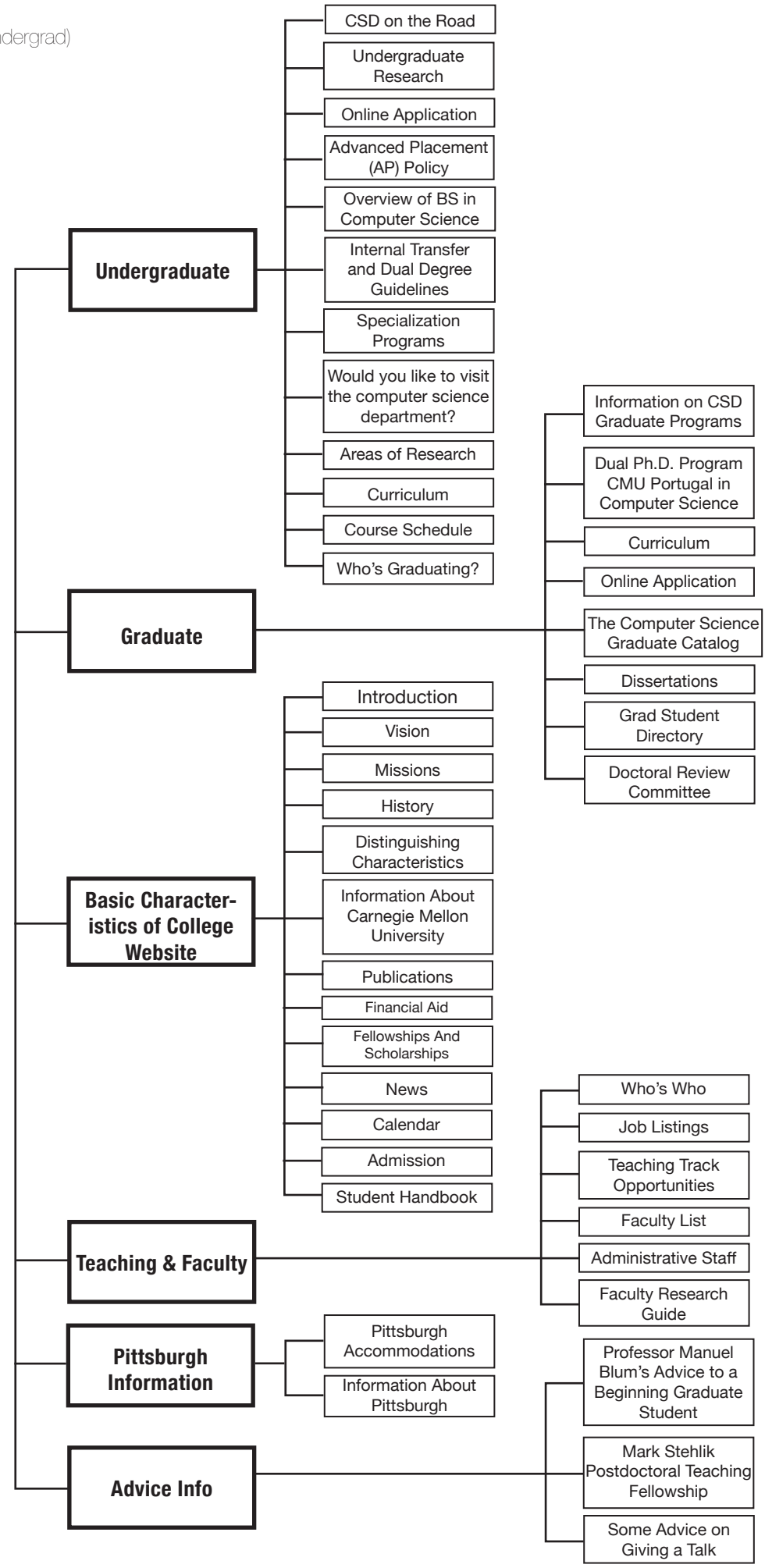
SORT 4


About Carnegie Mellon
Introduction
Vision
Missions
History
Distinguishing Characteristics
Information About Carnegie Mellon University
Applying to CMU
Admissions
Admission
Online Application
Curriculum
Pittsburgh Accommodations
Information About Pittsburgh
Would you like to visit the computer science department?
Financial Aid
Financial Aid
Fellowships and Scholarships
Teaching Track Opportunities
Research
Areas of Research
Faculty Research Guide
Undergraduate Research
Doctoral Review Committee
Dissertations
Publications
Some Advice on Giving a Talk
Funding & Grants for Research
Programs
Curriculum
Undergraduate Programs
Advanced Placement (AP) Policy
Overview of BS in Computer Science
Internal Transfer and Dual Degree Guidelines
Specialization Programs
Graduate Programs
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
CSD on the Road
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU Portugal in Computer Science
Links for Students
Student Handbook
Course Schedule
Calendar
News
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog
Email
Job Opportunities
Job Listings
Online Application
Teaching Track Opportunities
Mark Stehlik PostDoctoral Teaching Fellowship
About Our Community
Faculty List
Administrative Staff
Who's Who
Who's Graduating?
Grad Student Directory
Graduate School
Graduate Research
Doctoral Review Committee
Dissertations
Publications
Some Advice on Giving a Talk
Funding & Grants for Research
Grad Student Research
Professor Manuel Blum's Advice to a Beginning Graduate Student
Mark Stehlik Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship
Graduate Programs
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
CSD on the Road
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU Portugal in Computer Science
Grad Student Directory
Teaching Track Opportunities
Who's Graduating?
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog

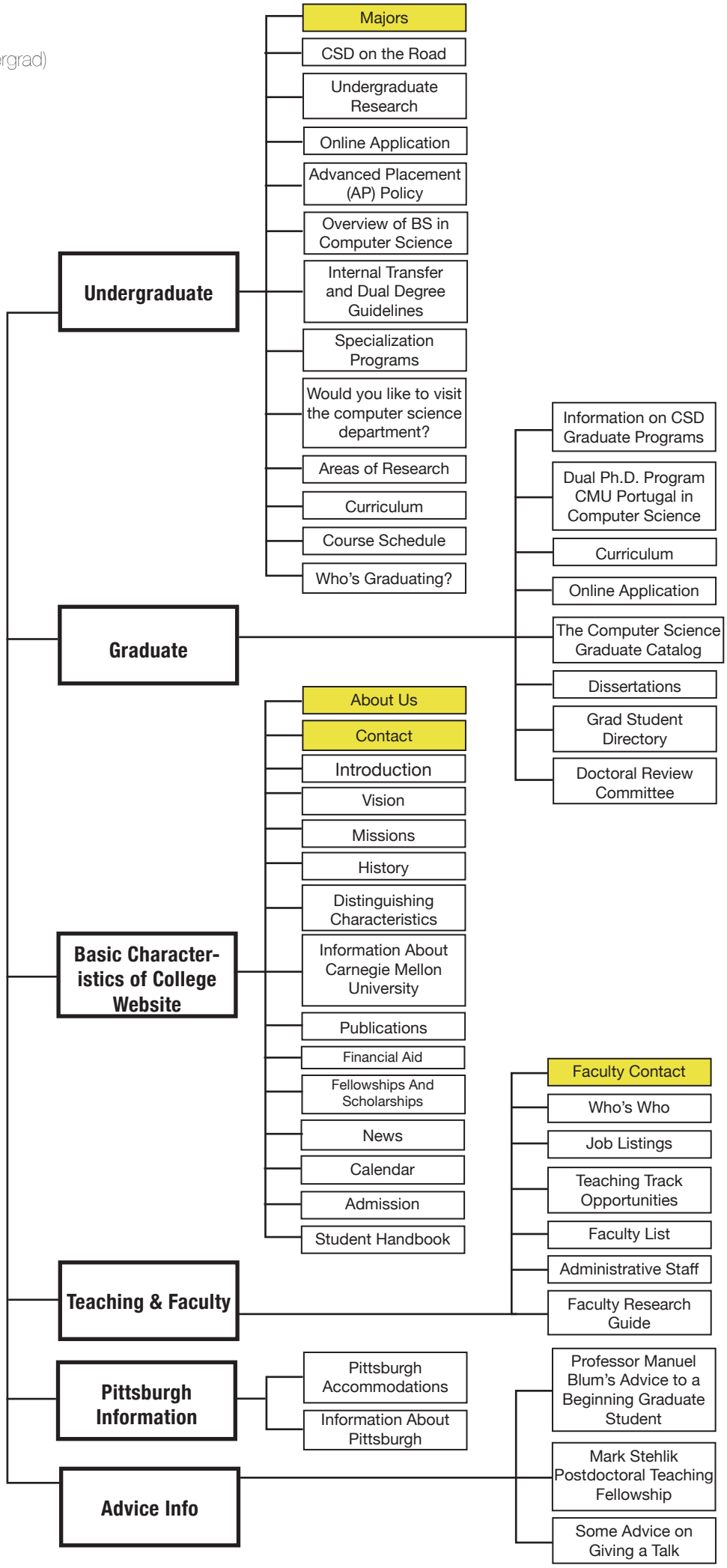
SORT 1


Undergraduate
CSD on the Road
Undergraduate Research
Online Application
Advanced Placement (AP) Policy
Overview of BS in Computer Science
Internal Transfer and Dual Degree Guidelines
Specialization Programs
Would you like to visit the computer science department?
Areas of Research
Curriculum
Course Schedule
Who's Graduating?
Graduate
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU Portugal in Computer Science
Curriculum
Online Application
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog
Dissertations
Grad Student Directory
Doctoral Review Committee
Basic Characteristics of College Website
Introduction
Vision
Missions
History
Distinguishing Characteristics
Information About Carnegie Mellon University
Publications
Financial Aid
Fellowships And Scholarships
News
Calendar
Admission
Student Handbook
Teaching & Faculty
Who's Who
Job Listings
Teaching Track Opportunities
Faculty List
Administrative Staff
Faculty Research Guide
Pittsburgh Information
Pittsburgh Accommodations
Information About Pittsburgh
Advice Info
Professor Manuel Blum's Advice to a Beginning Graduate Student
Mark Stehlik Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship
Some Advice on Giving a Talk

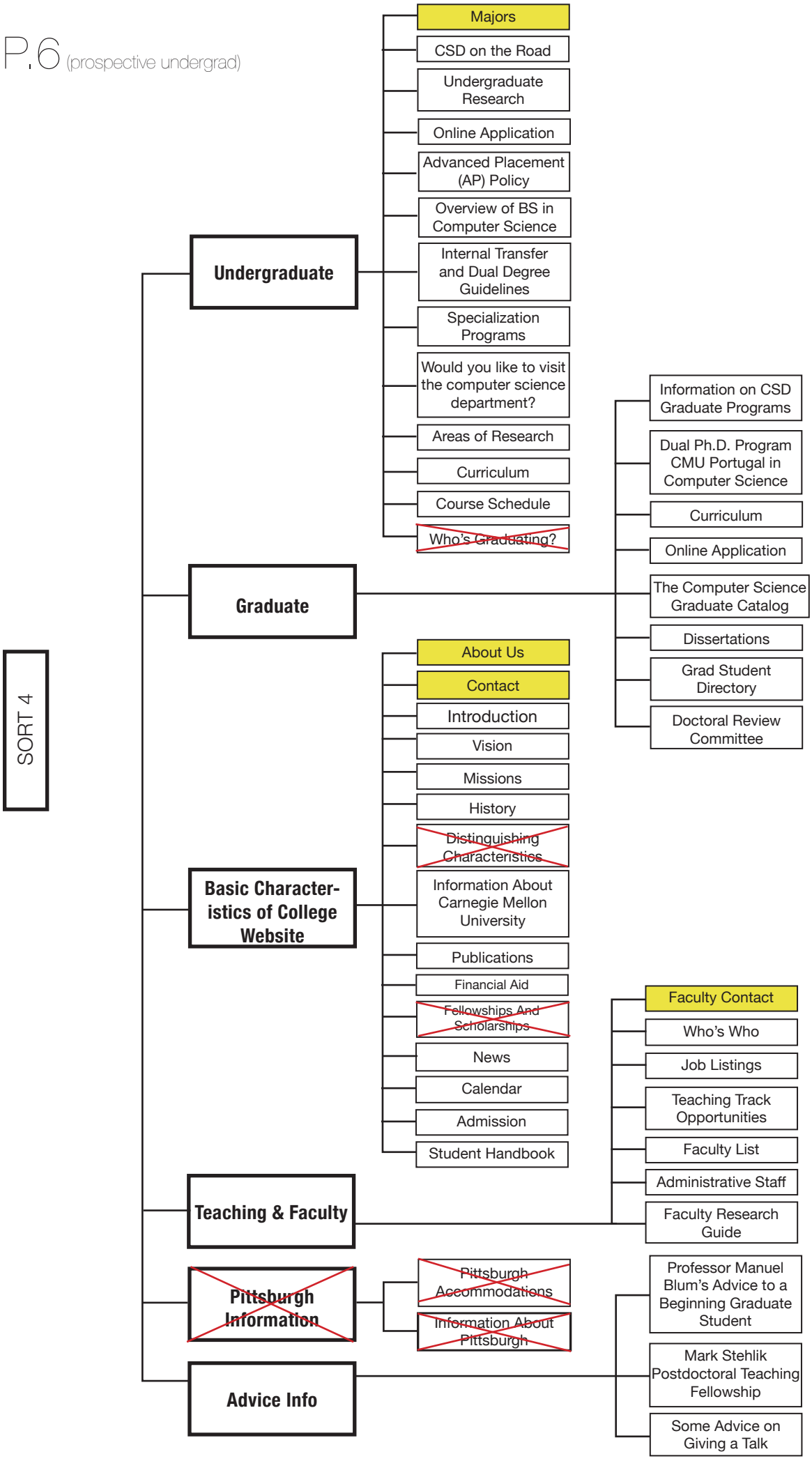
SORT 2


Undergraduate
CSD on the Road
Undergraduate Research
Online Application
Advanced Placement (AP) Policy
Overview of BS in Computer Science
Internal Transfer and Dual Degree Guidelines
Specialization Programs
Would you like to visit the computer science department?
Areas of Research
Curriculum
Course Schedule
Who's Graduating?
Graduate
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU Portugal in Computer Science
Curriculum
Online Application
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog
Dissertations
Grad Student Directory
Doctoral Review Committee
Basic Characteristics of College Website
Introduction
Vision
Missions
History
Distinguishing Characteristics
Information About Carnegie Mellon University
Publications
Financial Aid
Fellowships And Scholarships
News
Calendar
Admission
Student Handbook
Teaching & Faculty
Who's Who
Job Listings
Teaching Track Opportunities
Faculty List
Administrative Staff
Faculty Research Guide
Pittsburgh Information
Pittsburgh Accommodations
Information About Pittsburgh
Advice Info
Professor Manuel Blum's Advice to a Beginning Graduate Student
Mark Stehlik Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship
Some Advice on Giving a Talk

SORT 3


Undergraduate
Majors
CSD on the Road
Undergraduate Research
Online Application
Advanced Placement (AP) Policy
Overview of BS in Computer Science
Internal Transfer and Dual Degree Guidelines
Specialization Programs
Would you like to visit the computer science department?
Areas of Research
Curriculum
Course Schedule
Who's Graduating?
Graduate
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU Portugal in Computer Science
Curriculum
Online Application
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog
Dissertations
Grad Student Directory
Doctoral Review Committee
Basic Character-istics of College Website
About Us
Contact
Introduction
Vision
Missions
History
Distinguishing Characteristics
Information About Carnegie Mellon University
Publications
Financial Aid
Fellowships And Scholarships
News
Calendar
Admission
Student Handbook
Teaching & Faculty
Faculty Contact
Who's Who
Job Listings
Teaching Track Opportunities
Faculty List
Administrative Staff
Faculty Research Guide
Pittsburgh Information
Pittsburgh Accommodations
Information About Pittsburgh
Advice Info
Professor Manuel Blum's Advice to a Beginning Graduate Student
Mark Stehlik Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship
Some Advice on Giving a Talk

SORT 4


Undergraduate
Majors
CSD on the Road
Undergraduate Research
Online Application
Advanced Placement (AP) Policy
Overview of BS in Computer Science
Internal Transfer and Dual Degree Guidelines
Specialization Programs
Would you like to visit the computer science department?
Areas of Research
Curriculum
Course Schedule
Who's Graduating?
Graduate
Information on CSD Graduate Programs
Dual Ph.D. Program CMU Portugal in Computer Science
Curriculum
Online Application
The Computer Science Graduate Catalog
Dissertations
Grad Student Directory
Doctoral Review Committee
Basic Character-istics of College Website
About Us
Contact
Introduction
Vision
Missions
History
Distinguishing Characteristics
Information About Carnegie Mellon University
Publications
Financial Aid
Fellowships And Scholarships
News
Calendar
Admission
Student Handbook
Teaching & Faculty
Faculty Contact
Who's Who
Job Listings
Teaching Track Opportunities
Faculty List
Administrative Staff
Faculty Research Guide
Pittsburgh Information
Pittsburgh Accommodations
Information About Pittsburgh
Advice Info
Professor Manuel Blum's Advice to a Beginning Graduate Student
Mark Stehlik Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship
Some Advice on Giving a Talk

APPENDIX II: LABEL TEST

Please see attached PDF file for the results from our label testing.

For this test, we used three formulas in an Excel spreadsheet. These formulas used a four-point scale where 1, 2, and 3 represent the number of tries and 4 represents that they did not get the response. The first formula averaged the number of tries across the 6 users for 1 questions. The second formula averaged the number of tries across the 6 users for multiple questions for the same response. The final formula calculated the standard deviation of the responses given.

Results were manually reviewed for trends in use of language.

APPENDIX III: FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Participant 1

Where does your eye go to first?

Eyes went first to the picture in the panel in the middle.

What are your first impressions of the website?

Like how “clean” and “simple” the homepage is.

What do you think this site might help you do?

The navigation bar on the left seemed helpful to look up information.

Is there anything else you haven’t said yet that you’d like to mention about the website?

Maybe a link to Blackboard?

Participant 2

Where does your eye go to first?

The plane in the picture in the middle.

What are your first impressions of the website?

uhh its kinda minimal, and Carnegie Mellon (logo on top of page) is pretty small in the top. The computer science and school of computer science is kind of a weird looking font its kinda like high school or something (both of them, 2) and it doesn’t draw any attention to itself I guess, its very plain.

The colors are nice.

What do you think this site might help you do?

You could find out what people are currently doing in computer science.

Is there anything else you haven’t said yet that you’d like to mention about the website?

I guess not, no.

APPENDIX III: FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Participant 3

Where does your eye go to first?

Right at the center.

What are your first impressions of the website?

It seems kind of cluttered. Everything is concentrated in the center. I would like for it to be more spread out. So I know what's clickable and what isn't.

What do you think this site might help you do?

The information is organized well, so I know where to go to find information about the programs and the research and where I can find faculty.

Is there anything else you haven't said yet that you'd like to mention about the website?

No, not really.

Participant 4

Where does your eye go to first?

I don't know where to look. Wow. This large picture of this robot in the middle.

What are your first impressions of the website?

This is horrible. Like, this is so typical Carnegie Mellon. Like, are you for real? You can get an undergrad to program a website better than this.

What do you think this site might help you do?

I don't really... What is CSD on the Road? No, really, what is it? Why is it under People? And Who's Who and why are they not with the other people?

Is there anything else you haven't said yet that you'd like to mention about the website?

To be honest, if I were a student and I were applying, I would not be comforted by this. If you were applying to this, especially to computer science the number 2 in the country, you'd like to see a nice website. And you're like, is this a joke?

APPENDIX III: FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Participant 5

Where does your eye go to first?

goes to the picture of the faculty member first - the portrait thing on the lower right hand corner. it's the only thing that's not red or blue on the site.

What are your first impressions of the website?

It seems kind of bland. I guess, but there seems to be a lot of information and links. I like the more general headings, like general info, education, research, and people. there's not too much text which is nice. and you definitely tell what it is trying to say with the big titles in the front. I think it would be easy to navigate, but a little stripped down.

What do you think this site might help you do?

it would probably help you find out what you can do in the csd department if you are going to cmu as an undergrad or if you're going to do research there. and then, if you were trying to look for people to interview about the topic, there is like a whole list of people who is involved. which is probably helpful.

Is there anything else you haven't said yet that you'd like to mention about the website?

I mean, the text looks kind of daunting. on the right, the big paragraph. it would be hard to get through. it definitely screams computer science. it's very straightforward and logical - not logically, but straightforward. like, it's not fancy. it seems very minimal but to the point. computer science major would enjoy.

Participant 6

Where does your eye go to first?

there - this big rock.

What are your first impressions of the website?

it's a little... lacks color. although it appears to be easy to navigate. the links at the left have headings and subheadings. boring, but easy to navigate.

APPENDIX III: FIRST IMPRESSIONS

What do you think this site might help you do?

> find out information that I want to look into majoring in computer science at carnegie mellon. tell me about programs. faculty positions available is if I want to apply for a job. If I want to apply for admission. that's pretty much information on the department

Is there anything else you haven't said yet that you'd like to mention about the website?

> I think the ... um... I would like to see, more news. I would like to see more information. A little more photographic information perhaps. seems like there is a lot of negative space here, so I feel like they could do more. Have the, um, these headings and links, spread out to the left and more information in the center.