

Graphic Identity and Branding Policy

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100.00 Introduction and Purpose

In fall 2003, Montana State University launched a long-range effort to increase the visibility of the university, and enhance and strengthen our image and reputation. The activities that supported this effort, referred to as the Integrated Marketing Plan, have two central elements: key messages about the university, and the graphic identity of the university.

Much work has been invested in identifying the strengths of our university and what we offer our students and our external constituents. These strengths have been incorporated into a set of messages which helps us tell our story. These messages need to be reinforced on an on-going basis in the communication activities of all entities of the university, whether in publications, Web sites, speeches or media stories.

Our graphic identity includes the official signature for Montana State University, brand extension signatures for the colleges and agencies, and sub-brand signatures for designated units affiliated with the university.

This policy sets forth the approved usage of the university signature for communications in print, Web and electronic form. Adherence to these guidelines will protect the integrity of our visual identity and ensure the consistency in our communications that will support our growing reputation.

This project has long-term significance for the university. The strength of the Montana State University image and reputation is critical to the university's ability to achieve many goals of the strategic plan, particularly the recruitment of quality students, faculty and staff, and success in both private and public fund-raising.

Montana State University's image will continue to be strengthened with every constituent, whether internal and external, who visits a Web site, reads a publication, hears a speech or reads a news story. The support of all units of the university is important in our efforts to ensure that our various publics realize our strengths and what we offer our students and the state of Montana. Our ability to build a clear, consistent identity will help position this university as a leading institution in the Northwest.

200.00 Definitions

201.00 Signature - The university signature is a graphic that consists of three elements, the symbol (letterform M, flame and arc), the wordmark ("Montana State University") and the tagline (Mountains and Minds).

202.00 Brand Extension Signature - The brand extension signature is a graphic that consists of the university symbol and wordmark, along with the

name of an individual college or unit.

203.00 Sub brand signature - The sub brand signature is a graphic with a variation of the Montana State University Official signature (such as the MSU Alumni Foundation) or its own unique signature (such as the Bobcat graphic) that represents the unit name and shows affiliation to the University.

204.00 Business Suite - The business suite is comprised of the official letterhead, envelope, and business card design.

205.00 Montana State University System - is made up of all the campuses and agencies of Montana State University.

300.00 The Montana State University Signature



The graphic identity of the university is embodied in the official signature, which includes the symbol (letterform M, flame and arc), the wordmark ("Montana State University") and the tagline ("Mountains and Minds.") The symbol and wordmark must always be used together on any official communications. Whenever possible, the logo version with the "Mountains & Minds" tagline must be used.

The signature must be an element in any printed or electronic communications coming from Montana State University, whether a unit on campus or a remote site, such as a College of Nursing campus or Extension office.

To protect the integrity of the brand, the university signature, brand extension and sub-brand signatures must not be altered in any way.

The university signature must not be combined with other logos, except when a program has been approved for exemption through the MSU marketing director. Other logos for departments, centers, offices or special programs and projects must not be created, whether such logos are based on the university signature or are entirely new logos.

When the university signature is reduced or enlarged, the proportions must be maintained. Only in rare instances must the signature be used smaller than one inch wide. For print materials, only the high-resolution versions of the signature must be used, never scanned or low-resolution versions. High-resolution electronic files of the university signature are available from MSU Creative Services, and are downloadable at: www.montana.edu/cpa/graphics/uglogos.html.

The campus seal must only be used by the President's Office, on official documents or for formal occasions such as graduation.

All departments are required to follow the Montana State University graphic identity and branding guidelines in their print and electronic materials.

Specific guidelines for use of the university brand can be found at: www.montana.edu/brandtoolkit/.

310.00 Sub-brand and Independent Signatures

Many organizations are affiliated with Montana State University, though they are not tied directly to its core missions. Examples include the MSU Alumni Foundation, public broadcasting units or others with independent boards responsible for funding. Many carry the 501(c)(3) designation.

Three organizations have been designated as "sub-brands," which use a variation of the Montana State University official signature: Montana State University Alumni Association, Montana State University Alumni Foundation, and Bobcat Athletics. The Museum of the Rockies and MSU Bookstore are also sub-brands, but use a unique signature. These units must indicate their affiliation with the university in all of their communications.

Other units are considered "independent brands" and "retail brands," and are not required to use the university signature. These include The Montana Water Center, Montana PBS and retail outlets in the SUB, such as Bobcat Grill and the Sweet Shop.

400.00 Brand Messages

The core messages embody the key strengths and differentiating features of Montana State University:

Montana State University integrates learning, discovery and engagement

Excel - World-class scholars

Discover - Leading research and creativity

Create - Hands-on, learning opportunities

Connect - Friendly campus

Explore - Spectacular educational setting

Serve - Service to Montana and beyond

Whenever appropriate for the target audience, these messages must be reinforced in communications materials, talks and speeches. Presenting examples that demonstrate these strengths will reinforce our image and reputation, and ensure our various constituents associate these attributes with the university.

500.00 University Name

When referring to the university, "Montana State University" must be used (not Montana State University-Bozeman.) To clarify our location, "Montana State University at Bozeman" or "Montana State University in Bozeman" can be used.

The following are the official names of the other campuses and agencies of Montana State University:

Montana State University-Billings

City College Montana State University Billings
Montana State University-Northern
Great Falls College Montana State University
Gallatin College Montana State University
Montana State University Extension
Montana Agricultural Experiment Station
Fire Services Training School
The Montana State University System

600.00 Business Suite: Letterheads, Envelopes and Business Cards

University letters are a prominent form of communication, and it is important they send a visually consistent message.

A common letterhead, envelope and business card format maintains visual unity and communicates information clearly. As illustrated below, the letterhead contains the university signature in the upper left hand corner and the Mountains and Minds tagline across the bottom. Individual personalization of university letterhead is not allowed. Requests to use additional or alternate slogans specific to the departmental unit must be referred to the Director, University Marketing.

The return address on envelopes must appear beside the university signature. Two-color stationery is designed for formal correspondence, mostly to external audiences. It is not advised for internal communications or for those messages that are likely to be copied or faxed. Departments may elect to utilize one-color envelopes to accompany two-color stationery.

For external communications, all MSU employees must use the official business suite, which is typeset through MSU Creative Services, and printed through University Printing Services. Prices, information and on-line ordering are available at: <http://www.montana.edu/ezprint/>.

Departments may order an electronic letterhead template typeset by Creative Services, for use in printing on departmental printers, as long as color quality is maintained. Typeset mailing labels are also available from Creative Services upon request.

The following are approved examples of letterhead, envelopes, and business cards.

MSU Business System

MSU Core Logo → [MSU Core Logo]

Brand Extension (if available) → [Brand Extension Logo]

Academic Department (for brand extensions ONLY) → [Department of Media and Theatre Arts]

MSU Logo for Envelope (for brand extensions ONLY) → [MSU Logo for Envelope]

Office/Unit → [Office of Communications and Public Affairs]

Contact Information → [427 Cutbertson Hall, PO, Box 59717-2220, Bozeman, MT 59717-2220, Tel: 406-994-2721, Fax: 406-994-4102]

University Tagline → [Mountains & Minds]

Scholar's Margin → [2" on left, 1" on other sides]

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Office of Communications and Public Affairs
427 Cutbertson Hall • PO, Box 59717-2220
Bozeman, MT 59717-2220
www.montana.edu
Tel: 406-994-2721
Fax: 406-994-4102
Email: rlambert@montana.edu

When typing your letter on the new MSU letterhead, set a 2" margin on the left and 1" on all other sides.

700.00 University Mailing Labels, Forms, and Miscellaneous Communications

The university signature must appear on all internal and external communications pieces, including mailing labels, forms, special envelopes, nametags and other items. MSU Creative Services can provide assistance to departments in designing these items.

800.00 University Communications

The university signature must appear on all university print and electronic communications. There are numerous ways to incorporate the signature into the graphic design on the front or back cover. The signature must not be embellished or changed in any way.

The departments and offices of Montana State University produce a variety of newsletters and other promotional pieces each year. While a certain visual identity is needed for each piece, design and visual presentation must comply with the Graphic Identity Program. That is most often reflected in the headline (the name at the top of the front page). In keeping with the Graphic Identity and Branding Guidelines, the university signature must be integrated into the design.

900.00 Web Sites

The MSU branded Web template must be used for all Web pages of units designated as being core brands or brand extensions. Units with a sub-brand signature are not required to use the branded Web templates.

MSU Web Communications is responsible for the design and management of the Web branding program. In addition to providing the Web templates,

they are responsible for reviewing and approving all Web site designs before they are published publicly. MSU Web Communications must be contacted early in the Web development process to ensure design plans meet branded Web standards.

Web branding information and assistance with how to use the templates can be obtained through MSU Web Communications. The Web templates and other Web branding resources are available from the MSU Web Communications Web site: www.montana.edu/cpa/webcom/

The branded Web templates are integrated with style sheets that control the formatting of certain display standards and neither the style sheets nor the template graphics must be modified to create unauthorized format variations. In some cases additional graphical standards for branded title graphics are required separately from the templates. Contact MSU Web Communications to obtain information about these or other Web graphical standards. All graphical development for Web pages must be in accordance with the Graphic Identity and Branding Guidelines.

1000.00 University Vehicles, Information Signs, Building Identification

The university signature will require a period of phase-in as vehicles are replaced or repainted. When that occurs the new signature must be used. Internal campus signs and building identifications do not require the signature. Historic signs or sculptures must be adapted with the new signature where possible, but in other cases these artifacts will simply become a part of campus tradition, such as the MSC lettering chiseled on the Strand Union.

1100.00 Use of University marks by Registered Student Organizations

Registered Student Organizations may use the university name, logos or Bobcats name or logos for "in-house" purposes such as on posters, signs, advertisements and banners dealing with the activities of the organization, provided such use reflects positively on the University and the mark is reproduced accurately. No alterations of the university's marks are allowed.

1200.00 Commercial Products

All logos, seals, names, symbols and slogans are the exclusive property of Montana State University. Selling or distributing products to the general public is considered commercial use. All departments of the University, recognized campus clubs and organizations, individuals, and companies are required to obtain approval from the Licensing Director prior to producing, or arranging for production of, any product that utilizes the University's trade/service marks, regardless of use or method of distribution.

1210.00 External Authorization

The Montana State University President's Office has registered the signatures as trade/services marks to protect against inappropriate use. The use of the trade/service marks without campus authorization is prohibited. Any product bearing the university names, logos or marks and sold to the general public is subject to the requirements of the trademark and licensing policy. http://www.montana.edu/policy/trademark_licensing/

Groups from off campus must obtain written permission for logo usage. Please address requests for use of university marks to:

Director, University Marketing and Licensing Director
P.O. Box 172220
Montana State University
jkipfer@montana.edu
406-994-5737

1300.00 Miscellaneous Uses

Videos, DVDs, computer programs, multi-media presentations, websites and other electronic iterations must include the university signature in a manner consistent with the design and presentation of the production. In addition, newspaper and television advertising must include the signature. Classified ads need not contain the signature, but display ads must. Exhibits or displays representing an outreach program or distant university site must also display the signature.

1400.00 Requests for Exception

No document can anticipate all the circumstances that may arise from the use of a consistent university signature. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt a procedure for exception requests. Though it is expected these requests will be rare, each request will be considered by the MSU Marketing Director and a committee representing campus stakeholders.

Requests for exceptions to the Graphic Identity and Branding Guidelines must be first discussed with the MSU Marketing Director. Most issues and concerns can be resolved at that level. A formal request for an exception must be addressed in writing to the MSU Marketing Director.

If issues are still unresolved, they may be taken forward with the graphic review committee's recommendation to the MSU president. In the rarest of instances, the president of Montana State University may be asked to decide a request for logo exceptions. Generally, however, the university logo must be in broad and constant use without exception for the foreseeable future.

For use of the official university signatures, there are two categories of exceptions that can be considered.

Exceptions may be approved to use another logo with that of the University signature when: The use of the logo of an organization external to the university shows a cooperative relationship, such as with the public schools, which benefits both groups for some clearly definable term.

Exceptions may be approved to subvert or drop the university signature when: An affiliated organization exists which is separately incorporated with its own board of directors or a center is located on one of the university campuses but involves other colleges or interests which would not be adequately represented by the university signature.

The following criteria will be used for considering exceptions:

Evidence that using the university signature as a part of any visual presentation will substantially inhibit the affiliated organization from achieving its fund-raising or other communications goals.

Evidence that using the university signature as a part of any visual presentation would violate laws or regulations imposed by an external agency.

Evidence that combining an external logo with the university signature would substantially enhance the communications capability of both groups.

Evidence that the university signature cannot represent the interests of cooperating groups external to the campus.