Brand and Visual Identity Guidelines
Welcome to the brand and visual identity guidelines for the University of Wisconsin–Madison. These guidelines are designed to assist the university in reaching key audiences with a consistent message that leverages its legacy and prestige. They provide a roadmap for advancing and protecting a valuable asset: UW–Madison, one of the most respected public research universities in the world.

A brand defines what people most commonly associate with our university. We help shape the brand through what and how we communicate about the day-to-day and the long-term nature of our work, and about the people who do that work.

It is challenging to succinctly describe UW–Madison, given its depth and breadth, and its impressive legacy. But it is a legacy worthy of our respect and our protection. These guidelines explain the words and the characteristics we’ve chosen — through careful research with key constituencies — to define our university, to capture what sets us apart from other institutions of higher education, and to share our accomplishments with the rest of the world.

We understand that campus units value their individual identity and that complete uniformity is difficult at an organization as large as ours. But we also know that working as a team to leverage the university’s brand benefits the entire campus. For that reason, we expect every UW–Madison entity to comply with the most critical components of our visual identity system. We also ask that campus units consult with University Relations before working with outside vendors on graphic design, production, photography, video production, or printing. Doing so helps us to implement the brand and visual identity program effectively, economically, and consistently.

We’re proud of this university and the many ways that its people and its work span the state of Wisconsin and beyond. In our fast-paced world that bombards us with messages every day, it’s more important than ever to clearly represent our institution’s presence and strength.

Thank you for helping us to present a public face that is instantly recognizable as UW–Madison.

**Vince Sweeney**

*Vice Chancellor for University Relations*
THE UW–MADISON BRAND

The mission statement for UW–Madison describes the essence of what guides our work every day:

To create, integrate, transfer, and apply knowledge through innovative programs of research, teaching, and public service.

However, there is a subtext to those words: a principle first articulated in 1904 — and admired ever since. It’s called the Wisconsin Idea, and it permeates all that we do at this university. It’s simple in theory, but powerful in execution. As we learn and explore and discover in classrooms or laboratories or natural areas or libraries and more, we take an important step: We share knowledge with the citizens of Wisconsin and beyond. And then we take another important step: We become a resource to others, encouraging a give and take of ideas and opinions.

In turn, these important steps motivate us to examine our mission, then boldly augment that mission by addressing the future. In doing so, we create our vision:

The University of Wisconsin–Madison will be a model public university in the 21st century, serving as a resource to the public and working to enhance the quality of life in the state, the nation, and the world.

Achieving stature as a “model public university,” of course, requires a path. How do we get there? Our positioning statement starts us down that path:

The University of Wisconsin–Madison is a catalyst, where people create change both in themselves and in the world through innovation and exploration.

A brand promise essentially forges the path, giving us the critical tools we need to “create change”:

The University of Wisconsin–Madison provides a comprehensive educational environment in which intelligent, spirited students and scholars can work together to create change that influences Wisconsin and the world.

The Wisconsin Idea is just one of several points of pride that together form a university like no other. Along with the Wisconsin Idea are:

• academic distinction
• groundbreaking research
• global vision
• a progressive history
• a beautiful campus
• limitless opportunities
• a devoted culture known as Badger Spirit
• Midwestern values

As we communicate to both internal and external audiences, we keep in mind brand attributes, words that help to convey our university’s personality. Calling upon these words and noting how they relate to UW–Madison is a helpful step as we work together to align key messages. UW–Madison is:

• intelligent
• spirited
• engaging
• beautiful
• friendly
• Midwestern
• comprehensive
• big
• challenging
• progressive

VISUAL IDENTITY

A visual identity is a way to represent the brand through critical components: names, logos, typefaces, and colors. An identity system spells out how to present a unified front to others, allowing an individual entity to leverage the value of its legitimate connection to a respected institution. The system is a powerful tool for the campus:

• It allows clear communication and a unified voice, rather than confusing audiences with multiple interpretations that can be in conflict.
• It provides instant recognition, a way to immediately differentiate a UW–Madison unit from a similar enterprise at any other college or university.
• It strengthens a unit’s reputation and demonstrates a common mission, a message of “we’re all in this together.”
• It makes a positive association with UW–Madison, leveraging the recognition and feelings of goodwill for the university as a whole among a unit’s key constituencies.
• It helps to avoid duplication of effort, allowing units to perform efficiently and economically during a time when these traits are essential.
• It protects the brand equity, safeguarding the concrete value of a unit’s work from financial or other gains by external groups.
INSTITUTIONAL LOGO

A new institutional logo forms a solid foundation for UW–Madison’s brand and visual identity system. The logo pairs the “W crest” with the words “Wisconsin” and “University of Wisconsin–Madison” and uses official type fonts and colors, and a specific configuration. The logo must be included on websites, publications, or other materials that are developed for certain university entities. (See the Brand Hierarchy section for more details.) The logo may only be used for official university business and is prohibited from use to promote non-university activities or imply endorsement of a non-university activity or product. The logo is a graphic element. Do not include it within narrative text to replace words or attempt to re-create it in any way. Visit the brand and visual identity website at www.uc.wisc.edu/brand/print/index.php for specifications for using the logo.

OFFICIAL COLORS

Color use is one of the most effective ways to make an immediate connection to UW–Madison. The three official colors used in the logo and other related materials are Badger red, gold, and black. The logo must never appear in other colors. Visit the brand and visual identity website at www.uc.wisc.edu/brand/print/colors.php for specifications for official colors and a secondary color palette.

OFFICIAL TYPEFACES

Just as with logos and colors, typography plays an important role in identifying materials that represent the UW–Madison brand. The institutional logo for print applications includes two typefaces: The word “Wisconsin” is reproduced using Friz Quadrata; the words “University of Wisconsin–Madison” use Adobe Garamond Semi-Bold. Because the logo is a graphic element, it should not be re-created using these typefaces. However, a typeface is recommended for use in partnership with the institutional logo for readability and to be aesthetically pleasing. Visit the brand and identity website at www.uc.wisc.edu/brand/print/typography.php for specifications.

SECONDARY LOGO

Schools, colleges, and select campus units must use a newly designed secondary logo that incorporates the W crest, official type fonts and colors, and a specific configuration in keeping with UW–Madison visual identity standards. The secondary logo should be included on websites, publications, or other materials that are developed for these entities. (See the Brand Hierarchy section for more details.) Secondary logos are graphic elements. Do not include them within narrative text to replace words or attempt to re-create them in any way. University Communications will create files of secondary logos for print and electronic products free of charge upon request from schools, colleges, or select campus units. Visit the brand and visual identity website at www.uc.wisc.edu/brand/print/secondary-logos.php for specifications for using the secondary logo.

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

To allow greater flexibility, the logo has been designed in a centered-axis configuration as well as a flush-left version.
BRAND HIERARCHY

Institutions of higher education often call upon a brand architecture model to establish a strategic brand hierarchy for a brand and visual identity system. The five categories within the UW–Madison hierarchy are:

Core brand: The top tier, representing the institution as a whole. Uses the official institutional logo.

Core brand extension: For overarching entities that advance the overall mission of the university and align very closely with the core brand, such as schools and colleges. Uses an official secondary logo.

Secondary brand extension: An administrative office, support unit or academic department that supports the overall mission of the university. Uses an official secondary logo.

Sub-brand: An entity that is linked to UW–Madison’s core brand for strategic and economic reasons. Uses a logo that may incorporate key elements of the core brand (such as colors), but does so in a way that establishes a more independent look. For example:

Independent brand: An entity that uses an understated visual connection to the university because of an affiliation with multiple universities, an external funding source, or a mission that differs significantly from the university’s core missions. For example:

OTHER UNIVERSITY LOGOS

Along with UW–Madison’s institutional logo, three additional official logos are available for use in specific circumstances. The University of Wisconsin Athletics Graphic Identity Manual (http://licensing.wisc.edu/pdfs/uwAthleticsIDmanual.pdf) contains guidelines for their use.
STATIONERY SYSTEM

Using UW–Madison letterhead, envelopes, and business cards is one of the most effective ways to convey official university business. Both a level of formality and visual consistency are achieved via the use of approved logos, typefaces, colors, and paper stock. Campus units may order stationery materials online at www.uwdoitprintingstore.org, Digital Publishing and Printing’s online store.
WEB STANDARDS

Web templates
As part of an institutional home page redesign in 2010, a template was created for university web publishers that incorporates the official logo and colors, and links to the UW–Madison home page, MyUW, and the search function.

This template should be used for school- and college-level sites linked from the UW home page, sites that have an institutional scope beyond a single department, and administrative units that serve the entire campus. Units must not attempt to modify or re-create this template in any way. The template is designed to be consistent with the UW home page, yet adaptable to allow a unit to have a distinct identity via content, photographs, and other elements that fall below the template’s top banner.

Units that would like additional guidance for customizing a web page may use one of the additional design templates or contact University Communications for help with customization.

UW–Madison units that do not use the templates must follow minimum web standards.


Logo use on the web
Units must follow visual identity standards when using the official logo on the web. Visit the brand and identity website at www.uc.wisc.edu/brand/templates-and-downloads/web-logos.php for these standards.

Web color palette and secondary color palette
Units must follow correct color specifications when using UW–Madison’s official colors (Badger red, gold, and black) on the web. A secondary palette of colors may be used in addition to the official Badger red, gold, and black, providing flexibility when producing a web site, yet protecting the integrity of the university’s brand. Visit the brand and identity website at www.uc.wisc.edu/brand/web/colors.php for these color specifications.

Web accessibility
All university web pages must be accessible to users with disabilities. For additional information, visit the Division of Information Technology’s Web Accessibility Resources at www.doit.wisc.edu/accessibility/.

VIDEO STANDARDS

Using UW–Madison’s visual identity in video is an effective way to leverage a unit’s connection to the power of the university’s brand. Depending on the length, content, and intended audience for a video, there are several ways to integrate the brand into a video presentation. Visit the brand and identity website at www.uc.wisc.edu/brand/video for details about available video assets, standards, and downloadable files.

EDITORIAL STANDARDS

University Communications provides an editorial style guide that includes various statements for publication, guidelines regarding the use of university photos, and other policies. Visit the style guide at http://universityrelations.wisc.edu/policies/editorial.php.

TRADEMARK AND LICENSING

The UW–Madison institutional logo and a number of other logos and marks have value because they represent the history, identity, and prestige of a respected organization. They are protected by federal trademark laws. Any vendor that wishes to use UW–Madison logos must be licensed by the Office of Trademark Licensing. Visit www.licensing.wisc.edu for more information.

ADVERTISING AND OTHER POLICIES

Visit the brand and identity website at http://universityrelations.wisc.edu/policies/advertising.php for policies related to advertising, posting banners on campus, and campus signage.

REVIEW PROCESS AND CONTACTS

A Brand and Identity Committee within University Relations meets monthly to review requests from campus units that fall outside the brand and visual identity guidelines. Use the following e-mail addresses to send questions or requests for additional information:
• Brand and visual identity standards: brand@uc.wisc.edu
• Photo usage: photos@uc.wisc.edu
• Video usage: video@uc.wisc.edu

FAQs

Visit the brand and identity website at www.uc.wisc.edu/brand/frequently-asked-questions.php for Frequently Asked Questions about the guidelines.