WCU
WEST CHESTER
UNIVERSITY

WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

BRAND GUIDELINES

VERSION 2.0

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WELCOME TO
THE WEST CHESTER
UNIVERSITY BRAND

West Chester University's bright past and bold future together informed the look, feel, and tone of everything that you'll find within this brand guide. This university has been inspiring minds, forging new pathways, and building new communities since our founding in 1871.

It has been central to the economic, cultural, and social vitality of Pennsylvania and beyond. A university for all—a golden beacon of access and inclusivity promoting excellence, opening doors, and providing opportunities otherwise inaccessible. This story is the foundation of our brand, which is more than just a logo or tagline. It's what students, alumni, faculty, partners, parents, and peers feel as they encounter our university out in the world. This guide will help define how we are telling this story in all of our communications, to our existing community, to our alumni network, to prospective students and parents, and to the world.

BRAND STANDARDS

The most recognizable brands establish relationships through consistency. They are familiar and distinct—to audiences, these brands stand for something. Their communications come from the same source, despite that the brand may be speaking to very different audiences in very different areas.

This document will make unifying all communications from West Chester University easier to navigate. It was shaped by and for those who create West Chester University marketing and communication materials. Our brand will express itself in many places, speaking across digital, print, social, video, and more. Follow these guidelines to keep our brand consistent. These rules aren't in place to simply regulate creative—they are here to define and inspire, to differentiate and standardize, to serve as a platform that amplifies the West Chester University brand to the world.
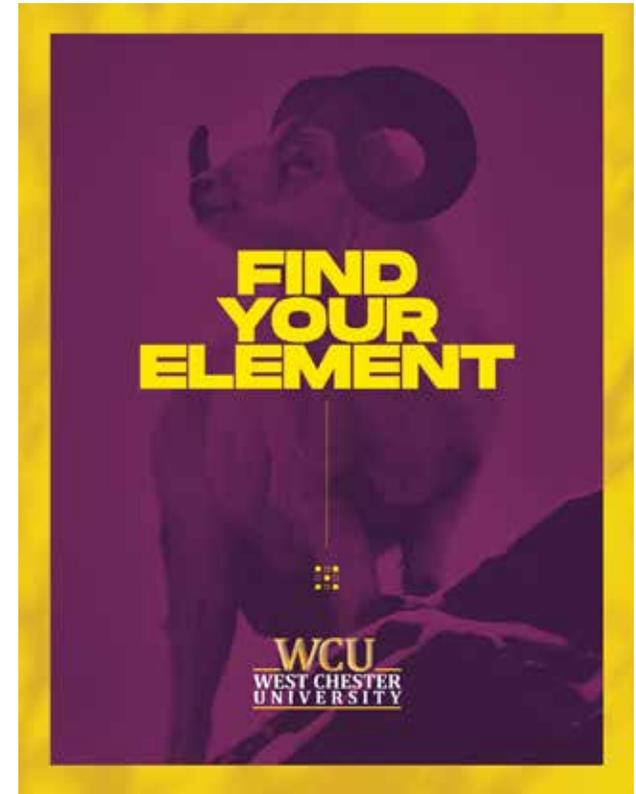
Brand Toolkit

To ensure proper usage, start with University Communications and Marketing. We'll work with you to ensure your efforts are on point and on brand, no matter the medium.

WCUPA.EDU/COMMUNICATIONS

THIS IS A LIVING DOCUMENT
Elements outlined within are subject to change.

DISCLAIMER // Some photos in this guide may be part of the conceptual work and are not owned by West Chester University.

OUR BRAND

BRAND POSITIONING

BRAND PILLARS

BRAND PLATFORM

BRAND POSITIONING

Our positioning statement is a brief articulation of what we stand for. It is a concise, internally facing idea intended to reflect our unique purpose. This phrase is not a tagline; instead, it is used to shape and guide brand communications. The Brand Positioning statement is influenced and formed by the support pillars, and serves as a guide for all marketing communications. The four pillars, on the next page, should be used to guide content strategy and other brand communications.

FORGING PATHWAYS THAT ENDURE AND INSPIRE

There isn't just one path to success. We owe it to ourselves, and our community, to pave new ones—creating individualized, long-term solutions so our students have the best access to resources for success on their journeys here and beyond. And we are deeply committed to building meaningful futures by creating opportunities and avenues that didn't exist before. It's not just about overcoming obstacles. At West Chester, we believe that it is our distinct responsibility.

BRAND PILLARS

The pillars are values unique to West Chester University and serve to influence the work on the following pages. Brand pillars are generally not referenced outside the organization, but they may be used as a framework for message development, and serve to influence all creative work.

1. Laying Meaningful Foundations

A successful future starts with a strong foundation and WCU provides the building blocks for each individual to pursue their passions as they embark on their own distinctive path. From affordable tuition to specialized programs, these are degrees and partnerships built for life, founded on a belief that higher education should be a realistic possibility for everyone and the resources needed aren't one-size-fits-all.

3. Shaped by the Collective

At WCU, students don't just pass through campus fitting into some pre-established mold—every individual helps define our culture and build upon our legacy. We are an amalgamation of every member of the WCU family, and the experiences they bring and have here, connected by an innate desire to discover what's next: for ourselves, for the community, and for the greater good.

2. Rooted for Growth

Our people have roots here, whether deeply ingrained or newly planted, which allows them to grow at West Chester and beyond. Our campus is growing into itself and constantly seeking opportunities to expand our offerings and capabilities and progress forward while staying true to our origins. We're rooted in a small-town culture with the potential for big, real-world impact.

4. Transforming the Path Ahead

It's not just our goal, but distinct responsibility to transform the opportunities for and futures of the individuals who come through our institution. As a leader in the PASSHE system, we're entrusted with providing a quality education to our students. But this is not the means to an end—it's the beginning. We're not just about results, we're about results that matter, and it's the responsibility of each of us to identify opportunities for change and create the pathways forward.

BRAND PLATFORM

FIND YOUR ELEMENT

Something happens when you find yourself here. You find your element. You find your passion and the path to realize it. You find it in a classroom educating tomorrow's brightest minds. Or bringing national championships home at the end of the season. Or powering inclusion that starts on campus and leads everywhere else. Your element is here and will fuel you far beyond West Chester. When you're in your element, you realize the raw potential and shine at your brightest.

This brand platform is intended to further guide concept development and execution, set a baseline tone, and function as a springboard for the entire brand expression.

BRAND VOICE

BRAND VOICE

TONE AND OUR AUDIENCES

HEADLINES

BRAND VOICE

The West Chester University brand is enterprising, intentional, connected, inclusive, and ambitious. Our voice reflects these notes. Our language is bold yet inquisitive, singular yet communicative, all to inspire our audience to elevate themselves and advance tomorrow. We speak clearly about ourselves and with our audiences to best power progress.

Start with the brand purpose, message pillars, and tone words as your guide. The copy that we create should prompt readers to question and answer everything, including themselves, challenging them to challenge themselves and accompany us on an exploration that starts in Chester County and leads everywhere else.

TONE WORDS

ENTERPRISING
We are always looking forward. Looking not to relive the past but to pursue what's next and keep our minds open to new possibilities.

INTENTIONAL
This exploration is full of deliberate purpose. We know where we are, and where we want to be. We know how to get there.

CONNECTED
Our strength is in our connectivity. To our state, to our community, to all that make up our vibrant network of individuals.

INCLUSIVE
Our doors are open. We are always looking to broaden and diversify our community. We are enriched and inspired by new ideas and perspectives.
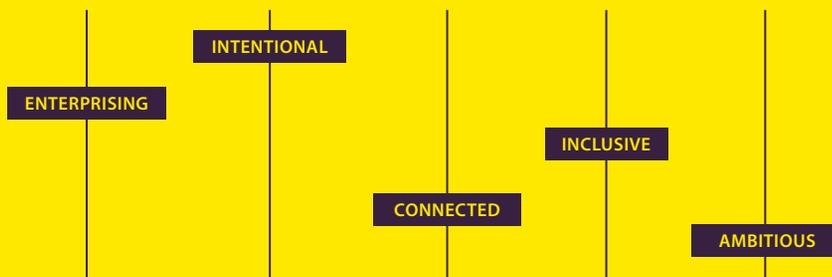
AMBITIOUS
Achievement is always in our sights. It may look different for each of us, but we share the drive to make our goals become realities.
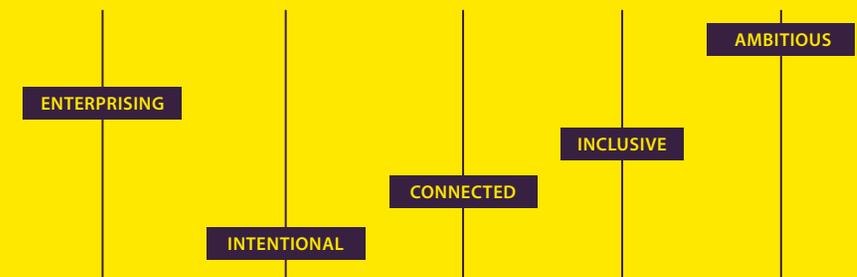
TONE AND OUR AUDIENCES

Our brand speaks in one voice and comes from one place, but the audiences we speak to—students, parents, partners, peers, etc.—
are wide and extremely varied. The WCU brand must flex its tone, depending on which audiences we're speaking with.
Below, you'll find our tone words arranged in an equalizer to visualize how we must scale them up or dial them down (these
examples are illustrative). Much like a public speaker, our brand voice should adapt to its every audience.

PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

INTENTIONAL

ENTERPRISING

INCLUSIVE

CONNECTED

AMBITIOUS

CAMPUS COMMUNITY

AMBITIOUS

ENTERPRISING

INCLUSIVE

CONNECTED

INTENTIONAL

ALUMNI AND DONORS

AMBITIOUS

INCLUSIVE

CONNECTED

ENTERPRISING

INTENTIONAL

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

CONNECTED

AMBITIOUS

INCLUSIVE

INTENTIONAL

ENTERPRISING
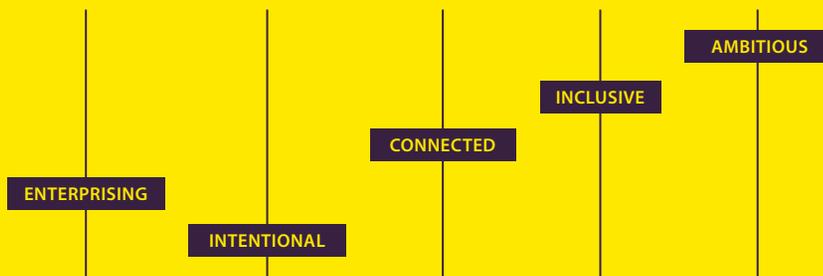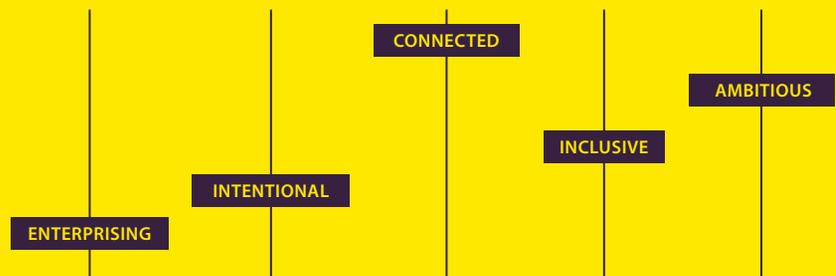
HEADLINES

Your headline has the power to turn heads. It's often the first and last opportunity to grab your reader's undivided attention and make them dive into your story. These lines should be as smart as they are simple. They should be stimulating and, most times, short. It's crucial that you don't jam too much information into your headline—if the line is confusing or takes more than a moment to understand, you've lost your reader.

With West Chester University, remember the brand purpose. At its core, students are finding something. Their four or more years will be a period of discovery and self-discovery. Play with that. Don't forget that your word choice can be unconventional and multifaceted. Double meanings are engaging. Headlines can be innovative through context, pairing straightforward language with unexpected photography to make more powerful statements as a whole piece of creative.

EXAMPLES

FOUND WHERE OPEN PERSPECTIVES CLOSE GAPS.

FROM A NEW PERSPECTIVE, YOU FIND IT.

FOUND IN THE LAST DROP OF EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT.

DISCOVER WHERE YOU ARE THE BEST YOU.

FOUND WHERE YOU LOSE YOURSELF.

SECTION 3

VISUAL BRAND

EXAMPLES

COLOR PALETTE

TYPOGRAPHY

PHOTO TEXTURES

VISUAL BRAND EXAMPLES

Our visual brand makes the WCU voice more unique and powerful. The following pages deconstruct and explain the visual elements that define our look and feel.

COLOR PALETTE

Our university brand uses a hierarchy of color palettes outlined below. These colors are a strong and unique element of every piece that we create, and allow our communications to be focused, unified, and recognizable as the West Chester University brand. Always use the correct colors when using these colors in digital and print work. Please consider contrast, legibility, and ADA compliance when designing with the color palette.

UNIVERSITY CLASSIC

Purple and Gold are our classic colors, still used around campus and in Athletics.

Classic Purple
Pantone 269

Classic Gold
Pantone 123

BRAND PRIMARY

These updated versions of Purple and Gold are the primary colors for our new brand work. They are bold, fresh, and versatile.

Elemental Purple

Pantone 7449

CMYK: 76/88/44/49

Digital: R-56 G-33 B-64
Hex# 382140

Elemental Gold

Pantone Yellow

CMYK: 0/5/100/0

Digital: R-255 G-232 B-0
Hex# ffe800

BRAND SECONDARY

These secondary colors expand and complement our brand color palette. When applied strategically, they add visual depth and dynamics to our brand communication.

Accent Purple

Pantone 7657

CMYK: 58/92/34/20

Digital: R-110 G-48 B-97
Hex# 6e3061

Accent Gold

Pantone 7555

CMYK: 18/36/100/0

Digital: R-212 G-161 B-41
Hex# d4a129

THIS IS AN RGB DOCUMENT

All colors shown are RGB swatches
and will not print accurately.

CONTRAST AND LEGIBILITY

The WCU Brand Campaign color palette reinforces a sense of strength and energy for all communications. It is flexible and made of bold, bright colors that create dynamic, expressive communications. In choosing color combinations for layout, color contrast is an extremely important consideration. Be sure to be mindful of this, and use higher-contrast combinations where appropriate. Be sure to take special care with reverse type and type overlays.

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN USING THE COLOR PALETTE

1 /   Do not routinely use red for type. Appropriate uses of red
        are limited to error messages and emergency alerts.

2 /   Do not use tints of the brand colors — colors diluted with white.

3 /   Use color type with care, avoiding non-ADA-compliant colors.

4 /   Do not compromise legibility by choosing low-contrast color combinations.

COLOR CONTRAST FOR THE WEB

When creating new digital content within the brand for West Chester University, it is important to ensure the contrast between colors is high enough to pass WCAG 2.0 AA accessibility standards. This grid provides an overview of the WCU campaign primary and secondary colors, and the level of contrast that exists between each. Reference the top of the grid for the intended text color and the left column of the grid for the intended background color.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

• Always accommodate for the 1 in 5 users that have a disability
   and rely on website accessibility.

• Make sure the overall layout of the page is purposeful
   and provides meaning.

• Ensure headers provide context to the page.

• Use lists, bullets, and numbers to make text easy to skim and read.

• Always provide appropriate alternative text for media content,
   such as images and videos.

• Make sure link text makes sense, even out of context.

• Don't rely on color to convey pertinent information.

• For video and live audio content, always implement subtitles,
   captions, or transcripts.

• Make sure these users can submit forms.

• Refer to w3.Org/wai for more accessibility information.

Text → / Background ↓	#FFFFFF	#FFE800	#FFAE2E	#D4A129	#6E3061	#4B257D	#382140	#000000
White #FFFFFF		Text 1.25 DNP	Text 1.8 DNP	Text 2.3 DNP	Text 9 AAA	Text 11 AAA	Text 14 AAA	Text 21 AAA
Elemental Gold #FFE800	Text 1.2 DNP		Text 1.5 DNP	Text 1.9 DNP	Text 7.4 AAA	Text 9 AAA	Text 12 AAA	Text 16.8 AAA
Classic Gold #FFAE2E	Text 1.8 DNP	Text 1.5 DNP		Text 1.2 DNP	Text 5 AA	Text 6.1 AA	Text 7.8 AAA	Text 11.3 AAA
Accent Gold #D4A129	Text 2.3 DNP	Text 1.9 DNP	Text 1.2 DNP		Text 4 AA	Text 4.8 AA	Text 6.1 AA	Text 8.9 AAA
Accent Purple #6E3061	Text 9 AAA	Text 7.4 AAA	Text 5 AA	Text 4 AA		Text 1.2 DNP	Text 1.5 DNP	Text 2.3 DNP
Classic Purple #4B257D	Text 11 AAA	Text 9 AAA	Text 6.1 AA	Text 4.8 AA	Text 1.2 DNP		Text 1.3 DNP	Text 1.9 DNP
Elemental Purple #382140	Text 14 AAA	Text 12 AAA	Text 7.8 AAA	Text 6.1 AA	Text 1.5 DNP	Text 1.3 DNP		Text 1.5 DNP
Black #000000	Text 21 AAA	Text 16.8 AAA	Text 11.3 AAA	Text 8.9 AAA	Text 2.3 DNP	Text 1.9 DNP	Text 1.5 DNP	

AAA Pass, AAA (7+)   **AA** Pass, AA (4+)   **DNP** Does Not Pass

TYPOGRAPHY

Typography plays an integral role in supporting every communication from the brand. Our two typefaces—Phonk and Myriad Pro—work together to create our distinctive typography system. These unique typefaces were chosen to add the unique identity of West Chester University to each headline and block of body copy.

DISPLAY PRIMARY PRINT/DIGITAL

PHONK CONTRAST

DISPLAY SECONDARY PRINT/DIGITAL

PHONK REGULAR

BODY COPY PRINT

Myriad Pro

PHONK CONTRAST IS AN IMPACTFUL DISPLAY TYPEFACE FOR HEADLINE USE.

PHONK REGULAR IS USED FOR SUBHEADLINES AND CALL OUTS.

MYRIAD PRO is a geometric sans-serif typeface used to set body copy. It works hard while remaining elegant—beautifully streaming body copy sentence after sentence. Leading is increased between lines and a slight kerning is applied between characters.

PRIMARY HEADLINE STYLE:

This utility style can be used across all media: from digital to print, motion, and more.

It is set in UPPERCASE, using periods at the end of full sentences. Below are some examples:
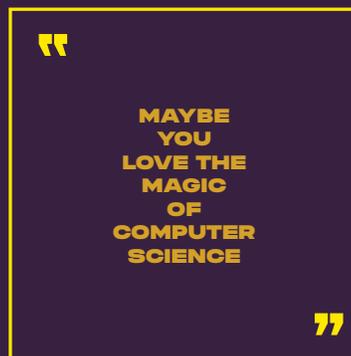
FOUND WHERE NEW DIRECTION UNFOLDS.

FOUND WHERE YOU LOSE YOURSELF.

FOUND WHERE EVERY MOMENT COUNTS.

SUBHEAD, CALL OUT, AND BODY COPY STYLES

Phonk Contrast is used for subheads:

FIND YOUR PASSION
FIND YOUR PURPOSE

Phonk Regular is used for call outs:

"
MAYBE
YOU
LOVE THE
MAGIC
OF
COMPUTER
SCIENCE
"

Myriad Pro is used for body copy:

We believe that you are a force of potential energy, ready to create change and shape the world of tomorrow. At West Chester University, we'll help you find your path, and we'll teach you how to harness your power and charge ahead. So get ready. Make every moment count. Make your future brighter. Find your element.

TYPOGRAPHY BEST PRACTICES

Setting type is a subtle art, and it's important to have some guidelines in place to ensure legibility and continuity of the brand. Here are some general rules to keep in mind when laying out type for headlines or body copy.

Headlines are always set larger than the body copy and in the bold weight, which provides the most contrast from body copy.

THINGS TO AVOID WHEN SETTING HEADLINES

1 / Do not create your own modifications to the font.
   Use only the typefaces provided by the foundries.

2 / Do not place the headline over a photo in such a way that the legibility is compromised.

3 / Do not vary the size of a specific weight or style within a headline treatment.

THINGS TO AVOID WHEN SETTING BODY COPY

1 / Do not track body copy more than +5pts as it can be difficult to read.

2 / Do not set body copy in all bold; it will become too dense to read at small sizes.

3 / Do not place the copy over a photo in such a way that the legibility is compromised.

4 / Do not set body copy in a weight other than light, regular, or medium for call-outs.

PHOTO TEXTURES

To create photographic textures, we use a branded purple color effect. This is best achieved with a gradient map using our two versions of purple. Use these textures in place of a solid color background and not for portraits or foreground content.

BRAND ASSETS ARE USED BY UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING
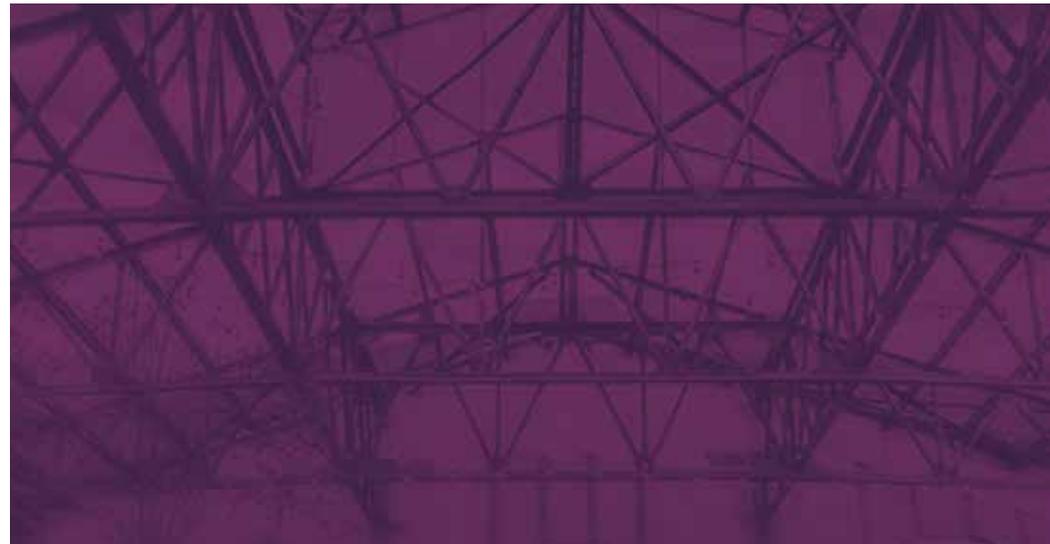
PHOTOGRAPHY
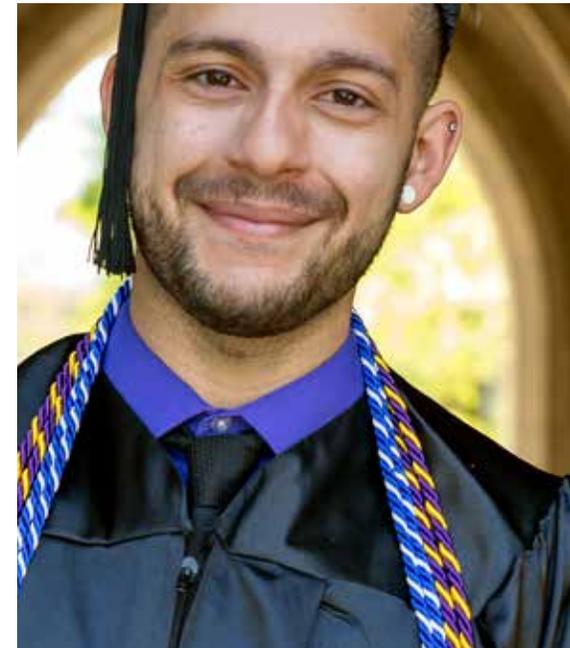
PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY

ACTION PHOTOGRAPHY

ENVIRONMENTAL PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTOGRAPHY TREATMENTS

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY

Our brand photography should capture subjects who are in their element—
using close-up portrait photography with natural lighting of students, faculty,
and others, each engaged in a moment or self-reflection.

ACTION PHOTOGRAPHY

Capturing the spirit and activity of life at West Chester is also important. Our portraiture can also be in action, both as individuals and in groups. From quieter moments of focus to louder moments of action, these really show students in their element.

ENVIRONMENTAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Scenic campus shots are strong branding elements. Use these scenes to visualize both the institution and the experiences that students discover throughout their stories. Capture iconic views and slice-of-life moments.

PHOTOGRAPHY TREATMENTS

ACCEPTABLE PHOTOGRAPHY

1 / TONE AND COLOR
Correct tone and color to ensure accurate reproduction of the
original photograph.

2 / RETOUCHING AND EDITING
Make technical touch-ups such as balancing and removing flaws (scratches, dust spots,
digital noise, etc.) to achieve better reproduction.

3 / CROPPING
Cut into a photograph to remove distracting elements to create a more interesting
composition.

4 / BLACK AND WHITE
Convert color images to black and white if and when the context
of the piece calls for the adjustment.

5 / COLOR OVERLAY
Implement color tints on select images to create a more graphic
quality in your work.

UNACCEPTABLE ADJUSTMENTS

1 / CONTENT ALTERATION
Avoid content alteration, for example, moving, adding, deleting, combining,
stretching, flipping, or shrinking, etc.

2 / OVER-CROPPING
Avoid cropping an image so severely that the subject and emotion of the
photo are compromised.

3 / OVER-EDITING
Avoid combining multiple overlays or editing in a way that the subject
matter becomes hard to discern or looks out of brand.

4 / ULTERIOR COLOR OVERLAYS
Avoid applying color overlays that do not reflect the hierarchy of the
West Chester University color palette. Only use the gradient map photo
treatments provided in the photo treatment section. Neutrals, accents,
and tint colors are not to be used on their own to create gradient
map variations.

LOGOS

PRIMARY LOGO

ATHLETICS PRIMARY LOGO

PRIMARY LOGO

The primary WCU logo is an essential element to our visual brand and represents our entire university. The primary WCU logo is the most identifiable visual that can be used across all university communication to help us ensure consistency.

BRAND ASSETS ARE USED BY UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

1 / PRIMARY LOGO ON PURPLE

Our primary institutional logo is our WCU bevel with wordmark. This is used on many internal and external documents and remains our primary logo for most use cases.

2 / PRIMARY LOGO ON WHITE

This is the primary logo for use on light backgrounds. See our extended visual identity guide for more information on usage.

PRIMARY ATHLETICS LOGO

The primary WCU athletics logo represents all of our athletic programs. As requested, Graphics & Printing also uses the ram logo in official University designs for WCU units and organizations.

BRAND ASSETS ARE USED BY UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

1 / ATHLETICS LOGO

Our Athletics programs use this logo of our golden ram with text as their primary visual brand identity. Here is the version for light color backgrounds. See our extended visual identity guide for usage.

2 / GOLDEN RAM LOGO

Here is our Golden Ram Logo on purple and other dark-colored backgrounds, which includes the yellow outline for clearer outer boundary and to avoid the need for an outer glow.

WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

BRAND GUIDELINES RESOURCES

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about how to use the brand guidelines or any other concerns regarding the new West Chester University brand, please contact University Communications and Marketing.

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