Communication Standards for Institutional Brand Identity

June 2015
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Introduction and Contacts

This communication standards guide for institutional branding is designed to be a reference for implementing the visual and narrative identity of Northern Illinois University. It is important to use these elements correctly and consistently to build the university’s brand and enhance understanding of the institution and its various divisions, colleges, departments and programs. A unified commitment to institutional branding will support our ability to deliver on our mission.

Building and maintaining the Northern Illinois University brand identity is an institutional priority set by the President and managed by the Division of Marketing and Communications with support from the University Marketing and Communications Council.

Any questions regarding these brand guidelines can be directed to the following areas:

**Communication Standards and Institutional Branding**
Marketing and Communications
marcomm@niu.edu

**Logos and Sub-Branding**
Creative Services, 753-6070
publications@niu.edu

**Web Site Design**
Creative Services, 753-1681
webcommunications@niu.edu

**University Letterhead and Business Cards**
Document Services, 753-1692
documentservices@wpo.cso.niu.edu

**Athletic Identity**
Athletics Marketing, 753-0639
rsedevie@niu.edu
The NIU Core Narrative
Who We Are, What We Offer

Introduction:
The Importance of Narrative Consistency

Our graphic identity standards ensure that we have a consistent look and feel to our communications, there is a definitive visual sense of NIU across all visual communications media and that we create a sense of cumulative impact in our visual presence. Similarly, the way we talk and write about the university should have a consistency and adhere to a set of key themes that represents the character of NIU and the value proposition that an NIU education represents.

Our core narrative is based on a *positioning statement* that represents in aggregate our value proposition. Embedded in the narrative are three key *themes* that animate the positioning statement. Underpinning these three themes are *proof points* that deliver on and make credible both the positioning statement and the themes.

The positioning statement and the themes can be expressed in different ways, but the essence of these narrative components should be manifest in our communications. In addition, proof points will vary from division to division, college to college and department to department, so it is up to each entity to develop the proof points in their respective areas that are most compelling and credible.
The NIU Core Narrative

Developing the Narrative

The development of a core narrative for NIU began with looking at those attributes that are most salient to the enterprise, then "laddering" from there to determine what kind of benefits to the student those attributes represent, and then elevating from the benefits dimension to identify the key themes or overarching concepts that reflect the overall value proposition of the university.

This exercise then becomes the basis for framing up a positioning statement that encompasses the thematic concepts and provides an “umbrella” for talking about the key strengths we bring to the table that contribute to the credibility and attractiveness of our value proposition.

Laddering to a Value Proposition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>BENEFITS</th>
<th>VALUE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University Resources</td>
<td>Student-Centered Education</td>
<td>Your Future, Our Focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive Staff</td>
<td></td>
<td>University experience tailored to who I am today and what I want to become tomorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors Program</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Mentoring</td>
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<td>Learning Communities</td>
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<td>Nationally-Recognized Programs</td>
<td>Big University Resources; Small College Culture</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Distinguished Faculty</td>
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<td>Athletics</td>
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<td>Entertainment</td>
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<td>Extra-Curricular Activities</td>
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<td>Community Engagement</td>
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<td>Communiversity Initiatives</td>
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<td>Research</td>
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<td>Engaged Learning</td>
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<td>Internships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alumni Network</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Career Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The NIU Core Narrative

Developing the Narrative

Positioning Statement
Our positioning statement is as follows:
At Northern Illinois University, we offer each student the best of both worlds: the resources and breadth of a large university with the culture, mindset and accessibility of a smaller college. We take a “student-centered” approach that provides the resources, tools and guidance necessary to build a tailored experience that is rewarding and transformative. When you come to Northern, you have the opportunity to build your own life while you’re here—and create the foundation for achieving career success when you graduate.

Inherent in the statement are three key themes:

• Large university, small college culture. At NIU, students have the best of both worlds—the opportunity to live and learn at a large university with significant resources, but at the same time a friendly, welcoming place where people support and nurture them and make sure they’re getting what they need.

• Student-centered education. Forget the organizational charts and hierarchies. When it comes to delivering higher education, our people and our resources are organized around the individual students; who they are, what they aspire to, and what resources are required to support their ability to lead the life they want both today and after college.

• Student career success. This is what we’re all about—delivering a tailored, individualized approach to education rooted in the concept of engagement that results in our graduates being ready to succeed in the career of their choice.

The result of our approach to educating our students is that they have the opportunity to build their own life—a lifestyle that fits them and recognizes their uniqueness as individuals.
The NIU Core Narrative

Implementing the Narrative

The following are examples of how we have employed the narrative in published communications:

At NIU, we are committed to providing each of our students with a rewarding experience that is in-line with their long-term objectives and tailored to their individual needs, desires, and talents. Delivering an educational experience that is student-centered and leads to career success depends on our ability to engage our students and keep them engaged.


NIU is a place where students come for the kind of student-centered approach to education that helps them forge a life on campus that is uniquely tailored to their needs and interests. And, because of the close learning relationships students form with faculty and staff, it’s an approach that ultimately results in career success when they leave our campus.

—Doug Baker, President’s Letter in Northern Now, Fall 2014

Our cornerstone goal is student career success, and we help our students reach this goal by providing a personalized, tailored approach to their individual needs and long-term goals. In doing so we put them at the center of everything we do. All of our academic and staff resources are marshaled in their service. We offer the best of both worlds—a first class education at a university with immense resources and a wealth of educational options to choose from, in the context of a friendly environment where people care about each other and feel part of a true community of citizens and scholars.

—Doug Baker, Evans Scholarship Program, January 2015

Tagline—Concept, Usage and Rationale

As part of the narrative, we have developed a new tagline to be integrated into our controlled communications channels. The tagline is meant to:

• Focus on students and their aspirations
• Reinforce our commitment to student career success
• Demonstrate that the student is at the center of our universe
• Encompass all three thematic elements of the NIU narrative

The tagline is “Your Future, Our Focus,” which is meant to encapsulate the three themes in a way that is memorable, easy to use in a variety of media and adaptable to different narrative contexts. Colleges or departments that don’t have their own tagline are encouraged to use “Your Future, Our Focus” with the logo.

Tone of Voice

Our tone should be warm, personal and inviting. We should use active voice wherever possible and avoid impersonal, institutional language. Visuals and copy should work together to create an overall impression of an organization that cares about its own people and who it serves, and works hard to make connections both on and off campus.
The NIU Core Narrative

Narrative Footprint

The narrative footprint connects the three elements of our narrative—the positioning statement, thematic concepts and associated proof points. For the overall university this narrative footprint is the following:

- **Tagline:** Your Future, Our Focus
- **Themes:**
  - Student Career Success
  - Big University Resources/Small College Culture
  - Student-Centered Education
- **Proof Points:**
  - Internships
  - Mentor program
  - Engaged alumni network
  - Research rookies
  - Alumni success
  - Nationally-recognized curriculum
  - Education mapped to critical skills
  - Top tier public university (U.S. News and World Report)
  - Social networks
  - Fraternities/sororities
  - Community engagement opportunities
  - Advising tailored to the individual
  - 140 majors
  - Access to Chicago for both entertainment and work
  - Learning Communities
  - 16-1 teacher/student ratio
  - Professors who care about teaching
  - Friendly, accessible staff
  - Seven colleges, many major options
  - Mentoring programs
  - Diverse internship options
  - Affordability
  - MAP-Works
  - Financial aid

To achieve narrative consistency, we urge the various parts of the university to adopt this thematic framework, with each college, department or division citing its own proof points to deliver the narrative in a way that is tailored to their individual needs and audiences.
The NIU Core Narrative

Integrating the Pillars into the NIU Narrative

Our cornerstone goal as an enterprise is “student career success,” which is also one of the primary themes of our university narrative. We can use the concept either thematically or when we are talking about our institutional goal. Such use is mutually reinforcing and should build awareness of our single-minded commitment to realizing this goal.

The three pillars that underpin the key objective of “student career success” are financial sustainability, ethically inspired leadership and thriving communities. They can be easily integrated into the narrative, either as a way of demonstrating proof of our key themes or our overall positioning that is manifested in the tagline “Your Future, Our Focus.”

• For example, our thematic concept of “student-centered education” enhances the perception of NIU’s ability to deliver a differentiated campus experience, which should translate into higher retention rates. Higher retention directly and favorably affects our ability to deliver on our “financial sustainability” pillar.

• Another example would be the community outreach opportunities that we offer our students, through which they gain experience that may eventually translate into their achieving career success. This also underscores the university’s commitment to the “thriving communities” pillar.

The bottom line is that all components of the NIU narrative are mutually reinforcing and can be related in communications to the three pillars and the cornerstone objective of “student career success.”
The NIU Core Narrative

Connecting the “Triangle” with the Narrative

Our strategic framework for the university begins with consideration of the “triangle,” which demonstrates graphically the need to connect the student and faculty to the world at large, in an effort to deliver the kind of real-world, engaged experiences the student will need to ensure his or her career success when leaving NIU.

The triangle was developed in recognition that:

• A major issue that has surfaced in surveys of potential employers is that college campuses are disconnected from the world around them, so that the skills that students learn are not necessarily the skills being sought by these employers.

• The more engaged a student is both in class and in out of classroom experiences, the more marketable he or she is and the more likely they are to experience career success over the long term. In fact, a study done by Purdue University and underwritten by the Lumina Foundation shows that the level of engagement that a student maintains while in school is the single largest determinant of long-term career success and fulfillment. It is more important than whether a student matriculates from a public or private university or whether they attend a “prestige” school.

The triangle is being used by each unit across the university to demonstrate the connection among students, faculty, support services and the outside world for given programs and initiatives.

The triangle connects with our narrative in a variety of ways:

• Closing the triangle means that we are providing engaging opportunities such as faculty-sponsored research, internships, mentoring and externships that will ultimately help students build the skills that employers seek in entry-level employees, thereby contributing to the cornerstone goal (and a major narrative theme) of student career success.

• The student is at the “top” of the triangle, meaning that all of our efforts begin and end with that individual. This feeds into our theme of “student-centered” education that is tailored to the needs of the individual student’s aspirations, needs and objectives.

• The triangle applies to those things that are most relevant to the individual student, which feeds into our theme of having the culture of a smaller college with the resources and scope of a large university.
Brand Voice

Speaking in a Consistent Brand Voice
Our brand voice conveys the personality of our communications and is created through the careful use of language, i.e., the words we choose to convey our message.

Our voice should:
• Reflect our brand personality, which is warm, inviting and accessible
• Reflect our promise of putting students at the center of what we do
• Demonstrate active engagement
• Enhance comprehension
• Complement our graphic style, which uses authentic, warm human images

Language should be conversational and include everyday words that create a sense of concreteness.

Example:
“We experienced inclement weather.”
“It rained hard for days.”

Here are some other ways that language can create a voice that best represents our brand:
• Be concise. Editing content and eliminating unnecessary words can support the brand voice and enhance comprehension.

• Use personal-sounding pronouns. Whenever possible, use “we,” “us,” “they” and “you” rather than words such as “one” or “students.” Personal-sounding pronouns speak directly to an individual on his or her level and demonstrate that there are people behind our institution.

Examples:
“One may have a good time…”
“You’ll have a great time…”

“NIU is focused on your future…”
“We’re focused on your future…”
Brand Voice

• **Use active voice rather than passive voice.** We’re often tempted to use passive voice to create the sense that NIU is an institution rather than an individual who takes action. But active voice is almost always better.

  Examples:
  “Mistakes were made.”
  “We made a mistake.”

  “Courses in accounting may be found…”
  “You can find our accounting courses…”

  “Knowledge may be obtained…”
  “You can learn about this by…”

• **Avoid using long words when a shorter one will do.** Shorter words are more understandable and can have more impact (e.g., “get” rather than “acquire,” “stir” rather than “agitate” or “lean” rather than “incline”).

• **Consider metaphors and colloquialisms.** They can also help personalize communications, and we use many of them every day without necessarily realizing it (e.g., “bulls and bears,” “the boiling frog syndrome,” “town and gown”).

• **Be “muscular” in the use of language.** We are not tentative about our commitments. Use words like “we will” and “we’re going to do” rather than “we think,” “we may” or “we’ll probably do that.”

NIU Examples
Here are some examples of existing copy in our current collateral directed at students and how this copy might be made warmer, more personal and more inviting:

Before: At NIU, we provide you with the perfect environment to explore your options.
Better: At NIU, we’ll help you discover what excites you the most and prepare you to rock the world.

Before: It’s your responsibility to do the following:
Better: Come join us! All you need to do now is:
Clearinghouse Review

As a university-wide effort to further integrate communications, marketing materials and content, The Division of Marketing & Communications created the Clearinghouse Review, through which all communications, marketing materials and products for NIU stakeholders should be submitted prior to distribution. The Clearinghouse supports college and departmental communications and marketing efforts by enhancing the distribution of these messages through university and/or additional communications channels.

Marketing materials such as emails, print publications, newsletters (electronic and print), advertisements (online and print), media buys (radio, TV, digital online display, etc.), videos, websites and social and digital campaigns are all effective tools for communicating with our external audiences. Strategic use of consistent, branded communication will be a key component of NIU’s future success in enrollment, fundraising and reputation management.

The Division of Marketing and Communications will review internal and external communications and marketing materials to ensure consistent brand and message integration and, where appropriate, recommend appropriate distribution mechanisms. Please submit marketing materials for review at go.niu.edu/clearinghouse. For more information contact University Marketing at marcomm@niu.edu. Please allow three business days for review.
Our Institutional Identity

Northern Illinois University’s visual identity is established through the appropriate use of the following graphic elements: the university logo, the university seal, and the Huskie athletics logo. These elements should be used only in the circumstances and specifications as described in this guide.

University Logo
This logo—in its three configurations—represents the university as a whole. It is used comprehensively in all internal and external communications and acts as an umbrella identity under which all other NIU identities fall.

Huskie Athletics Logo
The Huskie logo and its variations are intended for use on materials related to NIU Athletics programs. Contact the NIU Athletics Marketing office (see page 3) for permission to use the athletics logo. Athletics logo standards can be accessed at www.niuhuskies.com/ot/licensing-information.html.

University Seal
The university seal is reserved for use on materials related to the Office of the President, Board of Trustees or university documents of formal and official nature (i.e., diplomas, certificates, transcripts). The seal should not be used by offices or departments for their own materials. No modifications should be made to the seal as shown (i.e., no additional borders, text or other embellishments should be added).

Please contact University Marketing at marcomm@niu.edu for information on the appropriate use of the university seal.
The University Logo

The Northern Illinois University logo is central to institutional branding, and represents the institution as a whole, the sum of all its parts. When used by university departments and offices for their electronic and print materials, the NIU logo should be displayed appropriately in accordance with the standards described in this guide. Consistent and correct use of the logo significantly contributes to maintaining and strengthening the identity and image of NIU.

The Role of a Logo

A university logo serves to identify messaging with a "signature" of that institution. A logo is meant to be used as a footnote, or punctuation, to the message. Generally, the logo appears at or near the bottom of the page, and occasionally elsewhere. The logo should not be used as, or incorporated into, a heading within a message.

The Northern Illinois University logo is comprised of two parts:
(A) NIU logo mark
(B) NIU logo type

These parts combine to make a logo that represents, depicts, and identifies the university to the world. The logo mark is never to be used alone to represent the university, except in specific cases which must be approved in advance by Creative Services.
The University Logo

Logo Configurations

There are three configurations: horizontal, extreme horizontal, and vertical. All of them have been carefully crafted to maintain a consistent look while maximizing flexibility in application.

You can download these logos at go.niu.edu/logos. A university login ID is required. For assistance please contact Creative Services at 815-753-6070 or publications@niu.edu.
The University Logo

The Logo with Tagline

The downloadable files of the logo/tagline combination should be used for all instances of the logo and tagline appearing as a unit. There are three configurations: horizontal, extreme horizontal, and vertical. The tagline should not be added to the logo manually.

You can download these logos at go.niu.edu/logos. A university login ID is required. For assistance please contact Creative Services at 815-753-6070 or publications@niu.edu.
The University Logo

1 Color Logo Versions

The logo can be reproduced in one color with versions for light or dark backgrounds. The castle should always be lighter than the area around it. If a tagline or sub-brand is used with the 1 color dark background, it should always appear white. Avoid placing the logo on visually complex or busy fields of color or photography. If needed, place the logo within a solid, single-color box, allowing for the proper spacing and buffer zones (see page 18).

You can download these logos at go.niu.edu/logos. A university login ID is required. For assistance, or other variations, please contact Creative Services at 815-753-6070 or publications@niu.edu.

Incorrect Versions.
The castle should never be darker than the area around it.
The University Logo

Black and White Logo
4 Color Reversed Logo

A black and white version is also available for use where appropriate. The 4 color reversed logo is best used with dark backgrounds only.

You can download these logos at go.niu.edu/logos. A university login ID is required. For assistance, or other variations, please contact Creative Services at 815-753-6070 or publications@niu.edu.
The University Logo

Minimum Size and Space Buffer

A minimum amount of space is required around all edges of the NIU logo and mark to buffer it from other graphics and type that appears in close proximity to it. The space between the logo and all typography (with the exception of sub-branding of colleges and divisions), other logos, graphics, and photos should be equivalent to or greater than the gray region illustrated below.

In general, the NIU logo and mark should be displayed on all materials. To maximize legibility in both print and electronic materials, the logo/mark may not appear smaller than illustrated in the examples below.

---

minimum size:
print: 3/8" (.375") width of mark
electronic/web: 38 pixels at 72 dpi width of mark
The University Logo

Sub-branding

Sub-branded logos are an extension of the university’s brand identity and function as a specific identification for entities under the university umbrella that require personalized branding while still maintaining a visual link to the parent brand of the institution. See The Role of the Logo on page 13.

Your Options and Appropriate Use

Two options for sub-branding are available to assist individual marketing efforts: university-focused and unit-focused. The university-focus sub-brand is used for marketing and communications to external audiences. The unit-focus sub-brand is appropriate for internal audiences and material very specific to the unit.

For custom sub-branded logos please contact Creative Services at 815-753-6070 or publications@niu.edu.
The University Logo

Incorrect Logo Usage

Do not alter the proportions or distort.

Do not alter the colors.

Do not change the size or proportion of the sub-branding component.

Do not add elements or invade buffer zone.
Colors

Brand Colors

The brand colors for NIU are red and black. Gray, or silver, is used as an accent color within both the NIU mark and the Huskie Athletics mark. The formulas for red, black, and gray are shown below in their various forms for print and web display, as well as embroidery for soft goods.

**Pantone 200:**
- CMYK: C=0 M=100 Y=63 K=12
- RGB: R=204 G=0 B=0
- HTML: CC0000
- Madeira Thread: 1184

**Pantone Black:**
- CMYK: C=0 M=0 Y=0 K=100
- sRGB: R=0 G=0 B=0
- HTML: 000000
- Madeira Thread: Black

**Pantone 422:**
- CMYK: C=0 M=0 Y=0 K=33
- sRGB: R=165 G=167 B=168
- HTML: A5A7A8
- Madeira Thread: 1011

[or]

**Pantone 877 Metallic:**
- CMYK: NA (use 422 values)
- sRGB: NA (use 422 values)
- HTML: NA (use 422 values)
- Madeira Thread: 101
## Colors

In addition to the NIU brand colors of red, black and silver (gray), a supporting color palette organized into secondary and tertiary groups introduces many options for web and print use. Tertiary colors are broken into dark and light sub-groups that are helpful in extending the color palette and can be used to separate information within charts and diagrams.

### Secondary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>RGB</th>
<th>CMYK</th>
<th>Hex</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>204, 0, 0</td>
<td>13, 100, 100, 4</td>
<td>#CC0000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>238, 135, 41</td>
<td>3, 56, 98, 0</td>
<td>#EE729</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>52, 92, 137</td>
<td>86, 61, 26, 7</td>
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<td>Green</td>
<td>34, 142, 84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lime</td>
<td>157, 185, 77</td>
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<td>Purple</td>
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<td>152, 65, 19</td>
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### Tertiary

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### Grayscale

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<tr>
<td>Lightest Gray</td>
<td>219, 220, 222</td>
<td>0, 0, 15</td>
<td>#DBDCDE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>255, 255, 255</td>
<td>0, 0, 0</td>
<td>#FFFFFF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fonts

Fonts selected as especially compatible with the NIU logo and which complement it without clashing are shown below. While Lucida Bright is used within the NIU logo, it is usually not suggested as a font to use setting text, because body copy and headline fonts should complement the look of the brand but not attempt to match it.

Myriad and Palatino are licensed Adobe Open Type fonts and are available through http://www.adobe.com/products/type.html Georgia and Tahoma come standard with Windows and Macintosh.

**Palatino** - (serif) Comes with most versions of Windows. Can be paired with Myriad or Tahoma.

```
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890?!&$%
```

**Myriad** - (sans-serif) Can be paired with Palatino or Georgia.

```
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890?!&$%
```

**Georgia** - (serif) Comes with most versions of Windows. Can be paired with Myriad or Tahoma.

```
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890?!&$%
```

**Tahoma** - (sans-serif) Can be paired with Palatino or Georgia.

```
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890?!&$%
```
Photography

Images of the university are an important part of the overall brand. When original photography is
needed, using the professional photographers in Creative Services is recommended. Their expertise
in lighting and composition is essential to creating dynamic and engaging photos. Discussing the
project ahead of time with the creative team can help focus the direction of the photography.
Photo assignments can be made through Wade Duerkes at 753-6669 or wduerkes@niu.edu.

NIU’s campus is unique, and highlighting areas that support the narrative of a warm, personal and
inviting campus help reinforce our brand. From buildings and landscapes to students and faculty, you
can access a variety of photos from the Creative Services Image Library at images.media.niu.edu. If
you cannot locate a suitable image in the library, you can request assistance in locating an image or
schedule a photographer to get exactly what you need. For help with the Image Library contact Wade
Duerkes at 753-6669 or wduerkes@niu.edu.

Examples

Recommended photos reinforce NIU’s core narrative of a warm inviting student-centered campus.
Ideal imagery should convey student engagement that is authentic and has an emotional
connection with our audience. Photos considered for use should always have adequate lighting and
good image resolution.

Continue

Revisit
Examples

Print Marketing

There are many considerations when designing for print. Correct use of logo, a specific color palette, distinctive fonts and targeted photography should reflect the Northern Illinois University brand while supporting the sense of a warm, personal, inviting campus. Contact Creative Services at publications@niu.edu if you need help or have questions with print design. Postal regulations change frequently, so check with Document Services for mailing requirements. All print marketing that uses the university brand must be reviewed by the Division of Marketing and Communications through the clearinghouse (see p.11).
Examples

Print Marketing

open house postcard

Wishing you a bright and glorious new year!

department brochure

northern illinois university

Northern Illinois University  |  www.niu.edu/graphicstandards  |  Communication Standards for Institutional Brand Identity  28
Examples

Advertisements

Creative Services, publications@niu.edu, can assist with questions or production of print advertising. All advertising that uses the university brand must be reviewed by the Division of Marketing and Communications through the clearinghouse (see p.11).
Examples

Billboards and Outdoor Signage

The NIU brand has become part of the visual landscape of campus. Through the use of banners, large scale graphics, signs, flags and bus placards, the NIU identity is recognized and creates a sense of pride in our campus. Regionally, outdoor advertising is used to promote recruitment and build awareness.

We have made designated areas of campus available for banner displays. For more information, access the banner hanging policy online at go.niu.edu/banners or contact Brad Hoey, Director of Campus Communications at bhoey@niu.edu.
Examples

Business Cards, Letterhead, Envelopes

The Northern Illinois University letterhead system is to be used by all colleges, offices, and departments of the institution. Letterhead and business cards are available through Document Services, and must be ordered through the storefront at www.itsdocuments.com. Use your Novell login to access order information. If you have questions or need help, call Document Services at 753-1692.

Electronic letterhead used for email correspondence is also available from Document Services and ordered through the storefront at www.itsdocuments.com.

Student Networking Cards

Campus units may purchase a networking card for students who are representing their department, college, school, division or institute at a conference, presentation or other outreach and public engagement events and activities. With the exception of telephone numbers, only campus unit contact information such as college, department, degree sought, year of anticipated graduation, department mail address, and campus email address may appear on the card. Students respective campus unit(s) are responsible for purchase of the student networking card.

Student Employee Cards

Students employed by campus units are considered staff and may order business cards that list only their official job title and campus unit contact information. Student employee business cards must be approved by appropriate human resources staff or campus department/unit employer.

Volunteer Cards

Campus units may order business cards for individuals volunteering their time to the campus or who are engaged in special projects or initiatives on behalf of a campus unit. The card must include the name of the department, college or campus unit the volunteer is serving and should use the volunteer’s personal contact information (home address, phone, email).
Examples

PowerPoint Templates

PowerPoint templates utilizing the university brand are available for download at go.niu.edu/ppt.
Examples

Motion Graphics/Video

Any video or motion graphics posted on www.niu.edu, YouTube.com or any social media channel representing Northern Illinois University should identify the university at the beginning of each segment with the branded introduction created by the Creative Services’ Video Production team (right).

If a person is interviewed on camera they should be clearly identified in the video using the lower 3rd name keys, (right).

Each video should end with the branded closing slide, (right).

By law, video captioning is required for all NIU videos shared on the web for public consumption, and for any web-based video used for educational purposes to which an individual with a hearing (or relevant) disability needs access. This requires a text copy of the audio portion of the video. For videos produced by Creative Services, transcription services are budgeted for and included in the price of projects. For videos produced outside of Creative Services, transcription services are available through Creative Services for a fee.

The Video Production team can answer any questions and assist in all aspects of video production. Contact the Video Production Manager at 753-0179 for more information.
Examples

Social Media

To present a consistent look and feel on the wide variety of social media channels that we use to represent NIU we have created the following guidelines. We recommend that every official NIU account use the same avatar/profile photo to clearly identify each account’s affiliation with NIU. You can further identify your college/department/school when selecting a name for each account, and with the cover photo.

Naming Guidelines

Facebook/Instagram/Google+/YouTube/Pinterest
Northern Illinois University (insert college/department/school)
NIU (insert college/department/school)
Twitter
NIU (insert college/department/school)
Examples

Social Media

**Social Media Avatars & Cover photos**
Official social media accounts affiliated with NIU should use the NIU logo with a white background as the avatar/profile picture on every official social media account. See below. NIU accounts run by Marketing & Communications will use the logo with the black background. Download the logo with the white background sized for each of the most common social media channels. For questions or requests for a logo for a specific channel please contact Taylor Hayden thayden@niu.edu.

Cover photos are a great opportunity to showcase student engagement in your respective college/department/school. Cover photos with students helps reinforce the NIU Core Narrative more effectively than pictures of buildings on campus. Social Times has created a simple image size cheat sheet for cover photos on the most common social media channels. If you’re looking for a good selection of cover photos, try the NIU Image Library.

For additional information about social media best practices, contact the Social Media & Digital Marketing Manager at 753-8427.
Web Standards

Northern Illinois University’s web presence is an important part of NIU’s brand identity, and for many, the main channel of communication with NIU.

Web sites on the niu.edu domain or under the control and use of Northern Illinois University must adhere to the branding requirements detailed in the NIU Website Policy and Procedures that can be viewed online at www.niu.edu/webteam/policy/.

Any website not using the standard university template must be submitted to the Marketing Clearinghouse (go.niu.edu/clearinghouse) for review both at the design concept stage and prior to launch. Design concepts may be submitted as screen captures or PDFs. A development/quality assurance link should be submitted for live access at least seven days prior to launch.
Web Standards

Web Support
Creative Services supports departments that use the university’s official web templates. The office provides a variety of design, content and technical support including:

- Cascade Server help desk support
- Cascade Server training
- Content and navigation updates
- Responsive web design (RWD) conversions
- Site assessments and audits
- Web analytics reporting and support
- NIU Event Calendar support
- Web development

Website Style Guides, Best Practices, and Standards
To improve website design in the latest NIU templates, the Web Communications team has published two manuals: Web Standards and Web Style Guide & Best Practices. Site owners are expected to follow these guidelines; providing a consistent visitor experience across the NIU domain. These manuals are available at www.niu.edu/webteam.

Cascade Server
Creative Services Web Team can assist with content and navigation updates to your departmental or office website if it is hosted on Cascade Server. Request updates at www.niu.edu/webteam/.

Online training materials, including a user manual, print and video tutorials, image templates, and a troubleshooting guide are available on NIU’s Cascade Server website at www.niu.edu/cascade/.

Custom Templates & Solutions
Outreach Creative Services provides custom web solutions and templates for a fee – with prior approval from Marketing & Communications. Contact bwalk@niu.edu.

Custom Web Applications
ITS Web Services designs and develops custom web applications. For more information, contact webservices@niu.edu.

Resources
NIU-Branded URL Shortener: http://go.niu.edu
NIU free web-based survey tool: http://niu.qualtrics.com (use instead of SurveyMonkey)
Northern Illinois University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, marital status, national origin, disability, status based on the Victims’ Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) or status as a disabled or Vietnam-era veteran. Further, the Constitution and Bylaws of Northern Illinois University provides for equal treatment regardless of political views or affiliation, and sexual orientation. Inquiries concerning application of Title IX, Section 504, and other statutes and regulations may be referred to the Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources Center, 1515 W. Lincoln Highway, DeKalb, IL 60115, telephone (815) 753-1118. Printed by authority of the State of Illinois.