



Operational Area	Information and Technology
Responsible Executive	Associate Vice President of Marketing and Brand
Responsible Office	University Communications and Marketing
Effective	May 1, 2025

MSU Denver Brand Policy: Visual Identity Policy

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I. OVERVIEW

- A. **Purpose:** This policy defines the rules and procedures for the creation and use of official Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver or University) branded communication, both digital and printed, in accordance with current [WCAG Accessibility Guidelines](#), federal and state law, and other University policies. Additionally, this policy advises MSU Denver employees, departments, programs, and organization guidance on implementing University visual identity standards.
- 1. All University branded materials and collateral should be coordinated and approved by the University Communications and Marketing (UCM) department. UCM works to uphold brand integrity by ensuring all design and copy standards are met.
- B. **Scope:** This policy applies to all University employees, students, organizations, and others who research, plan, create, launch, and/or maintain any marketing, University branding, programs or events, to conduct official University business. External vendors and partners who feature our brand will be held to this policy as well. This policy applies to all University departments and units engaged in marketing, events, and distribution of branded materials, including but not limited to, advertising, websites and web applications, social media, promotional



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materials, official informational documents, marketing materials, signage, wayfinding, and University-level event graphics.

C. Branded Materials Examples:

1. **Advertising and Sponsorships:** Including but not limited to newspaper and magazine ads, flyers, brochures and posters (including any digital displays), television, radio commercials, outdoor advertising (e.g. billboards, bus shelters, train wraps, and other signage), direct mail advertising, letters, postcards and catalogs, display ads, and social media advertising and posts.
2. **Promotional Materials and Apparel:** Any merchandising and promotional items such as giveaway items and branded items for resale.
3. **Official University Informational Documents:** Including but not limited to the Viewbook, University fact sheets, department fact sheets, donor-facing pieces and experiential major maps.
4. **Environmental Branding:** Including but not limited to campus signage, wayfinding, directionals, interior environment colors and materials, and informational and digital signage.
5. **Social Media:** University accounts on online platforms i.e. Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc., to engage with its community.
6. **Websites and Web Applications:** Including but not limited to, department specific, informational, student-facing, event-driven, athletics, e-commerce/merchandise, community outreach, and news-based websites or applications.
7. **Photography:** Any photography representing the University, its people, buildings, campus should comply with brand guideline standards.
8. **Marketing Collateral:** University-level event graphics, campaigns, and other marketing materials that involve the use of University resources or branding.



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II. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. **Operational Area:** Information and Technology
- B. **Responsible Executive:** Associate Vice President of Marketing and Brand
- C. **Responsible Administrators:** Associate Vice President of Marketing and Brand Strategy, Director of Brand Strategy, Design Specialist, Brand Manager
- D. **Responsible Office:** University Communications and Marketing
- E. **Policy Contact:** Director of Brand Strategy
marcommclientservices@msudenver.edu

III. POLICY STATEMENT

- A. The University Communications and Marketing (UCM) team continuously works to advance the MSU Denver brand through a strategic approach via communications and marketing.
- B. The University Visual Identity Policy, in conjunction with the overarching MSU Denver [Brand Central](#), helps create a strong, unified presence that supports the University's goals and enhances its public image. All University branded materials must meet the accessibility requirements outlined in the current WCAG Accessibility Guidelines, and federal and state accessibility laws.

IV. RELATED INFORMATION

- A. **Logos**
 - 1. **University Logos:** The [MSU Denver Logo](#) is the official primary visual representation of the University. The logo must be used in accordance with the current WCAG Accessibility Guidelines and federal and state accessibility laws, and the guidelines provided on the Brand Central website. MSU Denver Logos include, but are not limited to, the federal trademarks we hold. A logo hierarchy comprises all logos maintained within the brand identity system at MSU Denver. This includes the University logo formats and logos systems such as the college, athletics, program and department logos, as well as affinity groups and current partnerships or co-brands. Logos that represent

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an area or department within the University must be official and within the brand system. Examples of the brand identity system, logo hierarchy, and University logos can be found on [Brand Central](#). University logos may not be altered in any way.

2. **New University Logos:** Any new logos or variations of existing MSU Denver logos must be created by UCM. No external or internal party is permitted to create MSU Denver logos independently.
3. **Alterations:** The logo must not be altered. Refer to [Brand Central](#) for examples of acceptable and unacceptable logo usage and misuse.
4. **Clear Space and Minimum Size requirements:** For legibility and accessibility reasons, maintain the required space around the logo and follow the minimum size requirements as defined in [Brand Central](#).

B. Colors

1. **Our Primary Color Palette:** Refer to [Brand Central](#) for the exact color specifications (PMS, CMYK, RGB, Hex) for MSU Denver Blue, MSU Denver Red, and MSU Denver Grey. Any additional secondary colors can be found within the brand standards policy.
2. **Accessibility:** Ensure use of brand colors and elements meet the accessibility standards indicated by current WCAG Accessibility Guidelines, federal and state accessibility laws, and have high contrast in a way that enhances legibility and accessibility. Tints (lighter) and shades (darker) of these 3 colors can expand the use of the colors and enhance legibility.

C. Typography

1. **Brand Typefaces:** Prescribed typefaces must be used as defined in [Brand Central](#). Alternative typefaces are available for use if using the primary typefaces is neither available nor practical.
2. **Consistent Use:** Maintain consistency in typography as outlined in [Brand Central](#) and brand guidelines publication.
3. **Typographic Style:** To help meet the accessibility standards outlined in the current WCAG Accessibility Guidelines, federal and state accessibility laws, and for legibility best practices for body copy, refer to recommended typographic style for alignment, University name use and alignment, color use, contrast and margin size.

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4. **Official Fonts:** Usage are detailed on the [Brand Central](#) website. Consistent use of our Support Typefaces helps unify the visual appearance of our University's branded communications. Typography guidelines are detailed in [Brand Central](#).

D. Mascot

1. **Official Mascot Illustration and Image:** Rowdy the Roadrunner is MSU Denver's official mascot. Proper usage guidelines for official illustrations of Rowdy are available in the [Marketing Toolkit](#). Existing photographs of the mascot are provided for campus partners on the Photoshelter site. Photo shoots can be arranged for additional images with established mascot partners on campus.
2. **Use:** The mascot should be represented in a positive and respectful manner. Use the mascot in accordance with federal and state accessibility laws and brand guidelines, particularly in promotional materials and social media. Use of non-photographic visual representations of the mascot must be approved by UCM.
3. **Violations:** See the co-existence agreement with Warner Brothers below under Trademarking.

E. Environmental Branding

1. **Campus Signage:** All campus signage should represent the University brand and comply with design brand standards.
2. **Use:** All campus signage and murals must be reviewed by the UCM Brand team and adhere to WCAG, and federal and state accessibility laws.

F. University Promotional Items

1. **Promotional Items:** All promotional items representing the University should comply with brand standards. See notes below about licensing and process for branded items to be approved.
2. **Use:** The UCM Brand team may review and approve promotional items as necessary to maintain a consistent and positive brand image.

G. Photographic Style

1. MSU Denver brand identity is often reflected in the photographic style and perspectives of campus imagery. The visual style used to tell the MSU Denver

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Story should follow the guidelines for photography outlined in the [University Brand Guidelines](#) and adhere to current WCAG Accessibility Guidelines, and federal and state accessibility laws.

H. Privacy and Intellectual Property

1. Privacy and intellectual property laws/policies regarding privacy of student information and fair use of copyrighted material apply to all University materials. Employee and student management of branded communications must adhere to these laws and policies.

V. TRADEMARKING AND LICENSING

A. Trademarks

1. MSU Denver holds several federally approved trademarks, which means that the marks have been designated for use in trade, for goods in giveaways, resale, retail, and uses specified for educational services. These trademarks are designated by use category and by first use in those categories. We hold legal rights to protect our marks for use on products and therefore we must keep the marks consistent as to their orientation, shape, alignment, color, etc., to retain our legal rights to these marks. Review errors and misuse sections of the logos on [Brand Central](#).

B. Coexistence Agreement Between MSU Denver and Warner Brothers

1. A legally binding co-existence agreement exists between MSU Denver and Warner Brothers that allows the understanding between the two parties that MSU Denver will use the Roadrunners marks that are federally trademarked. We have agreed to not use any of the Warner Brothers Roadrunner cartoon graphics. It is our goal to avoid any copyright infringements by never using Warner Brothers roadrunner related themes in our messaging, graphics, images or references. Abiding by the co-existence agreement is our main motivation to avoid penalties and cease and desist measures by Warner Brothers.

C. Licensing

1. MSU Denver logos are licensed for use in goods/products that are for resale or given away. A licensing agency outside of MSU Denver manages our



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licensing dues, licensees, and the portal for approving promotional items and apparel. The assemble that manages the licensing program is comprised of members from MSU Denver Intercollegiate Athletics, MSU Denver UCM, and MSU Denver General Counsel teams.

D. Product and Licensing Approvals

1. All vendors and departments purchasing promotional items and apparel and retailer managing goods and apparel, are subject to brand and logo approval prior to production and sale of these items via our licensing approval process.

E. External Vendors

1. **Vendor and Licensing Compliance:** External vendors (including retailers and contractors) must comply with the branding guidelines available in [Brand Central](#). Additionally, all branded merchandise intended for resale must go through the University licensing system. Existing vendors may be reviewed in [Brand Central](#) Promotional Items webpage.
2. **Approval Process:** All materials created by external vendors must be reviewed and approved by UCM before distribution.

F. Violations and Enforcement

1. **Reporting Violations:** Report any misuse of the MSU Denver brand to UCM, following the procedure outlined in [Brand Central](#).
2. **Corrective Actions:** UCM will require corrections to any non-compliant materials UCM requires all review of promotional items using the existing systems for pre-approved vendors in the collegiate marketing portal.

VI. POLICY HISTORY

- A. **Effective:** May 1, 2025
- B. **Enacted:** May 1, 2025
- C. **Review:** This is the inaugural enactment of this policy. This policy will be reviewed every three years or as deemed necessary by University leadership. This policy will be reviewed periodically by UCM to ensure its alignment with current branding and accessibility standards. Updates will be communicated through the [Brand Central](#) website and the Policy Board. This policy, in



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conjunction with the [Brand Central](#) resources, ensures that all materials representing the University are consistent, professional and aligned with MSU Denver's values and mission. All websites, advertising and digital and print materials must receive approval from UCM to maintain the integrity and consistency of MSU Denver's brand.

VII. POLICY APPROVAL

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Janine Davidson", is positioned above a horizontal line.

Janine Davidson, Ph.D.
President, Metropolitan State University of Denver

N/A
Chair, Board of Trustees, Metropolitan State University of Denver