Here IS HOW

WE CREATE A SENSE OF PLACE.

ENVIRONMENTAL BRAND GUIDELINES

University at Buffalo

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Introduction

The UB brand, in context

Our brand is what sets us apart. It underscores what's distinctive about the University at Buffalo and establishes the visual and verbal language we use to tell our authentic story.

But our brand is also the experience we create for our students, faculty, staff and visitors. This is especially true in how we define our living and working spaces. Since physical environments are less fluid than other expressions of our brand (a department or common area will likely go years between redesigns), we saw fit to create this addendum to our master brand guidelines.

This document defines best practices and a clear rationale for how the UB brand comes to life in your space and across campus.

And with clear direction moving forward, we can show the world—quite literally at every turn—**Here is how.**

Introduction

Why environmental branding matters

It drives continuity.

Like every other expression of our brand, when our environments adhere to our guidelines and follow specific design practices, our story will feel seamless and ring true.

It complements the journey.

However a visitor might have first experienced our brand—through an admissions brochure, an online ad or an NPR underwriting spot—the physical space should feel like a logical step along the way.

It fosters a sense of place.

UB is an institution unlike any other, and by aligning our spaces through our color palette, graphic language and typography, we'll support and fulfill that idea.

It validates our story.

The way we do things defines who we are. By looking at our spaces through that lens and supporting our story graphically, we can further illustrate what that means.

It extends our brand into the future.

Most importantly, environmental design creates an enduring expression that bridges today with where our brand will evolve over time.

By creating a physical presence with the UB brand, we elevate our story and provide a context for inspired and purposeful work. This means expressing our brand in ways that transcend targeted marketing efforts, brand refreshes, and incremental and organic evolutions of how we tell our story.

Color and Spaces

How our color palette shifts for environmental spaces

For interior spaces, the saturation and ratio of colors differ from print or web applications. A vibrant color field in a viewbook or on a webpage can be appealing, but when a similar color floods the walls of a room, the effect may be jarring or disorienting. For this reason, we've developed color palettes (see examples on the next page) specifically for environmental spaces.

These colors are also more affected by shifts in light, whether from different types of artificial lighting or changing natural light throughout the day. Lighting should be a major consideration in using an environmental color palette.

Light Reflective Value (LRV) measures visible and usable light that is reflected, which is crucial when choosing colors for a specific environment. A paint color below 50 percent LRV is typically darker and will absorb more light than it reflects back into the room. However, a paint color with a higher LRV supports lighting plans by helping daylight spread throughout the space.

Translating exact PMS colors into specific finishes or materials can be difficult or prohibitively expensive. Materials for flooring, furniture and structural elements should feel consistent with the environmental color palette but need not be exact color matches.

Color and Spaces

Our environmental color palette

This palette was designed specifically for environmental use only. It relies heavily on our primary colors, UB Blue and Hayes Hall White. These basic brand colors are supported by a robust secondary palette. Secondary colors should be used sparingly, as accents only on elements such as small walls, support beams or furniture. For assistance in selecting paint, please contact **Capital Planning** at 645-2612. The UB paint shop has color chips available for your use.

UB BLUE
Custom formulation

HAYES HALL WHITE
SW 7006
Extra white

SW (Sherwin-Williams)
These numbers represent specific paint colors that have been adjusted from our secondary palette to suit environmental spaces only. SW paint colors should not be used in any other application.

NEUTRALS

BAIRD POINT SW 7063 Nebulous White	**PUTNAM GRAY** SW 7067 Cityscape	SW 7024 Functional Gray	SW 1015 Skyline Steel	SW 6112 Biscuit	SW 6114 Bagel

USE THESE COLORS SPARINGLY

LETCHWORTH AUTUMN SW 6628 Robust Orange	**SOLAR STRAND** SW 6905 Goldfinch	**GREINER GREEN** SW 6703 Frolic	**LAKE LASALLE** SW 6767 Aquarium	**VICTOR E. BLUE** SW 6787 Fountain
CAPEN BRICK SW 6334 Flower Pot	**BRONZE BUFFALO** SW 6124 Cardboard	**OLMSTED ELM** SW 6719 Gecko	**NIAGARA WHIRLPOOL** SW 6516 Down Pour	**HARRIMAN BLUE** SW 9142 Moscow Midnight

Color and Spaces

Types of spaces

Branding affects the nature of environments—potentially making spaces more welcoming, conducive to focus or open to collaboration. By identifying the goal for each space and applying appropriate environmental design, a cohesive and consistent experience can be developed across the university.

Types of spaces	Goals for the space
Deans and VP offices **Office spaces can range from conference rooms to private offices. Because of the wide variety of uses, the goal for these spaces will need to flex accordingly.**	Provide a professional and comfortable atmosphere
Lobbies and reception areas	Establish an open and inviting space
Classrooms and study/co-working spaces	Create a climate that is conducive to focus; inspires an environment of engagement and collaboration
Residence halls and other student spaces	Furnish a sense of home and community

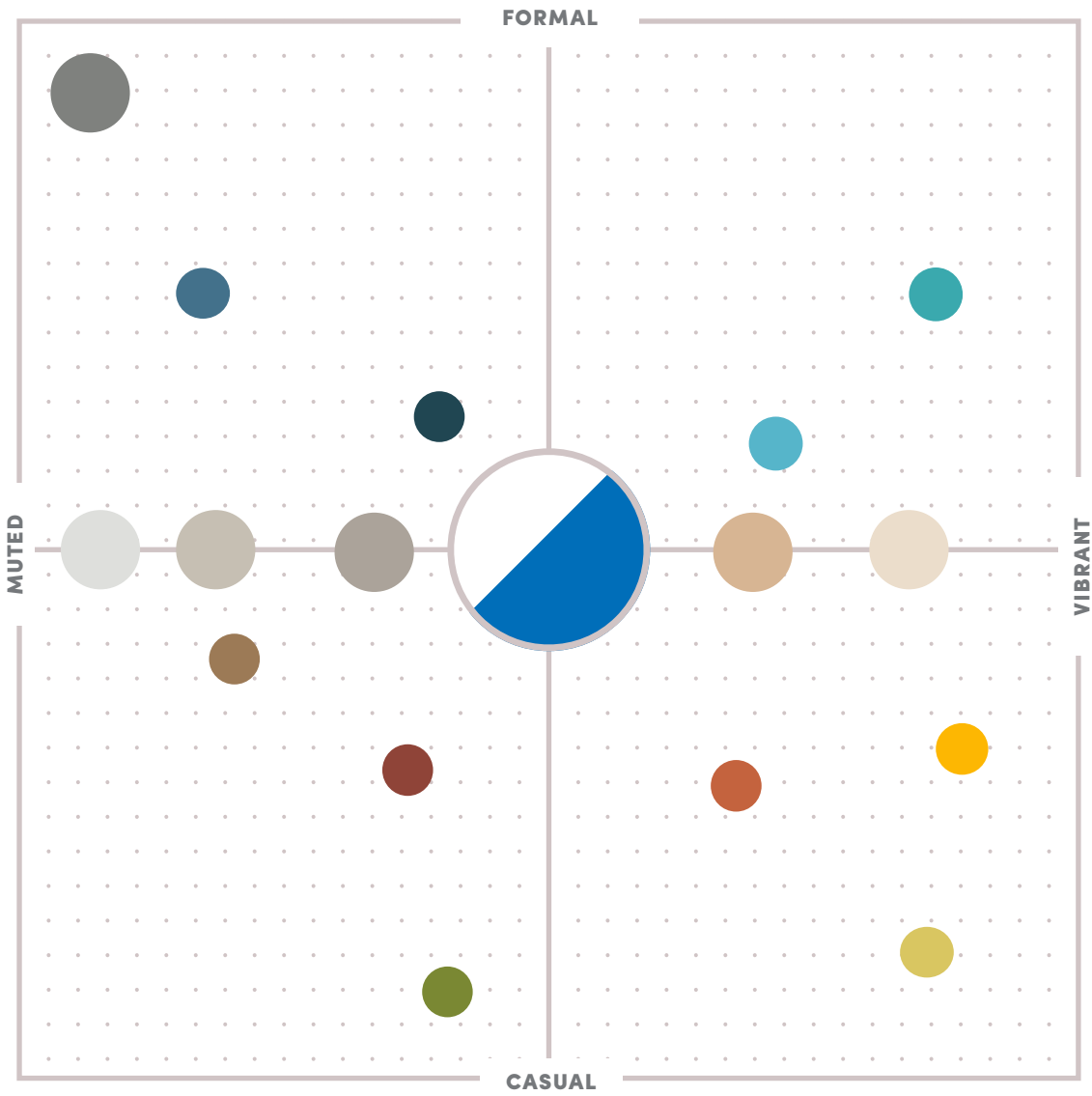
Color and Spaces

Color chart for interior spaces

This chart is a guide for the mood, feelings and overall tone of our environment. Colors can range from formal to casual and from muted to vibrant. Use it as a starting point to choose a palette that will project the right mood for your space.

Example: Dean and VP offices

Example: Classrooms



Example: Lobbies, learning landscapes and public spaces

Example: Residence halls and other student spaces

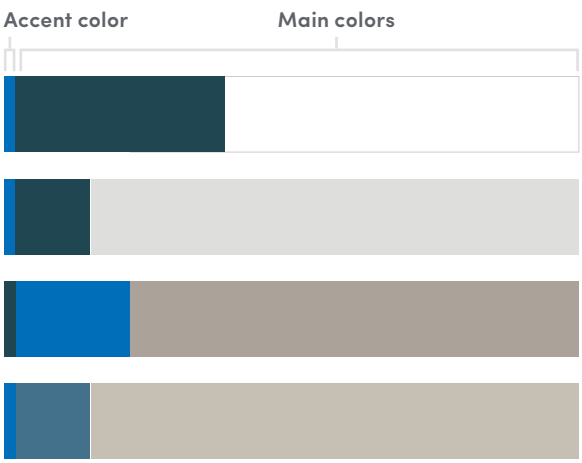
Color and Spaces

Sample palettes

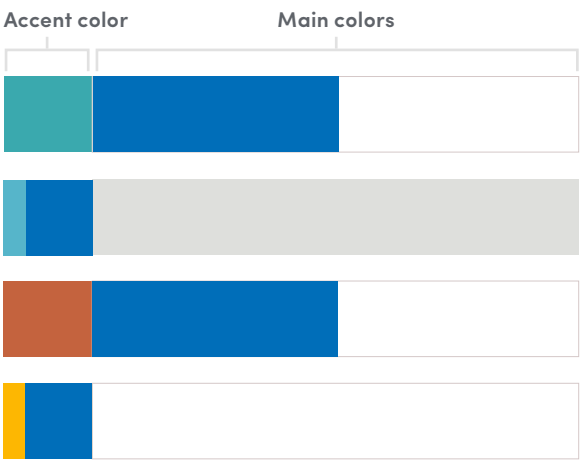
The samples below illustrate how environmental palettes are developed. This is by no means an exhaustive list of all possible color combinations. Color ratios are not an exact science, and these are not intended to be prescriptive percentages. Instead, the palettes should serve simply as rough guides for evaluating the entire visual space.

For a full list of available color palettes, please contact **Capital Planning** at 645-2612. The UB paint shop has color chips available for your use.

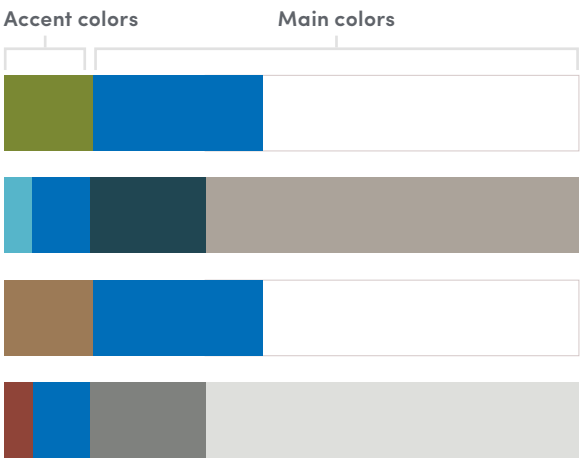
Deans and VP offices



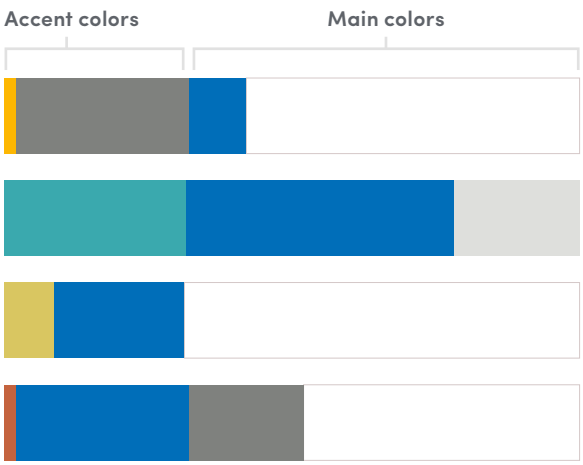
Classrooms



Lobbies, learning landscapes and public spaces



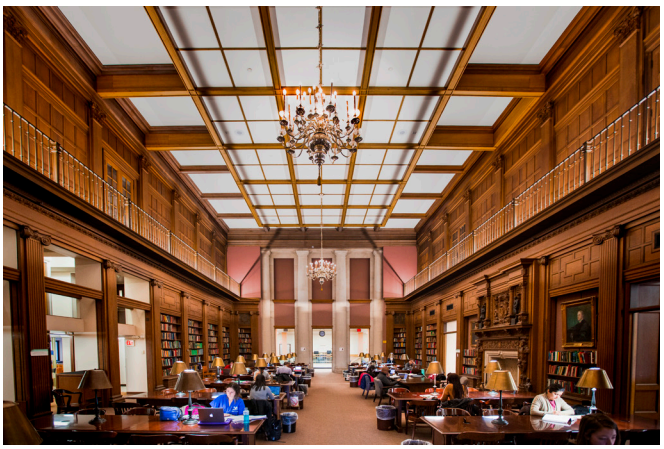
Residence halls and other student spaces



Color and Spaces

Traditional and contemporary spaces

While color should be used consistently across all spaces, the historical context of the space should be carefully considered. Some vibrant colors will feel appropriate for contemporary spaces yet out of place in traditional spaces. Conversely, some muted tones will be right for traditional spaces but will feel drab or dated in contemporary spaces.



A traditional space.

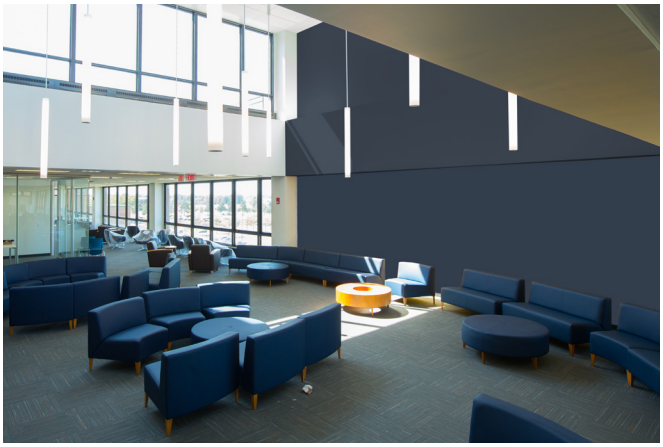
A contemporary space.

Color and Spaces

Color theory

Color is one of the most powerful tools for designing compelling environments. Shifts between colors may seem subtle, but the psychological effect can be significant. Brighter hues tend to make spaces feel bigger and energize the space's users. Darker tones can make an area feel smaller and more intimate, creating a calm and relaxing environment.

A study area that's painted primarily white, with a bright accent wall.



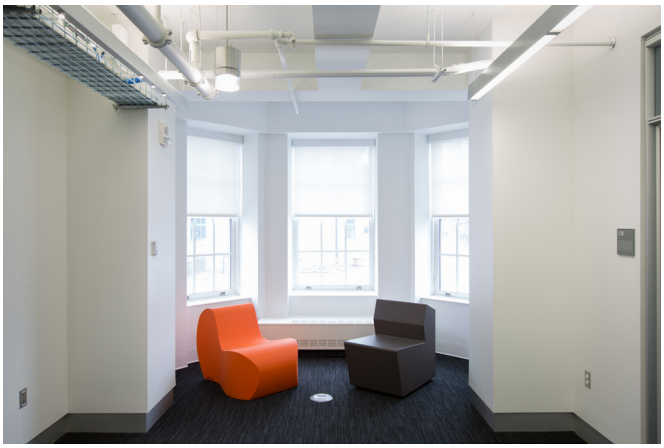
The same space with a dark accent wall.

Color and Spaces

Striking the right balance of colors

While there is no formula to develop a perfect balance of color in a given space, it is important to consider the space as a whole and how people move through and experience it. That experience will help determine the best balance of color. The rule of thumb: less is usually more.

A primarily white hallway with a dark accent color.



Using furniture to add a pop of color to an overall neutral palette.

A study space that balances dark and muted tones in furniture and carpeting with a bright accent wall.

Natural wood tones and neutral carpeting as the dominant tones, with an accent color.

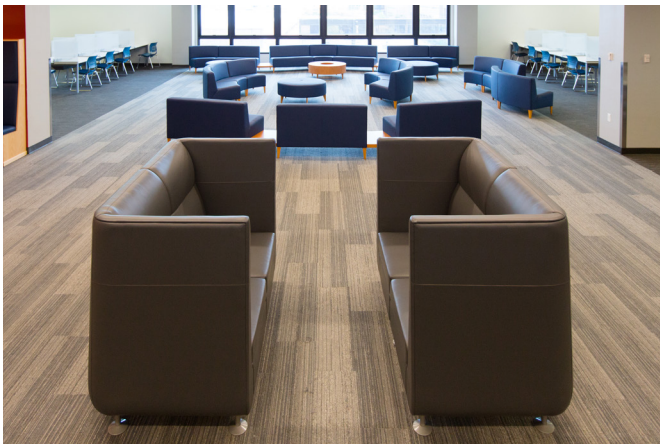
Color and Spaces

Factoring in furniture, building materials and structural elements

Many spatial elements, such as brick, beams and ductwork, cannot be changed, but they still need to be considered and incorporated into the total environmental design.

Overall, furniture and light fixtures should be modern, simple and functional, working just as well in 10 years as they do today.

Given that the replacement cycle for carpet and hard surfaces is 10 to 20 years, it's best that permanent materials such as these be chosen largely in neutral tones. Paint and wall coverings are generally better opportunities for using color as an accent.



Neutral or darker-toned furniture works with a number of accent colors.

Light fixtures will outlast many other environmental elements.

Ductwork can be incorporated into the overall spatial design.

Materials and colors need to balance with the brick in this space.

Materials

Finding compromises without compromising the brand

Overall, the UB brand is about how we do things, and the materials in a space should reflect that by being simple, clean and functional.

When selecting materials, the priority is to focus on how they all work together in the space rather than trying to get exact matches to the color palette. Natural materials, such as wood and metal, should be used to complement the color palette.

The interlocking UB logo can be used as a design element in spaces, but it should always appear in a combination of approved colors (UB Blue, Hayes Hall White and Putnam Gray). Be sure to consider the frequency of the logo's use in the space as well as in adjacent areas.

Blue chairs and carpet colors may not match the color palette exactly, but they work well together.

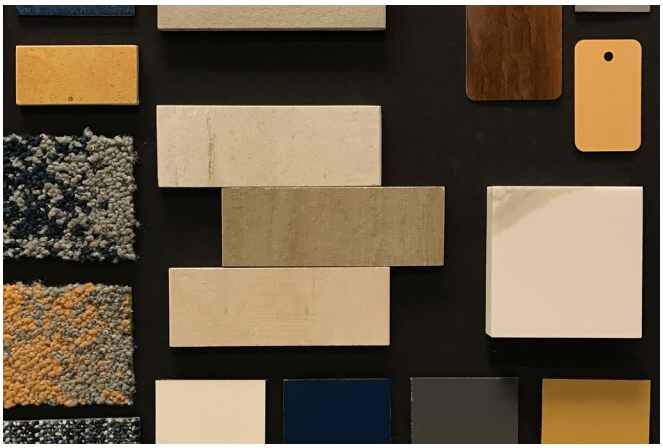
Wood tones balance accent wall color and neutral flooring and upholstery.

UB Blue accent wall with interlocking UB in brushed aluminum.

Materials

Keeping on brand throughout space renewal and remodeling

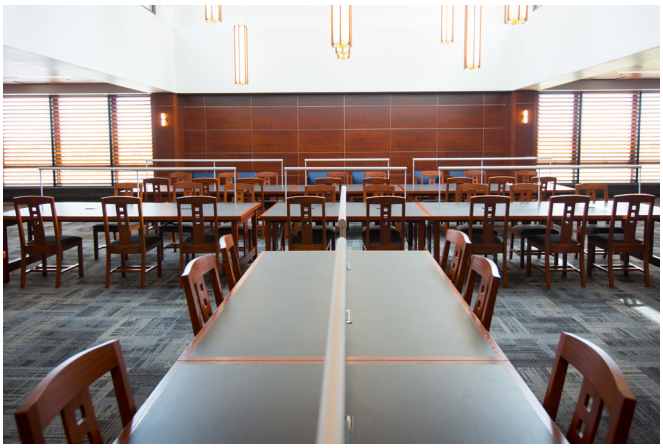
Renovations and remodeling offer a unique opportunity to take a comprehensive approach to selecting materials. Given the wide range of possible materials and finishes, particular attention should be given to how the materials work together in the space rather than how each fits individually within the guidelines.



Complementary colors of blue and yellow are balanced with neutral stone and wood finishes.

Cool and neutral flooring choices work well with warm, dark-toned wood.

This Hayes Hall classroom uses the contrast between bright whites and dark neutral tones.



Here, a library study space utilizes dark wood and neutral tones.

Identity

How the identity architecture extends into spaces

Identity architecture refers to the visual elements—marks, typography and color—that work together as a system to identify the University at Buffalo. Within physical spaces, the primary intent of the identity architecture is to present information clearly and consistently, which in turn establishes a sense of place. The identity architecture works in tandem with wayfinding to guide people through the environment and enhance their experience of the space.

Identity

Recommended primary color combinations

Depending on materials and finishes, the identity can be displayed in two-color, grayscale, monochromatic or reversed versions to best achieve contrast and legibility.

Two-color

Monochromatic

Grayscale

Reversed

Identity

Finish options

Dimensional lettering, cut vinyl and engraving are all acceptable finish options for the identity. Whichever materials and finishes are selected for the identity, it is of the utmost importance that the materials be simple and sophisticated to maintain the university's distinguished brand.

Dimensional lettering.

Engraved signage.

Cut vinyl.

Identity

Materials

Materials need not be exact matches to the Pantone colors in our palette, but they should feel similar in tone and texture. Silver-colored metals work well for the identity; gold and copper materials should be avoided.

Painted.

Aluminum.

Gold.

Brick.

Light-toned wood.

Copper.

Dark-toned wood
(These are considered for "special case" uses such as boardrooms, the president's podium and other high-end applications.)

Signage

Wayfinding

Wayfinding includes anything that helps guide people through the built environment, such as identity, directional signage and campus maps.

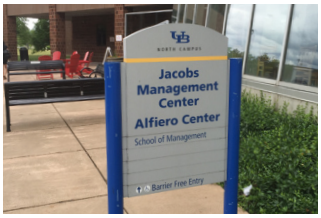
The examples shown below are not “best practices” for wayfinding; instead, they illustrate the range of signage utilized across campus.

EXTERIOR

Large-scale building identifier.

Traffic wayfinding.

Campus identifier.



Wayfinding.

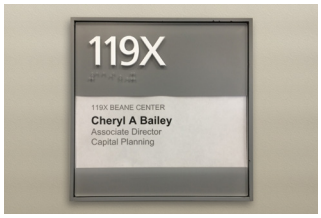
Campus map and directory.

Department identifier.

INTERIOR

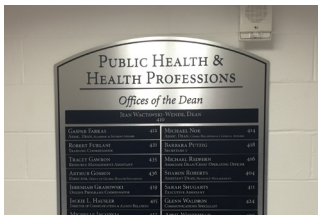
Large-scale building identifier.

Space identifier.



Room signage.

Wayfinding.



Department directory.

Above-door identifier.

Signage

Typography for identity, wayfinding and branding

Our typographic approach is divided into two categories: identity and wayfinding, and branding. Branding is typically refreshed every five years while identity and wayfinding can easily last 15 to 20 years or longer. A brand may change three or four times during the “lifetime” of an identity and wayfinding system. In this way, the identity becomes a bridge between what has come before and what comes next. It is a consistent element to which the brand must always align.

Kievit

Identity and wayfinding typeface

Permanent identity signage at a North Campus entrance.

Sofia Pro
More Pro
Freeland

Brand typefaces

Temporary brand banner on Alumni Arena.

Signage

Determining typeface usage

Kievit

Wayfinding and identity

Pieces that work together to guide people through the built environment and enhance their experience of the space.

- Interior and exterior building identifiers
- Campus maps
- Directories
- Room names and numbers
- Directional signage

Permanent fixtures

Pieces that are permanent, have elements integrated into the fixture or need to be replaced due to material failure.

- Etched numbers on glass
- Image captions on supergraphics
- Artwork labels
- Plaques
- Donor walls

Note: The examples here are by no means a comprehensive list but illustrate the types of signage that fit in each category.

Sofia Pro

Branding and marketing

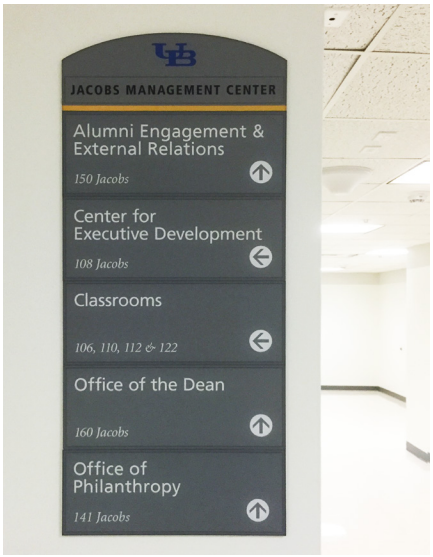
Pieces that are shorter term, have an expected end of life or are a part of campaigns. Materials that are easily replaced or incorporated with other brand elements.

- Banners
- Posters
- Vinyl clings
- Cut vinyl on painted surfaces

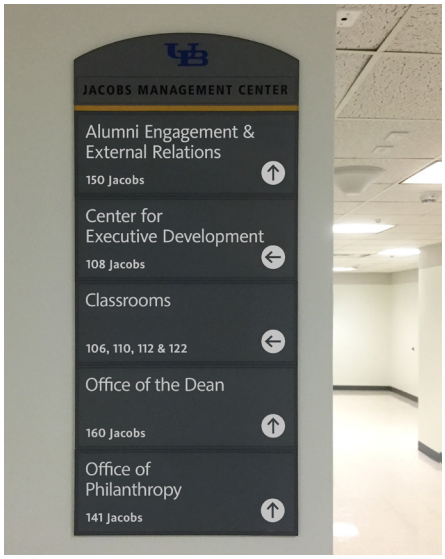
Signage

Aligning signage across campus

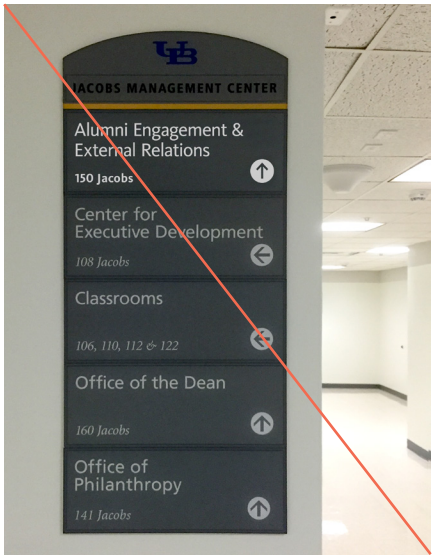
Aligning signage across campus isn't like flipping a light switch—it's an iterative process that will likely take a number of years. High-visibility, low-cost items should take priority for replacement (such as vinyl building identifiers on exterior doors). During replacement, the goal is avoiding mismatched signage that mixes new wayfinding elements with existing signage, within a single sign or application. When possible, make changes to all similar types of applications campuswide.



Original wayfinding signage.



An updated version with ALL typography and graphic elements replaced.



A version that mixes new wayfinding elements with existing elements. This should be avoided.

Graphic Elements

Approved graphic elements for environmental usage

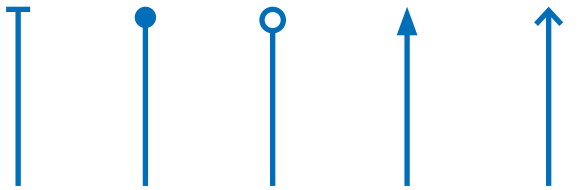
All graphic elements from the master brand are available for use in environmental spaces. The same rules for usage from the master brand guidelines should be followed.

LINES

Solid

Dashed

ENDS



BULLETS

Solid Letters

Open Letters

Solid Numbers

Open Numbers

PATTERNS

Graphic Elements

Recommended usage

The elements of the graphic language should be used sparingly. They should rarely feel like the dominant element in a space. The full color palette is available for use with the graphic language; however, the general guidelines for color ratios in environmental space should be followed here as well.

The graphic language is very directional by its nature. While it can be used to guide the viewer, create connections and add emphasis, it is important that these elements not cross over into wayfinding systems.

Graphic language used with photography and typography.

Graphic language paired with type on an exterior walkway.

Graphic Elements

Supergraphics

Photography, illustration, typography, brand patterns and graphics can all be used as an exciting way to add interest to a physical space, but should be considered carefully. Supergraphics should only be used occasionally and as a supporting element in a space. When contemplating the inclusion of supergraphics, please consult with **University Communications** before beginning your project.

Examples

Archival image.

Conceptual imagery.

Campus scenery.

Brand pattern with typography.

Photographs of people should generally be treated in monochrome so that they feel timeless. An alternative treatment for portraits is to use one of the halftone patterns shown here for a more contemporary look.

Graphic Elements

Recommended materials for permanent and temporary installations

Perforated vinyl window cling.

Cut vinyl on glass.

Plexiglass or vinyl banner.

Painted graphics.

Dimensional graphics.

Tone-on-tone dimensional pattern.

Questions?

Please contact Kelly Hayes McAlonie at kmhayesm@buffalo.edu.

Please refer to www.buffalo.edu/brand for more information on our Identity and Brand.

For information related to paint colors, please contact Capital Planning at 645-2612.

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