welcome & introduction

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Dear UCSF Community:

We all know that people and places have identities, but too often we forget that UCSF has one as well.

This is not to say that as individuals we lack loyalty to or awareness of UCSF's values, achievements, schools, centers or institutes. Yet it is precisely because we think of UCSF in a local or particular way that we overlook it in the general sense – and ask the world to piece together the whole picture of UCSF from a thousand snapshots.

This is not practical. Nor is this wise.

A fast-changing, highly competitive world requires that even accomplished institutions constantly project and broadcast their existence in order to amplify their excellence. The UCSF that saves lives, opens clinics for the poor and homeless, trains future doctors, dentists, nurses and pharmacists, works round the clock in research laboratories, transports thousands around the city every day with its own bus system, welcomes tens of thousands of patients through its doors every year, and does so much more has a coherent identity only if we insist upon it.

In the end, whatever our department or affiliation, we are all UCSF, and our continued success in everything from recruitment to research funding depends upon making that unity clear to the world.

One of the most important ways to broadcast our unity is to encapsulate the impact of our existence in a phrase. We now have done so with the tagline “advancing health worldwide.” UCSF’s Visual Identity Standards have been revised and expanded to incorporate this message. And on the pages that follow, you will learn how UCSF’s system should be employed on everything from posters to podcasts. Our goal is consistent use, rigorously enforced.

I ask for your cooperation and support in uniting behind this mandatory system, which the UCSF Administrative Policy Guide has entrusted to UCSF Public Affairs for promulgation, development and ongoing refinement.

Bruce W. Spaulding
Senior Vice Chancellor
University Advancement and Planning
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For maximum clarity, we have established a set of technical definitions that are consistently used throughout this text. Each is defined and illustrated below. It will be important, in both written correspondence and oral discussion related to design, to use these terms accurately and consistently. It is recommended, therefore, that the reader make herself “fluent” in the technical language of this document. Where appropriate, these definitions are repeated in the text for ease of reference.

* The signature is synonymous with the term identity. However, signature will be used throughout the Visual Identity Standards for consistency.
terminology (continued)

UCSF sub-brand signatures

UCSF Medical Center  UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospitals

university seal

brand

The sum impression or idea derived from a consumer’s experience of a company’s products, services, communications and people

logo

A visual symbol (abstract or representational) or a uniquely and individually “drawn” set of typographic characters that form a name (Nike), word (Apple) or abbreviation (IBM) or both, which is the official emblem of a company or institution

* The signature is synonymous with the term identity. However, signature will be used throughout the Visual Identity Standards for consistency.
the importance of an identity

Institutions, like individuals (or smaller “collectives” such as teams), can have a persona or identity. As identity is important for persons, so too is it essential to the success and reputation of institutions. Identity, whether institutional or personal, is based on things like principles (or values) held, actions taken, purposes pursued and that alignment of all these things called “integrity.” Institutions, like individuals, care about, cultivate and maintain their identities because these are nothing less than their character, their reputation.

Identity, in the institutional sense and from the “brand” perspective, is understood through three “channels”: voice, vision and action (what you say, how you look and how you act). These standards address the second of these: institutional appearance as it is communicated in logos, visual symbols, color, styled typography and “iconographic” elements. These must be coordinated and related back to the one foundational and defining idea by institutional identity. A clear understanding of these visual elements and how they work together forms the foundation for a successful brand identity. This guide aims to provide that understanding in detail and with clarity, particularly to those charged with managing these assets.
It is well understood that universities are not corporations and that their very diversity is part of their strength. The UCSF Visual Identity Standards have been carefully crafted. It respects the “individual” importance of professional schools, laboratories, institutes, centers and departments, and provides ready solutions for how these names can be used together with the UCSF logo and its associated brand elements. It also respects the individual creativity of designers by furnishing them with tools that allow a measure of freedom within the broad constraints required by branding best practices: primarily, the values of consistency and coherence.

The standards’ guiding principle, with respect to the many entities that make up UCSF, is that these entities benefit from their close association with the larger University name, which ensures their greater visibility, recognition and equity. To attain these benefits and to realize the idea of the “larger,” integrated university that is UCSF, the University name should always be the dominant, unifying element.

The goal is a cohesive UCSF visual identity, unfettered by a plethora of individual logos and marks that confuse, confound and compete with the University name.

In the standards that follow, you will find explanations designed to reflect a clear and consistent image of UCSF. There are details of how to access official art and examples of identity application.

The materials you create by following these standards should represent UCSF consistently, across applications and audiences. Whenever questions arise during the creation of UCSF materials, contact UCSF Public Affairs (info@pubaff.ucsf.edu). See also the UCSF Editorial Style Guide.

Much of the detail that follows is provided for graphic designers and/or printers. If you are contracting with designers or printers, please share this document, so that they adhere to our Visual Identity Standards.
The University of California, San Francisco is a leading university that consistently redefines health care worldwide by conducting advanced biomedical research, educating graduate students in life sciences and providing complex patient care.

The mission of UCSF is to attract and educate the nation’s most promising students for future careers in the health sciences and health care professions, with continuing emphasis on open access and diversity; to bring our patients the best in health care service, from primary care to the most advanced technologies available; to encourage and support research and scholarly activities to improve our basic understanding of the mechanisms of disease and the social interactions related to human health; and to serve the community at large through educational and service programs that take advantage of the knowledge and skills of UCSF faculty, staff and students.
Questions and requests for clarifications regarding the proper execution and implementation of the UCSF identity system should be submitted in writing to UCSF Public Affairs (info@pubaff.ucsf.edu). Responses will be issued within 72 hours of receipt.

The most current information about the UCSF brand identity is available online (identity.ucsf.edu). The supporting PDF document is updated periodically.

For information about print and web creative services, please contact UCSF Public Affairs. When beginning any new design project, consult a professional graphic designer. On-campus creative services are available and estimates can be provided from UCSF Public Affairs. Contact info@pubaff.ucsf.edu for an estimate. Or if you are hiring an outside professional graphic designer, ensure that the vendor has access to the UCSF Visual Identity Standards.

To order stationery, please contact Documents, Media & Mail (visit www.campuslifeservices.ucsf.edu/documentsmail).

For technical reasons, the colors reproduced in this PDF are representational only. Neither the computer monitor nor color printouts should be used as a color match. Please apply the color specifications detailed throughout this document and consult the Pantone color-matching system where appropriate to ensure color-matching accuracy.

WORK PRODUCED BY OUTSIDE VENDORS MUST CONFORM TO THE APPROVED UCSF IDENTITY STANDARDS. TO ENSURE THAT THESE STANDARDS ARE MET, UCSF PUBLIC AFFAIRS WILL REVIEW MATERIALS BEFORE THEY ARE PRODUCED, IF GIVEN A MINIMUM OF TWO WEEKS TO DO SO. CONSULTATION FEES MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH THIS REVIEW. SHOULD MATERIALS (INCLUDING PRINT AND ONLINE) BE PRODUCED THAT DO NOT CONFORM TO THE APPROVED UCSF STANDARDS, DISTRIBUTION, AVAILABILITY OR ACCESS COULD BE JEOPARDIZED.

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