MINOT STATE UNIVERSITY

Producing Professional Documents

Tips to make your documents look more appealing and professional

We can help …

DESIGN AND PRINT SERVICES AND THE MSU COPY CENTER OFFER A WIDE VARIETY OF SERVICES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS. We strive to provide excellent customer service, affordable pricing, and a wide array of printing. Located on the first floor of the Administration building, we will get your publication "ready"… type-"set" and PRINTED.

Our Services

Design, layout and typesetting. This service is *free* to all offices/departments on campus. We can design and set up all types of print or digital media such as:

- brochures
- social media posts
- conference books
- invitations
- ads
- fliers
- business cards
- office forms
- notecards
- billboards
- programs
- posters
- magazines
- notepads
- banners
- newsletters
- postcards
- booklets
- table tents
- tickets

We can also provide artwork to outside vendors for promotional merchandise such as pens, pencils, mugs, tote bags, presentation folders, etc.

Printing/Duplicating. The MSU Copy Center offers one-stop service for all your printing needs. With our high speed printers/copiers we are proud to provide top quality printing/copying service for black ink or full color finished projects in a quick turn-around.

Finishing. Along with our printing and duplicating services, we also offer a variety of options for finishing your projects. These options include:

- cutting/trimming
- booklet binding
- carbonless forms (2, 3 & 4-part)
- folding
- coil binding
- creasing/perforating
- stapling
- padding
- 3-hole punch
- tabs

Wide Format Printing. With our wide format printer we can print large posters and banners for all occasions. We have poster paper 36 and 42 inches wide, each on rolls of approximately 100 feet, which allows us to create and print very large posters and banners.

Copy Center. This center provides *personal* copy service to all *current* employees and students of Minot State University. Design, layout and typesetting services are not available for personal jobs. All orders must be print-ready. Orders sent electronically must be in pdf file format. Please note, the price-per-copy for personal jobs is different than the price of university funded projects, and are subject to ND sales tax. Contact Roxi, copy center technician (#3026) for project pricing. Payment options are cash or check only.

AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE: MinotStateU.edu/publications

- Customer Order Forms
- MSU Graphic Standards Manual
- MSU logos
- MSU graphic elements

It's the little things that can make a BIG difference!

The primary purpose of any printed document is to make your message clear and to encourage people to read every word.

The following includes a list of common typing and typesetting mistakes, as well as some basic rules to help you produce high quality publications. A few of the tips below (with green bullets) are specific to MSU graphic standards *(ink colors, font choices and logo use regulations).*

- **Put only one space after a period when typing documents.** Two spaces was necessary to divide sentences back when typewriters and word processors used mono-spacing between characters. Computer software programs use proportional spacing for characters, so an extra space after a period is unneccessary and can cause little rivers of white space to run through your document.

- **First line paragraph indents should not be set at the default setting of 1/2 inch.** The correct or professional first line indent is only two – three characters (or approximately 1/4 inch). The old-school typewriter version of first line indents being five spaces or 1/2 inch is too large and no longer appropriate.

- **Only use one punctuation mark**. Often, writers/typists feel that it is necessary to use more than one exclamation point to emphasize a phrase or sentence. An exclamation point emphasizes stronger or louder. Only one is correct and only one is needed. If the phrase or sentence does not need emphasis, then it ends with a period, thus, making a sentence that has an exclamation point stronger. Likewise, using two question marks does not make a question more of a question. Again, only one is correct and only one is needed. Also, do not use a question mark and an exclamation point together at the end of a question.

- **Use no more than two fonts to avoid a "font fiasco."** Typically, serif fonts are more relaxing on the eyes when reading large amounts of text, and sans serif fonts work well for headings and accent words. *Serif* means a small decorative line that adds embellishment to the basic form of a character. *Sans (*meaning without) *serif* eliminates the embellishments added to characters. At MSU, Cambria is the serif font that should be used for typing text. Montserrat is the sans serif font that should be used for headings and accent words. See page 15 of the MSU Graphic Standards and Brand Guide available on the MSU website.

- **Choose a suitable font point size.** The point size should not be so small that it interferes with easy reading, nor should it be so large that the text seems crammed together or over-whelming. For optimum reading, most fonts work well in 10 or 11-point type.

- **Numbers one through nine should be typed as words** (unless they are part of a numbered list or as a person's age). Numbers 10 and greater should be typed in number format.

- **The most professional look for typing time is: 4:30 P.M. or 8 A.M.** Use SMALL CAPS, not lowercase or uppercase. The :00 are unnecessary when typing time on the hour, e.g., 8 A.M. not 8:00 A.M.

- **Always add a space between the time and A.M. or P.M.** Always use periods when typing A.M. or P.M., e.g., 4:30 P.M., NOT 4:30PM.

- **Telephone numbers use hypens.** Although phone numbers may appear more modern typed with dots instead of dashes, the correct A.P. type style (which is the suggested MSU style of writing and type) is with hyphens, not dots, e.g., 701-858-4000 instead of 701.858.4000.

- **AVOID TYPING IN ALL CAPS.** Reading a large amount of text that has been typed in all caps is harder on the eyes and takes longer to read. The human eye distinguishes characters much faster and easier when the letters have different shapes and heights. Using all caps in headings/headlines should be avoided as well.

- *Italicize* **the space before an** *italicized* **word,** but not the space after.

- **Do not put a space before or after a backslash** when using it in paragraph text.

- **Put only one space after a colon or semicolon,** even when using it in instances such as Who: What: When: Where:

- **Never use a space bar to align text.** What seems to line up nicely on your computer monitor usually does not print well. Use tabs to align text.

- **Choose to indent the first line of text in the paragraph or add a line space between each paragraph — not both.**

- **When to use a hyphen, and when to use a dash?** There are three different types of dashes used today; the *hyphen*, *en dash* and *em dash*. The hyphen should not be mistaken for a dash. The dash has a different purpose than a hyphen.

    The *hyphen* (-) is used to separate the words in a compound adjective, verb, or adverb (i.e.; full-time, part-time). Hyphens are also used to separate number groups such as phone numbers or social security numbers.

    An *en dash* is approximately the width of the uppercase letter N (–) and is a little longer than a hyphen. It is used to connect two items that designate a range (usually numbers or time), or where you would otherwise use the word "to" (e.g., read chapters 10 – 12; the class runs from 10 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.; the final score was 86 – 92.) **Use a space before and after an** *en dash*.

    An *em dash* is typically the width of the uppercase letter M (—) and is used for emphasis or an interruption in thought (i.e.; I need three items at the store — milk, bread, and cheese). **Use a space before and after an** *em dash*. A double hyphen can be used in place of the *em dash*.

- **Avoid using a hyphen (-) as a bullet.** Use the Bullet Option on the menu or use the bullet keys to create bullets as needed. For example hold the "Option" key and tap the "8" key to create a bullet on a Mac. There are many fonts available now that are nothing but a series of different styles of bullets, e.g., Zapf Dingbats. Never center align bulleted text.

- **Punctuate bullets consistently.** If bullets are complete sentences, they should begin with a capital letter and end with a period. If your bullets are phrases, or parts of a sentence, you can choose whether or not to capitalize the first letter. It's a style choice — just be consistent. If your bullets are strictly a list that follows a sentence or paragraph, no punctuation is needed.

- **There should always be a space before and a space after an ellipsis.** An ellipsis is a series of three evenly spaced dots (…) and is used to indicate the omission of words in a quotation. It can also be used as a pause in the flow of a sentence.

- **There should almost never be more than two hyphens in a single paragraph.** Automatic word wrap in office software programs can cause several hyphenated words in a single paragraph, especially when using small column widths.

- **The official MSU colors** are based on the Pantone Color Chart. MSU red is Pantone 186 and MSU green is Pantone 3425.

- **The MSU Beaver is for athletic use *ONLY***, and cannot be used with, or as a substitution for the MSU logo. The MSU tagline (Be seen. Be heard.) cannot be used with the Beaver on athletics media, and the tagline cannot be used on any print or digital media without the Minot State University logo.

Polishing your pages

The following are guidelines to use when planning your printed publication.

- Avoid using a *script font*. Script fonts should be used sparingly for small amounts of text.

- Use *italic* and **bold** like a rich dessert — they are fine occasionally, but easy to overdose on.

- Rarely use ALL CAPS, but when necessary, use it for very small amounts of text only.

- Only use reversed type for small amounts of text.

- Don't underline. In professional publications, you will notice that emphasizing words is never done by underlining. Other options, such as *italics*, **bold**, etc. should be used instead.

- Avoid using type that is too small or too large. Comfortable sizes for easy reading is about 10 or 11-point for most fonts. Some fonts, such as Verdana have larger x-heights, and wider bases, and should be reduced down a point size or two.

- Use primarily flush left type. Centered type, flush right or justified type should be used carefully. Never use center aligned type for bulleted text.

- Watch for widows and orphans. In desktop publishing, a widow is a very short line — usually one word, or the end of a hyphenated word — at the end of a paragraph or bottom of a column. Widows leave too much white space between paragraphs or at the bottom of a page. They interrupt the reader's eye and can greatly affect readability. Fix them by reworking your lines of text or by editing the copy. Like a widow, an orphan is a single word, part of a word or very short line that appears at the top of a column or page. They should also be fixed by manually adjusting the words in your line of text.

- If you have too many hyphens in one paragraph or you want to manually adjust a line of text to fix widows and/or oprhans, place your cursor where you want to make a line adjustment, hold down the "shift" key as you tap your "return" key. This will keep the line you manually adjusted in the same paragraph it is in, and override an automatic paragraph break that occurs by just tapping the "return" key.

- When typing in two or more columns on a page be sure to align the first **baselines** of each column. The baseline is the invisible line that the type sits on when there are two bodies of text beside each other. It is very important that these two first lines of text are aligned.

- Don't be afraid of "white space"! (It's called white space, even if the paper is black; it just means the space where there is nothing printed on the page.) The area of the page that doesn't have anything on it is just as important as the area that does. Don't be afraid to use wide margins or add empty space between the heading and the body text. Filling a page with information can overwhelm your readers and distract them to the point that they choose to ignore the message you want to convey.

- Try to be consistent. If a heading is aligned left, then align all the headings to the left. If a heading is set in 18-point type, then make all the headings 18-point type. If a page number is at the bottom outer margin, then make all the page numbers at the bottom outer margin, etc.

- Be careful with graphics. More often than not, we see photos that are distorted, causing the subject to look short and fat, or too tall and too thin. When you want or need to resize a photo, be sure to resize it *proportionately*. In most software programs, to resize proportionally you need to drag a *corner* button. Some software programs require you to hold down the shift key and drag the corner button.

Remember to pay attention to the details. It's the little things that make a BIG difference!

PowerPoint Dos and Don'ts

The following are guidelines to use when planning your PowerPoint presentations.

- Be brief and clear. Don't crowd your slides. Instead, choose no more than 2 – 3 sentences per slide and keep in mind your keywords. Think of them more like statements rather than sentences.

- If you're using lists, try to limit it to no more than 6 bullets per slide. Make sure to leave space *(see leading on page 6)* between lines of text. Never center bulleted text.

- Limit the number of slides. A good case practice is using 20 – 30 slides or one slide per minute.

- Include only one central idea/objective per slide.

- Use section divider slides; this will help break up your content into memorable chunks.

- Use a legible font and type size. Don't use "flourishy" fonts that make it difficult to make out the actual words. Stick to standard, easy-to-read, preferably sans-serif fonts. Both MSU san-serif fonts, Avenir and Montserrat are good choices. Helvetica and Arial are also good options.

- Follow the 5/5/5/ rule. To keep your audience from feeling overwhelmed, you should keep the text on each slide short and to the point. Use the 5/5/5 rule: no more than five words per line of text, five lines of text per slide, or five text-heavy slides in a row.

- Titles should be at least 28 to 48 points, bulleted text or body copy at least 24 points. Only use uppercase letters in headlines and section titles, not in paragraphs.

- Ensure design consistency. Get started by downloading one of the MSU PowerPoint templates that were created using the MSU logo, University colors, and brand standards. Templates are available to download at: **https://www.minotstateu.edu/publications/templates.shtml**. Using one of these templates will make it much easier to create consistent presentations while maintaining the Minot State brand standard.

- Use visual elements to illustrate your ideas. Graphs and charts can help show relationships, comparisons, and change. Only include 1 – 2 images per slide.

- Strong photos can enhance your message. Do not distort photos when resizing them to fit on your slide. All photos should be resized proportionately *(see page 4: Be careful with Graphics)*. Only include 1 – 2 images per slide.

- End with a summary slide. Go through your key points and list the final benefits in a summary slide, at the end of your presentation. The most important sections of your presentation are the beginning and ending. The beginning is when you will grab the attention of the audience. The summary ending will make it easier for them to remember your ideas.

Typographic terms

Ascender. The part of a lowercase letter that ascends above the main body of the letter.

Baseline. The invisible line on which most letters rest. Letters with descenders such as g, j, and p descend below the baseline.

Body type. The type used for text; usually 11-point type and smaller.

Descender. The part of a lowercase letter that descends below the main body of the letter.

Display type. The type used for headlines; type larger than 14 points.

Em space. A space equal to the type size being used. For example in 10-point type, an em space is 10 points wide, and roughly the width of a capital M.

En space. A space equal to half an em space in the type size being used. In 10-point type, an en space is 5 points wide or roughly the width of a capital N.

Leading. (Pronounced "ledding.") The extra space that's often added between lines of type. Measured in points, from baseline to baseline. More commonly known as: single space, space and a half, or double spacing.

Letterspacing. The space between letters. Also known as kerning.

Lowercase. Small letters (a, b, c, etc.) Called lowercase from the days of handset type, when they were stored in the lower case below the capital letters in press/print shops.

San serif. Font or letter styles without serifs ("Sans" is French for "without.") Helvetica, Avenir or Montserrat are common examples of san serif fonts.

Serif. Fonts or letter styles that have a small stroke at the end of a letter. Common examples of serif type are **Cambria** or **Times New Roman**.

Upper case. Capital letters (A, B, C, etc.) Called upper case from the days of hand set type, when they were stored in the upper case above the small letters in press/print shops.

White space. It's called white space, even if the paper is black; it just means the space where there is nothing printed on the page.

X-height. The height of the body of a lower case letter. Specifically, the height of a lowercase "x". The x-height for a specific type size varies greatly from one typeface to another.

MSU Graphic Standards

Graphic standards provide campus personnel guidelines to help ensure consistent application of the Minot State University identity. Projecting a unified visual identity involves more than simply creating and implementing a logo. Graphic standards provide a sound, flexible structure for using logos, color, and typography — a graphic "vocabulary" unique to Minot State. By consistently following MSU graphic standards, Minot State's visual identity will become established and recognized. Failure to properly use these elements reduces our ability to effectively communicate with the university's many audiences, and diminishes the identity's value.

All official Minot State departments, offices, and programs must comply with MSU Graphic Standards. A copy of the MSU Graphic Standards manual is available to download from the MSU website.

Campus Printing Policies

Visual review policy. To ensure Minot State University communications are consistent, accurate, and reflect the qualities and brand pillars of the University, all Minot State University academic publications and print materials, merchandise, advertisements, digital, video and broadcast media, web pages, and other similar items promoting specific academic programs, departments, or special events require a review by the Marketing Office before public dissemination or submission to the Design and Print Services Office for design/production.

FOR NEW PROJECTS employees are required to submit a Word document electronically with the desired content, photography request(s), etc., to the Marketing Office.

PREVIOUSLY PRODUCED PROJECTS require review prior to printing. The PDF file should be submitted to the Marketing Office electronically.

All measures will be taken to not delay the production of materials.

All printing requests (whether printed on campus or off campus) require final approval by the Design and Print Services office.

STEPS FOR PRODUCING MATERIALS
1. Electronically submit a visual review form and attach your Word document with the new content or a PDF with your updates. Attach/note any photo(s) you are requesting to use in your publication/webpage/etc. Photography options are available at **MinotStateU.edu/ marketing**.

2. Once your project form has been approved by the Marketing Office, your project can be submitted to Design and Print Services for design and/or visual approval. A sample of the project form is shown on the right.

3. A final proof of the project will be submitted to you for approval before production.

For questions regarding this policy, contact the MSU Marketing Office.

Required branding policy. To ensure Minot State University communications reflect the brand of the University, all Minot State University print materials, electronic/social media materials, merchandise, advertisements, video and broadcast media, web pages, and any other similar items that represent Minot State University require the MSU logo, and whenever possible the University tagline. Proper usage and access to the University logo and taglines are available on the Minot State website > Design and Print Services > Logos.

Campus printing policy. All campus printing and photocopying must be channeled through the Design and Print Services office for review. If it is determined that a job cannot be completed by Design and Print Services, an outside vendor will be contacted. If an individual faculty or staff member contracts with an outside vendor without approval from Design and Print Services, that individual may be personally liable for the bill. For questions regarding this policy, contact Design and Print Services.

Copyright guidelines. Minot State University follows copyright guidelines that govern the printing/photocopies of copyrighted material or professional photography (including images downloaded from the internet). Because the University and any personnel making photocopies are liable for any infringement, the Design and Print Services office, and the MSU Copy Center reserves the right to refuse a copying order that, in its judgment, would violate copyright law. A copy of written permission must be included with each request for reproduction of copyrighted material at the time the job is brought to the copy center.

Email Communication and Signature

Email communication is a presentation of official Minot State University correspondence. To maintain consistent branding standards across all forms of MSU communication, it is recommended that faculty and staff use one of the email signature options shown below. In addition, an email must preserve the white background and not include background graphics. Official email signatures of Minot State employees must not include quotes, custom fonts, graphics, photos, or links.

FONT
Use Calibri, size 11, as your email default font. Since some email programs do not allow formatting (font choices, bold text, etc.), users on those systems may choose whichever font is the default font on that system.

TITLE AND CREDENTIALS
Choose [Dr.] or [Ph.D.]. DO NOT use both.
Example: Dr. Steven W. Shirley, President – OR – Steven W. Shirley, Ph.D., President

SIGNATURES List signature information in the hierachy shown below.

Option 1: Calibri – 11 pt.

Dr. Full name, Title
Department name
500 University Avenue West
Minot, ND 58707
701-858-XXXX | MinotStateU.edu

or

Full name, Credentials
Title | Department name
500 University Avenue West
Minot, ND 58707
701-858-XXXX | MinotStateU.edu

Option 2: Calibri – 11 pt.

Dr. Full name, Title
MINOT STATE UNIVERSITY
Department name
500 University Avenue West
Minot, ND 58707
701-858-XXXX | MinotStateU.edu

or

Full name, Credentials
Title | Department name
MINOT STATE UNIVERSITY
500 University Avenue West
Minot, ND 58707
701-858-XXXX | MinotStateU.edu

LOGO
Use of the logo is encouraged in all email signatures, except in situations where the email program does not offer a way to place the logo as part of the signature. If you are unable to use the logo *in the format shown above*, choose option 2 with **MINOT STATE UNIVERSITY** in **bold red** and typed with ALL CAPITAL LETTERS. Download the logo at:
https://www.MinotStateU.edu/publications/logos.shtml.

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS
You may add pronouns to your signature in parentheses immediately following your name. You may also add MSU Land Acknowledgement (hyperlinked to the Minot State Land Acknowledgement webpage at: **https://www.minotstateu.edu/mss/land-acknowledgement.shtml**) to below the last line of your signature.