

Photography

MSU uses a photography style that mirrors its brand personality, voice and publications style. Select high-quality photos that support the key messages that are most appropriate for your target audience(s) (see message hierarchy, p. 6-7)

MSU Photography

...is personal, yet showcases our environment (academic and recreational)

The best MSU shots focus on people in the context of their environment. The person should be the central focus of each shot, but we also want to show what the person is doing—whether working in a lab, playing sports or studying. Consider the rule of thirds to capture more of the environment (e.g., person in the left third of the photo with the environment in the other two thirds).

...is simple, balanced and natural

MSU is a natural place, where people are not pretentious or too self-important. MSU photos should be casual, yet show a quality academic environment. No sloppy or silly poses or expressions. Subjects should wear their natural clothes, which will be clean and neat, but not stuffy. Choose shots that are simple and elegant, not overdone.

...shows ambitious and friendly people

MSU is a vibrant and growing institution, where people work hard and play hard. Capture people devoting themselves to their work, no matter what that may be. Watch for emotional expressions on models: They should look friendly and approachable, and not too serious, bored or lazy. Cooperation and collaboration are key qualities of MSU, so great shots would be of faculty interacting with students, and students working with one another.

...is vibrant

Use color and light to show an optimistic university that is at the forefront of creativity, research, entrepreneurship and innovation.

...captures diversity

Whenever possible, depict diversity in ethnicity, gender and major field of

study. Also, consider the age of the target audiences, e.g., photograph freshmen to use in recruiting materials.

...showcases the unique “duality” of MSU

Look for shots that capture the unique—and sometimes unusually juxtaposed—blend of qualities that define MSU and Bozeman: world-famous professors who also mountain bike to work; laid-back students who are also known for their strong work ethic; a ski community that’s also a growing high-tech center. Show people, places and scenes that capture this wonderful blend of qualities, particularly the spectacular natural setting in combination with academic excellence.

MSU photography is not

...static and stodgy

Avoid posed portraits. Our audiences want to see what MSU people DO (and where they do it). A smile or upbeat expression is much better than a serious or thoughtful pose.

...cute, silly or gimmicky

Our shots should tell the rich academic story of MSU without any trickery. We do not use silly poses or Photoshop gimmicks.

...only about the mountains

While scenic beauty shots do well to sell the area, a better shot is one that shows the mountains AND an academic component of MSU.

...amateur

Photography should always be of the highest quality. Do not use snap shots or low-resolution images.

Other photography considerations:

- Do not use photos that appear dated—by clothing and hairstyles, campus landmarks, old-school ski gear, or faculty who are no longer with the university.
- Never manipulate a photo to the point where it is no longer accurate (e.g., “flopping” a photo so that a building once on the west side of a street is now on the east).
- Limit the use of stock photography. Use MSU’s photography database instead.
- Photographers should collect signed photo releases (consent forms) for subjects in photos that are used for marketing purposes (as opposed to news/editorial purposes). Be particularly cautious when photographing children. Model releases are available online at www.montana.edu/modelrelease

MSU photography database

Located online is an image archive for campus. These images are provided for the exclusive use of the university community on university-related projects. These images are available for download at www.montana.edu/photos

- Avoid photos in which subjects are wearing logo clothing, particularly that of rival universities
- Stop and think very carefully before using a photo that shows students, faculty or staff smoking, drinking alcohol, or engaging in otherwise unhealthy behavior. Never show photos of underaged students drinking alcohol.



Panorama of MSU campus in summer



Students learn from faculty mentors



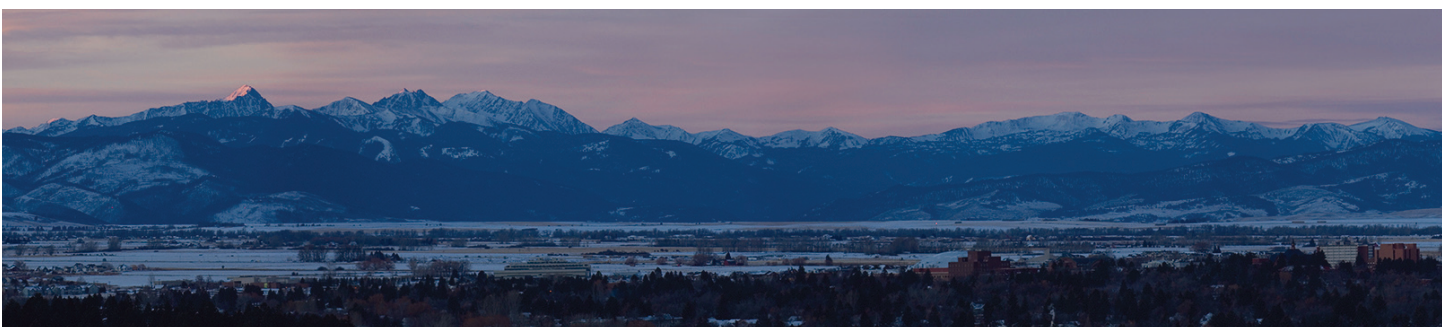
President Geoff and Patricia Gamble at home



Film students in action in Yellowstone National Park



Students interacting on campus



Alpenglow in the Gallatin Valley