Okstate.edu – Photo & Video Guidelines and Recommendations

Photography provides not just a quick representation of life at Oklahoma State University, but also serves as a compelling visual device for richer and more meaningful storytelling. All photography should add to the authenticity, pride and truth in the OSU story.

Keep the following guidelines in mind when selecting photography and video for use on the OSU website.

KEEP IT REAL

When surveying content, people often look first to imagery, then to copy. The best photography informs or illicits an emotional response quickly, and conveys a sense of place and connection with the viewer - all while supporting the content. We want to connect with real people in a real way. Be wary of using imagery that feels contrived or cold, as stock imagery often can.

CUSTOM vs STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY

Stock imagery often lacks vitality and results in a diluted, weakened impact. Custom-shot "slice of life" imagery is preferred to overly posed or overly produced stock photos. Whenever possible, using original OSU imagery will add to the authenticity of our story and develop the visual strength of the brand.
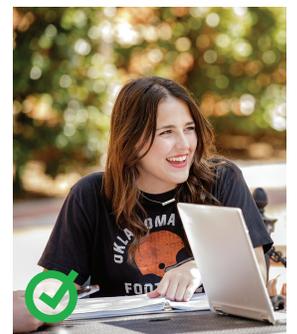
RECOMMENDED PHOTO & VIDEO DIRECTION

All photography should be brightly lit and communicate an inclusive sense of welcome by featuring diverse groups of people interacting or in the same space.

Authenticity

Capturing the feeling of being a part of the OSU family is crucial. Non-staged photography is preferred, but any coordinated shots should strive for a sense of natural interaction.

Part of the action

Photos featuring small groups of people (e.g., a classroom setting) should be shot from a first-person perspective to make the viewer feel like they're part of the scene. A lower angle and depth of field can help to convey this feeling.

A living campus

Photography featuring campus landmarks or architecture should always include the people that bring it to life. The OSU campus should never be portrayed as a closed set. Think architectural drawing, but with real people.

Bring the orange

Whenever possible, incorporate instances of OSU orange into the frame. Be it campus signage, installations, clothing or other materials - keep it subtle, but present. This will go a long way to convey the OSU brand when used on okstate.edu and other marketing materials.

Here are a few photo opportunities to further show, and tell, the OSU story:

- **Classes and departmental spaces**
- **The library** - featuring students taking advantage of all the services it has to offer
- **Campus culture** - more shots from public spaces such as the Student Union, Colvin Center, etc.
- **Community** - both on & offcampus. OSU/ Stillwater events and places of interest

AMBIENT VIDEO

Ambient video will be used as a storytelling element on the s ite, specifically for high-profile, high trafficked sections and pages. These videos are characterized as:

- **Silent** - no voiceover, no music, no exceptions
- **Embedded** - they're presented in-page only
- **Slower-paced** - both in scene length and activity
- **Expressive** - a visual documentation of life at OSU

Examples:
www.cim.edu
www.collegeofidaho.edu
www.ysu.edu

STAYING IN FRAME

The Rule of Thirds is a great guiding principle for framing custom photography and when editing existing photography. It is a fundamental consideration in art and photographic composition stemming from the theory that the human eye naturally gravitates to intersection points that occur when an image is split into thirds.

In the rule of thirds, photos are divided into thirds with two imaginary lines vertically and two lines horizontally making three columns, three rows and nine sections in the images. Important compositional elements and leading lines are placed on or near the imaginary lines and where the lines intersect.

Keeping the focal point of the image in or near the center of the middle row allows for flexible placement of imagery in both landscape and portrait modes. When shooting custom photography, taking a series of shots with the focal point centered within each of the three vertical columns will help ensure focal point visibility in most circumstances.

IMAGE FORMATTING

- Resolution for all images: 72dpi
- Ideal file weight: 1 mb or less
- Format for photography: JPG / 3mb MAX (use compression tools)
- Graphical imagery and illustrations: PNG
- The following aspect ratios will support flexibility for all media found in the site: 3:2, 4:3, 16:9 (for proper pixel dimensions and ratio sizes for each snippet, please refer to the Image Size Guidelines sheet).
- Dimensions for all images are based on the measurement along the longest edge:
  - 2500 for large images (e.g. Hero image)
  - 1200 for medium images (e.g. Flex 50-50)
  - 800 for small images (e.g. Teasers)