



**UT** SOUTHERN



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
TENNESSEE  
SOUTHERN

**BRAND USAGE GUIDE**



# Three Brand Pillars

At UT Southern, we know our campus is special—and we want everyone else to know it, too! Our brand pillars help us spread the word.

They serve as our foundation, describing who we are and how we're unique. Our brand pillars are the internal structures that uphold our messaging.

**TIP:** Everything we say about our campus should connect to at least one of the pillars.

## Education

The UT Southern experience inspires young people to explore new career paths and passions through academics and extracurricular activities. We do this through great undergraduate programs, low student-teacher ratios and high personalization. We believe in and cultivate the potential in everyone. We see you. We hear you. We know your name.

## Economics

Education should be affordable and accessible to all. By giving more people access to quality education, we elevate the expectations and perceptions that people have of themselves, of one another and of our entire community. By giving more people access, we strengthen the talent pool of the southern Middle Tennessee region to attract new business and industry. We are a workforce engine for the region.

## Experience

We offer a big university experience in a small town. That includes a vibrant campus life, a variety of extracurricular programs and valuable connections across the state through our membership in the UT System. All from a supportive community environment where hospitality meets higher ed. Join a university family that introduces you to a new world of opportunities.



# Brand Statements

**Simply put, UT Southern is...**

**a small college campus with big university connections.**

**a high-quality college experience that is affordable, accessible and authentic.**

**a collaborative university, offering real-world partnerships and mentors committed to your success.**

**a community where friends become family, where learning leads to doing and everyone sees opportunity.**

**TIP:** Use these memorable phrases as taglines on posters, brochures, social posts, merchandise and advertisements.

# Brand Voice

Building on the foundation of our brand is our voice. Our voice is our personality and is consistent. Our voice is welcoming and caring, but direct. It is conversational and familiar, yet confident, like a mentor to mentee. It is positive and motivational. It puts the student first—leading with their needs and interests and how we can meet them. Our voice is helpful and empowering.

## Welcoming and Caring

We believe in our students and their potential. We believe in the strength that comes from diverse viewpoints and ideas. We believe in the power of family, and we can't wait to welcome new students as part of ours. When they see the columns, they know they're home.

## Conversational and Familiar

We know a lot of big words but don't always feel the need to use them. We prefer to be laid back and easy going. Our class sizes are small, and small feels like the perfect size. Students aren't lost in the crowd. They're immersed in a community of people who know and care about them.

## Positive and Motivational

We're in the business of helping students explore their passions and launch their careers. We create connections—to one another, to career opportunities, to big ideas, from learning to doing, from past to future, from history to discovery. Anything is possible with a degree from UT Southern—and that's worth celebrating!

## Student-Centric

Our students are our first priority. We care about them, their needs and their passions. We meet them where they are in their journey, which includes the excitement of welcome week, stress of mid-terms, anticipation of a big game, joy of graduation and so much more. College is an experience—and is one we want to participate in with our students. We want to see and showcase our university through their eyes, not our own.

## Helpful and Empowering

This is a place where kindness is the rule, and we treat each other with respect. We strive to offer help when it's needed and to empower students, staff and faculty to reach their full potential. We also strive to help the region reach its full potential by infusing the workforce with graduates trained for success. We are Tennessee's nurses, teachers, scientists, programmers, analysts and professionals in training. We are tradition, and we are tomorrow. Find your fire. Go Firehawks!

**TIP:** Regularly check-in across all channels to determine how closely communications align with our brand voice.

# Brand Tone

Voice is our brand's personality, and tone is our mood. While our voice is constant, our tone is fluid. It changes. Note the difference in tone between nearly identical phrases.

**TIP:** In most cases, especially when talking to students and prospects, the UT Southern tone should be upbeat, informal and approachable.

**Let's talk soon! :)**

Playful, light, a conversation you may look forward to. **YES**

**Let's talk. Soon.**

Serious, dispassionate, a bit ominous. **NO**

# Brand Messaging

When crafting content sharing stories and starting conversations on social media, we're intentional about incorporating language that aligns with our brand pillars and embodies our brand persona.

**TIP:** Work the following on-brand phrases into copy at every opportunity.

## Education

- A place where everyone has opportunity
- Serving every student—from the big dreamers to the first-generation achievers
- Deep history, limitless opportunity
- An education where you come first
- We want you to succeed

## Access

- Affordable and accessible to all
- Private school experience, public school cost
- A springboard to a lifetime of opportunity
- Connecting graduates to career opportunities right here at home, across the state and beyond

## Experience

- Big university experience in a small, supportive community
- Where friends become family
- A place of learning, belonging and discovery
- Where hospitality meets higher education
- When you see the columns, you know you're home

# Branded Hashtags

To grow our audience on social media, we consistently use branded hashtags, such as:

**#UTSouthern**

**#FirstClass**

**#FindYourFire**

**#GoFirehawks**





# Writing Guide: Best Practices & Tips

## Grammar

Generally follow the rules of English grammar, but don't let AP style get in the way of connecting with the UT Southern audience, especially on social. "Ages 18-21" is better than "ages 18 through 21." Your use of "whom" may be grammatically correct, but it may also change the tone of the UT Southern voice. In customer service and on social, exclamation points and emoticons (within reason) are ok, or at least should not be considered taboo.

## Trust

Build trust by taking personal responsibility and saying "I am taking this next step on your behalf/to answer your question/to connect you with what you need ..."

## You Are a Person, Not a Number

If you can't give a satisfying answer, or you yourself can't address their question/issue, provide the call to action and ask them to "message me back here if you need additional help." Never make someone feel as though they've been directed elsewhere and don't still have a person as a lifeline.

## Slang

Using slang is an easy way to inject personality into the copy, but beware of dating ourselves and/or "trying too hard." Slang should only be used on social platforms and email campaigns. Avoid using it on marketing materials or website content.

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

If there's a chance the reader won't recognize an abbreviation or acronym, spell it out in the first mention. Avoid higher ed jargon.

## Pronouns

Use "you" and "your" to emphasize the importance of the student to UT Southern. For example, "Your career begins at UT Southern." Use "We" (first person) instead of "UT Southern" (third person) when speaking for the program. For example, "Not sure what career path you want to take? We're here to help." But use "I" when handling customer service issues in social media.

## Put People First

When possible, put the student first in communications. Example: "You want a career. We want to help." Default to person-first constructions that put the person ahead of their characteristics, e.g., instead of "a tall man" or "a female nurse," use "a man who is tall" or "a woman who is studying nursing." People-first language keeps the individual as the most essential element; there is more to each of us than our descriptors.

## Infuse Action

Start with verbs when you can (email subject lines, ad copy, marketing materials, etc.). For example, "start your career" or "take control." This is by no means a hard-and-fast rule but is a good practice. When conveying action, use a tone that is energetic and inviting. Invite the prospect to take an action. Never command.

## Use First Names

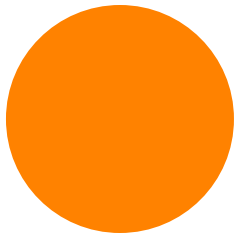
When possible, greet someone by their first name. Because UT Southern is that type of place: not so big that you can fall through the cracks, not so small that you can't find opportunity. A place where you can make a name for yourself.



# Color

Color is one of the most recognizable aspects of the our brand identity.

## Primary Palette



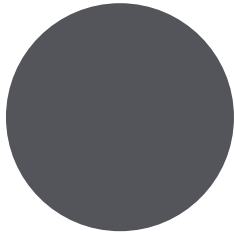
### UT Orange

PMS 151

CMYK: 0 / 50 / 100 / 0

RGB: 255 / 130 / 0

HEX: #FF8200



### UT Dark Gray

PMS Cool Gray 11

CMYK: 0 / 0 / 0 / 80

RGB: 88 / 89 / 91

HEX: #58595B

**Notes on using black:** Black is not part of the UT Southern color palette. It is necessary to use in some cases, such as black and white printing, but otherwise **Cool Gray 11** should be the dark neutral employed for designs.

## Accent Palette



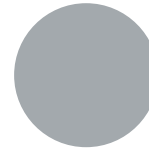
### UTS Red

PMS 186

CMYK: 0 / 92 / 77 / 22

RGB: 200 / 16 / 46

HEX: #C8102E



### UTS Light Gray

PMS 429

CMYK: 6 / 2 / 0 / 33

RGB: 162 / 170 / 173

HEX: #A2AAD



### White

CMYK: 0 / 0 / 0 / 0

RGB: 255 / 255 / 255

HEX: #FFFFFF

# Color Usage

## Color Accessibility

At their full saturation, not all brand palette colors will be legible when paired with one another. Refer to this chart to verify clarity of copy in designed pieces.

	Text Color				
	Orange	Dark Gray	Red	Light Gray	White
Background Color	PMS 151	●			●
	COOL GRAY 11	●	●		●
	PMS 186	●		●	●
	PMS 429		●		●
	WHITE	●	●	●	

## Distribution

This chart demonstrates color distribution to consistently achieve balance. Please note this is a visual representation and not a precise mathematical breakdown.

**Orange** and **dark gray** should be the most prominent colors, followed by **red** as an accent.

**Light gray** and **white** are neutral colors and should be used only to support the principal colors. Choosing one to be used in contrast should be sufficient to almost any application within a designed layout.



# Graphic Elements

These elements support our brand with unification of dynamic visual design regardless of application. When building a design, choose a **maximum of three options** (ex: angled text, color-on-color gradient, triple line stroke on a circular element) to ensure balance

## Ascending Angle

Firehawks fly. This subtle angle is a signifier of our ability to rise above and strive for progress. The **8-degree angle** can be applied to text, lines, photos, or shapes within a designed layout.

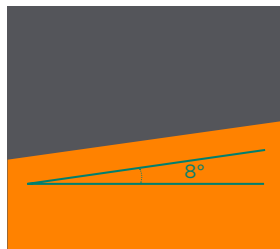
The angle is an accent to be used to highlight an element in the design. Do not angle the entire layout of any piece.

The angle rises from left to right, never descending from right to left.

Angled text



Angled element



## Color Gradient

Gradients create compelling background perfect for pairing with type and photography. Gradient options include: **color-on-color** and **color-on-photo**. UT southern gradients use a vertical orientation. Horizontal gradients should only be used in printed wide canvas applications, such as a billboard or banner.

### Color-on-Color Gradients

Color-on-color gradients employ two colors from the UT Southern color palette.



### Color-on-Photo Gradients

Color-on-photo gradients fade a color from the UT Southern color palette into a photo at the top or bottom of the photo.



## Triple Lines

As a nod to our campus landmark, the triple lines can be used as a textural element for layouts, appearing at varying widths. This element pairs well with color-on-color gradients to give the illusion of the lines fading into the background color.



Do not use the lines in any direction other than vertical.

### Direction Exception:

A triple line stroke can be used around circular shapes.



# Typography

**TIP:** When these fonts are not readily available for creating branded work in email, PowerPoint, etc., Arial in place of Gotham and Georgia in place of Goudy Old Style are acceptable alternatives

## Gotham

Gotham can be used for headlines and body copy. It is a modern clean sans serif that is accessible and welcoming. Gotham can be used in a variety of weights to create dynamic layouts.

**DO** use Gotham as a main typeface

**DO** pair Gotham with one or occasionally two of the other branded typefaces

**DO** use Gotham as the primary typeface in pieces that lean more **informal or recruitment-focused**

**DON'T** outline text with a stroke around the outside

**DON'T** stretch, squish, twist, or alter the established ratios of the typeface

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh  
Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq  
Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz  
1234567890!@#\$.+=.,  
Thin *Thin Italic*  
Extra Light *Extra Light Italic*  
Light *Light Italic*  
Book *Book Italic*  
Medium *Medium Italic*  
Bold *Bold Italic*  
Black *Black Italic*  
Ultra *Ultra Italic*

## Goudy Old Style

Goudy Old Style can be used for headlines and body copy. It is a serif that is familiar and empowering. Uppercase Goudy Old Style can be used for headlines.

**DO** use Goudy Old Style as a main typeface

**DO** pair Goudy Old Style with one or occasionally two of the other branded typefaces

**DO** use Goudy Old Style as the primary typeface in pieces that lean more **formal or professional**

**DON'T** outline text with a stroke around the outside

**DON'T** stretch, squish, twist, or alter the established ratios of the typeface

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii  
Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq  
Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz  
1234567890!@#\$.+=.,  
Regular *Italic*  
Bold *Bold Italic*  
Extra Bold

## Winlove

Winlove is a display script typeface that is used to accent a word or phrase within a headline.

**DO** use Winlove as emphasis within headlines

**DO** pair Winlove with Gotham and/or Goudy Old Style

**DO** use utilize the ascending angle with the emphasized word or phrase set in Winlove

**DON'T** use Winlove as the primary typeface

**DON'T** alter the established ratios of the typeface or outline the text

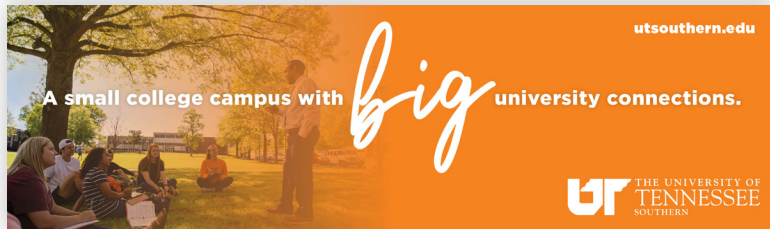
Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff  
Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk  
Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp  
Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu  
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz  
1234567890!@#\$.+=.,  
*Regular*



# Bringing the brand to life



Billboards



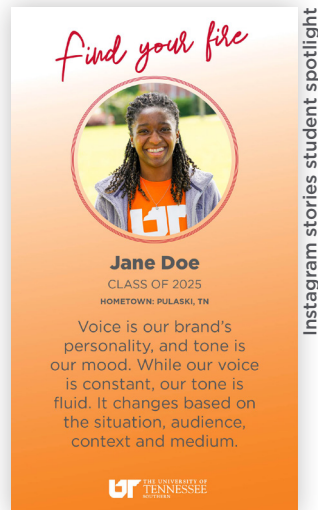
Full page ad



Pull-up banner



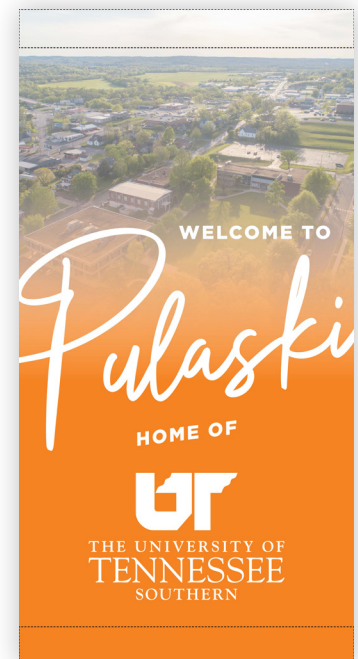
Formal Event Banner



Instagram stories student spotlight



Brochure cover



Pole Banner