

REACH. INSPIRE. CONNECT.



A Guide to Visual Communications

at Rhode Island College



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COLLEGE

A Guide to Visual Communications at Rhode Island College

Background

The president and executive officers at Rhode Island College have recognized the importance of projecting a consistent image of quality throughout the wide range of publications, advertisements, and other college communications vehicles, including the Rhode Island College web site. This brief manual is intended to provide guidelines for the preparation of Rhode Island College visual communications pieces.

While elements of the college's visual communications system date at least as far back as the 1960s (look up and to your right as you pass through the front doors of Roberts Hall and you will see a familiar flame symbol), the visual system for publications and advertising was developed in 1986 by Providence-based Malcolm Grear Designers (who designed—among many other projects—the visual communications system for the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta).

While the system has evolved somewhat over the years, the basic design elements remain the same and, more importantly, the underlying philosophy continues.

What is a Visual Communications System?

While visual design in the artistic sense is ageless, visual communications systems began to emerge in the mid-twentieth century as print advertising proliferated and television grew to dominate our daily lives. More than a logo or trademark, a visual communications system presents the identity and portrays the feeling, style, attitudes, and goals of an organization, large or small.

Typically, a visual communications system consists of graphic symbols and/or logotypes together with typography used in consistent ways to create an organizational identity. Color also plays an important role in a visual communications system.

The Rhode Island College Philosophy

Any good visual communications system rests on the firm foundation of a guiding philosophy. Before Malcolm Grear Designers were commissioned to develop the Rhode Island College system, an “Image Policy and Guidelines for Rhode Island College Advertising and Publications” was articulated, discussed, and endorsed by the executive officers of the college. Key phrases from that document described the desired image: contemporary and forward looking, aura of “worldliness,” “educational” feel. The goal was to project an identity that is “simple and elegant—appropriate to our educational mission.”

The Rhode Island College System

The Rhode Island College visual communications system uses two graphic marks: the college seal and the Rhode Island College logo-type. Both marks incorporate the flame symbol noted above.



The College Seal

The formal college seal was in use for several years before it was incorporated into the formal visual communication system developed in 1986. The annual Rhode Island College Commencement program carries the following description of this important symbol of the college’s identity:

The official Rhode Island College seal, adopted in 1960, incorporates the anchor, a symbol of hope and of the state of Rhode Island, with the founding of the institution in 1854. The seal

was designed by Edith C. Becker, professor emerita of art, who adapted the central flame symbol from the Holbrook Murals in the foyer of Roberts Hall. The flame is used in the murals to depict the energy that has, over the ages, supported the development of all living things and has led civilization to its highest intellectual achievements. In like manner, the flame in the Rhode Island College seal stands for the life of the body and the life of the mind, symbolizing the human and intellectual goals and achievements of Rhode Island College.

Traditionally reserved for formal occasions, such as Commencements and presidential inaugurations, the college seal was displayed more frequently as we “dressed up” for the college’s 150th birthday in 2004.



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The Logotype

The Rhode Island College logotype consists of the flame symbol (inside the oval from the center of the seal) next to the words “Rhode Island College” below a horizontal bar. The size of the letters emphasizes the word College, setting us apart from the other two public institutions of higher education in Rhode Island. All of these elements together form the logotype, and care should be taken to present them consistently with spacing and typography exactly as shown. Exceptions should only be made with sound graphic design considerations, as is the case, for example, in the different space arrangement in the college’s official stationery.



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Office of Publishing Services



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Typographic Considerations

The typeface (font) in the logotype is called Syntax. It is a strong, sans serif typeface (without the serifs or fine lines that finish off the main stroke of a letter, as in a “T” or an “M”) with a unique feel that sets the college’s identity apart from the more ordinary look other typefaces might project. Syntax is the recommended font for display type (headlines) in Rhode Island College publications and is used in the heads of this publication.

Syntax ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

A serif or roman face called Bembo (the body text typeface used in this publication) was selected in 1986 as the distinct but complementary font to be used with Syntax. A trip through the archives of Rhode Island College publications will reveal one or both of these faces used consistently in such publications as the Commencement program, the college’s student recruitment publications prepared annually for the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, and the College Catalog.

Bembo ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Students of typography may note slight variations in the roman face. Other fonts in the Bembo family, or very close relatives, have been substituted for Bembo over the years—these include Rotation, Rotis, and Sabon.

Rotation ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Rotis ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Sabon ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Colors

Rhode Island College's official school colors are gold and white. Because of the challenges such colors bring to the printing process, after some research to be cognizant of who else might be using it, burgundy was selected in 1986 as a consistent accent color. However, gold and white were more widely used as the college emphasized its history during the sesquicentennial celebration.

Because of the difficulty of printing in gold, metallic inks and foil stamps are frequently used on the more formal publications. In the case of the college stationery, ivory stock was selected to give the suggestion of gold, and burgundy ink gives a strong feel to the college's logotype.

The ink colors (from the Pantone Matching System) used in the Rhode Island College visual communications system are:

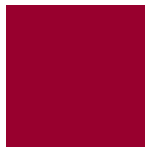


Golds:

PMS 125

PMS 872 (metallic)

(Note: Golds are tricky; contact Publishing Services for appropriate uses.)



Burgundy:

PMS 202

The Capital Campaign and Sesquicentennial Identity

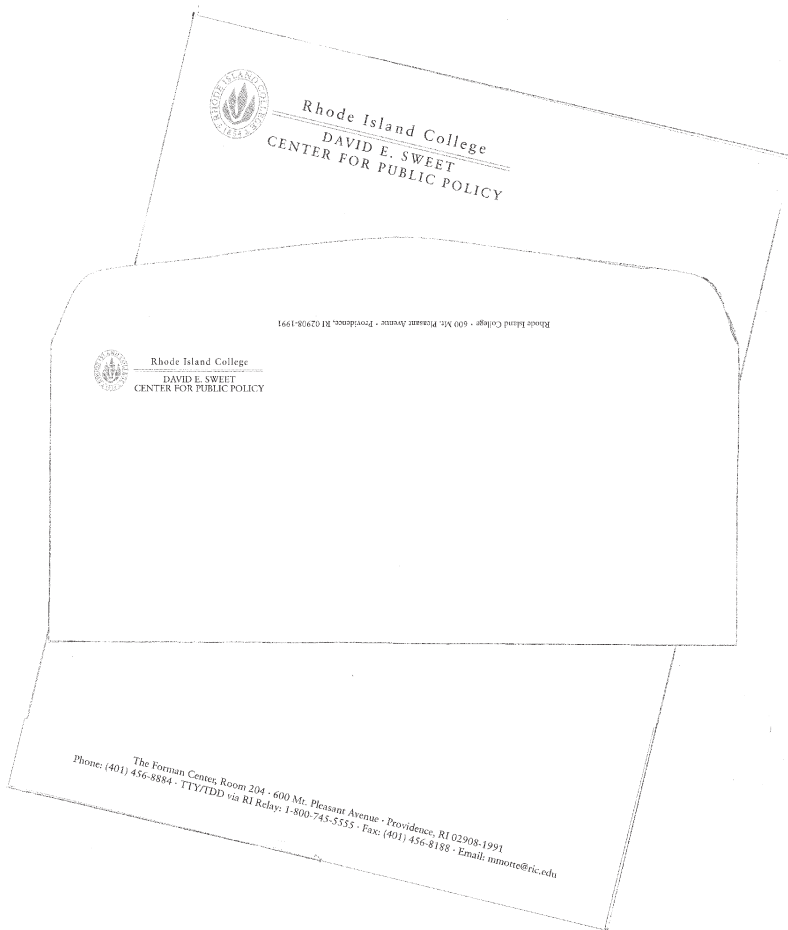
As the college embarked on its first ever major capital campaign, a special formal identity was created to carry the college through its 150th year and beyond. As with the original visual communications system, a rationale was developed for the campaign identity. Because of the importance of the campaign and its culmination in the Sesquicentennial celebration, the formal college seal was incorporated into the campaign stationery and other publications. In this special design, the seal is nestled under an arch similar to the one seen on signage around the campus. And the traditional gold and white look is an important part of the campaign identity.

A new mark was introduced specifically for the campaign and sesquicentennial identity. Many of the Campaign publications carry this explanation with the new tree symbol:



Hidden amid the shrubbery for years at the corner of Mt. Pleasant Avenue and College Road, this stately oak tree now dominates the newly landscaped entrance to Rhode Island College. Symbolizing the historical roots of the college, the growth of knowledge, and the future of our many graduates branching out across the state and beyond, we proudly display it as the identifying mark for our sesquicentennial celebration and campaign for Rhode Island College.

An interesting side note: the tree described above was severely damaged in a violent wind storm on September 11, 2002. With skillful and loving care, it has survived to continue as the grand sentinel at the Mt. Pleasant entrance.



New Look for the David E. Sweet Center for Public Policy

In an effort to give special emphasis to the new Center for Public Policy, a special identity for this important outreach arm of the college was modeled after the campaign and sesquicentennial identity. Through its several campus based affiliates, the David E. Sweet Center for Public Policy provides research and consultation to external constituents and members of the community at large. See stationery samples.

Reach. Inspire. Connect.

As part of a new marketing effort under the leadership of President Nancy Carriuolo, the College developed a tag line to complement its identity and emphasize its mission. In President Carriuolo's words: "RIC does REACH (for new goals), INSPIRE (students, each other, and external stakeholders), and CONNECT (internally and externally to achieve our mission)." The president also emphasized that "the tag line was developed on a pro bono basis by faculty, staff, students, and alums who have expertise in marketing."

REACH
INSPIRE
CONNECT



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Rhode Island College Athletics

For merchandising and other promotional efforts, the athletics department has developed its own set of marks, with the anchor symbol playing a prominent role. Request for use of these graphics should be directed to the Office of Intercollegiate Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation, The Murray Center, 456-8007.

Summary

Many in the Rhode Island College community and beyond may not be aware of the rationale and the specific elements of the Rhode Island College visual communications system. And that's as it should be. When applied appropriately, the system itself is inconspicuous and unobtrusive.

This brief manual is meant to be descriptive rather than prescriptive. Following are some “do’s” and “don’ts” that will help those involved with preparing Rhode Island College visual communications. Questions about implementation of the system, when and where to use individual elements of the system, or other technical issues should be directed to the Office of Publishing Services, Craig-Lee Hall (lower level), 401-456-8132.

Do's and Don'ts

- Do use either the college seal or the official logotype on all Rhode Island College visual communications
- Do use the recommended type fonts in college communications (Times Roman is fine in letters). If they are unavailable, use a sans serif face (such as Helvetica or Arial) for display type and a roman face (such as Times Roman) as the body type.
- Do reproduce the college seal only in black, white, burgundy, or gold.
- Do seek help from Publishing Services if you aren't sure.
- Don't use a typeface other than Syntax in the logotype.
- Don't try to imitate the seal or the logotype (get the high resolution images from the Office of News and Public Relations).
- Don't use unusual type fonts or more than two different fonts in a given publication.
- Don't run type or graphics over the logotype or seal (without consulting the design team in News and Public Relations).
- Don't stretch, distort, or modify the college marks (seal, logotype, tree) in any way.

Note: Downloadable graphics for PowerPoint or other electronic presentations are available at: <http://www.ric.edu/webcommunications/resources.php>

In printed publications, please use only high resolution images, available from the design group in News and Public Relations as noted above.

Rhode Island College Branding and Marketing Committee

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