

Augsburg University Brand Photography and Videography Style

Office of Marketing and Communication

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Strong photos and videos bring Augsburg University's brand to life. Inspiring, distinctive, thought-provoking visuals help prospective students picture their lives as Auggies and foster deeper emotional connections with our alumni.

Photos should be technically excellent, including in contrast, color, focus, lighting, and composition. Before using a file photo, also consider whether the technology, fashion, and locations in the image are still current. Clip art is, by definition, *not* distinctive, and therefore should not be used. Likewise, stock photos should be avoided whenever possible.

Like our brand voice, Augsburg's visual style is rooted in authenticity.

We endeavor to show our campus and community as they are, because misrepresentations or idealizations are ultimately damaging to our brand. Authentic photos and videos are:

- 1) Accurate
- 2) Candid (not posed) when possible
- 3) Diverse and non-stereotypical
- 4) Community based

Accurate

One way of being authentic in our photo and video is to employ a photojournalistic ethic. Instead of posing individuals or manipulating settings, have subjects "do what they do" and work to get the best shots within that situation. Strive to capture moments of spontaneous emotion and/or action. Avoid "photoshopping" images to make them fit our parameters. Use lenses that capture the truth of an image (avoid using fish eye and other lenses that distort the scene) and shoot from the point of view of the target audience. This allows viewers to project themselves into the scene.

Candid

We generally don't pose photo subjects. Instead, we work around the individual/s to create the best image. This gives the subjects more control over the photographic process and treats them as an important part of the scene instead of a prop. In cases where we must give greater direction to achieve a specific effect, we still aim for the final image to seem to be a candid.

When taking environmental or "in studio" portraits or straight-to-camera video, we use simple, straightforward poses. The subject should engage directly with the camera, looking directly into the lens, and the photographer should try to bring out the personality of the subject. Do this by having a conversation with the subjects while taking their photo or by using a conversational interview technique for video. The idea is to make them forget about the camera and trying to "look their best." The way subjects "look their best" is by showing their true personality, and to capture that, the photographer has to make them feel relaxed in front of the camera.

Diversity without stereotypes

Augsburg is an intentionally diverse private institution, and when photographing and capturing video of that diversity it is important to remember not to put subjects into stereotypical roles. We are looking for the truth of the institution, and that means showing diversity in an authentic way. Treat all subjects as

individuals, not quotas to be fit within the frame. Avoid the idea of a “rainbow of people” when trying to show our diversity. This kind of photography is trite and does not show the true nature of our University.

Community based & Interaction

When possible, show life and give a sense of place within photos or videos. Augsburg is a fun, vibrant community. The University is more about the interaction of students, faculty, and staff and our interaction with the community than about our buildings and grounds. Strive to capture campus life as it exists on a day-to-day basis.