

PRINT-READY FILE SETUP

Before designing a piece, you should familiarize yourself with the University's graphic standards for correct logo use. You can view or download the document at usm.edu/university-communications/graphic-standards. University logo files for use on print materials can be downloaded from our website at usm.edu/university-communications/university-logos.

SUBMITTING AN ONLINE PRINT-READY PROJECT REQUEST

Go to usm.edu/uc/print-ready. Enter the information and submit the order.

OUR PROCESS

1. Once our office receives the print-ready project request, we will start a job ticket and send you a copy for review.
2. A request for quotes will be sent out. This will take at least two business days. We will send you an email with the lowest price(s).
3. The print-ready file will be reviewed for printing issues and University graphic and style standards. We will let you know via email if the file is approved "as is" or if changes are required.
4. If changes are required, make the changes and send the final file to us as soon as possible.
5. The job will then be sent to print.
6. Please allow at least 5-7 business days for printing and delivery.

Please note that if you cannot be reached for questions or printing issues, the project will be delayed.

If the file uploaded is too large, the online form will not work properly, and we may not receive your request.

If you do not hear from us within two business days, please feel free to contact us.

FILE SIZE

Make sure your document is the correct size. The file size should be whatever your finished piece will be after it is printed/trimmed/folded. Indicate the correct size in your print-ready project request. If the size is not in the drop-down list, select OTHER and enter it in the additional information box.

QUALITY

Only use high-resolution images. Images should be 300 dpi minimum at 100% size. DPI refers to the number of dots or screen pixels used to create an image; the more dots, the higher the resolution, the better the image. Do not use images copied from a website or social media platform, as the resolution will be too low.

For files that have text and images, it is best to create the background in Illustrator or Photoshop, import the background into InDesign, and create the layout in InDesign.

University logos must be high-quality and not distorted in any way. Vector files should be used to ensure high-quality printing. More information about vector versus raster files can be found at printcnx.com/resources-and-support/additional-resources/raster-images-vs-vector-graphics. You can also search "vector vs raster" for additional information.

COLOR

Four-color process files

- should not include any additional spot colors or RGB images, and
- should be in CMYK color format, not RGB color format.

Spot color files

- If the output file will print in PMS or Pantone spot colors, those specific colors should be used to create the file.

Southern Miss Gold

The Pantone® values are 123C, 123CP, 115U and 115UP.

- If your project will print on coated paper, use Pantone Color Bridge Coated 123CP or Pantone Solid Coated 123C.
- If your project will print on uncoated paper, use Pantone Color Bridge Uncoated 115UP or Pantone Solid Uncoated 115U.

Solid Black Areas (four-color process only) – When you want a large area of solid black within a document (excluding text), 100% black (K) will not result in a solid, saturated black. We recommend using rich black — a mixture of 60% Cyan (C), 40% Magenta (M), 40% Yellow (Y) and 100% Black (K) inks — to create a nice, saturated black. In Adobe products, simply create a new ink swatch with this mixture.

TRIM AND FOLDS

- Crop marks must be included in the file. They help the printer identify where to trim the piece.
- Bleeds – If images extend to the edge of the page, extend the images 1/8 inch (.125 inch) beyond the edge of the page. The working file must include bleeds in the document setup. When creating a pdf, select the bleed setting.
- Be aware of the margins and folds. If text or elements are obviously out of the margins, such as too close to folds or edges, revisions will be required.

FINAL PDF

- Export the PDF as single pages, not spreads.
- Crop marks – The pdf must include crop marks.
- Bleeds – Include .125 inch bleeds on all four sides if any images extend to the edge of the page(s).
- Quality – Create the pdf at the highest press quality. Some programs like Word do not have different options to choose from.

There are websites with instructions for how to create a print-ready file. In the search, indicate what program or file format you are using and the subject, such as “InDesign how to convert spot colors to process” or “PDF add bleeds and crop marks.”

This is a quick tip sheet and does not address every possible question about print-ready file setup. Our office will review the file and contact you about any printing issues we observe. If another designer created the file, you should forward the information to him/her. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

