Branded LED Sign Policy
USG Policy 2a (3.00) | Approved May 2017

I.   Purpose & Applicability

A.   The Universities at Shady Grove (USG) recognizes the need for the Montgomery County community to receive relevant, timely, coordinated and visually appealing communications. USG's Branded LED Display sign (located on the Shady Grove Garage) is a primary channel to communicate to the outside community. Content displayed on the sign needs to promote the USG brand and reinforce USG as an innovative model for delivering the specific education and workforce needs demanded by the Montgomery County region. USG's core branded messages include:

i.   USG is a partner campus of nine Maryland public universities, all of which share in the mission of creating educational and economic opportunities for the residents of Montgomery County and the surrounding region.

ii.   USG is Montgomery County's only campus to offer affordable, quality, public higher education, with more than 80 upper-level undergraduate and graduate degree programs in areas of high demand by regional employers.

iii.   Providing students in our region with equal access to a higher education that equips them with career-ready skills and degrees, right here in Montgomery County is the right thing for our students and our community and an economic imperative for the region and state.

iv.   USG offers academic programs close to home in state-of-the-art facilities, with flexible full-time, part-time, evening and weekend schedules.

v.   Through strong and sustained partnerships with education, business, government and the community, USG supports workforce and economic development in the region, while providing high-quality educational opportunities to the next generation of leaders in the community.

vi.   USG is committed to environmental stewardship. It is our goal to facilitate, educate, and raise awareness of sustainability in all areas of campus life.

II.   Messaging Examples

A.   Examples of messaging communicated on USG's Branded LED Display sign include:

i.   Significant events open to the community and involving multiple local education and/or university partners (e.g. Open Houses)

ii.   Welcome messages for special guests, start of school

iii.   Seasonal/holiday messages

iv.   Congratulatory messages (e.g. Graduation Celebrations)

v.   Campus-wide awards and recognition

vi.   Announcement of new degree programs offered on the USG campus

          vii.   Availability of USG Conference Center facilities and services

III.   Policy Statement
- A. The following guidelines outline the usage standard for USG's Branded LED Display Sign
  - i. The creation of messages for display on the sign is the responsibility of the Marketing and Communications Department.
  - ii. Messages that promote or condone behavior that violates USG/USM policies, or local, state or federal law will not be approved for display.
  - iii. Advertisement of commercial products or services will not be approved for display.
  - iv. USG's Marketing and Communications Department is responsible for the selection of content to be displayed on the sign and ensures that the scheduling of messages is done in a fair and appropriate manner.
  - v. USG's Marketing and Communications Department reserves the right to edit or deny messages that do not uphold and reinforce the branded communication standards of USG.
  - vi. Use of USG's Branded LED Display sign for any other purpose, including but not limited to political, commercial, or personal information, is prohibited.

- B. Content & Format Standards
  The creation of messages for the sign requires consideration of technical, legal, and aesthetic factors. The technical considerations deal with the system's capabilities and limitations. The aesthetic or creative considerations relate to making the digital messages and digital video visually interesting and effective communicators. When creating messages for the sign, it is important to consider the system's horizontal aspect ratio, graphic readability and balance, graphic colors and compatibility (within graphics and against backgrounds), and graphic style.

- C. Readability
  Digital messages are typically displayed for 15-20 seconds at a time. Therefore, it is best to limit the number of elements (text and graphic images) in a digital slide so that viewers have sufficient time to read the slide during its brief display time.

- D. Text and Fonts
  Limit the number of words (five words maximum) and the number of lines on a slide (three lines maximum). Allow sufficient white space between and around text so that it appears balanced and visually pleasing. The resolution limitations of the sign displays require the use of simple, bold text or type. It is best to avoid light, ornate fonts with fine thin lines or fonts with delicate serifs (even in larger sizes) because they are difficult to read.

- E. Color and Contrast
  Other readability considerations are color and contrast. Insufficient contrast between text and background colors can make reading difficult. Some color combinations may provide sufficient contrast but still be difficult to view because one or more of the colors is extremely bright.

- F. Copyrighted Material
  Do not incorporate elements into digital messages that violate copyright laws.