
Policy #UCM008: Canva

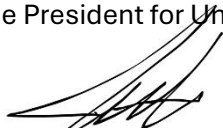
Recommended for Approval by:



Kelly Repinski

Vice President for University Communications and Marketing

Approved by:



James D. Fisher, J.D., Ph.D.

Interim President

Effective Date: 10/13/2026

A. Intent

Canva Enterprise enables Pennsylvania Western University (PennWest) employees to create day-to-day operational communications using approved templates and brand assets while maintaining university brand standards. Canva supplements—but does not replace—the professional creative services provided by University Communications and Marketing (UCM).

This policy establishes the governance, responsibilities, and standards for the appropriate use of Canva Enterprise across the university.

B. Definition(s)

Approved Template. A Canva template created and approved by University Communications and Marketing for university use.

Artificial Intelligence (AI). Canva features that generate or modify content using artificial intelligence. AI-generated content must comply with PennWest policies and brand standards.

Brand Assets. Official PennWest logos, colors, fonts, graphics, photography, icons and other visual identity elements.

Brand Kit. The Canva repository containing PennWest-approved brand assets for authorized users.

Brand Standards. PennWest's official visual identity and messaging guidelines.

Canva Administrator. The individual(s) designated by University Communications and Marketing to manage Canva Enterprise, including user access, templates and brand

assets.

Canva Enterprise. PennWest's licensed version of Canva for creating approved university communications.

Creative Services. The University Communications and Marketing unit responsible for brand governance, graphic design, photography, videography, and visual communications.

Locked Elements. Components of approved templates that Canva users cannot edit to maintain brand consistency.

Routine Communications. Standard university communications created using approved templates, such as internal flyers, presentations, social media graphics, digital signage, certificates, and similar materials.

C. Policy Statement

• Guiding Principles

The following principles guide the PennWest Canva Enterprise program:

- Protect and strengthen the PennWest brand.
- Promote consistent application of university brand standards.
- Empower employees to create routine communications using approved templates and brand assets.
- Preserve the role of Creative Services in providing professional design, branding, strategic communications, and creative expertise.
- Ensure responsible stewardship of university resources through centralized brand governance and standardized templates.
- Support accessibility, compliance, and continuous improvement.

• Roles and Responsibilities

- University Communications and Marketing (UCM): Administers Canva Enterprise, manages brand assets and templates, provides governance and oversees compliance with university brand standards.
- Department Users: Create routine communications using approved templates and brand assets in accordance with this policy and university brand standards.
- Supervisors: Individuals within a department who ensure departmental use of Canva aligns with university policies and business needs.
- Canva Administrators: UCM team members who manage user access, permissions and platform administration.

• Scope of Canva Self-Service

Canva Enterprise supports the creation of routine university communications using approved templates and brand assets. The platform supplements professional creative services while helping ensure consistent application of PennWest brand standards.

Employees may customize approved Canva templates to meet the needs of their department, program, event or audience. Unless restricted within a template, users may modify content, photography, approved colors, graphic elements and layouts while maintaining all required brand elements and standards.

Materials created by adapting an approved Canva template do not require review

or approval by Creative Services before use.

With this flexibility comes responsibility. Creators must carefully review materials for spelling, accuracy, clarity, accessibility, and appropriate content before publication. Every communication represents PennWest and can influence how the University is perceived.

Creative Services will work with departments and offices to develop additional approved templates when existing templates do not meet a recurring communications need.

- **When to Involve Creative Services**

Canva self-service is intended for routine departmental and event communications using approved university templates. Projects requiring original creative development, specialized production, or strategic brand oversight should be submitted to University Communications and Marketing (UCM) Creative Services.

Creative Services involvement is required for projects that:

Brand Identity: Create or significantly modify university logos, visual identities or other core PennWest brand elements.

Marketing and Recruitment: Develop materials specifically intended to recruit prospective students, promote academic programs to external audiences, or support university-level marketing, recruitment or fundraising campaigns.

High-Profile Communications: Support major institutional initiatives, executive communications or other strategically significant projects requiring professional creative direction.

Original Creative Development: Require new visual concepts, custom illustrations or designs beyond the structure of approved Canva templates.

Specialized Design and Production: Require professional photography, videography, publication design, complex print production, signage, wayfinding, vehicle graphics or environmental graphics.

Routine Communications and Canva Self-Service

Employees may independently create and publish routine departmental, informational and event materials using approved Canva templates, including materials shared with external audiences, provided they follow university brand standards.

The need for Creative Services involvement depends on the project's purpose, scope, and strategic significance—not simply whether an external audience will view the material.

When uncertain whether a project is appropriate for Canva self-service, employees should consult UCM before beginning work.

- **Brand Standards**

Creative Services maintains and governs the PennWest Brand Kit and all official brand assets.

Department-specific Brand Kits may include approved departmental logos, templates, photography, and other assets created or approved by Creative

Services. These assets will be made available within Canva for use by the appropriate departments.

Users may not modify official brand assets, including university or departmental logos, or locked template elements without approval from Creative Services.

- **Accessibility**

All materials created using Canva Enterprise must comply with applicable accessibility laws and PennWest accessibility standards. Users are responsible for ensuring their communications are accessible. Guidance, templates and resources to support accessible design will be provided by University Communications and Marketing.

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

Canva's AI features may be used to enhance productivity but do not replace professional judgment. Users are responsible for ensuring AI-generated content is accurate, accessible, compliant with applicable laws and consistent with PennWest brand standards. AI-generated imagery may not be used in official university marketing, recruitment, executive communications, institutional publications, or news content without approval from Creative Services. PennWest's official communications should prioritize authentic photography of its students, faculty, staff, campuses and programs.

- **Canva Access**

Access to Canva Enterprise is limited to PennWest employees with a demonstrated business need and is administered by University Communications and Marketing.

UCM will work with departments to determine the appropriate number of Canva users based on factors such as current Canva use, frequency and volume of communications, employee responsibilities, and the need to create or collaborate on materials.

Departments are encouraged to designate Canva users rather than request licenses for employees with only occasional needs. License allocations may be adjusted as departmental needs change. Departments requesting licenses beyond their university-funded allocation may be responsible for the cost of additional licenses at the current university rate. Additional licenses must be obtained through UCM and may not be purchased independently by departments.

Before receiving access, users must complete required onboarding and training and acknowledge this policy.

By using Canva Enterprise, users agree to comply with university brand standards, accessibility requirements, and this policy; use approved templates and brand assets; preserve locked brand elements; and consult Creative Services when professional design support is required.

University Communications and Marketing may modify user permissions, update templates and brand assets, require additional training or revoke access when necessary to protect the integrity of the PennWest brand or ensure compliance with this policy.

D. Related Policies

Not Applicable.

E. Contact Information

For additional information, please contact the Office of University Communications and Marketing.

F. Policy Review Schedule

Each policy shall be reviewed by the corresponding Vice President on a regular basis as appropriate.