Video Standards & Guidelines

rev May 2025

About this Document

This document is a comprehensive resource that provides guidance to ensure video materials are in alignment with the overarching brand guidance for the center, the University of Michigan, and Michigan Medicine.

The Center for Global Health Equity at the University of Michigan uses video as a powerful storytelling tool to share our mission, elevate our impact, and build connection across global communities. This guide outlines the minimum quality standards and best practices for creating video content on behalf of the center.

These standards apply to all faculty, staff, students, and external vendors producing videos representing the center across platforms. These guidelines set minimum production quality standards to ensure we provide our audiences with a high-quality viewer experience.

While unique to the center, these guidelines draw from the overarching frameworks defined by both Michigan Medicine[1] and the University of Michigan[2]. ■

1 Michigan Medicine Editorial Guidelines (myumi.ch/pkV5q)
2 U-M Editorial Resources (myumi.ch/XGy4P)

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Quick Reference Checklist

BEFORE FILMING

- ☐ Creative brief complete
- ☐ Storyboard approved
- ☐ Consent forms signed
- ☐ All assets have copyright clearance

DURING PRODUCTION

- ☐ Shoot in 16:9 HD, at minimum
- ☐ Clear, balanced audio
- ☐ Well-lit and framed visuals
- ☐ Use branded lower thirds

POST-PRODUCTION

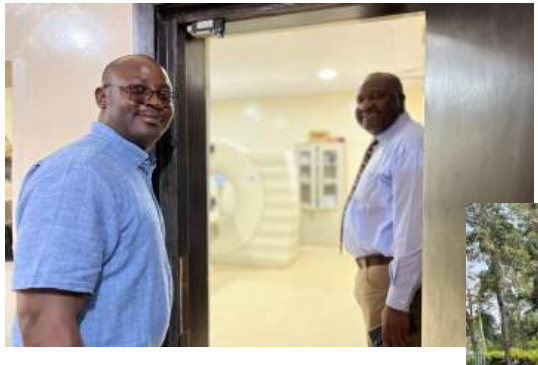
- ☐ Include captions
- ☐ Add end credits, if applicable
- ☐ Close with center logo
- ☐ File named correctly

FINAL REVIEW

- ☐ Tested on mobile
- ☐ Shared with center review team
- ☐ Final export uploaded to Youtube
- ☐ External promotion

Pre-Production

Signaling our values in the videos we produce



Video plays an important role in how we communicate our mission, impact, and values to stakeholders. As an equity-focused organization, the videos we use in our communication materials must reflect our values, respect the communities we serve, and genuinely showcase our impact.

We're committed not just to featuring the groundbreaking research of our University of Michigan team, but to prominently showcasing our international collaborators. **Our videos should uplift others, stressing the substantive changes we are driving by partnering with dedicated individuals globally.** ▪

All videos should:

- Be visually interesting
- Have clear, understandable audio
- Tell a complete and compelling story as concisely as possible (in general, storytelling web videos should be no longer than 3 minutes)
- Follow the university brand standards and visual identity guidelines
- Close with the appropriate logos
- Be consistent in style, tone and message
- Meet ADA digital accessibility standards
- Uphold current best practices in videography

Impact Scholar HaEun Lee (left) accompanies her mentor Sister Priscilla Busingye, MBChB (right)—obstetrician and gynecologist and fistula surgeon at Saint Francis Hospital in Nsambya, Uganda—on a site visit to a camp that provides free postpartum surgical procedures.

Best practices

MAKE A CREATIVE BRIEF AND STORYBOARD

Before embarking on a video, it's best to have a clear vision and goal prior to the shoot. Once that's completed, spend some time mapping out the ideal visuals for each scene.

GET INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Make the video review process more efficient by making full transcripts of the video interviews, so stakeholders can see the full context. Highlight themes or specific sentences in the interview transcripts that you think will be successful in the video.

ENSURE COPYRIGHT

Videos must be free of any copyrighted material unless legal permission is granted and documented. Leverage music, sound, and photo licenses from the center, Michigan Medicine, or the producer to ensure compliance.

Farhana Alarakhiya, chief data innovation Ooficer at AKU's Data and Innovation Office, presents to a group of center leadership during a retreat for our Data Collaborative initiative.

Production

On a recent visit, center member Cheryl Moyer, a faculty member at the U-M School of Public Health, met with local traditional leaders in Techiman, Ghana, as part of the Ghana Michigan platform to IMProve Access, quality Care, and Training for health (IMPACT) project.

Visual & Audio Quality

VISUAL QUALITY

Avoid using acronyms for named centers and programs on external communications as much as possible.

- **Aspect Ratio:** Recommended aspect ratio = 16:9 with no letterboxing
- **Video Format:** Preferred file types to upload to YouTube: Quicktime (.mov) and MPEG (.mp4)
- **Resolution:** High Definition (HD) video at either 1920x1080 or 1280x720 or 4k, if possible
- **Audio format**: MP# or AAC preferred

VISUAL STYLE

Consistent application of the center's visual identity gives strength to both the individual video as well as our overarching brand presence.

Our videos should:

- Capture genuine expressions to convey authenticity, intimacy and relatability
- Use natural light and shallow depth of field to keep the focus on the subject and prevent backgrounds from being distracting

AUDIO QUALITY

- Clear, balanced, and intelligible throughout
- No hissing, skips, or background noise
- If there are multiple speakers, ensure volume consistency

Visual Identity & Branding

CENTER LOGO

- **All videos should include the center's logo in the outro of the video.** Work with the communications manager to identify which logo treatment is the most appropriate for the project.
- **Use only official logo files—**do not alter color, proportions, or effects

THIRD PARTY LOGOS

The use of third party logos will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the communications manager.

While the center's logo should be the primary brand acknowledged by the videos, in rare occasions a third party who has provided significant support or resources towards the creation of the video may be considered.

A third party logo must be supplied by the organization and should be a high quality vector image. Low quality or unofficial logos will not be utilized in the center's video content.

Lower Thirds

We currently offer two approved lower third templates for use in video editing. These can be provided as Adobe Premiere or After Effects files upon request.

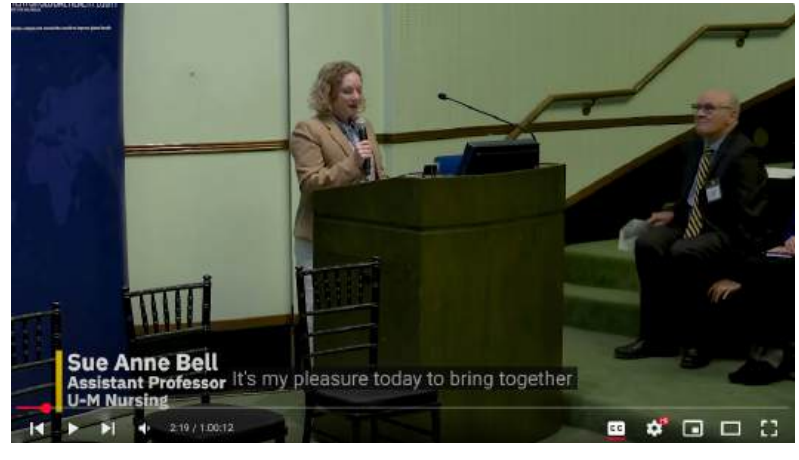
TEMPLATE OPTIONS

Boxed Blue Template

- Best for busy or cluttered backgrounds
- Optimized for longer names or multi-line titles
- Uses a navy-blue block with the University of Michigan logo and center branding
- Ideal for interviews or complex title structures

Yellow Line Template

- Designed for shorter names and titles
- Bold white text with a yellow accent line
- Best used when screen space is limited or the background is clean



USAGE GUIDELINES

- Use either approved template based on visual clarity and subject name length
- Do not modify fonts, color schemes, or layout without approval
- Alternate designs must be reviewed and approved by the center's communications manager

POSITIONING GUIDANCE

The lower third can be placed on the left or right side of the frame, depending on which has the most empty space. When possible, place at or below the shoulder of the subject, with consistent padding between text and vertical bar.

Exceptions

A floating lower third may also be used when placed over a solid backdrop with proper contrast between the text and the background.

Incorrect Usage

- Do not use too small font.
- Do not change the size of the bar.
- Do not place in the middle of the screen.
- Do not place lower third above shoulders.
- Do not place lower third at bottom of screen where it will block captions.
- Do not use white text with no bar.

TIMING GUIDANCE

The lower third should be included on the subject's first speaking appearance. Exceptions include:

- **If the first scene of the interviewee is less than 2 seconds**, wait until the next, longer clip to introduce the subject, in order to give the viewer enough time to read and process the name and title.
- **If the first scene is a close-up**, wait to place the lower third on a medium or wide shot. If there are only close-up shots of the interview, it is acceptable to use a floating title

NAMING CONVENTIONS

Identifying subjects in a video is important to provide context and credibility. Given space and legibility constraints, it is best to keep the title descriptor concise. If a faculty member holds multiple CGHE titles, use the one title that is most relevant for this video. Do not include acronyms for credentials or terminal degrees (PhD, MPH, MD, etc).

Capitalize the first letter of all words that are not articles (a, an, the, etc) in lower third headings.

Always identify interviewee in the following order:
Line 1: Name
Line 2+: Title, Organization

Do use:
Akbar K. Waljee
Leslie D. Yamada and Tachi Yamada M.D. Director,
Center for Global Health Equity

Don't use:
Dr. Akbar K. Waljee
Internal Medicine Department

Use of University of Michigan name

In most cases, use the acronym "U-M" followed by the school or department, if applicable.

CENTER FOR GLOBAL HEALTH EQUITY
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

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