

Tips for taking photos

Individual portraits (or headshots) of faculty or staff members are most easily done outside in the shade, rather than indoors or in the direct sun. Use a camera with a zoom lens set to its longest telephoto setting. This will blur the background to keep distracting details to a minimum. Use a tripod or at least concentrate on holding the camera very steady. Camera shake is the primary reason for blurry photos. Crop the photos tightly. If you want to show a person's face, don't bother to include a huge expanse blank wall behind him or her.

For group shots, almost anything is better than lining everyone up against a wall. Try shooting from a high angle with the group looking up at the camera. Or arrange the group around a couch or chairs with some sitting and some standing. Shoot at an angle to walls, rather than straight on.

For classroom, lab, office, or event photos, remember to vary angles and distance. Shoot at minimum zoom and maximum zoom. Show the overall scene, interaction between people, and close ups, too. And always shoot a LOT of photos! You'll be surprised how many photos of groups of people are unusable because of someone blinking or having a weird expression.

Remember to try to include action whenever possible. If someone is getting an award for something, rather than showing the person with a plaque, try to show the person doing whatever he or she did to get the award in the first place.

Include caption information whenever the subject or action in the photo is not immediately apparent.

Also remember to include photos of your staff, students, and faculty wearing Northeastern State University clothing when possible. Try to stay away from featuring logos from other universities.

Information courtesy of Charles Barry, Santa Clara University.