Graphic Design Quick Guide:

Image File Types:

- JPEG (JPG) – most common file type. Quality of the image decreases as the file size decreases. Used in digital and print media, especially when something is printed at a high resolution.
- PNG – Ideal for web projects, not suitable for printed materials. Can be saved with a transparent background.
- GIF – Most commonly animated but is also used for web projects where an image needs to load very quickly. Not ideal for high detail or colorful images.
- TIFF – Avoid using for digital, best use is for printing photographs
- PDF – Great for sharing flyers, can become tricky to make accessible for digital use

Raster and Vector Image Files

- Raster images are constructed by pixels to form an image. JPEG, GIF, and PNG are all raster image extensions. Resizing these images can affect the quality. Mainly used with photos.

- Vector images are constructed using proportional formulas, which means you can resize these images without affecting quality. PDFs are vector file types. Logos and other brand graphics should be saved as vector files. Mainly used with illustrations.

Colors:

- RGB – red, green, blue. Best used for digital materials
- CMYK – cyan, magenta, yellow, black. Best used for printed materials
- Hex Color Code – a six-digit combination of numbers and letters that create a wide spectrum of colors in RGB. #RRGGBB An easy way to share colors and maintain uniformity throughout designs.
- Contrast – How colors interact with each other is important for legibility and accessibility. Check color contrast with an easy-to-understand WCAG pass/fail checker using hex codes (webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/)

Text:

- Typeface – The style of lettering. Usually, what people refer to as fonts. Ex. Times New Roman, Helvetica, Arial, Tahoma, etc.
- Font – Variations on typefaces, Italics, bold, expanded, condensed, etc.
- Serif – Typefaces that have slight projections/tails added to the ends of a stroke.
  - Times New Roman is a classic serif typeface.
- Sans Serif – Typefaces that do not end with projections/tails (like the typeface used in the document) Easier to read on small screens.
- Script – Typefaces designed to look like cursive handwriting.

Resources:

Free to use Photos/Illustrations/Videos:

- Freeimages.com
- Pixabay.com
- Unsplash.com
- Pexels.com
- Pdimagesarchive.org

Editing:

- Gimp.org
- Pixlr.com
- Capcut.com
- Canva.com (free Canva Pro for nonprofits available)

Accessibility

- Alt text: section508.gov/create/alternative-text/
  - This is just one resource; alt text is a broad subject and there are many ways to execute correctly.
- Color Contrast: webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/