Verbal lexicon
On language: The language used by the university to define, describe and differentiate itself is a direct reflection of the intelligence, ingenuity, progressive mindset and poetic pragmatism (quintessentially Chicago) that underlie its standing as a premier public university.

Verbal lexicon: A lexicon is a system of language that can be mined and appropriated according to need throughout the university, across media and across publics. It is open-ended insofar as it lays the groundwork for further elaboration and ‘on-point’ personalization by providing a common vocabulary and overall narrative framework.
Stakeholders have used the following terms to described UIC’s institutional personality. When preparing narrative text and visuals, consider the aspects of the UIC personality that best describe your story or your point of view and adopt them as part of your communications strategy. These brand attributes can be used individually or in combination.

**Excellence**
the quality of being outstanding

**Opportunity**
circumstances favoring possibility

**Discovery**
bringing to light something previously unknown

**Potential**
capacity for growth, achievement and future development

**Resilience**
the quality of being able to recover quickly or easily

**Fostering**
the action of encouraging or helping forward

**Transformation**
the action of changing in form, shape or appearance

**Service**
conduct tending to the welfare or advantage of others

**Courage**
the ability to act with confidence and without fear

**Honesty**
displaying qualities of openness, candidness and integrity

**Diversity**
the state of inclusion of people of different races, ethnicity, cultures, gender identities and socio-economic backgrounds

**Chicago**
forward-thinking, determined, gusty metropolis
UIC key themes

Most universities can lay claim to the one or more of UIC’s brand attributes. What makes these values unique to UIC is how they are put into action across campus. When you write or speak about UIC, these themes should be part of the conversation. Demonstrate these concepts by providing concrete examples of students, faculty, staff or researchers living up to these ideals.

- **Excellence**
  Access excellence.
- **Opportunity**
  Actualize opportunity.
- **Discovery**
  Inspire discovery.
- **Potential**
  Cultivate potential.
- **Resilience**
  Develop resilience.
- **Fostering**
  Foster success.
- **Transformation**
  Transform lives.
- **Service**
  Serve others.
- **Courage**
  Be courageous.
- **Honesty**
  Exemplify honesty.
- **Diversity**
  Experience diversity.
- **Chicago**
  Chicago’s public research university.

Note: All of the key concepts are nouns representing a specific quality, action, ability, capacity, process, or circumstance attribute able to UIC.
Key stories

Excellence: UIC abounds with stories of students who come to campus with the dream of graduating with honors, and do; of faculty who can teach anywhere in the world but choose UIC; of scholars and researchers who embrace the view from the street; of staff who lead by example. The wellspring of excellence at UIC is the community of individuals thriving in the here and now.

Opportunity: The promise of greatness is an embodiment of the American dream, a dream infused with possibility. A transcendent dream, presumptuous and audacious. As early as 1936, a young state legislator, Richard J Daley, introduced a resolution calling for a publicly supported university in Chicago. As mayor, Daley made real his commitment to the city, breaking ground on what was originally called Circle Campus, in 1963. A young university, UIC is a testimony to the possibility of personal achievement, appealing to curious and hungry minds.

Potential: A solid academic foundation is the bedrock upon which a rewarding future is built. It begins with a dream of becoming a doer, a thinker, a maker. It is advanced through exposure to and the testing of new ideas. UIC unleashes the potential of its students in ways commensurate with success: deepening one’s understanding of the world by way of scholarship, collegiality, professional practice, research, public service and community engagement.

Discovery: Hearts and minds are stirred to action by the prospect of discovery. Imagine! UIC faculty and researchers are on the cutting edge, working hard to offer solutions to all matters of public concern. Federal investment in basic research pays dividends every day through the creation of new ways of doing things, new products, new companies and new jobs. Scientific innovation contributes to national competitiveness, improves living standards and furthers social welfare. Imagine!

Resilience: Strength of character is most readily nurtured in a collective context wherein competing modes of thought and behavior are given equal measure. Discoveries are made, questions are answered, problems are solved as a result of constructive discourse and scrutiny. Success, after all, is a product of trial and error, search and re-search. It is sustained by resiliency and adaptability, skills fundamental to the UIC experience.

Transformation: History is made by those with the conviction, courage and temerity to actuate change from the ground up. Nothing exists in a vacuum. All things ultimately influence all other things: the smallest change on a micro level ultimately influences change on a macro level. UIC is a place of transformation. It is an agent of change, transforming lives that transform lives.

Service: Democracy is a living organism that thrives on active participation. At UIC, neutrality is not an option. Jane Addams’s Hull-House is the preeminent model of civic engagement and it is no coincidence that the university, with its ethic of public service and democratic responsibility, is centered around it. UIC’s commitment to university-community collaborations, harnessing expertise from both sides, expands and deepens the discourse that invigorates our democracy and perpetuates Jane Addams’s legacy of organizing for social justice.

Fostering: Encouragement inspires bravery and bravery inspires change. UIC fosters scholarship and practices that reflect and respond to conditions in an increasingly complex world by encouraging students and faculty alike to look beyond the scope of possibility. To be bold. To surmount difficulties by engaging in scientific and/or interdisciplinary research. To foster growth within the context of one’s field of interest by asking questions and questioning answers.
Courage: It is with courage that young people pursue a university education. Some who enter UIC are children of new immigrants; some are undocumented. Many are the first in their families to go to college. All hunger for an education that makes a difference so that they, too, can make a difference. UIC offers myriad opportunities for personal growth and provides the necessary framework for the origination of bold ideas and assertive action.

Diversity: Diversity is more than an inert term. It is an attitude of inclusivity; a celebration of dissimilarity; a source of enrichment; an agency of interaction and dialogue; a mindset that nurtures differences and engenders a sustained sense of belonging. An important resource driving change and promoting equity at UIC is the manifold voices, races, cultures, beliefs, identities, orientations and perspectives that inform the collective discourse.

Honesty: It is easy to paint a pretty picture of the urban condition but what individuals respond to, and what truly motivates, is an honest acknowledgment of conditions as they are: shortcomings and long shots, social dichotomies and contradictory forces, paucity and privilege, losses and wins. UIC provides outlets for innovation, platforms for multi-modal research and forums for public engagement consistently making good on its commitment to confront the most pressing issues of the day.

Chicago: UIC is as much a part of Chicago’s legacy as a resilient, forward-thinking, gutsy metropolis, as Chicago is part of UIC’s legacy as an enterprising, broad-minded, spirited public research university accessible to all who aspire to achieve. UIC and the city look to one another for leadership, opportunities, and growth. Every advancement begins with an idea. Ideas change the world. UIC is a place of becoming. Ideas abound.

Uniquely UIC

Dream big.
Work hard.
Do good.
Give back.

Stand up.
Speak out.
Be bold.
Stay true.

Look far.
Aim high.
Dig deep.
Go strong.

Ask questions.
Question answers.