

What Advertising Students Should Know: A Statement of Principles

Report of the National Education Executive Committee American Advertising Federation Updated March 2013

This is a draft of what we hope will become guiding principles about the desired outcomes of advertising education. They can provide guidance for the evaluation of advertising programs by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. A statement of desired outcomes is especially relevant because the Accrediting Council is initiating a careful examination of the outcomes of journalism-mass communication education. It is almost certain that the accreditation process will have a much stronger emphasis on outcomes than it had in the past. In doing so, the Council is responding to pressure from the U.S. Department of Education and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.

We see this draft as the starting point of an effort to achieve consensus with the Advertising Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) and the American Academy of Advertising (AAA), the other advertising organization represented on the Accrediting Council. The principles have been shaped by our own beliefs and the results of focus group research with advertising practitioners at the American Advertising Federation national conference in June 1999. We have tried to make the principles general enough to be flexible and to meet changing conditions.

1. An advertising curriculum should enable students to learn the following:
 - A. Various disciplines within the advertising field and how they relate.
 - B. Role of advertising in society and culture.
 - C. Role of advertising in business marketing and communications.
 - D. Management of the advertising function and personnel in advertisers, advertising media companies and related businesses.
 - E. A wide range of alternatives and constant change for delivering advertising messages and how to use those delivery vehicles.
 - F. The conceptual basis for crafting advertising messages.
 - G. The regulation of advertising and its role as a business.
 - H. Ethical principles for advertising practices.
 - I. Research methods appropriate to guiding advertising strategy and evaluating its results.
 - J. An appreciation for the diversity of markets and audiences for whom advertisers create campaigns and messages.
 - K. The development of critical thinking skills.
 - L. The development of strategic thinking skills.
 - M. Improvement in writing skills.

N. Improvement in oral and presentation skills.
O. The ability to work with others to solve problems creatively.
P. Participation in Experiential Learning Program (i.e. NSAC)
Q. An awareness of advertising implications across geographical and cultural boundaries.

2. Instruction in advertising courses should include both theory and practical application.

3. Advertising students should be strongly encouraged to gain experience through industry-related activities and internships.

4. Advertising students should be proficient in using equipment and technology they will use in their careers.