

**American Advertising Federation
National Student Survey
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The following is preliminary data from the 2017 National Student Survey. The data were collected on April 18-19, 2017 using Survey Monkey's online platform. A total of 2950 AAF student member email addresses (supplied by AAF) received invitations with a link to take the survey. The invitation included an incentive for a \$5 Starbucks gift card for completing the survey. A total of 855 students responded, which is a 29% response rate. Those with completions received Starbucks gift cards via the online fulfillment service CoffeeSender.com.

DEMOGRAPHICS:

- Respondents numbered 855 (80% women and 20% men) students from 149 schools.
- In terms of race/ethnicity, 72.9% of the students indicated that they were white, 11.8% Hispanic, 8.8% Asian American, 6.2% African American, 1.1% Native American and .9 Pacific Islander. 2.1% indicated that they were International students (non U.S. citizens). (Students could choose more than one option).
- Students' age ranged from 18-49 with a median age of 21.
- For year in school, 59% were seniors, 26% juniors, 11% sophomores and 4% first-years.
- 70% were on the NSAC (Tai Pei Frozen Foods) team at their school.
- The average self-reported overall GPA was 3.47; GPA in the major was 3.57.

THE ADVERTISING MAJOR:

- 85% of the students identified as advertising/marketing/communications majors, either alone or combined with another major.
- 36.5% decided to major in advertising when they were in high school or before. 26.2% decided when they were in their first year and 29% when they were sophomores.
- For six out of ten, advertising was their first and only major. About one third had another major before switching to advertising.
- In terms of important sources for selecting advertising as a major, 21.5% said that looking at ads in the media influenced them and 14% said that depictions of advertising careers on TV or in movies was an important factor. Other important sources included parents (18.5%), relatives (8.8%), high school teachers (11.3%), internships/jobs (12.4%), aptitude test (22.8%), college professor (21.5%) and college advisor (20.6%). Students could select more than one source.
- More than half (57.3%) of the students said that they majored in advertising for BOTH the creative and business aspects. However, 30.5% said that they were advertising majors because of the Creative aspects only while only 9.8% said that they majored in advertising for the business aspects only.

- About one-third (37.3%) didn't know that they could major in advertising when they were in high school.
- About one-third (30.8%) agreed that they majored in advertising to avoid taking math courses.

AFTER GRADUATION:

- 72% said they plan to work in the field of advertising after graduation. Another 13% intend to go to graduate school. Of those, 10% believe that they will also work in advertising while going to graduate school.
- New York, Chicago and Los Angeles were the top three geographic areas preferred for a job. 22% of the respondents checked "international city/market."
- Advertising agencies (75.8%) continue to be the top company preference for advertising students. About half (49.1%) indicated a preference to work on the client side.
- Account executive/brand manager (44.4%) was the most preferred job within advertising, followed by strategy/planning (46.3%) social media manager (43.2%), art director (34.7%), public relations (30.2%), copywriter (24.1%) and research (18.8%).
- About one-fourth (25.8%) of the students who were graduating had received one or more job offers at the time of the April survey and about half of those had accepted the position.
- Salary offers averaged about \$37,500 annually, ranging from \$20,000 to \$70,000.
- Mean salary expectations for students' first job were above actual offers at \$42,500. Students expected \$70,000 for their salary in five years on average.

INTERNSHIPS/MENTORS:

- About three-fourths of students held at least one internship during college.
- About half of the students worked at least one unpaid internship (about half of those for college credit and about half without credit).
- Two-thirds of the students reported having a career mentor. Of those students, 45% said that a professor was their mentor while 32% said their mentor was a working professional.