Memorandum to Presidents

Date: July 21, 1980

From: Office of the Vice Chancellor for University Affairs and Development

Subject: Advertising Guidelines for State-operated Campuses

This Memorandum establishes a set of guidelines for State-operated campuses to follow in conducting advertising programs designed primarily for the recruitment of students.

There appears to be an upsurge in interest by the campuses in informing prospective students of educational opportunities available to them at State University units. An informal check of current practices shows that individual campus procedures tend to vary widely. Therefore, it is clearly in the best interests of the State University as a whole to adopt guidelines that will bring a greater degree of order and continuity to the advertising practices of the State-operated campuses, emphasize fiscal responsibility and quality control, and suggest important factors that should be considered in the preparation of advertisements.

The attached guidelines were circulated widely to presidents and campus public relations officers in draft form. Suggested changes, where appropriate, were incorporated into the final version.

The Office of University Affairs and Development is prepared to work with the campuses in interpreting these guidelines and in assisting advertising efforts where possible.

Attachment

This memorandum addressed to:

Presidents, State-operated Campuses
As the nation's largest system of higher education, encompassing 64 diverse, geographically dispersed institutions offering more than 3,700 academic programs, State University of New York has a continuing responsibility to keep its present and prospective students and the taxpayers of New York State well informed with respect to the University's educational opportunities, cultural advantages, breadth of research and scope of public services.

To adequately meet this responsibility, the University conducts its informational programs in traditional ways -- catalogs, pamphlets, films, brochures, booklets, news releases, internal newspapers -- and, as necessary, by advertising in newspapers, radio and television.
To assure that such advertising by the University and its campuses is as effective and responsible as possible, the following guidelines will apply to State-operated campuses:

I. Academic and non-employment-related advertising may be conducted to inform prospective students of formal degree, career advancement and self enrichment opportunities; to acquaint the general public with the various programs and activities which are offered as part of the college calendar.

II. 1. To the extent possible, print and electronic advertising shall be funded through non-State-appropriated funds, such as Income Fund Reimbursable Accounts, or grants from campus foundations and other private sources.

2. Expenditure of State-appropriated funds for advertising is authorized when no other appropriate source of funding is available. Multi-color publications continue to require prior approval of the State Department of Audit and Control.

3. Cooperation with an advertising program funded by a University constituency, such as the faculty union, is allowable, providing the objective is to promote a better understanding of the University and its breadth of educational, cultural and public service opportunities.
III. 1. Where resources are adequate, advertising should be conducted utilizing campus personnel. Campuses may retain commercial advertising agencies under established procedures, many of which mandate competitive screening.

2. Contracts will specify services to be provided, remuneration to be paid, and may contain a clause to provide for credit -- through rebate or additional services -- in those instances where the agency earns a commission through placement of campus advertising.

3. All contracts are subject to approval by the State Department of Audit and Control.

4. Upon request, the Central Administration Office of University Affairs and Development will provide campuses with a model contract and will serve as Albany intermediary to facilitate contract negotiations with the Department of Audit and Control.

IV. 1. Advertising by a SUNY campus reflects not only on that campus but also on the entire State University. Therefore, strict attention should be given to the quality of the advertisement so that it properly represents both the excellence and the reputation of the system.
2. Campuses will give continuing attention to fair and collegial consideration of programs at other State University campuses, particularly where more than one campus may be utilizing the same advertising outlets and canvassing the same general geographic areas.

3. Every effort shall be made to insure that the textual or illustrative content of advertising meets ethical and legal standards and that it fairly and accurately presents the programs or services being offered.

4. Advertising directed to prospective students shall state, either by text or separate notice, State University's adherence to equal opportunity principles and programs. Care should be taken that, to the extent possible, photographs or drawings reflect the diversity of the SUNY student constituency.

V. 1. It is recommended that advertising coordinating committees be established as needed in each of the four existing catalog contract regions so that representatives of area SUNY campuses utilizing a common medium would have a forum to prevent overlapping, conflicts or directly competitive programs.
2. Campuses should consider the effectiveness and economies of a regional approach to advertising in which several campuses could join in presenting to prospective students the wide range of SUNY academic programs available in a particular geographical area.

3. While State University campuses enjoy a certain uniqueness and individuality, there should be an ongoing awareness they also are members of a State-wide system and share common overall goals. Advertising thus should indicate that the campus is part of the State University of New York.

VI. The Office of University Affairs and Development may coordinate periodic seminars to provide a forum for campus representatives to discuss common concerns. While specific agendas will be developed cooperatively with the campuses, such a meeting could discuss such general topics as:

-- Cost efficient planning and placement of advertising in print and electronic media.

-- Effective administration of campus media advertising programs.
-- Promoting a greater sense of total University in individual campus advertising through an annual University-wide theme or design of a University-wide logo.

VII. The Office of University Affairs and Development is designated as the office in Central Administration to monitor these guidelines and to assist the campuses in their interpretation and usage.