



Professional Standards of Teaching

A design educator adheres to values that demonstrate respect for students, other educators, academic institutions, the profession, the public, society and the environment. These standards define the expectations of a design educator and represent the distinction of an AIGA member teaching design.

This is a living document meant to evolve through updates from the design educators' community.

What is the design educator's responsibility to students?

- 1.1 **Educate students on these standards.** Make explicit the pedagogical value of well-considered expectations that include encouraging professional conduct. Uphold AIGA's Standards of Professional Practice and Professional Standards of Teaching. Take the responsibility to educate students on these standards. Do not use position of authority to ask students to participate in any activity which does not support these standards.
- 1.2 **Value diversity.** Recognize the potential of each student and respect and support the diversity of her/his students, engaging students in valuing their own cultural, religious, and gender identities, and the identities of others. Teach listening. Ask students to suspend forming rebuttals to someone else's position while the other person is speaking.
- 1.3 **Consider learning styles.** Promote student learning by providing a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences. These experiences should address a variety of learning styles that encourage varied approaches and solutions to design problems.
- 1.4 **Respect privacy.** Uphold students' right to privacy and protect disclosures of personally identifiable information, including but not limited to those contained in a student's academic records, except where applicable government regulations authorize disclosure without consent (including the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in the United States).
- 1.5 **Support best interest.** A design educator will always act in the best interest of students within the guidelines of these standards.
- 1.6 **Disclose conflict of interest.** A design educator will not knowingly work with a student where a personal interest may conflict with the educator's professional obligations. If a conflict exists, a design educator may continue to work with a student so long as the conflict is explicitly acknowledged to the student and others who might be affected.
- 1.7 **Recognize the limits of objectivity as a construct in critiques.** Work to distinguish from among the categories such as opinion, knowledge, and precedent. Use the critique to situate your own point of view and model of ethical behavior for your students. Focus comments upon the work itself, work habits exhibited by students, and the process by which a student arrives at a design solution. Situate comments in appropriate settings in which they can be heard as constructive.
- 1.8 **Uphold rights and ownership.** A design educator will not ask students to participate in any work that fails to protect the students' rights and ownership to preliminary concepts, works in progress and finished material, unless required to do so by their academic institution. A design educator may ask students to grant limited or specific

usage rights of such materials for the purpose of presentation or publication. Students should be made aware of any outside entities that may be involved in a project or course prior to enrolling in the course. Special attention must be paid to required courses that engage entities beyond the educational institution.

- 1.9 **Include appropriate credit.** A design educator will include appropriate credit for any student or students' work presented or published.
- 1.10 **Protect health and safety.** A design educator will be cognizant of and respect students' health and safety in regards to work environment and equipment. A design educator should be attentive to students who display needs for emotional and mental health assistance. The educator should be aware of her or his institutional student resources.
- 1.11 **Promote accessibility.** A design educator will promote accessibility of work spaces, equipment, and the delivery of educational services and materials to students of all ages, abilities and physical conditions. A design educator shall make accessible for students with disabilities or difficulties all materials distributed by electronic means in accordance to applicable government regulations (for example Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, §1194.22 in the United States).
- 1.12 **Support internships.** A design educator will encourage students to participate in internships to apply design skills acquired in school to real-world projects and create continuity within the design profession. Educators will guide students to make good informed decisions when searching for internships. Quality internships should situate students in an on-site, professional, ethical and safe work environment, take into account students' personal learning goals, and provide them with an opportunity to work directly with a senior level designer or art director who acts as a mentor.

What is the design educator's responsibility to other educators?

- 2.1 **Cooperate.** A design educator will support peers in achieving shared goals and upholding the Professional Standards of Teaching. A design educator should be involved to the extent possible based upon institutional expectations in the governing and creating of pedagogical structures and processes.
- 2.2 **Criticize fairly.** A design educator will use fairness when criticizing the work of peers and will not directly or indirectly disparage a colleague's work or reputation. The most felicitous approach in instances of conflict is to deal with the person directly. Make every effort to keep disagreements respectful and limited to academic issues.
- 2.3 **Respect rights and ownership.** A design educator will respect the ownership rights of other educators with regards to creative work and intellectual property.

What is the design educator's responsibility to academic institutions?

- 3.1 **Uphold policies.** A design educator will conduct her/himself in a manner that upholds the policies of her/his academic institution. If an educator wants to change policies, she or he will go through the proper governing channels of the institution.

- 3.2 **Respect confidentiality.** A design educator will respect the privacy and legal activities of her/his institution and individuals therein. This includes the discreet handling of all confidential activities and information not available through public records, but excludes the discovery of illegal activities.
- 3.3 **Support current and appropriate curricula.** A design educator will support the development and implementation of current and inclusive curricula appropriate to the degree granted, accrediting organizations and the mission of her/his academic institution.
- 3.4 **Require reasonable levels of proficiency.** A design educator will require her/his students to attain a reasonable level of proficiency appropriate to the degree granted and the mission of her/his academic institution.
- 3.5 **Provide a range of assessment strategies.** A design educator will support the development and/or implementation of a range of assessment strategies to evaluate student learning outcomes and maintain high-quality learning environments.
- 3.6 **Facilitate transparency.** A design educator will not knowingly provide her/his institution with inaccurate or misleading statements for the recruitment of students or faculty, or other publicity purposes.

What is the design educator's responsibility to the profession?

- 4.1 **Uphold the Standards of Professional Practice.** A design educator will adhere to the expectations of the AIGA Standards of Professional Practice. Take the responsibility to educate students on these standards along with the AIGA Professional Standards of Teaching. Remember they are the future design professionals.
- 4.2 **Require proficiency.** A design educator will expect her/his students to attain a reasonable level of proficiency appropriate to the expectations of the market, profession or practice in keeping with the degree granted and the mission of her/his academic institution.
- 4.3 **Discourage spec work.** A design educator will guide students to understand the risks associated with offering design services to a client (unless the client is a charitable or non-profit organization) without the promise of a fee, royalty, salary, or other agreed-upon form of compensation. This practice is considered speculative and is discouraged among design professionals. Contests or competitions are also considered spec work when compensation is provided only if a design is accepted or used. Work done only for the promise of future work or the opportunity to create a portfolio piece fall in this category. Student/client projects should support strategic design methods and include appropriate interaction between students and client, to achieve a desired outcome.
- 4.4 **Encourage pro-bono work.** A design educator will support student participation in projects for charitable or non-profit organizations. No fees or other forms of compensation are required for this type of work which is considered pro-bono work.
- 4.5 **Respect Intellectual property rights.** A design educator will not knowingly infringe on another person's or group's intellectual property rights. She/he will not give instructions, or accept instructions from anyone else, to do so. She/he will teach students to respect creative commons licenses and request permission when using the digital assets or intellectual property of others for classroom assignments or other creative work.

What is the design educator's responsibility to the public?

- 5.1 **Protect health and safety.** A design educator will adhere to all legal safety regulations and will not knowingly do or fail to do anything that constitutes a willful or reckless disregard for the health and safety of any segment of the local or global communities in which she/he lives or works. She/he will teach students to do the same.
- 5.2 **Communicate truthfully and transparently.** A designer educator will strive to present information in a clear and truthful manner in all forms of communication and avoid false, misleading and deceptive representation that knowingly misinforms the public. She/he will teach students to do the same.
- 5.3 **Value diversity.** A design educator will respect the dignity of all audiences and teach students to do the same, which includes refraining from depicting or stereotyping people or groups of people in a negative or dehumanizing way. She/he shall strive to be sensitive to cultural values and beliefs and encourage students to understand, respect and value these unique differences.

What is the design educator's responsibility to society and the environment?

- 6.1 **Consider consequences.** A design educator will take a responsible role in considering the possible intended and unintended consequences of the design decisions she/he or students might make to society, the environment and future generations, before taking any action to implement those decisions.
- 6.2 **Support free speech.** A design educator will strive to understand and support the principles of free speech, freedom of assembly and access to an open marketplace of ideas, particularly in her/his role as an educator, and shall act accordingly.
- 6.3 **Support social equity.** A design educator will not knowingly engage in any activity or project that violates the human rights of others. She/he shall teach the ethical commitment of designers to this principle.
- 6.4 **Aid cultural vitality.** A design educator will support and promote the uniqueness of different cultures recognizing that human communities are resilient because of their diversity. She/he will encourage students to make design and messaging culturally relevant, respecting how communities manifest identity, preserve and cultivate traditions, and develop belief systems and values.
- 6.5 **Protect natural resources.** A design educator will promote responsible stewardship of natural material, energy resources and animal resources in work, assignments and teaching. This shall include teaching methods to minimize waste.
- 6.6 **Consider the supply chain.** A design educator will strive to use and teach methods to evaluate goods or services by manufacturers or suppliers with respect to the entire supply chain. She/he will seek sustainable suppliers at every step.
- 6.7 **Support economic health.** A design educator will encourage design methods that support sound business values and the benefits of sustainable solutions including efficiency, competitive advantage, profitability, increased sales, and brand equity.

- 6.8 Encourage knowledge sharing.** A design educator will encourage open communication and knowledge sharing among colleagues, students, clients, suppliers and users, to develop product or service systems that support sustainable practices.
- 6.9 Foster ecological and ethical literacy.** A design educator will take a responsible role in encouraging a student's ability to identify, understand, interpret, communicate and use environmental and ethical principles in the products, services and systems she/he designs.