



# MFA Midpoint Review & MA Final Presentation Guidelines

## Master of Fine Arts & Master of Arts

### School of Advertising

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During the MFA Midpoint/MA Final Review, you are demonstrating to a committee of department directors, senior faculty, and distinguished industry professionals your mastery of art direction, copywriting, and creative strategy. The Review is a required component of your Master's level program and must be completed before the next stage of your program.

Please read through all of this information carefully before preparing your materials for Midpoint Review. The latest version of the Guidelines can be found on the [Graduate Showcase website](#) by clicking "Schools" and choosing "Advertising." This will take you to the [Advertising Graduate page](#) with the most current Guidelines.

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## 1. ELIGIBILITY

Students enrolled in ADV 616: Advertising Concept Development (online only students) *or* ADV 670: Visual Storytelling (onsite and hybrid students) will be scheduled for a review automatically and do not need to sign up.

Students who have completed more than 27 units without taking ADV 616 or ADV 670 should speak with their advisor regarding eligibility.

## 2. SCHEDULING

### A. PRESENTATION DATE

**Onsite:** MFA Midpoint Reviews and MA Final Presentations typically take place during ADV 670 sessions. Your instructor will provide details when the semester begins. Plan ahead and be prepared to present starting class 12.

**Online:** MFA Midpoint Reviews and MA Final Presentations will be scheduled beginning module 12 of the semester. The Advertising Department ([advertising@academyart.edu](mailto:advertising@academyart.edu)) will contact each student by midterm with available dates and times.

### B. ORIENTATION

Your instructor will conduct the review/presentation orientation in class. If you would like to view the Orientation materials separately, it can be found at [this link](#) or by going to the [Graduate Showcase website](#) and looking under "Midpoint Review Orientation."

### C. ATTENDANCE & CANCELLATIONS

Cancelling your presentation will be recorded as a "No Show." You will be required to present the following semester. Speak to your instructor before requesting a cancellation.



### 3. DELIVERABLES SUMMARY

Your MFA Midpoint Review or MA Final Presentation consist of an oral presentation of your portfolio (thesis), which has been uploaded into the LMS review portal.

#### A. THE PORTFOLIO PDF

You must present **three to five** campaigns/projects, along with enough single ads for a total of **18 to 20 pieces**, including:

- Two integrated campaigns (each must utilize three media minimum)
- Motion graphic or video piece (may be an element in an integrated campaign or single ad)
- Each campaign or single ad must be accompanied by a creative brief at minimum; brand analysis, brand book, and/or consumer segment projects are encouraged to establish stronger strategic frameworks

*More details and guidance can be found in the Portfolio PDF Checklist.*

#### B. THE ORAL PRESENTATION

You will show your portfolio in a 10-15 minute oral presentation for a Review Committee. You will be stopped if you exceed 15 minutes so the committee has time for questions.

You may present using a slide application if you prefer but have your pdf ready as a back up in the case of incompatibility (no new software will be downloaded onto AAU machines for your presentation). Save your pdf to cloud storage or a usb drive in addition to uploading your pdf in the LMS.

Begin practicing your oral presentation well in advance to ensure your level of professionalism.

*Online students only:*

- Your presentation will take place in an online meeting environment. Please read further about the technical setup and requirements for your presentation here: [Online Technical Requirements](#). (These requirements are also linked from the [Grad Showcase page](#).)
- An Online Coordinator will reach out to you to arrange an appointment to test your computer, internet connection, web-camera, and telephone. The Online Graduate Review Coordinator will also show you how to upload and use your slideshow during your oral presentation. *If you have not been contacted by a coordinator two weeks before your date, you can reach out to the Online Coordinator at: [onlinegradreview@academyart.edu](mailto:onlinegradreview@academyart.edu) or (415) 618-3614.*
- Students presenting online are required to have their equipment and any a draft of the presentation materials ready to upload and test at least two weeks prior to the presentation date (1 week for the Summer Semester) to be able to test with the Online Review Coordinator.
- It is recommended that Online students do not embed any video files into the slide presentation or the pdf directly, but rather have that as a separate asset ready to be played in the presentation. This can be practiced during the technical runthrough with your Online Review Coordinator.
- Online students can also do a self-guided preliminary test for the presentation by going here: [Adobe Connect Diagnostic Test](#)



## 4. DELIVERABLE DUE DATES & HOW TO UPLOAD

Your portfolio pdf must be uploaded to the LMS review portal **at least three working days before the date of your presentation, and the file size must not exceed 50 MB.**

For instructions on how to upload your portfolio pdf to the LMS and tips for how to reduce your file size, go to the Grad Showcase resource page at this url: <http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/>

## 5. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND RESULTS

### A. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The work you submit will be assessed using the [Graduate School of Advertising](#) program learning outcomes. At the Midpoint Review the review committee is looking at your progress towards achieving your degree’s stated outcomes and your professional readiness. This includes:

- A diverse media mix. Work must demonstrate a mastery of creative strategy and include samples of the best projects from your studio classes.
- The campaigns shown needs to be from your time as a student at Academy of Art University. Demonstrate substantial artistic explorations that involve a high level of critical thinking and problem solving
- The campaigns must be professionally presented in a manner that is appropriate for the work, including proper spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

The [Graduate Showcase page for Advertising](#) has examples of successful past projects and presentations for your reference.

### B. RESULTS

The review committee for your MFA Midpoint Review or MA Final Presentation will submit the outcome of your presentation within 3 days. This decision and the committee’s feedback can be found in the LMS review portal.

You will receive one of the following outcomes:

<b>Approved:</b>	You have passed, and can now proceed with Directed Study for the following semester. Please look at the course recommendations and comments in your LMS review portal, and work with your advisor to register for your next classes.
<b>Not Approved, Resubmit:</b>	You have not passed, and are not yet allowed to proceed with Directed Study (MFA) or degree completion (MA). Your portfolio is very close to fulfilling all Approval requirements and only a few small changes are needed. The committee has given you a new due date and instructions for how to resubmit your portfolio



once the changes have been made. When you have uploaded your new resubmitted portfolio, you will email the department ([advertising@academyart.edu](mailto:advertising@academyart.edu)) and your advisor that you have done so. The committee chair will then re-evaluate your portfolio. This re-evaluation will result in either an **Approved** outcome or a **Not Approved, Re-present** outcome.

**Not Approved, Re-present:** You have not passed, and are not yet allowed to proceed with Directed Study (MFA) or degree completion (MA). Follow the specific Review Committee feedback, as given in your LMS review portal. You must complete additional studio work, rethink Final Project, and will be presenting your portfolio again the following semester. You will need to contact your advisor regarding how to proceed with your class schedule. This is the automatic outcome for a “No Show” on your presentation date.

<p><b>6. PREPARATION TIMELINE</b> The semester before:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and review the Advertising Guidelines in this document</li> <li>• Work with your advisor to register for ADV 616 online or ADV 670 onsite</li> </ul>
<p>The semester of your presentation:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarize yourself with the <a href="#">Graduate Showcase webpage</a> for MFA Reviews and MA Presentations</li> <li>• Work on your assignments in ADV 616/670 proactively and review the Midpoint Orientation if needed</li> <li>• Start collecting your best campaign samples</li> <li>• Look at examples of MFA Midpoint Reviews on the <a href="#">Graduate Showcase webpage</a></li> <li>• Keep an eye out for the email from the School of Advertising about your presentation date, location, and preparation resources (<a href="mailto:advertising@academyart.edu">advertising@academyart.edu</a>)</li> </ul>
<p>1 month before your presentation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize and create notes for your oral presentation</li> <li>• Work on your portfolio and oral presentation outside of class, and take advantage of ARC Language Labs, ARC Presentation Tutoring, and ADV Workshops)</li> <li>• Practice using your pdf or slide deck software</li> <li>• Send your portfolio draft to a proofreader (fiver.com as an example)</li> </ul>



1-2 weeks before your presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check that the file size for your portfolio upload does not exceed 50MB</li><li>• Practice your oral presentation out loud and with a timer and/or in front an audience</li><li>• Plan your attire, dress professionally</li><li>• <u>Online students</u>: Review the online-specific requirements and test all of your equipment with your Online Coordinator, practicing the virtual presentation room tools and setup. If you have not been contacted by this time, reach out to <a href="mailto:onlinegradreview@academyart.edu">onlinegradreview@academyart.edu</a> or (415) 618-3614</li><li>• <u>Online students</u>: Do not embed your movie file into your presentation pdf or slide show, but have it ready to access separately</li></ul>
3 working days before your presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Upload your portfolio pdf into the LMS</a> review portal</li><li>• Save your pdf/presentation files on a usb drive or in cloud storage in the event of difficulties. If you are using a slide deck application, make sure you have a pdf version, and/or your files are reverse compatible (specialized software will not be supported)</li></ul>



## 7. PORTFOLIO & PRESENTATION CHECKLISTS

**Portfolio Contents:** You must present **three to five** campaigns/projects, along with enough single ads for a total of **18 to 20 pieces**, including:

- Cover with identifying information including:
  - 1) Your Name
  - 2) Student ID Number
  - 3) Either “MFA Midpoint Presentation” or “MA Final Presentation”
  - 4) Date of Presentation
  - 5) School of Advertising, Academy of Art University
- Short bio and resume
- Introduction page for each campaign or single ad within the portfolio, including:
  - 1) Client and/or product name
  - 2) Instructor’s name
  - 3) The semester the campaign was created
  - 4) Credit for other contributors and description of each contributor’s role (such as Art Director, Copywriter, or Creative Strategist)
  - 5) **The creative brief for the campaign or single ad**  
Example questions to formulate a brief:
    - Why are we advertising?
    - Who are we talking to?
    - What do they currently think?
    - What is the single most persuasive idea we can convey?
    - What would we like them to think after seeing our message?
    - Why should they believe it?
    - Are there any creative guidelines?
- At least two** integrated campaigns (each must utilize three media minimum)
- Motion graphic or video piece (may be an element in an integrated campaign or single ad)

NO STORYBOARDS will be accepted.

- Oral Presentation:**
- Introduction (approx. 1-2 minutes)
  - Campaign Review (approx. 10 minutes)
  - Conclusion (less than 1 minute)

Students should practice their presentations so they are not reading the content to the class. Presentation support is provided by [ARC in Language Labs and Presentation](#)

[Tutoring](#), and in [Advertising Workshops](#).

## 8. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: I have heard my friends say that they had to sign up for their Midpoint. Do I need to sign up?**

**A:** No, Advertising students no longer sign up for their MFA Midpoint or MA Final presentations (as of Spring 2017). You will be contacted by the School of Advertising around midterm. Plan to present during weeks 12 to 14. You can ask your instructor in ADV 616 online or ADV 670 on campus about the timeline.

**Q: This is a lot of information. Who is guiding me to make my portfolio and my oral presentation?**

**A:** This guide is your primary resource for your portfolio and oral presentation. Students who review the guide thoroughly tend to have a more complete presentation. Your next resource is your instructor in ADV 616 online or ADV 670 on campus. Additionally, you can email any questions to the Midpoint Review Coordinator ([midpointreview@academyart.edu](mailto:midpointreview@academyart.edu)) if you are an MFA student or the Final Review Coordinator ([finalreview@academyart.edu](mailto:finalreview@academyart.edu)) if you are an MA student. For help with presentation skills and developing your portfolio outside of class, you should take advantage of [ARC Language Labs and Presentation Tutoring](#) as well as [ADV Workshops](#). You can also check with the School of Advertising for the Drop In Hours of directors.

**Q: How long is my presentation?**

**A: On Campus:** Each presentation is scheduled in a 20 minute block during your normal class time. Students will present one after another. Your oral presentation cannot exceed 15 minutes.

**Online:** Currently, each online presentation is scheduled in a 1-hour block of time. However, this is to ensure that everything works technically and so the committee members can have a discussion after your presentation. You will actually only be presenting for up to 15 minutes of that time.

**Q: Should I use a proofreader?**

**A:** Flawless grammar and spelling are required throughout (including punctuation and capitalization). Use spell check before you print or make PDFs. It will catch many simple errors. You should plan to have your final PDF proofread, either by another student or a trained pro.

Proofreaders check for typos, misspellings, punctuation errors and simple grammar problems. They do not edit or re-write. Agree in advance how you will provide the work—hard copy or PDF—and the turnaround time you need. If you send electronic files, never expect a proofreader to work with editable documents such as .PSD or .AI files. Know the standard proofreading marks. Be clear what you want proofed. Maybe you want everything checked. Maybe you only need the creative briefs and descriptions checked.



If you have your work checked a second time, be sure to include the original material with the proofreader's marks so he/she can reference it. Proofreaders are very busy, please make arrangements early.

## 9. CONTACTS

MFA Midpoint Review Coordinator:	<a href="mailto:midpointreview@academyart.edu">midpointreview@academyart.edu</a> (415) 618-6390
MA Final Presentation Coordinator:	<a href="mailto:finalreview@academyart.edu">finalreview@academyart.edu</a> (415) 618-6297
Contact for Online Students:	<a href="mailto:onlinegradreview@academyart.edu">onlinegradreview@academyart.edu</a> (415) 618-3614
Department Contact:	School of Advertising (415) 618-8839 <a href="mailto:advertising@academyart.edu">advertising@academyart.edu</a>