Bachelor of Science

Apparel, Textiles & Merchandising

Business of Fashion

Major or Minor in Apparel, Textiles & Merchandising :: Apparel Design Minor
Professional Context

Students majoring in Apparel, Textiles and Merchandising gain through knowledge in the business aspects of the fashion industry. We nurture tomorrow’s fashion leaders and develop broad-based professionals who are forward-thinking, creative, innovative, relevant, and passionate. Award winning professors with vast industry experience are committed to fostering student’s personal goals and allow students to immerse themselves in chosen interest areas to learn, understand and apply new

Job Prospects

Digital Presentation Techniques: Introduction to industry standard software used to visually communicate information. Basic skills acquired include the development of line plan components, presentation techniques, and concept boards.

Introduction to the Fashion Industry: Overview of the history, structure, and operation of the fashion industry. Provides knowledge and skills for effective development in understanding the dynamics of the fashion industry.

Buying and Merchandising Math: Introduction to the financial management of fashion products; mathematical applications used in all levels of apparel operations such as using percentages, mark-ups, profit formulas, pricing principles and tracking inventory.

Basic Sewing Techniques: Basic clothing construction theory, techniques, and teaching methods covering basic garment components: collars, sleeves, bodices, pleats, etc.

Style Principles: Body to Store: Theory and practice of merchandise presentation from store windows and displays to merchandising on the body. Application of principles and elements of design and concept development to execution for a variety of mediums.

Fashion Trend Analysis: Fashion forecasting; reflecting the acceptance or rejection of trends; analysis of socio-economic, demographic, media, and fashion influences. Students will have an opportunity to travel to market.

Internship Planning: Preparation for required internship; identifying professional goals, skills, opportunities and strategies, complete resumes, the application processes, preparing for interviews, analyzing the student internship, and introductory portfolio preparation.

Northwest Field Experience in Apparel and Textiles: An applied study of clothing, textiles, fashion merchandising, and design through regional field visits to meet with fashion professionals within a range of careers.

Socio-cultural Aspects of Apparel: Clothing in relation to individual and group behavior patterns; personal and social meanings attributed to dress; and cultural patterns of technology, aesthetics, ritual, morality, and symbolism.

Apparel Manufacturing: Analysis and evaluation of apparel through manufacturing; specification development, seam/stitch classifications, apparel assembly, equipment capabilities and production processes, costing, strategic sourcing, and quality assurance. Consideration of consumer product expectations, and sustainability.

Consumer Textiles: Study of natural and synthetic textiles: generic classification, fiber-forming substances, morphology, fabrication, finishing and dyeing processes, properties, and performances.

History of Fashion: Historical changes in fashion and costume design from Egyptian period through Eastern civilization to present. Social, political, and religious influences on fashions. FCSA 452 and TH 452 are cross-listed courses; students may not receive credit for both.

Merchandise Buying and Planning: Principles of buying and selling merchandise; analysis of consumer demand, stock inventories and open-to-buy.

Applied Research: Basics of research design including problem identification, research and evaluation.

Spreadsheet Applications: Developing spreadsheets for business and workplace environments.

Principles of Retailing: Introduction to retailing including retail stores, merchandising, operations, store layout, internal organization, buying, personnel management, inventory control, and sales promotion.

Advanced Fashion Design: Fundamental concepts of flat pattern and draping design theories and techniques. Design and execution of draped and flat patterned samples and garment structures will be required. Includes translation of garment ideas from conception through production and merchandising. (Elective)

Fashion Line Development: Production of an apparel line from conceptualization to completion. Design concepts will be executed through storyboards, identification of target market, merchandising strategy, and completion of muslin samples. A final project of three original designs will be showcased at the annual fashion show. Can be repeated. (Elective)

Internship: An individualized, contracted field experience within the apparel industry. This contractual arrangement involves a student learning plan, cooperating employer supervision, and faculty coordination.

Exit Assessment: During the last quarter of their program, students are assessed on program outcomes and portfolios are created for internship and job interviews.

Student selected electives are also included in the major along with a chosen complementary minor
Education And Training

Small class sizes with rigorous learning experiences supplemented with industry field trips to fashion capitals and internships assures students are industry ready. Students can partially define their individual curriculum through elective courses. Study abroad opportunities in London, Milan, Paris, and more are highly encouraged. Course credit directly transfers to CWU into the ATM major.

Course Structure

Students apply newly acquired knowledge to professional level projects and industry case studies in a hands-on atmosphere. Industry relevant coursework is put into action in a collaborative environment where students work in teams to solve fashion problems in creative and new ways.

Students accumulate a comprehensive physical portfolio and feature their work on their websites to assist in showcasing their skills and talents to prospective employers. Industry professionals critique and provide relevant feedback on student websites to assure they are of the highest level.
Field Experiences


Study abroad in the major European fashion capitals. Courses taken abroad count directly towards classes in the major or towards major elective requirements. Courses are taught in English by faculty industry professionals. Cultural field trips are an essential part of the experience while abroad. Abroad fees are affordable and qualify for financial aid.

Students visit New York City and Los Angeles to study the apparel industry. The experience allows students to research and apply industry knowledge, identify opportunities in fashion with national and international businesses, and immerse themselves in the local diverse culture. Students also have the opportunity to visit MAGIC, which is the world’s largest fashion marketplace. The field trips are conducted through The Student Fashion Association. This allows students to fundraise to offset the cost of their trip.
Student Produced Fashion Show

The annual spring fashion show is a student produced and promoted show which enables the students to synthesize skills such as critical and creative thinking, negotiating, team work, delegating, and communication skills that are relevant to future careers in the apparel industry.

Students contact and work with local businesses, technicians and clubs to develop publicity and advertising, fund-raising, coordination of models, designing and building the stage and exhibition area, music, choreography, and announcements for the show.

Apparel Design students produce an original apparel line from conceptualization to completion. Design concepts are executed through storyboards, identification of target markets, draping and flat patterning of designs and completion of muslin samples. A final project of at least three original designs are showcased.
Apparel Design

Design are executed through storyboards, identification of target markets, draping and flat patterning

The Apparel Design core is designed to enable students with career interests in this field to gain experience in the competency areas expected of apparel designers. This allows the student to learn to apply the basic principles of design and creativity in developing apparel.

Students will study the application of creative expression, fashion sketching, concept communication, line planning, draping, flat patterning, pattern drafting, Photoshop, Illustrator, specification packs, theoretical and practical design, elements of design, principles of design, textile development and trend analysis in order to create a final saleable product for a target market.
Where Our Alumni Are Working

Next Step?

To get to know us better and see if we are a good fit with your interests and professional goals, contact us to make an appointment to meet. Please email Professor Eklund at andrea.eklund@cwu.edu.

You can also check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page to see what our program and students are up to and stay abreast of events and fashion news.