

Fashion Business Management

Department Website

School of Business and Technology

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Behind every fashion purchase, there's a multibillion-dollar global industry influencing what's for sale. As a professional in the field, you'll choose the best looks and trends, in the right colors, sizes, and silhouettes, to create a merchandise mix that keeps your customer coming back for more.

This prestigious program is closely connected with industry, providing real-world experience, networking opportunities, and insider insights. The fashion business is both creative and analytical, and you'll learn the skills and innovative thinking you need in product development, merchandising, styling, e-commerce, and much more. You'll graduate prepared to succeed in this rapidly changing industry, now and in the future.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAMS (AAS)

- Fashion Business Management One-Year AAS Degree Program
- Fashion Business Management AAS Degree Program

UPPER DIVISION ALTERNATIVE(S)

Graduates of the AAS degree program are eligible to apply for admission to the Bachelor of Science programs in:

- Fashion Business Management
- Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing
- Direct and Interactive Marketing
- Home Products Development
- International Trade and Marketing for the Fashion Industries
- Production Management: Fashion and Related Industries
- Textile Development and Marketing.

By completing certain course requirements, graduates may also apply to the Bachelor of Science programs in:

- Advertising and Marketing Communications
- Technical Design.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE PROGRAMS (BS)

- Fashion Business Management BS Degree Program
- Fashion Business Management/Florence and New York BS Degree Program

RELATED MINORS

- Asian Studies
- Creative Entrepreneurship
- Design Thinking
- Economics
- Ethics and Sustainability
- International Trade and Marketing
- Mandarin Chinese
- Mathematics
- Spanish

FM 000 — FASHION BUYING/ MERCHANDISING

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

FM 100 — Fashion Industry Fundamentals

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course covers the evolution of fashion, market segmentation, relationships between industry sectors and retailers. Students will explore career paths and emphasize the importance of personal branding. Studies will culminate by exploring the global supply chain from concept to consumer focusing on sustainability and ethics.

FM 108 — First Year Experience I

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course covers the evolution of fashion and the relationships between fashion industry sectors. This will enable students to begin formulating their career path and emphasize the importance of “Brand You”. Technology platforms widely used in the industry are introduced providing the skills for a successful college experience.

FM 109 — First Year Experience II

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course is the second part of the FYE series. It delves into the history of retailing and retailers concentrating on their strategies and positioning with regard to their various store type. It explores the global supply chain from concept to consumer with a focus on sustainability and ethics.

Prerequisite(s): FM 108.

FM 110 — Product Elements and Principles

2 credits; 1 lecture and 2 lab hours

Students learn the key components necessary for development of fashion apparel products. They gain experience in identifying apparel construction techniques, fabric strategies, product processes, bill of materials (costing), global sourcing, and learn key apparel terminology to develop garment prototypes.

Corequisite(s): TS 110.

FM 114 — Introduction to the Fashion Industry

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This survey covers the history, characteristics, and global interrelationships of all segments of the fashion industry. The course explores how fiber, textile, and apparel producers, retailers, and home furnishings companies merchandise and market their products within the industry and to the ultimate consumer.

FM 116 — Fashion Business Practices

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

A comprehensive introduction to the modern fashion business environment with insight to the structures, finances, management, leadership, organization and ethical responsibilities of varied global fashion enterprises. Emphasis is placed on careers, job descriptions and the preparation necessary for a successful career in the fashion business.

FM 144 — Product Knowledge for Merchandising

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Familiarizes students with the terminology and characteristics of merchandise of non-textile fashion accessories and home furnishings at all price levels. Enables retail buyers, product developers, and wholesale salespersons to differentiate criteria for price and quality.

FM 201 — Social Media Applications for Fashion Business

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Students explore the social media platforms used by the fashion business industry. Course assignments emphasize blogging, vlogging, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Pinterest, and any emerging social media platforms.

FM 203 — Business Intelligence in Planning and Buying

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course addresses business analytics used by merchants, product developers, planners, wholesale sales, and more. Students are prepared to think critically, measure, and analyze the financial elements (key performance indicators) used in the fashion business.

Prerequisite(s): Mathematics Proficiency.

FM 204 — Innovation in Product Development

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Introduces students to the processes of apparel product development, including planning, forecasting, fabric, silhouette, size specifications, pricing, and sourcing. Students examine the best practices and innovative approaches for apparel product development in the apparel fashion industry in order to compete in today's competitive retail environment.

Prerequisite(s): FM 110.

FM 205 — Fashion Marketing and Digital Technology

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Focuses on marketing in the context of the global fashion industry. Topics include research, analysis, market segmentation, target customer identification, the marketing mix, strategic planning, brand strategy and positioning, customer relationships, social media, and mobile marketing, as well as the use of online analytics and new technologies.

FM 206 — Strategies of Merchandising

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Strategies of Merchandising I is the Capstone course for the AAS degree in Fashion Business Management. Its focus is on developing merchandise strategies to effectively buy, plan and merchandise a retail business in stores and on a website. Students will gain experience by actively developing merchandise plans using industry analytics.

Prerequisite(s): FM 203 or FM 224.

FM 207 — Retail Strategies

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Explores current practices in the retail industry. Topics and disciplines include retail landscape, channel classification, industry segments, retail market strategies, data analytics, customer relationship management, financial strategy, supply chain structures and retail management.

FM 213 — Direct and Digital Marketing for Fashion Business

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Presents a comprehensive overview of the direct marketing industry, including its various components and career opportunities. Through the use of case studies and/or assignments, students learn strategic planning: how to choose and merchandise a product, pinpoint a target audience, develop marketing tests, and analyze results. Students are also introduced to the various electronic vehicles currently used in this ever-changing industry.

FM 222 — Import Buying

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Analyzes key factors in developing import programs, distribution of products, market sources, financing, and aspects associated with apparel and other imported products. The impact of imports on domestic apparel businesses is examined.

Prerequisite(s): FM 108.

FM 223 — Creative Fashion Presentations

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Students prepare and present fashion information through clinics, shows, and written communiques. They learn how to research, analyze, and forecast fashion trends. Awareness of career opportunities in the fashion industries is fostered.

Prerequisite(s): FM 108.

FM 226 — International Buying and Marketing

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Students, under faculty supervision, visit principal European cities to study the factors involved in fashion marketing and the international customer's attitudes about fashion. Discussions involve methods, practices, and reasons for importation and exportation. Students are expected to complete written assignments. Approximately three weeks in June. Prerequisite(s): Approval of instructor.

FM 228 — The Business of Fashion Styling

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

In the course, students explore the role of a fashion stylist as it applies to the field of merchandising. They learn about career opportunities in fashion styling and wardrobe consulting. The business requirements and entrepreneurial opportunities in the field of fashion styling are explored.

FM 231 — Strategies of Selling

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Principles of personal selling techniques, presentation skills, the art of persuasion, negotiating, and account building in the wholesale markets are developed through lectures and workshops.

FM 245 — Fashion Forecasting for Merchandisers

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Students explore and apply various forecast research methods in preparation for developing, planning, purchasing, or merchandising fashion product lines and collections. Trend research is evaluated through the use of forecast service databases, and relevant fashion related business articles and websites to identify opportunities for growth and profitability in fashion businesses.

FM 251 — Small Store Fashion Retailing

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Enables students to understand the procedures of organizing a small fashion retail enterprise and to become aware of the decision-making inherent in successful small-store merchandising. Students develop a model for a small fashion retail store.

Prerequisite(s): FM 108.

FM 299 — INDEP STDY FASH BUY/MERCH

1-3 credit

FM 300 — Case Study Method: Fashion Business Applications

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Introduction to methodology strategies for fashion business cases. Research and identification of current internal and external environmental factors and business trends for solving fashion business cases. Aspects of the fashion industry are reviewed through various cases and current industry issues.

FM 303 — Fashion Business Law

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course provides a practical introduction to the legal environment of the fashion industry. Students learn to anticipate and manage the key legal issues and problems faced by fashion designers and companies from the start-up phase through branding, sourcing, sales, and distribution phases.

FM 304 — Business of Virtual Merchandising

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course focuses on the changes in retail merchandising for: wholesale showrooms, retail visual merchandising, and online platforms; B2B and B2C business models. This student experience in working in a virtual merchandising environment will be gained through the use of BeyondXR Virtual Showroom Platform. This course applies cloud based virtual software that students will use to create virtual showrooms for wholesale and retail brands. Students will apply their skills to merchandise collections, plan and allocate product, and create visual merchandising presentations all in a virtual setting.

FM 305 — The Business of Building a Fashion Brand

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

The Business of Building a Fashion brand explores concepts and skills in creating and launching a fashion brand. Students utilize classroom activities to simulate the business activities and strategies relevant to brand development including concept development, understanding target audience, manufacturing decisions, digital marketing and trademarking, pricing and profit strategies.

Prerequisite(s): EN 121 or ES 129 or equivalent.

FM 312 — Innovative Business Leadership

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

The course explores applications of innovative leadership skills required to manage people and projects. A combination of leadership styles influences key outcomes for the creative fashion industries. Special leadership topics currently faced by the fashion industry are examined. Business strategy development framework models to assess current performance are used.

FM 322 — Fashion Inventory Management

3 credits; 2 lecture and 2 lab hours

In computer simulations and using advanced functionality in Excel, students make decisions involving inventory models, inventory replenishment, and seasonal and long-term replenishment strategies. Using the case study method, students learn to manage a business by developing seasonal financial plans, creating store plans, and balancing multi-store inventories.

FM 324 — Business of Licensing

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Students examine the business aspects of licensing as they apply to the fashion industry, from licensing assignments through the merchandising approval process. Appropriate skills for negotiating and planning licensed product lines are developed. Business and career opportunities with manufacturers, retailers, product developers, and designers of licensed fashion merchandise are explored.

FM 325 — Financial Assortment and Planning

3 credits; 2 lecture and 2 lab hours

A comprehensive study of financial and merchandise assortment plans utilizing JDA Enterprise Planning software. Business trends, along with historical data, will be used to construct a six-month plan that achieves the financial goals of the department for all key metrics. In-season strategies will be developed to address current business projections.

FM 326 — Sustainability in Fashion Merchandising

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Using the case study method and primary research, this course enhances student knowledge of sustainability issues. Attention is also paid to the fiscal implications of implementing sustainability initiatives, illustrating that sustainability and profit are not mutually exclusive.

FM 328 — Merchandising for Multichannel Retailing

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course covers Multichannel retailing, which is rapidly gaining momentum in the industry as consumers gain control of the shopping experience and demand to shop everywhere and in every way. The course looks at how e-commerce and social commerce, as well as mobile devices and tablets, are revolutionizing the role of the brick-and-mortar store to create a seamless shopping experience.

Prerequisite(s): FM 203 or FM 224 and FM 206 or FM 225.

FM 329 — Predictive Analytics for Planning and Forecasting (Interdisciplinary)

3 credits; 2 lecture and 2 lab hours

This is an interdisciplinary course cross-listed with MA 329. This course provides students interested in predictive analytics with an understanding of statistical applications to retail merchandising with a focus on case studies from the company Planalytics. Students apply time series analysis to case studies to understand how analytics techniques lead to stronger sales, fewer markdowns and improved gross margins.

Prerequisite(s): MA 222.

FM 330 — Data Insights and Fashion Analytics

2 credits; 1 lecture and 2 lab hours

Various social media platforms and databases are used as part of the big data conversation to understand and quantify consumer sentiment on fashion apparel before financial decisions and strategies are finalized. Data Insight and predictive analytics are employed in order to maximize revenue and margin. Critical thinking is required to analyze, interpret and incorporate data into the final merchandise assortment plan.

FM 331 — Technology and Transformation in Fashion Management

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Let's reimagine fashion! The metaverse is changing the fashion business, and the industry is poised to build upon the blockchain revolution. Digital identities, the Internet of Things, and robotics are altering the nature of fashion products. This course explores these exciting technological transformations and their implications for fashion business practices.

FM 341 — Computer-Aided Product Development I

3 credits; 2 lecture and 2 lab hours

This course examines how technology is used to create, merchandise, and communicate during each phase of the product development process. It focuses on the creative and analytical phases of product development, including trend research, data analytics, sourcing for color, silhouette, and patterns, and assortment planning.

FM 361 — Leadership Development for Retailing

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

A comprehensive study of the leadership skills inherent to being an effective, efficient manager in retail today. Students learn the effect of an organization's culture on the management process and how it is viewed from a global perspective. Decision-making, planning and strategic management, driving change and innovation, controlling, and managing communication and information technology are also studied.

FM 362 — Dynamics of Store Operations Management

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course identifies the divisions of retail management from the store operations perspective. Specific areas of operations management are analyzed. Students compare and contrast management practices among retailers using skills gained from roundtable discussions with industry executives and field trips.

Prerequisite(s): FM 361.

FM 363 — Corporate Social Responsibility

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Using case studies, students gain an understanding of the importance of corporate ethics and of the ethical challenges faced by retailers, marketers, and manufacturers in the United States. Also addressed are the ways a company manages its retail business processes to produce a positive impact on society, and how it integrates social, ethical, and environmental concerns with retail profit objectives.

FM 380 — Special Topics in Fashion Business Management Studies

0 credits

FM 380A — Special Topics in FBM: Case Study in Distributors- Amazon

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

Amazon challenges whole industries on a weekly basis. It has changed how the publishing, retail, fashion, grocery, tv/cable, technology, delivery, banking, pharmaceutical businesses operate, and the list continues to grow. This class will dissect these aspects of how Amazon's business makes this all possible as well as explore how it has turned the investment world upside-down and revolutionized what "business-as-usual" means.

FM 422 — Merchandising Strategies

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This is the capstone course for B.S. degree students, which integrates the skills and knowledge acquired in previous FM and related courses. Working in teams, students research financial, merchandising and competitive data and combine with information provided by executives from various retail organizations. Students articulate merchandising strategies in a final presentation.

Prerequisite(s): MA 300 or MA 311 or MA 321 or MA 322 or MA 331.

FM 423 — Fashion Planning and Allocation

3 credits; 2 lecture and 2 lab hours

Students assume the roles of merchandise and location planners and allocators for a multi-door retailer. Using the case study method, students utilize industry technology and advanced Excel applications to analyze and evaluate data to develop allocation strategies to support seasonal assortments and location plans.

Prerequisite(s): FM 322 or FM 329 or MA 329.

FM 424 — Global Merchandising

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course explores the multiple merchandising practices used around the world in fashion apparel companies-- both retail and wholesale. American merchandising theory is used as a base of comparison in the consideration of various religions, cultures, legal systems, and other global systems.

Prerequisite(s): FM 361.

FM 431 — Sales Management

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course includes the formulation of strategic sales programs for manufactured products and services. Students implement sales programs and evaluate control of the organization's sales activities. The course blends dynamic processes composed of interrelated sections, all geared to reach the sales objectives.

FM 441 — Computer-Aided Product Development II

3 credits; 2 lecture and 2 lab hours

This course applies web-based content and computer applications during product development. Students implement professional technical packages including bill of materials, construction details, specifications, cost sheets, etc., based on the creative content from FM 341.

Prerequisite(s): FM 341.

FM 480 — Special Topics in Fashion Business Management Studies

0 credits

FM 480A — Special Topics in FBM: Structural Racism & Challenges of Diversity in the Fashion Business Retail Ind

3 credits; 3 lecture hours

This course explores structural racism in the fashion industry from a historical and scholarly perspective. Prominent themes include Reconstruction, Jim Crow and how the Civil Rights Movement desegregated fashion retail stores. The rich contributions of Black designers such as Elizabeth Keckley and Ann Lowe frame a significant historical narrative.

FM 492 — International Product Development Practicum

4 credits; 4 lecture hours

In this course students apply principles learned in FM 244 to an international work experience in collaboration with an industry sponsor. They simulate the development and sourcing of a product in overseas factories. Offered in summer and winter only.

Prerequisite(s): FM 110 and FM 204 or FM 244.

FM 499 — Independent Study in Fashion Merchandising Management

1-3 credit

Prerequisite(s): a minimum 3.5 GPA and approval of instructor, chairperson, and dean for Business and Technology.