MAJOR IN APPAREL AND MERCHANDISING

The Apparel and Merchandising program emphasizes the study of apparel and textile design, product development and sourcing, and the promotion, distribution, and retailing of consumer goods in the global environment, while fostering awareness of cultural diversity and a commitment to social responsibility. The program encompasses study of the cultural/historical, economic, social/psychological, and scientific aspects of the textile and apparel industry. There are three concentrations in the major: Apparel Design and Production, Merchandising, and Product Development.

Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate mastery of core knowledge and skills specific to their program/concentration areas. The three concentration areas include:

- **Apparel Design and Production**: core knowledge and skills include use of industry-related technology for sketching, pattern drafting, marker making, constructing, and cross discipline knowledge and skills in conceptual design, technical production specifications communication, materials sourcing, and marketing.

- **Merchandising**: core knowledge and skills include consumer behavior and market research, retailing, assortment planning, merchandise buying, sales and customer service, advertising and promotion, and cross discipline knowledge and skills in accounting/budgeting, purchasing, management, and marketing.

- **Product Development**: core knowledge and skills include market research, product design and development, prototypes, specification sheets, global sourcing, and supply chain management. Skills in this concentration are enhanced through industry related technology. Students will be able to assess and synthesize multiple factors in creating/producing quality products, services, and design solutions. The factors will address human, design, industry and business, global, science, and technology sensitivities.

Students will demonstrate understanding of professional practices, processes, and skills utilized in the areas of apparel design and production, merchandising, and product development. These practices, processes, and skills include critical and creative thinking, communication, ethics, social responsibility and sustainability, collaborative problem-solving, and interdisciplinary learning.

Students also will demonstrate professional behaviors and ethical business practices that enhance the well-being of others and contribute to the advancement of the global industry.

Students may enroll in internship credits one to two semesters prior to graduation and in the pre-internship course during their third year in the major. Student internship placement with businesses and organizations in national and international settings is designed to facilitate the depth and integration of knowledge in the study of apparel and merchandising and to enhance professional development and career opportunities. Students with a 2.500 GPA are eligible to participate in department-facilitated internships.

Students who are interested in co-curricular learning experiences have the opportunity to visit apparel and fashion headquarters, manufacturers, and markets, network with industry professionals, participate in department-led study tours, engage in project based learning experiences, assist with department recruiting events and new student orientations, and participate in a variety of leadership events.

Potential Occupations

Career options for Apparel Design and Production graduates include, but are not limited to: apparel and fashion designer, computer-aided design (CAD) manager, creative director, design director, fashion illustrator, fashion magazine editorial contributor, fashion stylist, pattern-maker, technical designer, and trend/fashion forecaster.

Career options for Merchandising graduates include, but are not limited to: consumer or market researcher, brand/product merchandise manager, merchandise buyer, retail analyst, retail manager, retail store/website planner, resident buying office administrator, sales representative, showroom coordinator/manager, inventory control agent, consumer or market researcher, product trend analyst, advertising and promotions coordinator/manager, public relations specialist, social media specialist, and visual merchandiser.

Career options for Product Development graduates include, but are not limited to: consumer or market researcher, product designer/developer, prototype engineer, production manager, sourcing agent, product testing specialist, quality control agent, and import/export specialist.

Concentrations

- Apparel Design and Production Concentration
- Merchandising Concentration
- Product Development Concentration