

FASHION, BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN FASHION MERCHANDISING

The major in fashion merchandising requires a strong background in marketing, business and specialized professional courses with an emphasis on globalism. Students are directed toward assignments that will develop their skills in research, writing, presentation and critical thinking. Graduates find career opportunities in fashion forecasting, product development, advertising and promotion, retail management, buying, and international marketing.

Internships provide not only experience but industry contacts, and are strongly recommended. They may be conducted primarily during the summer semester.

Study abroad programs are readily available for fashion merchandising majors.

Student learning outcomes

Upon completing this program, students will know and know how to do the following:

1. Creative problem-solving and critical thinking: Transferable skills
Fashion merchandising students will demonstrate creative problem-solving and critical thinking through the completion of assignments and projects from freshman year through the senior capstone project. Throughout the student's tenure in the program, courses include exercises in creative problem-solving and critical thinking around simulation learning, research projects, forecasting projections, management skills and research papers, which includes self- and peer-directed learning.
2. Worldview and multidisciplinary approach to the fashion industry
Fashion merchandising students will receive a worldview and multidisciplinary approach to the fashion industry through course work, which exhibits the importance of transforming fashion into an ethical and sustainable business model. Encouraging students to be part of the evolution needed in the fashion industry through projects and assignments, which include sustainability, ethics, economics, culture, global supply chain, design principles and the history of contemporary fashion.
3. Dynamic merchandising skills
Technical skills required in the fashion industry such as Photoshop, Illustrator, CLO 3D, Excel, Word and retail math will be revealed throughout introductory, intermediate and advanced course work. Additionally, students will display skills in portfolio development, the visual presentation of concepts, ideation and design principles.
4. Professionalism
Fashion merchandising students exhibit professional verbal, visual and digital presentation skills, which includes critical feedback. Additionally, the soft skills of professionalism consisting of punctuality, meeting deadlines, dependability, a sense of urgency and effective communication are central to professionalism.

Special requirements

Acceptance into the program is based on evaluating the applicant's extracurricular activities, community service, letter of recommendation, application essay and a preferred minimum GPA of 3.0.

Degree requirements for Fashion, Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) with a concentration in fashion merchandising

Course	Title	Hours
General education (https://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/general-education-curriculum/)		
Select 30 credits of general education courses in consultation with an adviser.		30
Major requirements		
• Major core requirements		
FASH 120	Introduction to the Fashion Industry	3
FASH 145	Technology in Fashion Merchandising	3
FASH 250	Concepts of the Fashion Industry	3
FASH 290	Textiles for the Fashion Industry	3
FASH 319	Fashion History: The Modern Era	3
FASH 340	Merchandising Portfolio	3
FASH 341	Merchandise Planning and Control	3
FASH 342	Retail Buying Simulation	3
FASH 343	Fashion Forecasting	3
FASH 380	Fashion Branding	3
FASH 440	Line Development Studio	3
FASH 443	Fashion Management and Leadership Development	3
FASH 445	Fashion Entrepreneurship	3
FASH 451	Importing and Exporting Fashion	3
• Additional major requirements		
• Major electives		
Select from any FASH course not otherwise required for degree.		3
Ancillary requirements		
ACCT 202	Accounting for Non-business Majors	3
ARTH 103 & ARTH 104	Survey of Art I and Survey of Art II	6
BUSN 162	Digital Literacy: Spreadsheets Skills I	1
BUSN 323	Legal Environment of Business	3
Design history elective		3
Select from FASH 320 or any additional ARTH course		
Marketing courses		15
MKTG 301	Marketing Principles	
Select 12 additional credits in MKTG		
Open electives		
Select any course.		14
Total Hours		120

The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 120.

Note: Internships are not required but are strongly recommended. FASH 493 may range from one to six credits.

What follows is a sample plan that meets the prescribed requirements within a four-year course of study at VCU. Please contact your adviser before beginning course work toward a degree.

Freshman year

Fall semester		Hours
ARTH 103	Survey of Art I	3
FASH 120	Introduction to the Fashion Industry	3
FASH 145	Technology in Fashion Merchandising	3
UNIV 111	Introduction to Focused Inquiry: Play course video for Introduction to Focused Inquiry: Investigation and Communication (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
General education course		3

Term Hours: 15

Spring semester

ARTH 104	Survey of Art II	3
FASH 250	Concepts of the Fashion Industry	3
UNIV 112	Focused Inquiry II (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
Play course video for Focused Inquiry II		
General education course		3
General education course		3

Term Hours: 15

Sophomore year

Fall semester

FASH 290	Textiles for the Fashion Industry	3
MKTG 301	Marketing Principles	3
UNIV 200	Advanced Focused Inquiry: Literacies, Research and Communication	3
General education course		3
Open elective		3

Term Hours: 15

Spring semester

BUSN 162	Digital Literacy: Spreadsheets Skills I	1
FASH 319	Fashion History: The Modern Era	3
FASH 341	Merchandise Planning and Control	3
General education course		3
General education course		3
Open elective		2

Term Hours: 15

Junior year

Fall semester

FASH 342	Retail Buying Simulation	3
FASH 343	Fashion Forecasting	3
Design history elective		3
Fashion elective		3

General education course	3
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Term Hours: 15

Spring semester

ACCT 202	Accounting for Non-business Majors	3
BUSN 323	Legal Environment of Business	3
FASH 380	Fashion Branding	3
FASH 443	Fashion Management and Leadership Development	3
Marketing elective (MKTG)		3

Term Hours: 15

Senior year

Fall semester

FASH 340	Merchandising Portfolio	3
FASH 440	Line Development Studio	3
Marketing elective (MKTG)		6
Open elective		3

Term Hours: 15

Spring semester

FASH 445	Fashion Entrepreneurship (capstone)	3
FASH 451	Importing and Exporting Fashion	3
Marketing elective (MKTG)		3
Open electives		6

Term Hours: 15

Total Hours: 120

Note: Internships are not required but are strongly recommended. FASH 493 may range from one to six credits.

The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 120.

Accelerated B.A. and M.S.

The accelerated B.A. and M.S. program allows qualified students to earn both the B.A. in Fashion with a concentration in fashion merchandising and M.S. in Business with a concentration in marketing management in a minimum of five years by completing up to 12 credit hours of approved graduate courses during the senior year of their undergraduate program. Students in the program may count up to three credit hours of graduate courses toward both the B.A. and M.S. degrees. Thus, the two degrees may be earned with a minimum of 147 credits rather than the 150 credits necessary if the two degrees are pursued separately.

In their senior year students would also take up to nine credit hours of graduate-level foundations courses, which are prerequisites for the graduate program.

Students holding these degrees will be very competitive due to the combined knowledge and skills in marketing, culture and business and will be well prepared for success in an increasingly global marketplace.

Entrance to the accelerated program

Interested undergraduate students should consult with their adviser as early as possible to receive specific information about the accelerated program, determine academic eligibility and submit (no later than two semesters prior to graduating with a baccalaureate degree, that is, before the end of the spring semester of their junior year) an Accelerated Program Declaration Form to be approved by the graduate program director. Limited spaces may be available in the accelerated program.

Academically qualified students may not receive approval if capacity has been reached.

Minimum qualifications for entrance to this accelerated program include completion of 90 undergraduate credit hours and an overall GPA of 3.25. Students who do not meet the minimum GPA requirements may submit GRE scores to receive further consideration.

Once enrolled in the accelerated program, students must meet the standards of performance applicable to graduate students as described in the "Satisfactory academic progress (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/satisfactory-academic-progress/>)" section of the Graduate Bulletin, including maintaining a 3.0 GPA. Guidance to students admitted to the accelerated program is provided by both the undergraduate School of the Arts adviser and the faculty adviser to the graduate program.

Admission to the graduate program

Entrance to the accelerated program enables the student to take the approved shared courses that will apply to the undergraduate and graduate degrees. However, entry into an accelerated program via an approved Accelerated Program Declaration Form does not constitute application or admission into the graduate program. Admission to the graduate program requires a separate step that occurs through a formal application to the master's program, which is submitted through Graduate Admissions no later than a semester prior to graduation with the baccalaureate degree, that is, before the end of the fall semester of the senior year. In order to continue pursuing the master's degree after the baccalaureate degree is conferred, accelerated students must follow the admission to graduate study requirements outlined in the VCU Bulletin.

Degree requirements

The Bachelor of Arts in Fashion degree will be awarded upon completion of a minimum of 120 credits and the satisfactory completion of all undergraduate degree requirements as stated in the Undergraduate Bulletin.

A maximum of 12 graduate credits may be taken prior to completion of the baccalaureate degree. Three of these credits, MKTG 672, are shared with the graduate program, meaning that they will be applied to both undergraduate and graduate degree requirements.

The graduate business courses that may be taken as an undergraduate once a student is admitted to the program — and how they apply — are shown in the table below.

Course	Title	Hours
ACCT 507	Fundamentals of Accounting (graduate foundation; satisfies ACCT 202 or open elective in undergraduate program)	3
MKTG 672	Influencing Consumer Behavior (shared between undergraduate and graduate programs)	3
FIRE 520	Financial Concepts of Management (graduate foundation; satisfies open elective in undergraduate program)	3
SCMA 524	Statistical Fundamentals for Business Management (graduate foundation; satisfies open elective in undergraduate program)	3

Recommended course sequence/plan of study

What follows is the recommended plan of study for students interested in the accelerated program beginning in the fall of the junior year prior to admission to the accelerated program in the senior year.

Course	Title	Hours
Junior year		
Fall semester		
FASH 319	Fashion History: The Modern Era	3
FASH 341	Merchandise Planning and Control	3
FASH 380	Fashion Branding	3
MKTG 301	Marketing Principles	3
Fashion elective		3
Term Hours:		15
Spring semester		
BUSN 323	Legal Environment of Business	3
FASH 340	Merchandising Portfolio	3
FASH 342	Retail Buying Simulation	3
Elective (MKTG)		3
General education course		3
Term Hours:		15
Senior year		
Fall semester		
ACCT 507	Fundamentals of Accounting	3
FASH 443	Fashion Management and Leadership Development	3
FASH 450 or FASH 440	Line Development Line Development Studio	3
SCMA 524	Statistical Fundamentals for Business Management	3
Elective (MKTG)		3
Term Hours:		15
Spring semester		
FASH 445	Fashion Entrepreneurship	3
FASH 451	Importing and Exporting Fashion	3
FIRE 520	Financial Concepts of Management	3
MKTG 672	Influencing Consumer Behavior	3
Elective (MKTG)		3
Term Hours:		15
Fifth year		
Summer semester		
MKTG 671	Marketing Management	3
Fall semester		
MKTG 675	Digital Marketing	3
MKTG 679	Brand Strategy	3
Electives		6
Term Hours:		12
Spring semester		
MKTG 657	Market Planning Project	3
Electives		9
Term Hours:		12