

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.

Learning outcomes

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

1. Implement technical skills: The program will provide students with technical knowledge and skills of contemporary computer software.
2. Utilize problem-solving: Apply quantitative and qualitative skills to problem-solving within the apparel industry. Students will be familiar with the various levels of the fashion industry, and understand how the different business levels and segments intersect. Students will have knowledge of numerous occupations in the fashion industry.
3. Understand the fashion industry and its occupations: Students will understand the workings of the wholesale segment of the fashion industry including market segmentation, buyer behavior and career opportunities. Numerous simulations and outside evaluators will be used.
4. Understand the wholesale industry: Students will understand how theoretical perspectives on markets, trade and economic development can be applied to historical and current data on production, consumption and trade.
5. Understand global economics: Students will understand how theoretical perspectives on markets, trade and economic development can be applied to historical and current data on production, consumption and trade.
6. Application of the design principles: Students will successfully apply the elements and principles of design to various fashion-related projects and presentations.
7. Knowledge of the theory of contemporary fashion: Students will be aware of the historical significance of fashion in contemporary history.
8. Application of merchandising math: Students will demonstrate understanding of the fashion buyer's job with regard to merchandise planning and control.

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

General Education requirements

Course	Title	Hours
University Core Education Curriculum		
UNIV 111 Play course video for Focused Inquiry I	Focused Inquiry I	3
UNIV 112 Play course video for Focused Inquiry II	Focused Inquiry II	3
UNIV 200	Inquiry and the Craft of Argument	3
Approved humanities/fine arts		3
Approved natural/physical sciences		3-4
Approved quantitative literacy		3-4
Approved social/behavioral sciences		3-4
Total Hours		21-24

Course	Title	Hours
General Education directed electives		
Select nine General Education directed elective credits ¹		9
Total Hours		9

¹

Directed electives are VCU "general education" electives.

Collateral requirements

Course	Title	Hours
ACCT 202	Accounting for Non-business Majors	3
ARTH 103 & ARTH 104	Survey of Art I and Survey of Art II	6
BUSN 323	Legal Environment of Business	3
INFO 162	Digital Literacy: Spreadsheets Skills I	1
MKTG 301	Marketing Principles	3
MKTG 315	Buyer Behavior	3
MKTG/INTL 320	International Marketing	3
MKTG 330	Integrated Marketing Communications	3
MKTG 340	Retail Management	3
Art history elective		3
Total Hours		31

Major courses

Course	Title	Hours
FASH 145	Computers for Fashion I	3
FASH 240	Survey of the Fashion Industry I	3
FASH 241	Survey of the Fashion Industry II	3
FASH 250	Concepts of Fashion Merchandising Environment	3
FASH 290	Textiles for the Fashion Industry	3
FASH 319	Contemporary Fashion	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 443	Supervision and Management	3
FASH 445	Fashion Entrepreneurship (capstone course)	3
FASH 450	Line Development	3
FASH 451	Importing and Exporting Fashion	3
FASH 490	Fashion Seminar	1
Fashion elective		
FASH 210 or FASH 350	Visual Merchandising Fashion Promotion	3
Total Hours		46

Open electives

Course	Title	Hours
Select 13 open elective credits ¹		13

1

Open electives are any courses from any department within the university.

The minimum total 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 145	Computers for Fashion I	3
FASH 240	Survey of the Fashion Industry I	3
UNIV 111	Focused Inquiry I	3
Play course video for Focused Inquiry I		
Approved social/behavioral science (University Core)		3-4
Term Hours:		15-16

Spring semester

ARTH 104	Survey of Art II	3
FASH 241	Survey of the Fashion Industry II	3
UNIV 112	Focused Inquiry II	3
Play course video for Focused Inquiry II		
Approved natural/physical science (University Core)		3
Approved quantitative literacy (University Core)		3
Term Hours:		15

Sophomore year

Fall semester

ACCT 202	Accounting for Non-business Majors	3
FASH 250	Concepts of Fashion Merchandising Environment	3
Approved humanities/fine arts (University Core)		3
Art history elective		3
Open elective ¹		3
Term Hours:		15

Junior year

Fall semester

FASH 319	Contemporary Fashion	3
FASH 341	Merchandise Planning and Control	3
FASH 380	Fashion Branding	3
MKTG 301	Marketing Principles	3
FASH elective (select from):		
FASH 210 or FASH 350	Visual Merchandising or Fashion Promotion	3
Term Hours:		15

Spring semester

BUSN 323	Legal Environment of Business	3
FASH 342	Retail Buying Simulation	3
MKTG 330	Integrated Marketing Communications	3
Directed elective ²		3
Open elective ¹		3
Term Hours:		15

Senior year

Fall semester

FASH 443	Supervision and Management	3
FASH 450	Line Development	3
MKTG 315	Buyer Behavior	3
MKTG 340	Retail Management	3
Open elective ¹		3
Term Hours:		15

Spring semester

FASH 445	Fashion Entrepreneurship (capstone)	3
FASH 451	Importing and Exporting Fashion	3
FASH 490	Fashion Seminar	1
MKTG 320	International Marketing or INTL 320	3
Open electives ¹		4
Term Hours:		14
Total Hours:		120-121

1

Open electives are any courses from any department within the university.

2

Directed electives are VCU "general education" electives.

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

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

FASH 145. Computers for Fashion I. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Laptop computer required. Basic computer skills required. This course introduces students to contemporary technology with emphasis on basic computer graphics software used in the fashion industry today.

FASH 210. Visual Merchandising. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Theory and practical application of visual merchandising techniques in the fashion industry. Development of design concepts, fixturing, layout and presentation for retail, manufacturing and special events. Use of computer-aided design.

FASH 240. Survey of the Fashion Industry I. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A survey of the apparel industry emphasizing the role of the designer and the various stages of production.

FASH 241. Survey of the Fashion Industry II. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An analysis of the apparel industry emphasizing retail aspects.

FASH 250. Concepts of Fashion Merchandising Environment. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Basic research techniques and analysis skills for evaluating contemporary fashion and apparel topics.

FASH 290. Textiles for the Fashion Industry. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. This course is designed to develop an understanding of the factors which influence the tactile behaviors of fabrics during garment design, manufacture and wear. Apparel fiber construction, finish and properties both natural and man-made will be analyzed.

FASH 319. Contemporary Fashion. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: **UNIV 200** or **HONR 200**. An in-depth study of fashion beginning at the Industrial Revolution and continuing to the present from a historical and socioeconomic point of view. Hands-on examination of vintage garments and field trips to museum collections.

FASH 341. Merchandise Planning and Control. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Theory and mathematical application of the major elements of retail buying and merchandising. Discussion covers planning and control of inventory, profit analysis, merchandise pricing and purchase negotiation.

FASH 342. Retail Buying Simulation. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: **FASH 341** and **INFO 162**. Practical application of retail buying in relation to the calculations for a six-month buying plan for a department within a department store. The simulation includes projection of sales, stock levels, markdowns, purchases, gross margins, markup, etc.

FASH 343. Fashion Forecasting. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Using basic principles to identify, track and analyze current trends, students will develop a fashion forecast. Demographic, economic, social and historical forces of behavior will be evaluated.

FASH 350. Fashion Promotion. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: junior standing. Through lecture and field experience, students are exposed to technical and creative aspects of fashion promotion and public relations. A variety of media are utilized. Students may be required to spend time outside the classroom on promotional activities.

FASH 380. Fashion Branding. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Students will understand the concept of fashion branding and the processes necessary to successfully develop or redevelop a fashion brand.

FASH 442. Advanced Show Production. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A practical application of the production, planning and execution of a professionally staged and choreographed fashion show featuring the Department of Fashion Design and Merchandising students' juried work.

FASH 443. Supervision and Management. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. The study of advanced leadership skills as they relate to the fashion industry. Topics include team building, negotiations, time and stress management, and communications. Emphasis placed on leadership and supervision skills across cultures.

FASH 445. Advanced Application in Store Development. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: **FASH 341** and **342**. Studies operational functions as related to the objective and decision-making procedures inherent in successful small-business retailing. Quantitative strategies will be applied as students develop a model plan for a retail business.

FASH 450. Line Development. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Pre- or corequisite: **FASH 341**. Students will learn the fundamentals of producing a line of apparel, accessories or home fashions from conception to consumer. Emphasis will be placed on market research, specification sheets, costing, sourcing, production and sales.

FASH 451. Importing and Exporting Fashion. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: **FASH 450**. An overview and introduction to import/export theory, government regulations and global sourcing. Students will gain insight to the dynamics and cultures of the international fashion marketplace.

FASH 490. Fashion Seminar. 1 Hour.

Short course (5 weeks); 3 lecture hours. 1 credit. A professional seminar for senior fashion majors. Lectures will cover career opportunities and job preparation.

FASH 492. Independent Study in the Fashion Industry. 1-3 Hours.

Semester course; 1-3 credits. May be repeated. Prerequisite: junior or senior standing as a major in fashion design or fashion merchandising. Learning experiences should be designed with the supervising faculty member in the form of a contract between student and instructor; approval of department chair necessary prior to registration. This course will be limited to those students who have demonstrated intense commitment to a particular area of study within the fashion industry.

FASH 493. Fashion Internship. 1-3 Hours.

1-3 credits. It may be a single internship for 3 credits or several (maximum 3) totaling 3 credits. Open to junior- and senior-level fashion majors only. A practicum in which students apply on-the-job the formal classroom and studio training they have received in their option (design, merchandising) on campus.