Fashion Design and Management

A design-centered program in Fashion Design, Technical Apparel Design, and Fashion Design Management

Study the art of fashion design and the business of designing, marketing, and manufacturing apparel in a global production system. Students develop an understanding of fashion and the creative process, aesthetics, and technical skills, and apply management and marketing principles to this specialized industry within the context of an Ivy League university education. This is the only fashion design and management major in the Ivy League.

Program Options

- Fashion Design
- Fashion Design Management

Program Strengths

- Studio-based training in fashion and textile design
- Merging of fashion and technology
- Various business perspectives suited to the dynamics of the fashion industry
- Teaching and research using an on-site historical costume collection

Fashion Design

Fashion Design and Management (FD&M) provides an in depth study of the creation, aesthetics, function, and international business of fashion. Two options within the major are available and allow students to match their talents with their passions. The Fashion Design option prepares students for careers as designers in the fashion industry through studio courses exploring concepts and techniques of making fashion, while the Fashion Design Management option applies management and marketing principles to a broadly defined fashion industry.

Fashion Design

Students use conventional techniques and digital tools, plus new technologies to communicate fashion ideas and develop design skills. Students have access to leading faculty and courses in the creation of fashion collections, and learn to create a range of products from runway fashion and active sportswear to cutting edge innovations in “smart” textiles. Students also have access to the Cornell Costume and Textile Collection to use for design inspiration and to learn about changing fashions and ethnic dress.

Curriculum

Courses exploring fashion, design theory and methods, and the industry are grounded in the liberal arts to provide a well-rounded education that integrates fashion design with other fields of study.

Fashion Design Management

Students learn to solve problems by applying an understanding of the visual, theoretical, and technical aspects of the fashion
Requirements in the Major

Foundation courses
- Introduction to Computer-Aided Design
- Art, Design, and Visual Thinking
- Fashion Product Management
- Fibers, Fabrics, and Finishes
- Structural Fabric Design
- Style, Fashion, and the Apparel Industry

One of the following:
- Fashion Theory: Functional Aspects of Clothing and Design; Fashion, Media and Technology; or Anthropology of the Fashioned Body
- Fashion Design option coursework
- Fashion Draping; Introduction to Fashion Design; Creative Patternmaking; Fashion Design; Apparel Design; Product Development; Fashion Promotion and Presentation; Collections for the Fashion Industries

Fashion Design Management option coursework
- Introductory Economics; Introduction to Business Management; Calculus; Ethics/ Sustainability in Business and Industry; Oral Communication or Foreign Language; Accounting; Product Quality Assessment; Textiles, Apparel, and Innovation; Global Fashion Management

Select two from:
- Additional Design or Apparel studio courses

Curriculum

The program combines courses in apparel and textile structures and analysis, apparel design and history, business management, marketing and finance, consumer behavior, communications, economics, ethics, entrepreneurship, marketing, and public policy. Students consider how apparel and textile designs are affected by material selection, production methods, technology, supply chain management, finance, professional ethics, corporate social responsibility, consumer behavior, and the human implications of technological change.

Special Opportunities

Students take advantage of a variety of opportunities beyond formal coursework.
Participation in national and international design competitions, as well as mentored independent projects is encouraged. Students regularly participate in and win scholarships in the prestigious YMA and Geoffrey Beene fashion competitions, and the Barbara L. Kuhlman fiber and wearable arts program.
Research, done independently or through a faculty member’s team, provides valuable practical knowledge while testing students’ interests. Students also have the opportunity to work and conduct research in the Cornell Costume and Textile Collection.
The annual student-managed and designed Cornell Fashion Collective Fashion Show features the apparel designs of our students.
Many FD&M students spend a semester studying abroad in international fashion centers such as London, Paris, and Florence, or take part in Cornell exchange programs in Hong Kong, Paris, Seoul, or New Zealand.
Human Ecology’s Urban Semester program offers an opportunity to explore New York City’s cultural, business, and community settings.

Careers

Graduates of the FD&M major have earned a reputation among employers in the apparel and textiles industries for their ability to think creatively, and are attractive candidates for leadership positions in fashion and related industries. Alumni are designers, executives, technical designers, buyers, account managers, computer-systems designers, financial analysts, and human resource managers for influential fashion houses and under their own labels. Graduates also do specialized design in fields such as elite athletics and the protective clothing industry, and use their creativity in public-relations, fashion journalism, publishing, and theater design.
Those who go on to graduate work are well prepared for programs in business administration, communications, marketing, law, museum studies, apparel design, costume history, textile design, and theatrical costuming.

Selected Graduates

Analyst-International Labor Standards, Walt Disney Co.
Associate Merchandiser, Polo Ralph Lauren
Associate Technical Designer, J. Crew
Collection Designer-Own Label, “Hayley Paige”, JLM Couture
Design Manager, Coach Leather
Designer, Macy’s Merchandising Group
Developer Materials, Fashion at Adidas Group
Digital Marketing Analyst, LL Bean
Director of Production, Oscar de la Renta
Director of E-Commerce, Barneys
Fabric Research and Development, Lord & Taylor
Fashion Editor, People Stylewatch
International Public Relations Associate, Tony Burch
Market Analyst, TJX, Inc.
Merchandise Director, Dior Couture
Product Development, Winds Enterprises
Sourcing Coordinator, Burberry
Technical Designer, Nike
VP Design, Eddie Bauer
VP Product Development, Michael Kors
VP Sales and Corporate Development, Refinery 29, Inc.
Wholesale Planner, Theory

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