Sample courses

Fibers, Fabrics, and Finishes (FSAD 1350) introduces the properties and performance of textile materials and their production processes and provides a general overview of the textile industry from a materials perspective.

Introduction to Fashion Design (FSAD 1450) covers the principles of garment assembly and flat-patternmaking for apparel design, as well as the use of mass production equipment and methods to analyze, develop, and assemble garments.

Fashion, Aesthetics, and Society (FSAD 2190) introduces students to fashion, beauty, and trends and their integral relationship throughout history. Students learn and explore various aspects of contemporary fashion phenomena, such as fashion-art collaborations, media-effects on body image, the impact of new technologies on fashion and lifestyle trends, and other significant issues of society manifest in fashion of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Fashion Product Management (FSAD 2310) provides an overview of the fashion supply chain with emphasis on the U.S. apparel industry. Students will learn key concepts for managing the development, marketing and distribution of fashion products including consumer behavior, trend forecasting, brand management, merchandise planning, and multi-channel distribution.

Activewear Design and Product Development (FSAD 2660) is a projects-based course in which students explore the relationship between technology and design, and the impact of production issues on manufactured activewear. Students learn computer-aided patternmaking; activewear construction methods; manufacturing technologies; communication of technical details, flats, specifications; and costing of garments.
Research

Undergraduates can participate in department research that focuses on expanding knowledge and creating new understandings in areas of fashion and fibrous materials that address end-uses for future needs and make an impact on humanity as a whole.

A sampling of department research units includes the Cornell Digital Fashion and Body Scan Research Lab, Cornell Performance Apparel Design Lab, and the Textiles Nanotechnology Lab. Students also have the opportunity to work with, draw inspiration from, and conduct research in the Cornell Fashion and Textile Collection.

Research examples

- Exploring uses for post-consumer textile waste
- Smart garment development
- Cornell Fashion and Textile Collection exhibition research and sample preparation
- Thermal comfort and ergonomics of protective clothing
- Fit and sizing research using the Cornell Body Scanner

Honors program

The Honors Program recognizes the highest level of academic achievement among FD&M majors. The program allows qualified undergraduates the opportunity to pursue independent creative scholarship/research under the supervision of a member of the FD&M faculty. Students apply to the Honors Program during their junior year.

Experiential opportunities

FD&M students participate in engaged learning opportunities that provide valuable practical knowledge while testing their academic and career interests.

Participation in design competitions and mentored independent projects is encouraged. Students regularly participate in and win scholarships in the prestigious YMA Fashion Scholarship Fund and CFDA Design Competitions, and the Barbara L. Kuhlman fiber and wearable arts program.

Study-away options

Many FD&M students spend a semester studying abroad in international fashion centers such as London, Paris, and Milan, or take part in Cornell exchange programs in Hong Kong, or New Zealand.

Internship examples

- Balenciaga
- Malia Mills
- MBF Trend Consulting
- Milly
- Nike
- Phillip Lim 3.1
- PVH Calvin Klein
- Tommy Hilfiger
- Tory Burch

Student organizations

The Cornell Fashion Collective presents an annual student-managed and designed Fashion Show, which features the apparel designs of our students and others across campus.

Students connect to professionals in the fashion industry through the student-run organization, the Cornell Fashion Industry Network.

Professional pathways

Graduates of the FD&M major are attractive candidates for leadership positions in fashion and related industries and have earned a reputation among employers in the apparel and textiles industries for their ability to think creatively.

Alumni are designers, product developers, buyers, marketing managers, communicators, data application developers, and financial analysts for influential fashion houses and retailers or as entrepreneurs 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.

Graduate/Professional school

Students who go on to graduate work are well prepared for programs in business administration, art business, communications, marketing, law, museum studies, apparel design, costume history, textile design, and theatrical costuming.

Sample career paths

Collection Designer-Own Label, BY., Bonnie Young
Senior Project Manager, Macy’s Merchandising Group
Senior Director of Supply Strategy, PVH
Creative Director, Echo Design
Executive Director, ShopBAZAAR.com at Harper’s BAZAAR
Senior Vice President Merchandising, BaubleBar
Senior Technical Developer, Target
Senior Digital Designer, Nike
Senior Director, Global Product Licensing, Michael Kors
Curatorial Manager, Rare and Historical, Ralph Lauren Library
Digital Marketing Entrepreneur, Maison MRKT