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**FAST – SCHOOL OF FASHION AND ACCESSORY STUDIES AND TECHNOLOGY**


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**DEPARTMENT OF FASHION MERCHANDISING**  
**COURSE TITLE: FASHION RETAIL MANAGEMENT**  
**COURSE CODE: FTFCSF360**  
**3 Semester Credits**

**1. DESCRIPTION**

This course addresses the procedures involved in managing a fashion retail enterprise and the decision-making inherent in successful merchandising for smaller-scale stores. Knowledge will be acquired through lab practice gained by running a real enterprise in which students and professionals exchange their knowledge and propose successful solutions to be applied. Coursework includes site visits to well-known Italian luxury brands in Florence such as Ferragamo, Gucci, and Cavalli (companies may change according to availability), and special guest lectures from local prominent emerging designers.

**2. OBJECTIVES**

The aim of this course is for students to learn how to manage a retail store, by addressing its most crucial management issues, dynamics and functions. Students will be able to develop the necessary sensitivity to create and recognize at a glance the storytelling entailed within a retail store through its features and through the type of message that the retail store is conveying. Students will acquire competences and skills to deal with retail store daily operations (opening, closing, cleaning, cash management); store (orders); retail store merchandising (selecting items and displaying them); events and promotion.

At the end of the course students will be able to:

- Understand how to manage a retail store
- Learn the dynamics underlying the management of a retail store
- Understand the importance of retail business in the fashion retail industry
- Evaluate opportunities and careers in the fashion retail industry
- Manage a fashion product's life cycle in store
- Promote and merchandise fashion products
- Outline a basic yet effective marketing strategy for a fashion retail store
- Grasp the fundamentals of how outsourcing impacts the retail environment on a local and global scale
- Analyze the local retail environment to understand how to become competitive
- Learn how e-commerce and online promotion affect the retail environment
- Gain team building, writing, and presentation skills

**3. REQUIREMENTS**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**4. METHOD**

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects, and site visits within the local community. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities

which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, videos, slides, guided problem solving, and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable.

An asset of the program is the opportunity to showcase student work at FLY, the non-profit retail store of FAST, alongside professional emerging designers based in Italy. All works produced by students will be featured with garment specifications, photographed, and published for promotion on school websites. Garments will undergo a selection process for in-store and classroom placement. Furthermore, FAST experiential learning and internship students will then utilize these items to create window displays and other special installations throughout the season. For this reason, it is not possible for students to take projects, garments, accessories, and the like home upon course completion. In the event that a garment is sold, all profits will go toward scholarship funds for future FAST students.

## **5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES**

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

- Diamond, Ellen. *Fashion Retailing: A Multi-Channel Approach*, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015.

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

## **FURTHER READINGS**

- Brannon, Evelyn L. *Fashion Forecasting*, Fairchild Books, 2012.
- Goose, Virginia. *Fashion Merchandising*, AVA Academia, 2012.
- Palomo-Lovinski, Noel. *The World's Most Influential Fashion Designers: Hidden Connections and Lasting Legacies of Fashion's Iconic Creators*, Barron's, 2010.

## **LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE**

Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times of the university library. Also note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to borrow materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed.

Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

### **BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA**

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

[http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca\\_palagio\\_di\\_parte\\_guelfa/](http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/)

### **BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE**

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

[www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it](http://www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it)

### **THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE**

Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: [www.britishinstitute.it/en](http://www.britishinstitute.it/en)

## **6. FIELD LEARNING**

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

## **7. COURSE MATERIALS**

No additional course materials are necessary.

## **8. COURSE FEES**

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated by the instructor on the first day of class.

## **9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM**

10% Attendance

10% Participation

10% Assignments

20% Midterm Exam, Field Learning Project (if applicable), Special/Research Project (if applicable)

30% Final Exam

20% Paper/Project

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+= 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B-=80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C=73-76%, C- =70-72%, D = 60-69%, F= 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

## **10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION**

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

**Absences** are based on academic hours: 1 absence equals 3 lecture hours.

Two absences: 6 lecture hours, attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

Three absences: 9 lecture hours, the final grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Four absences: 12 lecture hours, constitutes automatic failure of the course regardless of when absences are incurred.

Please note:

- The above hours refer to lecture hours. Please note that the contact / credit hour policy in the academic catalog includes additional distribution ratios according to delivery category. Ex: 1 absence equals 6 FL/SL/Lab hours or 9 EL hours.

- Hours may be distributed in different formats according to the academic course schedules.

### **LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE**

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

### **TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.**

It is the student's responsibility to know how many absences are incurred. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

**Participation:** Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

## **11. EXAMS – PAPERS – PROJECTS**

Example of how exams, papers, and projects are detailed and graded:

The **Midterm exam** accounts for 20% of the final course grade. For exam time and date consult the course website. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.**

Format: the exam is divided into three sections:

- Part I: Multiple choice questions for a total of 20 points.
- Part II: Short-answer questions (concise explanations, main ideas, key words, names, etc.) for a total 50 points.
- Part III: Essay questions (based on content, vocabulary, detail, etc.) for a total of 30 points.

The **final Paper/Project** accounts for 20% of the course grade.

Format: topic, length, guidelines, and due date will be provided on the course website.

Material for research will be available in the university Library in Corso Tintori 21.

The **Final exam** accounts for 30% of the final course grade. For exam time and date consult the course website. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.** Format: the exam is divided into three sections:

- Part I: Multiple choice questions for a total of 20 points.
- Part II: Short-answer questions (concise explanations, main ideas, key words, names, etc.) for a total 50 points.
- Part III: Essay questions (based on content, vocabulary, detail, etc.) for a total of 30 points.

The Final Exam is cumulative

## 12. LESSONS

Lesson 1	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Course introduction, presentation of topics, class syllabus and the course website. Information on assignments and exams. Introduction to fashion retailing and an overview of the fashion retailing industry, with a focus on the expansion of global retail. Overview of fashion principles and theories. Introduction to FLY Fashion Loves You retail store: its incorporation within Florence, and its mission as a unique store combining school, consignment, emerging designer collection, and vintage clothing.
Objectives	Students will acquire information on the course organization and a general grounding on the basics of the retail environment.
Readings/Assignments	Read: Chapter 1 “The nature of the fashion retailing industry” Chapter 2 “The global impact of fashion retailing”. Assignment will be provided in class by the instructor.

Lesson 2	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Focus on consumers: rational vs. emotional motives, demographics, multicultural segmentations. Consumer analysis and related store development.
Objectives	Students will become aware of the many different aspects of customer's needs and behaviors that influence retail, as well as the life cycle of each category and their impact on the buying of fashion merchandise.
Readings/Assignments	Read: Chapter 4 “The fashion consumer”. Assignment on consumer behavior will be provided in class by the instructor.

Lesson 3	
Meet	In class

<b>Lecture</b>	Different techniques on how to gather and research data. The role of Internet. Opening up to potential markets. Ethics and social responsibilities of managers and buyers.
<b>Objectives</b>	Students will acquire skills in devising research techniques aimed at understanding the needs and behaviors of the final client, in order to efficiently deal with existing clients and open up to new markets. Students will focus on ethical concerns and training responsibilities.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Read: Chapter 5 “Retail Research directions in today’s retail environment” Chapter 6 “Ethical practices and social responsibility by retailers”. Assignment on how to generate an effective research strategy, will be provided in class by the instructor.

<b>Lesson 4</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	How to locate and select the ideal area where to open a retail store according to demographics, shopping districts, competition, and trends. Overview of visual merchandise and store design.
<b>Objectives</b>	Students will be encouraged to evaluate and understand the selection process to locate, open, and design a successful retail store. Understand the importance of visual merchandise and storytelling.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Read: Chapter 7 “On-site and off-site locations” Chapter 8 “Designing and fixturing brick-and-mortar premises” Chapter 9 “The importance of visual merchandising to store”. Assignment on store location, will be provided in class by the instructor.

<b>Lesson 5</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Analysis of retail environments in Florence
<b>Objectives</b>	After having received information that will enable them to evaluate the level and quality of retail stores, students are requested to analyze specific parts of the city assigned by the instructor. A class discussion of the case study will follow in the next lessons.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Students will be asked to write their reflections on the retail scene in Florence and present their ideas within a focus group during the following class.

<b>Lesson 6</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	The importance of HR, dealing with labor in order to maximize employee retention. How to get merchandise in store, how to manage quality, stock, and prevent its loss. Midterm exam preparation review.
<b>Objectives</b>	This class is focused on the importance of setting up the right organizational structure. Acquire basic knowledge of recruitment, training, compensation and benefit. Students are exposed to different methods inherent to stock distribution and management.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Read: Chapter 3 “Organizational structures”, Chapter 10 “The Human Resources division”, Chapter 11 “Merchandise distribution and loss prevention”. Assignment will be provided in class by the instructor.

<b>Lesson 7</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class

<b>Lecture</b>	MIDTERM EXAM
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<b>Lesson 8</b>	
<b>NA</b>	ACADEMIC BREAK

<b>Lesson 9</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Buyers responsibilities and methodologies for each season's purchase and plans. Domestic market place vs. off-shore/global market place. Private label and the merchandise mix.
<b>Objectives</b>	Students will understand the role of the buyer in all its seasonal duties, and evaluate whether buying private labels, domestic or non-domestic merchandise in order to structure the best merchandise mix.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Read: Chapter 12 "Planning and executing the purchase", Chapter 13 "Purchasing in the global marketplace" Chapter 14 "Private label importance to the merchandise mix". Assignment will be provided in class by the instructor

<b>Lesson 10</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Pricing Strategy. How to price position a product and the implication on the marketing strategy. How the product and/or distribution influence the pricing. Retail mark up around the world. Price analysis.
<b>Objectives</b>	Students will become aware of the major pricing strategies and their role, in order to be competitive and to achieve revenue.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Read: Chapter 15 "Inventory Pricing"

<b>Lesson 11</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Different types of fashion retail advertising: media and their importance, print vs. broadcast, special events, and cooperative advertising.
<b>Objectives</b>	Students evaluate different types of promotion channels and techniques, and familiarize with different show formats available to promote a successful retail store or network.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Read: Chapter 16 "The Importance of Advertising and Promotion". Assignment on the comparison among different existing store promotional strategies will be provided in class by the instructor.

<b>Lesson 12</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	The impact of electronic devices on retail, and the rise of Social Media. Social media vs email power.
<b>Objectives</b>	Students are stimulated to evaluate the impact of electronic devices on the success of a retail environment, and which are the best channels to succeed.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Read: Chapter 17 "Communicating to Customers through Electronic Media". Assignment will be provided in class by the instructor.

<b>Lesson 13</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Personal selling. In-store and off-store services. Emergence of Experience

	Shopping. Strategic planning in fashion retailing.
<b>Objectives</b>	Students will learn to evaluate the role of a good sales associate according to each store, as an intermediary of the brand core values between the buyer and the final client. Students will be guided through a list of operations that are considered necessary in order to perform personal selling.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Read: Chapter 18 “Servicing the Fashion Shopper”. Assignment will be provided in class by the instructor.

<b>Lesson 14</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Review of the material covered in class, lectures, handouts, online references, research, case study, book extracts, etc. distributed throughout the semester. Conclusions and review – preparation for the final exam.
<b>Objectives</b>	Gain and assess your well-rounded perspective on fashion retail.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Review the course material in order to be prepared for the final exam. Read appendix “Careers in Fashion Retailing”.

<b>Lesson 15</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	FINAL EXAM