

Format revised 2025  
Syllabus reviewed in 2025

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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 interaction with the local community.

Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, integrate relevant academic sources, may include multimedia references, propose creative problem-solving, and other appropriate forms of delivery as deemed appropriate to the course's purpose.

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 course participation and completion. Where applicable additional materials may 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.

## **LIBRARY**

Course participants may access the campus library. Please consult the library site for resources such as collections, borrowing, scanning and wifi connection, and research: <https://www.auf-florence.org/Library/the-library/>

## **6. COURSE MATERIALS**

No additional course materials are necessary.

## **7. 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. If this course requires a fee, the exact amount is communicated prior to enrollment.

## **8. GRADING AND EVALUATION & ATTENDANCE**

10% Attendance

10% Participation

20% Assignments

20% Midterm Assessment

20% Final Exam

20% Paper/Project

The above grade breakdown percentages reflect the grading scale standards in the "Grading and Evaluation System" section of the catalog.

## Attendance

Class participation is mandatory. Based on the hours defined in the Academic Catalog's attendance policy, students may miss up to 2 class encounters delivered as lecture hours. A third absence constitutes a course failure.

Please note that absence hours may vary according to the learning methodology, as per the academic catalog policy on credit hours: [https://catalog.auf-florence.org/standard\\_regulation](https://catalog.auf-florence.org/standard_regulation)

## 9. EXAMS / PROJECTS / ASSIGNMENTS

**Midterm Assessment:** The midterm assessment accounts for 20% of the final course grade. It consists of an online submission due on Lesson 6. The instructor will provide specific information on the content and format at due time.

**Final Exam:** The final exam accounts for 20% of the final course grade. 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

**Final Project:** The final 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.

**Assignments:** This course requires at least 3 assignments as per the course outline in the syllabus.

Further details are provided in the course portal.

## 10. COURSE OUTLINE

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 #1 assigned, due by next class meet.

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.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Chapter 4 “The fashion consumer”.

<b>Lesson 3</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	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. 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 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. 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 5 “Retail Research directions in today’s retail environment” Chapter 6 “Ethical practices and social responsibility by retailers”. 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 #2 assigned, due by next class meet.

<b>Lesson 4</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. FINAL PROJECT OVERVIEW

<b>Lesson 5</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”. MIDTERM ASSESSMENT ASSIGNED, due prior to next class meet.

<b>Lesson 6</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".

<b>Lesson 7</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" Assignment #3 assigned, due by next lesson.

<b>Lesson 8</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".

<b>Lesson 9</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". FINAL PROJECT DUE

<b>Lesson 10</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. 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>	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. 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 11 Final Exam</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	FINAL EXAM