



Format Revised 2020
Syllabus created in 2022

Florence University of the Arts (FUA) is an academic institution for study abroad in Florence, Italy. FUA collaborates with The American University of Florence (AUF), an international university offering US-style undergraduate and graduate degrees, in a cooperation to offer study abroad programs with a diverse breadth and depth of academic curriculum.

FUA study abroad programs may include AUF offerings, which are US-aligned in terms of higher education standards as per the university's institutional structure. Common courses offered by FUA and AUF have been jointly selected by both institutions as eligible for mutual recognition and delivery. As such, equal academic standards, credibility, and outcomes are vetted by the Academic Offices of the institutions for all courses and syllabi offered in the study abroad program.

DEPARTMENT OF FASHION COMMUNICATION AND PUBLISHING

COURSE TITLE: FASHION GOES VIRAL: THE ART OF INFLUENCING

COURSE CODE: FTFCFGV320

3 semester credits

1. DESCRIPTION

The object of this course is the encounter between fashion – one of the oldest but ever-changing mode of communication – and contemporary tools for influencing other people's decisions – digital social networks. The two are strictly intertwined: fashion needs social media influencers as much as social media influencers need fashion. Digital media has completely reconfigured the fashion world: bloggers have usurped famous magazine editors at fashion shows, the retail industry is shifting to online shopping, platforms such as Instagram create new forms of social status and power. Yet, while digital media creates new jobs, it brings forth also unexpected negative consequences and issues. This course examines how interconnected fashion and influencers are, and guides students to master the potential of social networks regarding the fashion world. Topics will range from an overview of the evolution of fashion trends to the digital tools needed to succeed as a social media influencer. Students will be able to understand the evolution of fashion, its intrinsic relation with the notion of influence, as well as new trends of digital marketing through social networks. To provide students with a hands-on approach, there will be visits to local museums and/or shops as well as an encounter with a Florentine-based influencer. This course encourages independent explorations in Florence, including those for research and content collection for course projects (i.e. *Blending Magazine* assignment). Students will also analyze high-impact Case Studies related to the course topic. Successful completion of the course requires regular visits and interaction with the FLY CEMI: students will interact with an Instagram Fashion Account for applying concepts related to merchandising and promotion.

2. OBJECTIVES

In this course students will:

- develop a unique understanding of both fashion industry and digital media, as well as how deeply interlinked they are today;
- learn how to use social networks such as Instagram as tools to create influence in the fashion industry;
- study how fashion and digital media create community, culture, identity, and new forms of work;
- learn about the historical connections between fashion and technology;
- learn about the ethical and legal issues in both fashion and digital media.

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.

5. TEXT BOOKS – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

TEXT BOOKS:

- Bendoni, W. K., “*Social Media for Fashion Marketing: Storytelling in a Digital World*,” Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2017.
- Bradford, J., “*Fashion Journalism*,” Routledge, 2019.

Textbooks may also be available for purchase online or in e-book format. Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

FURTHER READINGS

Keller, E., Berry, J., “*The Influentials*,” The Free Press/Simon & Schuster, 2003.

Kartajaya, H., Kotler, P., Setiawan, I., “*Marketing 4.0. Moving from Traditional to Digital*,” Wiley, 2016.

www.vogue.com

www.businessoffashion.com

www.theblondesalad.com

www.businessoffashion.com

www.us.fashionnetwork.com

www.business.instagram.com/getting-started

www.tustyle.it

www.gucci.com

LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE

The FUA-AUF library is located in Corso Tintori 21. Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times. 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/

BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE

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

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

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

30% Participation and Assignments

20% Midterm Exam

20% Final Exam

20% Final 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 FUA academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

On the second absence the attendance and participation grade will be impacted. Please note that missing certain field learning activities may count for more than one absence.

On the third absence the instructor may lower the final grade by one letter grade. (Example: Final grade average of 93% or A will become a B).

The fourth absence constitutes automatic failure of the course. Students with excessive absences will be asked to withdraw with a W (if before the deadline) or leave the course with a WF.

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 always the student's responsibility to know how many absences he or she has in a course. 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 addendum. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.**

Format: the exam is divided into three sections:

- Part I: 10 Multiple choice questions. Each correct answer is worth 2 points, for a total of 20 points.
- Part II: 10 short-answer questions. Each correct and complete answer (concise explanations, main ideas, key words, names, etc.) is worth 5 points, for a total 50 points.
- Part III: two essay questions; each correct and complete answer is worth 15 points (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 site.

Material for research will be available in the FUA-AUF Library in Corso Tintori 21.

The **Final Exam** accounts for 20% of the final course grade. For exam time and date consult the course addendum. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.** Format: the exam is divided into three sections:

- Part I: 10 Multiple choice questions. Each correct answer is worth 2 points, for a total of 20 points.
- Part II: 10 short-answer questions. Each correct and complete answer (concise explanations, main ideas, key words, names, etc.) is worth 5 points, for a total 50 points.
- Part III: two essay questions; each correct and complete answer is worth 15 points (based on content, vocabulary, detail, etc.) for a total of 30 points.

The Final Exam is cumulative.

12. LESSONS

Lesson 1 INTRODUCTION	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Introduction to the course: syllabus, objectives, course material, assignments, and grades.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce students to the complex and ever-changing world of fashion influencing through social networks and digital media; • Help students set up new Instagram profiles; • Encourage students to stroll through Florence for their article assignment and Instagram posts/stories; • Provide the first influencer Case Study example by analyzing Chiara Ferragni's success as a "digital entrepreneur."
Readings	<p>Read: https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2016/nov/29/chiara-ferragni-blogger-the-blonde-salad-social-media-style-posts-multi-million-pound-business</p> <p>Read: https://fashinnovation.nyc/fashion-influencers/</p> <p>Read: https://www.ukessays.com/essays/cultural-studies/introduction-to-fashion-design-objectives-cultural-studies-essay.php</p> <p>Optional reading: https://www.newyorker.com/humor/daily-shouts/how-to-be-an-amazing-influencer-like-me</p>
In-class Assignments	Students introduce themselves to the class; students create Instagram account for their Final Project; sign-up presentation sheet on Fashion Influencer Case Study.
Home Assignments	This afternoon: students browse FLY Store and create posts on items (dresses and accessories) that catch their attention – NOT from Pucci's collection. Remember to link FLY's social profiles.

Lesson 2 WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE TALK ABOUT FASHION?	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Definition of the notion of fashion, with an historical overview; Costumes and accessories throughout history; The triangular desire behind fashion; Influencers of the past Case Study.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a general overview of fashion and its historical evolution, with a particular focus on Palazzo Pitti's costumes; • Introduce students to the most recent trends in fashion; • Familiarize students with key terms in the fashion industry; • Prepare students for the visit to the Museum of Costume and Fashion at Palazzo Pitti.
Readings	<p>Read: "Fashion Journalism," chs. 1, 3, 4.</p> <p>Read: https://lukeburgis.com/mimetic-desire/</p> <p>Browse: https://www.uffizi.it/en/pitti-palace/costume-and-fashion-museum</p>

Home Assignment	In light of our visit to the Museum of Costume and Fashion at Palazzo Pitti, each student must browse the museum website and choose 2 dresses/accessories. During the visit, they will take pictures of them and then describe and promote on their Instagram Fashion Account.
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Lesson 3 IS FASHION AN ART?	
Meet	Meeting point on campus prior to course visit
Lecture	Visit to Museum of Costume and Fashion at Palazzo Pitti
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow students to experience the evolution of fashion; Engage students in the theoretical discussing whether fashion should be regarded as an art form or a mere economic business; Introduce student to the actual place where fashion catwalks take place in Florence.
Readings	Read: https://e-tarjome.com/storage/btn_uploaded/2020-08-19/1597833731_10917-etaljome%20English.pdf Browse: https://www.uffizi.it/en/pitti-palace/costume-and-fashion-museum
Home Assignment	This afternoon: 2 Posts about 2 dresses/accessories shown at Palazzo Pitti on Instagram Fashion Account.

Lesson 4 WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WRITE ABOUT FASHION TODAY?	
Meet	In class
Lecture	The discipline of fashion journalism and its technological evolution; How to read fashion and talk about it; The readership of fashion journalism.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide students with the tools needed to write about fashion; Practice fashion writing and journalism from examples provided in class; Introduce students to the digital revolution in fashion.
Readings	Read: "Fashion Journalism," chs. 6, 8, 9. Read: "Social Media," ch. 1. Optional reading: "Fashion Journalism," ch. 14. Optional reading: https://www.vogue.com/article/how-tiktok-changed-fashion-this-year
In-class Assignments	10-minute presentations on Fashion Influencer Case Study

Lesson 5 WHY DOES FASHION NEED DIGITAL INFLUENCERS?	
Meet	In class
Lecture	The interrelation between fashion and social networks influencers; How digital media influencing changed fashion; How social networks influencers need fashion.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the intrinsic connection between fashion and social networks influencers; Get a better picture of the economic forces at play in fashion in today's digital society; Familiarize students with the idea of the ever-connected consumer.
Readings	Read: "Social Media," chs. 2, 3. Read: https://digitalmarketingmagazine.co.uk/social-media-marketing/how-social-media-and-its-influencers-are-driving-fashion/4871 Optional reading: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348284065_The_role_of_Instagram_influencers_as_a_source_of_fashion_information

In-class Assignments	10-minute presentations on Fashion Influencer Case Study
Home Assignments	This afternoon: students browse FLY Store and create posts on items (dresses and accessories) that catch their attention – NOT from Pucci’s collection. Remember to link FLY’s social profiles.

Lesson 6 WHO IS AN INFLUENCER?	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Definition of influencer; Influencers and the study of personality; Key factors in identifying an influencer.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce students to the role of social network influencer; Understand the difference between being famous and being influential; Translate the theoretical knowledge learnt in the readings to the fashion world.
Readings	<p><u>Read:</u> “<i>Fashion Journalism</i>,” ch. 12.</p> <p><u>Read:</u> https://www.researchgate.net/publication/251582746 Who are the social media influencers A study of public perceptions of personality</p> <p><u>Read:</u> https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02650487.2019.1634898</p> <p><u>Optional reading:</u> https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/business/story/2021-08-06/what-is-a-social-media-influencer-online-brand-guide</p>
In-class Assignments	10-minute presentations on Fashion Influencer Case Study

Lesson 7	
Meet	In class
Lecture	MIDTERM EXAM

Lesson 8	
Meet	ACADEMIC BREAK

Lesson 9 THE BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCE BEHIND FASHION INFLUENCING	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Interview with Florentine-based fashion influencer (i.e. Elisa Zanetti (https://www.instagram.com/elisazanetti/?hl=en)). Review of the triangular desire; How to influence other people’s decisions; Influencers as leaders.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow students to meet and interview a fashion influencer; Introduce students to the behavioral science behind fashion influencing; Make students aware of the existing mechanism behind fashion digital media marketing;
Readings	<p><u>Read:</u> https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0148296318303187</p> <p><u>Read:</u> https://behavioralscientist.org/invisible-influence-how-other-people-think-for-you-and-why-thats-ok/</p> <p><u>Optional reading:</u> https://hbr.org/2020/08/strengthen-your-ability-to-influence-people</p>
In-class Assignments	All students must prepare at least 2 questions on any topic/issue regarding fashion influencing through social networks for our guest interview.

Home Assignment	All students submit an article (1 page single-spaced) for <i>Blending Magazine</i> on their window shopping in Florence: Where did you go? What did you notice? What caught your attention? How to dress like a local in Italy?
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Lesson 10 BY THE NUMBERS: UNDERSTANDING AN INFLUENCER PROFILE	
Meet	In class
Lecture	The tools needed to read an influencer profile; How to read an influencer profile from a company's point of view; The phenomenon of fake popularity.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to understand what to look for in a social network influencer profile; • Understand the difference between likes and interactions; • Gain familiarity with all key terms in digital media marketing.
Readings	<u>Read:</u> “ <i>Social Media</i> ,” ch. 6. <u>Read:</u> https://fashionbrain-project.eu/fashion-influencers-industry-perspectives/#:~:text=Brands%20and%20retailers%20have%20adopted,more%20relevant%20than%20paid%20advertisement .
In-class Assignments	10-minute presentations on Fashion Influencer Case Study

Lesson 11 HOW AND WHEN DOES DIGITAL CONTENT BECOME VIRAL?	
Meet	In class
Lecture	The notion of viral in today's digital society; The path to success in social network influencing; Case Study: Emilio Pucci, from Florence to the World.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the importance of going viral from an economic standpoint; • Identify key factors needed to make content go viral; • Recognize the relevance of Pucci brand for Florence and the world.
Readings	<u>Read:</u> “ <i>Social Media</i> ,” ch. 4. <u>Read:</u> https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0008125620958166 <u>Browse:</u> https://emiliopucciheritage.com/ ; https://www.emiliopucci.com/ <u>Optional reading:</u> https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/21582440211056609
In-class Assignments	10-minute presentations on Fashion Influencer Case Study
Home Assignments	This afternoon: students focus on Palazzo Pucci and write one Post and 5 Stories Highlights on their Instagram Fashion Account (the heritage site in the above links is an important reference). In their post, students should clearly show Pucci's influence on Florence and worldwide. Remember to link Pucci's websites and social profiles.

Lesson 12 DO WE STILL NEED ACTUAL SHOPS AND PRINTED MAGAZINES?	
Meet	In class
Lecture	New trends in social network fashion marketing; The ever-changing nature of digital media; Different marketing strategies through the years, with a particular focus on Gucci.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarize students with the attempt to re-invent the role of fashion shops; • Invite students to evaluate both the physical concept store as well as its digital promotion;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote critical thinking about the future of traditional fashion institutions; • Analyze Gucci's marketing strategies through the years; • Prepare students to the following visit to Gucci Garden and its “concept store.”
Readings	<p>Read: “Social Media,” ch. 5.</p> <p>Read: https://www.vogue.com/article/will-influencers-replace-retailers-2020s</p> <p>Read: https://thestrategystory.com/2021/08/11/gucci-marketing-strategy/</p> <p>Browse: https://guccigarden.gucci.com/#/en/</p> <p>Optional reading: https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/06/shops-arent-for-shopping-anymore/563054/</p>
In-class Assignments	10-minute presentations on Fashion Influencer Case Study
Home Assignments	This afternoon: students visit FLY Store and promote Pucci - Le Formiche vintage collection on Instagram by creating one Post. Remember to link Pucci's and FLY's websites and social profiles.

Lesson 13 WITHIN AND BEYOND TRADITION: THE CASE OF GUCCI GARDEN	
Meet	Meeting point on campus prior to course visit
Lecture	Visti to Gucci Garden
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage students in a discussion of what's to come in the fashion influencing industry; • Make students aware of current trends; • Promote development and exchange of new ideas among students with regard to fashion influencing.
Readings	<p>Read: https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/celebrity-influencer-endorsements-fashion-consumers-b1999000.html</p> <p>Read: https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2019/mar/31/squaring-up-how-instagram-fashion-is-changing-the-way-we-shop</p> <p>Optional reading: https://www.thevintagebar.com/the-archive/gucci-x-hip-hop</p>
In-class Assignments	During our visit, students will take pictures of what catches their attention. This afternoon: students will make one Post and 5 Stories Highlights of Gucci Garden on their Instagram Fashion Account.

Lesson 14 THE DARK SIDE OF FASHION INFLUENCING & FUTURE SCENARIOS	
Meet	In class
Lecture	New trends in social network fashion marketing; From sustainability to eating disorders: the main issues affecting digital media and social networks influencing; The role of fashion influencers with regard to such issues; The hidden and dark side of fashion influencing.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage students in a discussion of what's to come in the fashion influencing industry; • Provide students with the greater picture on social networks and the fashion industry; • Promote a genuine and informed exchange of ideas; • Presentations of students' Instagram Fashion Profiles to the class (see below).
Readings	<p>Read: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00913367.2021.1980471</p> <p>Read: https://www.voguebusiness.com/technology/what-influencer-marketing-looks-like-in-the-metaverse</p>

	<p>Read: https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/08/style/fashion-influencers-sustainability.html</p> <p>Optional reading: https://www.apa.org/members/content/social-media-research</p>
In-class Assignments	<p>Presentation of Final Project – students' Instagram Fashion Profiles on FLY Store merchandising to the class (at least 10 Posts on FLY items throughout the course). What products, what kind of influencing, what sort of engagement, outcomes? All students must bring their laptops and cell-phones.</p>

Lesson 15	
Meet	In class
Lecture	FINAL EXAM