

# Fashion Design and Merchandising

---

**Department Head: Dr. Michael Newman**

**Graduate Coordinator: Dr. Catherine Black**

118 Lloyd-Ricks Watson Building

Box 9745

Mississippi State, MS 39762

Telephone: 662-325-2950

Email: cblack@humansci.msstate.edu

The School of Human Sciences offers the Master of Science degree in Fashion Design and Merchandising (FDM) with two concentrations: (1) Design & Product Development and (2) Merchandising. FDM is based on an interdisciplinary approach to understand design, product development, fashion businesses, consumer behavior, and related industries in the context of fashion culture in society. It encompasses specialty areas in fashion design, product development, consumer behavior, textiles, historic costume, merchandising, and international trade. Graduates will become future leaders in the global fashion complex--textile, apparel, and retail industries--and promote the economic development of industry sectors that increase the quality of life for people around the world. Graduates will also advance research and policy in areas related to the fashion complex to broaden the effects of academic application of research in practice, as well as governmental actions on the fashion complex. This degree is designed to provide students with an in-depth understanding of the fashion and retail industry, consumer behavior, product development, business principles, and technology applications. Students select a concentration in one of two areas: Design and Product Development or Merchandising.

## Admission Requirements

An individual must have a valid admission status in the Office of the Graduate School to secure enrollment. Admission to graduate study is limited to the pursuit of requirements for the degree and the field of study as specified in the student's application and statement of purpose. Qualified applications for the FDM graduate program are expected to have interests and goals that are consistent with the department's faculty expertise and interests, as well as course offerings. Once all application materials have been submitted, applicants should contact the FDM graduate coordinator at 662-325-2950 to schedule an interview with members of the FDM graduate faculty. To accommodate international applicants, interviews can be conducted using distance technology. Admission decisions are based on a holistic consideration of the applicant's credentials.

For international, non-native speakers of English, a TOEFL score indicative of ability to successfully complete graduate work is required. See English Language Test Score Requirements in the MSU *Graduate Catalog* for more information.

## Master's Admission Requirements

- Meet all MSU Graduate School requirements for admission
- Have earned a baccalaureate degree in FDM or a related field
- Submit Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores competitive with other applicants
- Submit three letters of recommendation, with at least two of the letters coming from individuals familiar with the applicant's academic work
- Submit a sole-authored writing sample and/or creative portfolio
- Submit a personal statement (500-1,000 words) describing the applicant's purpose for undertaking graduate study, professional plans, career goals, and detailed research interests

For those applicants not possessing a B.S. in Fashion Design and merchandising, admission will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If accepted, those students will be required to complete leveling courses from the FDM undergraduate core curriculum.

Design and Product Development:

- FDM 1533 Basic Apparel Construction
- FDM 2524 Textiles for Apparel
- FDM 2593 Product Development II
- FDM 4343 Patternmaking and Design

Merchandising:

- FDM 2524 Textiles for Apparel
- FDM 4533 Merchandise Planning and Buying

## Instructions for Writing Sample/Creative Portfolio

Applicants to the master's program are asked to submit a sole-authored writing sample in English or creative digital portfolio so that the admission's committee may assess the applicant's ability as a writing/designer, potential for success in the graduate program, and ability to do research and present it in written/visual form. The minimum length of the writing sample is five (5) pages, but the sample should not exceed 25 pages. The writing sample

should be presented in APA style (title page, headers, references, etc.). The digital portfolio should be a minimum of 10 pages and the file size should not exceed 2 GB showcasing work completed by the individual in the past five years. Examples of possible writing samples include, but are not limited to, papers from past courses, journal articles, or some written work product, such as a manual or technical report. Examples of possible creative work completed include, but are not limited to, original creative apparel designs, concept/trend boards, fashion illustrations and/or technical sketches. The writing sample or creative digital portfolio should be e-mailed as an attachment to mhunt@grad.msstate.edu.

## Coursework

The master's degree in FDM requires 31-32 hours of coursework and has a thesis and a non-thesis option. A specialization will require 9 hours of coursework completed in one of the areas at the master's level.

## Financing Your Graduate Education

Although the School of Human Sciences does have a limited number of assistantship opportunities, students are responsible for making their own arrangements for financing their graduate studies. For information about financial aid options and/or to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), visit <http://www.sfa.msstate.edu>.

## Careers

A professional with a M.S. degree in Fashion Design and Merchandising is prepared for a career as a merchandiser, buyer, trend forecaster, sales/e-commerce representative, retail manager, fashion entrepreneur, fashion designer, product developer, technical designer, stylist, sourcing agent, and many other options within the global fashion industry. Students learn real-world application through lab experiences in settings that align with the students' career goals.

The Design and Product Development concentration explores the creative and product development aspects of the fashion and retail industry from trend innovation and concept to an end-use product and beyond. Coursework prepares students to conduct in-depth research and analysis in a variety of fields such as creative design, technical design, design processes, and related creative industries.

The Merchandising concentration explores the business and product development aspects of the fashion and retail industry from finalized design to the end use by consumers and beyond. Coursework prepares students to conduct in-depth research and analysis in a variety of fields such as merchandising, buying, international trade, fashion business, and retail operations.

## Master of Science in Fashion Design and Merchandising with a concentration in Design and Product Development - Thesis Option

### Required Courses

AELC 8803	Applying Research Methods to Agricultural and Extension Education	3
EPY 6214	Educational and Psychological Statistics	4
HDFS 6424	Teaching Methods in Agricultural and Human Sciences	3-4
or AELC 8403	Directing Learning Experience in Agricultural and Extension Education	
HS 6513	Social-Psychological Aspects of Clothing <sup>1</sup>	3
HS 8813	Seminar in Human Development and Family Studies	3
FDM 8000	Thesis Research/ Thesis in Fashion Design and Merchandising	6
Design and Product Development Concentration		
FDM 6343	Pattern Making and Design	3
FDM 6593	Creative Design Techniques	3
FDM 6733	Computer-Aided Design for Fashion	3
Total Hours		31-32

<sup>1</sup> Or Restricted Elective (3) if HS 6513 taken at the undergraduate level, with approval of major professor and graduate committee. Restricted Electives may include 6000-8000 level graduate courses in programs related to the individual student's course of study. Examples may include the College of Business or Arts & Sciences. The major professor will provide direction for options, with approval from the student's graduate committee. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain permission from respective departments and instructors.

## Master of Science in Fashion Design and Merchandising with a concentration in Design and Product Development - Non-Thesis Option

### Required Courses

AELC 8803	Applying Research Methods to Agricultural and Extension Education	3
EPY 6214	Educational and Psychological Statistics	4
HDFS 6424	Teaching Methods in Agricultural and Human Sciences	3-4

or AELC 8403	Directing Learning Experience in Agricultural and Extension Education	
HS 6513	Social-Psychological Aspects of Clothing <sup>1</sup>	3
HS 8813	Seminar in Human Development and Family Studies	3
FDM 7000	Directed Individual Study in FDM	6
Design and Product Development Concentration Courses <sup>2</sup>		9
FDM 6343	Pattern Making and Design	
FDM 6593	Creative Design Techniques	
FDM 6733	Computer-Aided Design for Fashion	
Total Hours		31-32

<sup>1</sup> Or Restricted Electives (9) if courses were taken at undergraduate level.

<sup>2</sup> Restricted Electives may include 6000-8000 level graduate courses in programs related to the individual's student's course of study. Examples may include the College of Business or Arts & Sciences. The major professor will provide direction for options, with approval from the student's graduate committee. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain permission from respective departments and instructors.

## Master of Science in Fashion Design and Merchandising with a concentration in Merchandising - Thesis Option

### Required Courses

AELC 8803	Applying Research Methods to Agricultural and Extension Education	3
EPY 6214	Educational and Psychological Statistics	4
HDFS 6424	Teaching Methods in Agricultural and Human Sciences	3-4
or AELC 8403	Directing Learning Experience in Agricultural and Extension Education	
HS 6513	Social-Psychological Aspects of Clothing <sup>1</sup>	3
HS 8813	Seminar in Human Development and Family Studies	3
FDM 8000	Thesis Research/ Thesis in Fashion Design and Merchandising	6
Merchandising Concentration		9
Restricted Electives <sup>2</sup>		
Total Hours		31-32

<sup>1</sup> Or Restricted Electives (3) if above course taken at undergraduate level.

<sup>2</sup> Restricted Electives may include 6000-8000 level graduate courses in programs related to the individual student's course of study. Examples may include the College of Business or Arts & Sciences. The major professor will provide direction for options, with approval from the student's graduate committee. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain permission from respective departments and instructors.

## Master of Science in Fashion Design and Merchandising with a concentration in Merchandising - Non-Thesis Option

### Course List

#### Required Courses

AELC 8803	Applying Research Methods to Agricultural and Extension Education	3
EPY 6214	Educational and Psychological Statistics	4
HDFS 6424	Teaching Methods in Agricultural and Human Sciences	3-4
or AELC 8403	Directing Learning Experience in Agricultural and Extension Education	
HS 6513	Social-Psychological Aspects of Clothing	3
HS 8813	Seminar in Human Development and Family Studies	3
FDM 7000	Directed Individual Study in FDM	6
Merchandising Concentration <sup>2</sup>		9
FDM 6343	Pattern Making and Design	
FDM 6593	Creative Design Techniques	
FDM 6733	Computer-Aided Design for Fashion	

Total Hours 31-32

4 *Fashion Design and Merchandising*

1 Or Restricted Electives (3) is above course taken at undergraduate level.

2 Restricted Electives may include 6000-8000 level graduate courses in programs related to the individual student's course of study. Examples may include the College of Business or Arts & Sciences. The major professor will provide direction for options, with approval from the student's graduate committee. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain permission from respective departments and instructors.