



## STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT REPORT

**PROGRAM:** Fashion Design

**SUBMITTED BY:** Janice Ellinwood

**DATE:** September 30, 2016

**BRIEFLY DESCRIBE WHERE AND HOW ARE DATA AND DOCUMENTS USED TO GENERATE THIS REPORT BEING STORED:**

**PAPER DOCUMENTS THAT RESULT FROM ASSESSMENTS ARE HOUSED IN THE OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR, AND THE ANALYSIS DERIVED FROM THEM ARE SENT ELECTRONICALLY TO FULL-TIME FACULTY IN THE DEPARTMENT.**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Program description from the Course Catalog:** Please copy and paste the current year's catalog description of this program. This is generally a one-two paragraph description immediately following the name of the program. Please be sure to include the listing of program outcomes as printed.

**List all of the program's learning outcomes:** (regardless of whether or not they are being assessed this year)

Learning Outcome	Year of Last Assessment	Assessed This Year	Year of Next Planned Assessment
<i>Create garments (worthy of acceptance to Marymount's prestigious fashion show) that are of appropriate quality, function and aesthetics.</i>	2012-13		2016-17
<i>Design an aesthetically pleasing and functional line of apparel that is appropriate for a target market and visually expressed in a portfolio for entry into the industry.</i>	2014-15	2015-16	2017-18
<i>Make technical drawings of apparel (flats and specs), fashion illustrations, and fashion presentations.</i>	2014-15	2015-16	2017-18
<i>Conduct design research and apply findings to design problems.</i>	2014-15		2016-17

**Describe how the program's outcomes support Marymount's mission, strategic plan, and relevant school plan:**

**The outcomes directly relate to the effective career preparation of the fashion design students as well as the intellectual experience of each student. There is an emphasis on the aesthetics of the student work, whether the garments themselves, the lines they are a part of, or the two-dimensional planning for them, such as technical drawings, fashion illustrations or fashion presentations. The fashion**



design program has a reputation for providing its students with outstanding professional development, both in the form of the fashion show, to which students submit their designs and senior lines for jurying, and ultimately, scrutiny by members of industry. A noted designer, the recipient of Marymount's Designer of the Year award, reviews the seniors' portfolios and provides feedback before they enter the field. In addition, the program promotes inquiry-based learning through student-faculty collaboration. Reflecting the diverse population of Marymount University at large, fashion design students often represent a wealth of backgrounds, which brings a range of global perspectives to the study of the field. In addition, through their research and travel with the CGE, they become aware of global trends in fashion, most specifically in the European countries, but often with exposure elsewhere, due to interaction with local embassies.

Provide a brief description of the assessment process used including strengths, challenges and planned improvements and provide evidence of the existence of a culture of continuous improvement based on assessment:

One assessment measure, the portfolio evaluation by faculty, which occurs at the conclusion of the academic program, is working reliably. Another assessment, the professional designer's (MU Designer of the Year) oral evaluation of the senior portfolios is limited to the particular designer and his/her priorities and experience. This continues to be an exemplary opportunity for the seniors, as it works almost like a master class. The Senior Focus Group provides good open-ended feedback, as they are asked to provide feedback specifically related to the outcomes of the program. The internship evaluations also provide valuable feedback, but once in a while, the Center for Career Services sends the wrong program evaluation. While all of these occur at the senior level, the faculty evaluations of fashion show garments include those entered and accepted to the show from sophomores, juniors and seniors. However, this year, with the bulk of program work resting on only three faculty members, including the abundance of work on Portfolio in Motion, this year including the reception preceding it, Fashion Club, and the Field Study Tour in Las Vegas, they were too overwhelmed to execute this assessment—Involving close scrutiny of over 100 garments. It is likely that this assessment, as a result, should be replaced. However, we compensated somewhat by having the Designer of the Year respond to actual garments in the senior lines, in addition to their portfolios, although that too provided evaluation at the end of senior year. The program instituted inquiry-based learning in 2010-11. Those ventures include a project in children's apparel in AA265 Fashion Illustration I (for sophomores), a project in knitwear in AA385 Apparel Design II (for juniors), and one in AA407 Product Development II (for seniors). Originally, the department obtained a grant, funded by Cotton Inc., where the students, along with the faculty member, developed appropriate designs in tennis apparel for women age 55 and over. Two years ago, they designed junior-sized golf apparel, again under a grant from Cotton Inc. In the past year, the focus was on "mother/daughter" coordinated ensembles.

As a result of our 2012-13 Assessment Report and the Program Review in 2013-14, the faculty grew determined to improve student learning in the areas recorded the weakest by the assessment process. An end-of-junior-year assessment took place in May 2015, measuring student ability in making appropriate fabric choices for end products, selecting the appropriate fabric weights for end products, implementing function in a design, figure drawing, rendering fabrics, choosing color(s), implementing aesthetic design decisions, flat drawing and specs. This assessment was conducted across AA365 Fashion Illustration II and AA415 Apparel Design III by the faculty in those courses. The purpose of the assessment is to tailor teaching in the senior year to the areas of weakness indicated in the assessment and appeared to have had a positive effect on this year's seniors.



While it has always been a significant challenge to follow up on the department faculty and the Director of the Center for Career Services, who maintain a role in the process, whether conducting in-class assessments or ones outside the classroom, such as the evaluation of fashion show garments or the forwarding of the internship evaluations, a more critical problem has emerged. The department is experiencing a profound turnover of faculty, going from 6 full-time positions (5 tenure track and 1 term) in 2014-15 to 4 (3 tenure track and 1 term) in 2015-16. The elimination of one of the tenure track faculty also occurred at the end of the 2015-16 academic year. However, we were able to replace that tenure track position, keeping the program steady with three tenure track positions and one term position. Bear in mind that three of the four faculty are also responsible for the implementation and assessments of the fashion merchandising program. Because Washington DC is not an apparel producing center, it is not possible to use adjunct professors to staff fashion design courses.

Far less of an issue, It is also a challenge for the Department Chair to organize all of the data and retrieve it for the implementation of this report. Previous faculty always felt overwhelmed by the amount of assessments that are taken for both this program and the one in Fashion Merchandising. Most of these coincide with the preparation and implementation of the annual fashion show, which is a project that is in addition to their workload responsibilities, department and community service and scholarship.

Describe how the program implemented its planned improvements from last year:

This was a transition year for the implementation of the curriculum changes recommended from the Program Review. For instance, AA260 Sample Room Techniques I and AA307 Product Development I ran for the first time, although so did AA370 Tailored Garment Structures, even though it was planned for deletion, for the students whose catalogue listed it as a requirement. Many of the others will take place over the next few years, since they affect the upper level of the curriculum, such as the decrease of internship credits from 6 to 3. The junior level assessment continued. Senior portfolios required complete spec packs for original garments, an effort to bring up the quality of technical drawing and demonstrating competencies sought in the field. Specs were also assigned again in AA350 Apparel Design I, AA385 Apparel Design II, AA415 Apparel Design III, AA418 Advanced Problems in Fashion Design, and of course, AA 423 Senior Fashion Design Portfolio. Although the senior exit interview used questions related to the outcomes, and not the specific evaluative measures for the senior portfolio, responses included worthwhile related data.

We instituted bus trips to G Street Fabrics in Rockville, one per semester, to ease our students' ability to obtain supplies, and they are continuing.

We continually hope to acquire industry-dedicated software, and the faculty training for it, through a grant, when the university approves the cost of one workstation. We hope to obtain task lighting in the sewing studios and new tables and chairs, where needed. We also hope to cultivate partnerships with industry. We expect to continue our great programs with the Center for Global Education, our fashion show, Portfolio in Motion, and the Designer of the Year Award.



**In addition, the result of faculty discussion about feedback obtained from the 2015 Student Focus Group regarding the outcome that is not assessed in last year's report , “Create garments (worthy of acceptance to Marymount's prestigious fashion show) that are of appropriate quality, function and aesthetics.” Is the development of slopers in AA385 Apparel Design II and some pattern making was taught in AA260 Sample Room Techniques II and AA370 Tailored Garment Structures. The teaching of pants (women's, but with the option of men's) also began in AA260 Sample Room Techniques II.**

**Provide a response to last year's University Assessment Committee review of the program's learning assessment report:**

A connection between learning in the fashion design program is easily made, as described above, to the global perspective described in the University's mission, but it continues to be difficult to relate it to Marymount's Catholic heritage.

The previous junior level assessment indicates improvement in the senior level regarding many of the previous weaknesses, especially flats and specs, fabric weights and functional design.

It is difficult to come up with assessments that do not coincide with Portfolio in Motion, since students require much of the academic year to create the garments and portfolios that are evaluated for learning. The exceptions are assessments for inquiry learning, which all take place in Fall semester courses—AA265 Fashion Illustration I, AA385 Apparel Design II, and AA407 Product Development II.

The evaluation instrument used for inquiry was adjusted to relate to the goals of the liberal arts core learning, including information literacy, communication, and critical thinking.

The Department Chair continues to implement the Senior Exit Interview, which occurs during exam week—after all of the senior year courses and Portfolio in Motion.

There has not been time for the implementation of other recommendations, such as having dialogue with internship site supervisors. Although the Department believes in the value of assessment, the faculty all agree that there are too many assessments to take in our department for both the Fashion Design and Fashion Merchandising programs—enough to interfere with the purpose of the institution—teaching.

## Outcomes Assessment 2015-2016

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**Learning Outcome 2:** *Design an aesthetically pleasing and functional line of apparel that is appropriate for a target market and visually expressed in a portfolio for entry into the industry.*

### Assessment Activity

<b>Outcome Measures</b> <i>Explain how student learning will be measured and indicate whether it is direct or indirect.</i>	<b>Performance Standard</b> <i>Define and explain acceptable level of student performance.</i>	<b>Data Collection</b> <i>Discuss the data collected and student population</i>	<b>Analysis</b> <i>1) Describe the analysis process. 2) Present the findings of the analysis including the numbers participating and deemed acceptable.</i>
Direct Measure: Portfolio Evaluation by Faculty	90% of students must receive a rating of Excellent (5) or Good (4) in the categories that relate to line development and appropriateness for target market. Other options are average (3) and poor (2) and inadequate (1). The categories include: fabric choices, color harmony, fabric weights, aesthetic design sense, functional design sense and appropriateness for target market.	Two former faculty members, neither of whom taught the senior portfolio course or the senior course in which lines are produced, evaluated the portfolios. This occurred after the professional designer conducted her review. The Department Chair tabulates the ratings.	Out of 5 seniors, ratings were: Fabric Choices: 4 excellent (5), 1 poor (2) Color Harmony: 4 excellent (5), 1 good (4) Fabric Weights: 4 excellent (5), 1 poor (2) Aesthetic Design Sense: 4 excellent (5) 1 good (4) Functional Design Sense: 3 excellent (5) 2 good (4) Appropriateness for Target Market: 4 excellent (5) 1 good (4) Last year the areas of weakness were fabric choices, fabric weights and functional design. There is considerable improvement this year, but less demonstrated in functional design.
Indirect Measure: Senior Focus Group	Seniors make positive comments assessing their knowledge of line development and designing apparel appropriate for a target market.	The Department Chair meets with seniors at the end of the academic year to conduct the Senior Focus Group. She tabulates the responses.	When asked whether seniors felt they could design an aesthetically pleasing and functional line of apparel that is appropriate for a target market and visually expressed in a portfolio for entry into the industry, all agreed they fully understood how to design appropriately for a target market. However, they made the following comments: Consider starting color media for practical drawing methods earlier in the curriculum and expand the use of digital media. There may be too much overlap in AA272 Textile Design I and

			AA395 Digital Presentation for Fashion. Show different approaches to portfolio presentation. Have each student make an individual "Plan of Action" for the portfolio, holding to specific dates. Although last year's students thought they did not have adequate time to design their senior lines creatively in AA420 Advanced Problems in Fashion Design II and that the design process for the senior lines should begin prior to the spring semester, this year's seniors found it difficult to begin that early and still manage their time effectively during the Spring semester.
Direct Measure: Portfolio Evaluation by Designer	Designer comments on line development or appropriateness for target market.	The designer's comments are recorded word for word by the Department Chair during the portfolio review. Then she classifies them according to the categories measured in the portfolio evaluation by faculty.	It is very difficult to obtain a reliable assessment from a guest designer. However, the oral comments and open-ended conversation between student and designer are highly valuable. It is not beneficial to ask the designer to fill out an evaluation form. But she is nevertheless self-directed in terms of the importance placed on the categories, often as a result of personal experience. Once in a while, the designer is not always frank about shortcomings. However, that did not appear to be the case with MU's 2016 Designer of the Year. Reem Acra stated unilaterally that all of the portfolios were "better than what is out there." She commented positively on the color combinations chosen for the lines in the portfolios and the coherence of the collections (the merchandising appeal for the target markets). She was also impressed with the research conducted for the portfolios, asking her own assistant designer what she had coming for Spring 2017, after she saw one student's inspiration that came from Indian printed fabrics characteristic of the 1970s.

#### Interpretation of Results

**Extent this learning outcome has been achieved by students (Use both direct and indirect measure results):**

Although it is difficult to draw conclusions from the work of just five students, this outcome has largely been achieved to the high standard the department faculty desire. The only category indicating discussion among the faculty is *functional* design sense.

**Program strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to assessment of outcome:**

Such strong results indicate the success of the junior year assessment for the categories that relate to this outcome, except perhaps “functional” design. In addition, the senior focus group gave sound suggestions for improved learning: Start color media earlier in the curriculum; examine the extent of overlap in digital courses AA272 Textile Design I and AA395 Digital Presentation for Fashion; bring to the portfolio course an individual’s “Plan of Action,” explain different approaches for portfolios, and consider that beginning the design of the senior lines prior to Spring semester was not necessarily effective.

**Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:**

First of all, the end-of junior-year assessment should continue. Because of the current industry emphasis on technical design, the portfolios should continue to include entire spec packs and the learning about specs (a technical drawing of a garment showing construction details along with a table of measurements) in all pattern-making courses plus AA407 Product Development II. These assignments should probably demand entire spec packs. They may also improve the students’ thinking about functional design. Faculty should discuss ways to strengthen the understanding of functional design. The portfolio course should add a “Plan of Action”, show different approaches to portfolio presentation, begin the design of the senior lines promptly at the start of Spring semester, perhaps with students conducting their research over the Christmas Break.

**Learning Outcome 3: Make technical drawings of apparel (flats and specs), fashion illustrations, and fashion presentations.**

**Assessment Activity**

<b>Outcome Measures</b> <i>Explain how student learning will be measured and indicate whether it is direct or indirect.</i>	<b>Performance Standard</b> <i>Define and explain acceptable level of student performance.</i>	<b>Data Collection</b> <i>Discuss the data collected and student population</i>	<b>Analysis</b> <i>1) Describe the analysis process. 2) Present the findings of the analysis including the numbers participating and deemed acceptable.</i>
Direct Measure: Portfolio Evaluation by Faculty	90% of seniors must receive a rating of excellent (5) or good (4) in the categories of flat drawing, specs with measurements, evidence of construction, rendering figures, and rendering of fabrics. Other ratings are average(3),	Two former faculty members, who did not teach the senior portfolio course or the senior course in which the senior lines are produced, evaluated the portfolios. This occurred after the professional designer had conducted his/her	Out of 5 seniors, ratings were: Flat Drawings: 2 excellent (5) 3 good Specs w/Measurements: 4 excellent (5) 1 poor (2) Rendering of Figures: 4 excellent (5) 1 good (4) Evidence of Construction: 4 excellent (5) 1 good (4) Rendering of Fabrics: 4 excellent (5) 1 good (4)

	poor (2) and inadequate (1).	review. The Department Chair tabulated the ratings.	All categories reached the performance standard. However, the flat drawings that received "good" ratings lacked a zipper tab or darts, possibly because students did not allow enough time to be accurate.
Indirect Measure: Internship Evaluation	Site supervisors must rate interns superior (4) or good (3) in "make technical drawings, fashion illustrations and presentations."	Site supervisors choose the ratings and return the evaluations to the Director of the Center for Career Services. The Director forwards them to the Department Chair, and she tabulates the ratings.	For 4 interns, on this outcome, internship supervisors rated 2 excellent, 1 average and 1 N/A, meaning the intern did not perform these functions in her internship. For this assessment, the outcome was not achieved. However, it is difficult to make a broad judgment based on only 4 students.
Indirect Measure: Senior Focus Group	Seniors make positive comments assessing their own knowledge of "making technical drawings, fashion illustrations and presentations."	The Department Chair meets with seniors near at end of the academic year to conduct the Senior Focus Group. She tabulates the responses.	When asked whether they felt they had learned to "make technical drawings, fashion illustrations and presentations," all students responded affirmatively. Ensuing discussion recommended more exposure to digital media in the curriculum and more instruction on the illustration of accessories.

#### Interpretation of Results

**Extent this learning outcome has been achieved by students (Use both direct and indirect measure results):**

It is apparent from the faculty ratings of the portfolio that this outcome was largely achieved, except in the category of flat drawing. However, the ratings of internship supervisors were not as clear. Graduating seniors reported they were prepared in the execution of flats, specs, illustrations and presentations.

**Program strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to assessment of outcome:**



The end-of-junior-year assessment, implemented in May 2016, offered some related evaluation. The ratings for three juniors were as follows: Figure Drawing: 2 excellent 1 average; Rendering of Fabrics: 2 excellent 1 Average; Flat Drawing: 1 excellent 1 good 1 average; Spec Pack 2 good 1 average. This indicates some improvement required for the next assessment report. Points of measure, a component of the Spec Pack, was lacking for all three students. One of the three students simply did not give the work evaluated adequate time and attention. In addition to this consideration, it is important to note that Designer of the Year Reem Acra praised the “sketching ability” of some seniors.

**Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:**

The end-of –junior-year assessment should continue. Specs, most often with complete spec packs, should be assigned in all fashion design studios in the pattern making and senior sequence: AA350 Apparel Design I, AA385 Apparel Design II, AA415 Apparel Design III, AA407 Product Development II, AA418 Advanced Problems in Fashion Design I and AA423 Senior Fashion Design Portfolio. In addition, AA307 Product Development I, a lecture concentrating on technical design, as well as topics such as apparel production and the relationship between quality standards of apparel and pricing, acts as a springboard for the execution of the specs that are assigned in the rest of the curriculum. The department continues to hope for the budget expenditure of one workstation to facilitate a grant for thousands of dollars of industry-dedicated software from Lectra Corp. Note again that all of MU’s fashion design program’s direct competitors have had it for a few years. That would also reflect the seniors’ hope for more technology in the curriculum. AA365 Fashion Illustration II can expand to include the Illustration of accessories.

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