

Fashion Design Department, Pratt Institute

I BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

FASD 145-01

Contextualizing Fashion

Meeting Time: Thursdays 9:00 am – 11:50 am

Meeting Location: Collection Hall 216

Credits: 3

Prerequisites: N/A

Chairperson: Jennifer Minniti

II INSTRUCTOR

Tessa Maffucci, Visiting Instructor

Office Hours: By appointment

Phone: (207) 460-1963

E-mail: tmaffucc@pratt.edu

III COURSE DESCRIPTION

1 Institute Bulletin Description:

This course is an introduction to ways of examining clothing and fashion in context. How do we read images and representations of clothing and how do they manipulate the meaning of the garment? In what ways is this visual language used to produce fashion? How and why is context important in this process? Is there a distinction between clothing and fashion? We will use these questions to embark on a participatory research project and as a point of departure for class discussions, related readings and field trips.

2 Detailed Description:

This course will explore the mechanisms that create meaning in and through fashion. We will investigate how clothing is presented or visualized in myriad contexts, looking at historical sources, scholarly texts and contemporary modes of information dissemination. This course will be structured as a participative research project in which the final project will be the construction of an 'archetypal garment', situated in context and critical analysis by the student and presented as part of a class exhibition. The framework for weekly meetings will be based upon class discussions that not only synthesize readings in fashion theory, but also address topical issues featured in related articles and the examination of visual media. Throughout the course, this rhetorical process will prepare the student to propose possible futures and alternatives for

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understanding and approaching fashion, leading to the development of new creative practices in every aspect of fashion field — design, communication, and theory.

Studio work will involve creative interpretations of lectures to strengthen understanding of concepts and/or synthesize them with the current socio-cultural climate.

3 Course Goals:

During this course, students will learn to identify and employ different methodologies including primary and secondary research. They will develop an individual perspective and be able to articulate this during class discussions, in response to related readings and visual media analysis. The course will cultivate an understanding of how meaning is constructed in fashion and how different contextual frameworks allow for manipulation and perpetuation of existing meaning in order to construct new ones. Upon completion of the course, students will develop their own critical view on fashion, supported by scholarly research and critical analysis, preparing them to be conscious and innovative creative thinkers, designers and fashion / image-makers in their own practices, ultimately, seeking to discover their personal and unique response to the question, “What is Fashion?”

4 Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- *Demonstrate an understanding of key research methods and concepts in fashion theory, with the ability to present critical analyses in material, written and oral form.*
- *Demonstrate an acute awareness of how meaning is constructed in fashion and the ability to apply these concepts to new situations, insights, and directions.*
- *Demonstrate the practical awareness that experimentation and interpretation are vital to the discovery and development of new directions in fashion practice.*

5 Course Calendar:

NOTE: Changes to the schedule and/or required readings and exercises may occur and will be advised in advance. **Please check your Pratt e-mail and Learning Management System (LMS) for the detailed weekly agenda.**

To access LMS:

1. Go to <http://lms.pratt.edu>
2. Use your OneKey username and password to log in.

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Week & Date	Theme	Description	Readings & Assignments
WEEK 1 (Jan 24)	<i>Introductions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Syllabus overview • Project description • In-class exercise 	N/A
WEEK 2 (Jan 31)	<i>Fashion Research</i>	Library Workshop with Cheryl Costello	Assignment: * Select research topic
WEEK 3 (Feb 7)	<i>Language of Fashion</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture & discussion • In-class exercise • Project meetings 	<u>Reading:</u> 1. R. Barthes, <i>The Language of Fashion</i> (2006), pp. 21-32. 2. A. Hollander, <i>Seeing Through Clothes</i> (1993), pp. 311-327. Assignment: * Reading Response
WEEK 4 (Feb 14)	<i>Fashion & Film</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer presentations • Lecture & discussion • Screening: <i>In the Mood for Love</i> (2000) 	<u>Reading:</u> 1. N. Khan, "Cutting the Fashion Body: Why the Fashion Image Is No Longer Still," <i>Fashion Theory</i> , Vol. 16, Issue 2, pp. 235-250. 2. P. Calefato, <i>The Clothed Body</i> (2004), Chapter 9: Fashion & Cinema. Assignment: * Reading Response * Research Outline Due
WEEK 5 (Feb 21)	<i>Fashion & Photography</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer presentations • Lecture & discussion • In-class exercise • Project meetings 	<u>Reading:</u> 1. W. Benjamin, <i>The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility and Other Writings on Media</i> (2008), pp. 19-42. Assignment: * Reading Response
WEEK 6 (Feb 28)	<i>Fashion & Illustration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer presentations • Lecture & discussion • In-class exercise • Project meetings 	<u>Reading:</u> 1. C. Blackman, <i>100 Years of Fashion Illustration</i> (2007), pp. 6-11; 70-73; 166-169; 258-261.

			<p>2. C. Breward, <i>Fashion</i> (2003), Chapter 5: Fashion on the Page, pp. 115-129.</p> <p>Assignment: * Reading Response * Revised Research Outline Due</p>
WEEK 7 (Mar 7)	MIDTERMS	Research Presentations	<p><u>Reading:</u> 1. L. Manovich, "Cultural Data: Possibilities and Limitations of Digitized Archives," <i>Museums and Archives on the Move</i> (2017) pp. 259-276.</p> <p>Assignment: * Reading Response * Research Presentations</p>
WEEK 8 (Mar 14)	SPRING BREAK		
WEEK 9 (Mar 21)	<i>Craft & Making</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Peer presentations ● Lecture & discussion ● In-class exercise 	<p><u>Reading:</u> 1. R. Sennett, <i>The Craftsman</i> (2008), pp. 65-80.</p> <p>2. M. Bain, "The World's Largest Clothing Maker Isn't Betting on Automation," <i>Quartz</i>, Jan. 2, 2018. https://qz.com/1169397</p> <p>Assignment: * Reading Response * Initial design sketch due</p>
WEEK 10 (Mar 28)	<i>Fashion & Activism</i>	Visit to FABSCRAP	<p><u>Reading:</u> 1. P. Rivoli, <i>The Travels of a T-Shirt in the G 97</i>.</p> <p>Assignment: * Reading Response</p>
WEEK 11 (Apr 4)	<i>Fashion & Identity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Peer presentations ● Lecture & discussion ● Project meetings 	<p><u>Reading:</u> 1. D. Hebdige, <i>Subculture: The Meaning of Style</i> (1979), pp. 5-19.</p> <p>2. J. Entwistle, "Fashion & the Fleishy Body," <i>Fashion Theory</i>, Vol. 4, Issue 3, pp. 323-348.</p> <p>3. K. J. Cerankowski, "Queer Dandy Style: The Cultural Politics of Tim Gunn's Asexuality," <i>Women's</i></p>

			<p><i>Studies Quarterly</i>, Vol. 41, Issue 1 & 2, pp. 226-241.</p> <p>Assignment: * Reading Response * Draft Artist Statement Due</p>
WEEK 12 (Apr 11)	<i>Fashion & Media</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer presentations • Lecture & discussion • Project meetings 	<p><u>Reading:</u> 1. D. Thomas, <i>Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster</i> (2007), pp. 17-38. 2. T. Agins, <i>Hijacking the Runway: How Celebrities Are Stealing the Spotlight from Fashion Designers</i> (2014), pp. 31-43.</p> <p>Assignment: * Reading Response</p>
WEEK 13 (Apr 18)	<i>Studio Day</i>	Co-working on Final Projects	<p>Assignment: * Send me an article you think I should read and why.</p>
WEEK 14 (Apr 25)	<i>Screening</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The True Cost</i> (2015) • Discussion of film and summary discussion of class topics 	<p>Assignment: * Final Artist Statement Due</p>
WEEK 15 (May 2)	FINAL PRESENTATIONS		

IV COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1 Assignments & Projects

Research Journal

Students are required to keep a research journal to fill with writing, reference images, ideas, sketches, diagrams, swatches, scraps and odds & ends from research. The journal is a work-in-progress documentation, its goal is to focus on self-expression through informal free-form writing, poetry, word maps, lists, etc. inspired by the class readings, exercises and discussions. The journal can be physical (e.g. 3-ring binder, portfolio or notebook), digital (e.g. blog, website or Google Doc) or a combination of both. * **You must bring your journal to class each week, as it will be necessary for in-class exercises and progress review assessments.** *

Weekly Reading Responses

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Responses to themed readings (*Language of Fashion, Fashion & Film, etc.*) are **due on LMS the day before class** each week. These responses should not summarize the reading, but rather critique and comment on the texts. Responses should be concise (one or two paragraphs) and will help to guide in-class discussion.

Peer Presentations

Students will present on one themed reading during the course of the semester, summarizing and expanding on the key concepts in the selected readings. When preparing your presentation, consider how the author's perspective/ideas could be clarified in a way that is creative and informative for your peers, and offer insight into how the topical reading can be connected to our understanding of fashion and culture today.

Presentations should be 10-15 minutes long and supported through a PowerPoint, Keynote or Prezi. Material/supporting objects are welcome to illustrate your point.

Guiding questions:

1. How does this reading make you consider your own relationship to clothing?
2. What is one quote or section that resonates with you and why?
3. If you could pose a question to the author, what would that be?
4. How does this reading relate to current events?

NOTE: Your presentation is **due by Tuesday**, the week of your presentation, for final review and comments before you present in class.

Final Project

Part One (Research): Students will choose an item of clothing and pursue an intensive research process, starting with a material analysis of the garment and conducting scholarly research to address the themes discussed in class. Your mission is to build a "family tree" of the item of clothing; to visualize the origin, evolution, and iterations of this particular fashion artifact. The project is designed to link your studio practice to the concepts and representations of fashion through the contexts of history, culture and social practices, using methodologies and conceptual frameworks introduced in the course.

- Topic: Selections are **due by January 31st** at the start of class.
- Outline: Your research outline must include at least six scholarly sources (e.g. books, journal articles) and one primary source (e.g. interview, site visit, archive) you plan to use for your research. These sources should support your investigation into the core history of your chosen item (including predecessors, cultural analogs and influences), as well as the garment's evolution to present

day. Also include variations and interpretations the garment has gone through in different cultures and social/political atmospheres. Research outlines are **due by February 14th** at the start of class.

- Meetings: Time will be set aside for in-class meetings and guidance on project research and development.
- Presentation (MIDTERM): Each student will prepare a 5-minute presentation of their research process and findings (supported with PowerPoint, Keynote or Prezi) to share in class on **March 7th**.

Part Two (Design, Construction & Exhibition): Building upon the research performed in part one of the project, students will engage into design and construction of an original garment that will address, challenge and deconstruct the concepts, theories and contextual phenomena learned throughout the semester. The data gathered (or alternatively, the approach developed) will inform and substantiate the conceptual development of the garment or other sartorial object. The final project will be displayed during the last class of the semester as a peer-reviewed exhibition accompanied by the artist statement.

- Design Sketch: Initial sketches with concept notes and research are **due by March 21st** at the start of class.
- Artist Statement (FINAL): A typed document in the form of “artist statement” will be presented together with your finished garment at the end-of-semester exhibition. The document will explain the process, theories and/or concepts engaged in the project and design solutions applied to address those. The statement should be 400-500 words and be supported by a minimum of six images documenting the final object. **Draft statements are due at the start of class on April 4th and final statements are due at the start of class on April 25th.**
- Meetings: Time will be set aside for in-class meetings and guidance on project development and writing.
- Presentation: On the opening day of the exhibition, students will present their work to creatively express the intent behind the project. Students should be able to answer questions and facilitate discussions regarding their work in a group-critique setting.

2 Materials, Textbooks, Readings

Required Materials:

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- Journal for work-in-progress documentation
- Tools needed for garment conceptualization and construction

Required Textbooks and Readings:

- All the readings required for the course will be available via LMS

Recommended Texts:

- Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. 2013. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*.
- Kawamura, Yuniya. 2011. *Doing Research in Fashion and Dress: An Introduction to Qualitative Methods*. Oxford: Berg.

Also visit the Pratt “library guide” website for fashion and design for additional resources: http://libguides.pratt.edu/content_mobile.php?pid=356315&sid=4365553
Contact: Cheryl Costello, Art & Architecture librarian, ccostel5@pratt.edu

Journals and Periodicals:

- *Vestoj: The Journal of Sartorial Matters*. [2009-]. London: London College of Fashion.
- Steele, Valerie. [1997-]. *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture*. Oxford: Berg.

Databases:

- Berg Fashion Library
- New York Times Archive
- Women’s Wear Daily Archive
- Vogue Archive
- Stylesight/WGSN

Websites and blogs:

- The Business of Fashion, BoF Voices & Podcast
- Exactitudes (Arie Versluis and Ellie Uytenbroek)
- Threadbared (written by Pratt professor Minh-Ha T. Pham)
- Worn Stories (Emily Spivack)
- Worn Through: Apparel from an Academic Perspective

Films/Video:

- John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (1972)
- Vicki Vasilopoulos, *Men of the Cloth* (2013)
- Wim Wenders, *Notebook on Cities and Clothes* (1989)

Places to visit:

- Costume Institute at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1000 Fifth Avenue)
- Bard Graduate Center Gallery (18 West 86th Street)
- Cora Ginsburg Antique Costumes and Textiles (19 East 74th Street, by appointment)
- Fales Library & Special Collections (NYU: 70 Washington Square So, 3rd Floor)
- The Tenement Museum (103 Orchard Street)
- The Museum at FIT (Seventh Avenue at 27 Street)
- The Museum of the City of New York (1220 Fifth Avenue)

3 Assessment and Grading

Grade Criteria & Final Grade Calculation:

Reading Responses & Peer Presentations: 15%
Final Project (Part One): 25%
Final Project (Part Two): 35%
Research Journal: 15%
Attendance, Professionalism and Class Participation: 10%
Total: 100%

Grading Standards:

A = sustained superior performance demonstrated in all areas of Course Requirements
B = consistent above-average performance in a majority of the Course Requirements
C = generally average performance and Course Requirements are achieved
D = below average performance and Course Requirements are achieved
F = demonstration of Course Requirements is not sufficient to receive a passing grade

A 4.0 Excellent
A- 3.7 Excellent
B+ 3.3 Above Average
B 3.0 Above Average
B- 2.7 Above Average
C+ 2.3 Acceptable
C 2.0 Acceptable
C- 1.7
D+ 1.3
D 1.0
F 0.0 Failure
INC N/A Incomplete – automatically expires after the following semester

V POLICIES

Attendance & Professionalism

The success and enjoyment of this course will rely heavily on careful listening and contributing thoughtful input to the topical discussions (whether it is sharing a headline in the news, asking a question or building upon a comment already made). Grades will be based upon your level of participation—for example, high grades will be given to students who make attempts to engage in the discussion, arrive on time, deliver assignments on time and pay attention during lectures; low grades will be given to students who do not arrive on time, deliver assignments late, disrupt class with non-discussion-based conversation and appear distracted by laptop/mobile-device use.

This course requires a commitment from you: a responsibility to prepare before class, attend class *and* participate in it, and to be prepared with assignments on time. Simply showing up in class will not assure you a passing grade.

Participation:

You will be evaluated on how you participate in class; individual, group and public critiques; readings, lectures and discussions of the research; design process, design analysis, and final project/review. This could very much be the difference in a letter grade, so please speak freely, thoughtfully and often. You should try to make at least one contribution to the dialog each week.

Absence and Lateness:

On time attendance at each class meeting is expected. Partial attendance, i.e. lateness or early departure, will each count as one-half an absence if not excused in advance. On-time return to class from breaks is also expected. Lateness and absence can adversely affect your grade: unexcused absences will result in drops in your final grade. Three missed unexcused classes may result in a failing grade or major deduction in your final grade. Late assignments will not be accepted except with permission.

*** Attendance is taken within the first five minutes of class time. Three (3) or more tardies during the semester will be calculated as one (1) full absence. Three (3) unexcused absences may result in an automatic “F”. “Excused” absences must be documented through email correspondence with your professor. Four (4) or more tardies or three (3) absences will be reported to your academic advisor. ☒***

Excuses:

There are very few legitimate reasons to miss all or part of a class session or for submitting assignments after the deadlines. In order for an absence or lateness to be excused, you must provide formal documentation explaining the reason behind the absence. Valid excuses include (chronic) personal health issues documented by Health and Counseling; family emergencies; crits, shows or class trips related to other Pratt

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courses. The following reasons do NOT excuse lateness or absence: oversleeping, excessive workload in other classes, inability to use the LMS, forgetting/not knowing/being unprepared.

Assistance with Assignments:

If you have difficulty at any level with the assignments listed in the syllabus, notify your instructor right away via e-mail or in person. Grading will be based upon the expectations put forth by your instructor, and it is the responsibility of the student to take advantage of Pratt's academic resources to ensure a high level of quality with the composition of writing, presentations and materials constructed throughout the semester.

Students who require special accommodations for disabilities must register with the Office of Disability Services at the beginning of the semester. They should contact the Disability Services Director, first floor Willoughby Hall, adjacent to Health and Counseling Services: 718-636-3711

Classroom Civility and Academic Honesty/Integrity:

You are expected to maintain the civility and integrity of the course in and out of the classroom. In class, this means timely arrival, turning phones and computers off, leaving the classroom in clean, orderly condition. Outside of class, this means properly citing all references and work that is not your own. Students must adhere to all Institute-wide policies listed in the Bulletin under "Community Standards" and which include policies on attendance, academic integrity, plagiarism, computer and network use. Please see <http://www.pratt.edu/policies> (click on Judicial Procedures) for policies and procedures for handling academic conduct issues.

All students must adhere to Institute-wide policies listed in the student handbook and Institute Bulletin under "Community Standards." These include policies on attendance, academic integrity, plagiarism, computer and network use.

Health & Safety:

No food or drink in the studios.

No use of machines in any studio without the certification sticker on your Pratt ID.

No cell phone use during class/studio time.

Do not use machinery if you are taking medication that will cause drowsiness, and /or impair your physical dexterity. Please consult medication labeling or your medical provider.

All students are expected to adhere to the specific Health & Safety and Environmental Protection Guidelines of Pratt Institute.

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