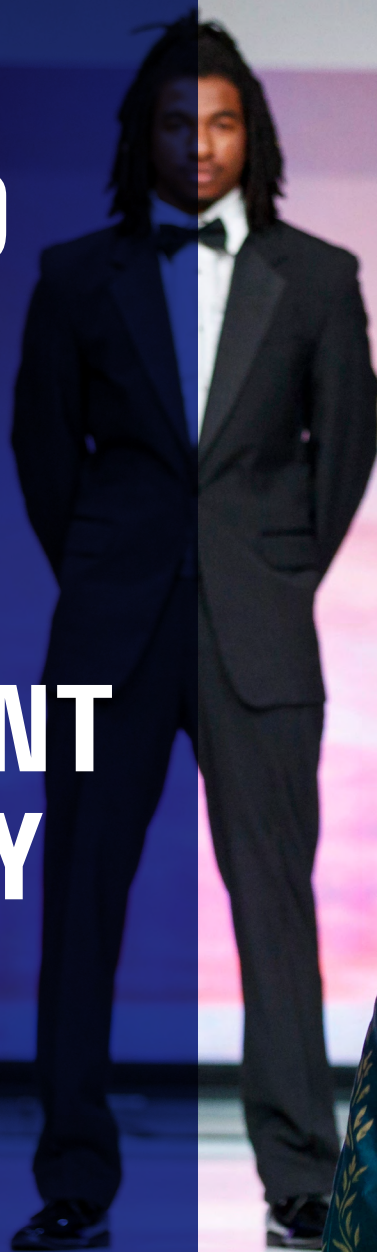


# A GUIDE TO GETTING A FASHION DEGREE AT MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY



**MARYMOUNT**  
UNIVERSITY

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# ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT PURSUING A FASHION DEGREE?

Of all of the colleges with fashion majors, Marymount University is the only university in the Washington D.C. area that offers undergraduate degrees in both **Fashion Design** and **Fashion Merchandising**. These fashion-focused programs are designed to prepare creative professionals to enter the fashion industry with the skills and confidence needed to succeed in many different career paths in the fashion industry, including fashion design and production, fashion retail or wholesale buying and sales, public relations, brand management, visual merchandising, and global sourcing.

If you think that a career in the fashion industry could be the perfect fit for you, we encourage you to keep reading and let us help you determine **A)** if you should get a fashion degree, **B)** what kind of fashion degree aligns with your interests, and **C)** whether Marymount's Fashion Design or Fashion Merchandising degree will help you achieve your professional goals.

Let's get started.

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a white button-down shirt and a patterned skirt, stands in front of a wall covered in graffiti. She is holding a black bag. The background is dark and moody, with blue and white graffiti visible.

“Fashion is the armor to survive the reality of everyday life.”

—Bill Cunningham, Fashion Photographer & Writer

“I don’t design clothes. I design dreams.”

—Ralph Lauren, Fashion Designer & Founder of Ralph Lauren Corporation

“Fashion is in the sky, in the street. Fashion has to do with ideas, the way we live, what is happening.”

—Coco Chanel, Fashion Designer & Founder of Chanel

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FASHION INDUSTRY

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Life in the fashion industry is fast-paced, creative, inspiring, and constantly evolving.

The fashion industry has a big impact on both fashion centers on U.S. coasts and smaller cities throughout the country, growing in the number of high-value, high-wage jobs that it offers. The fashion industry is literally worth trillions of dollars, with more than **\$250 billion** spent annually on fashion and around two million people employed by the industry in the U.S.

Over two-thirds of all fashion designers are employed in New York City and Los Angeles, the two largest fashion hubs in the United States, but San Francisco, Nashville, Miami, Chicago, and **Washington D.C.** are beginning to rise as fashion hubs as well.



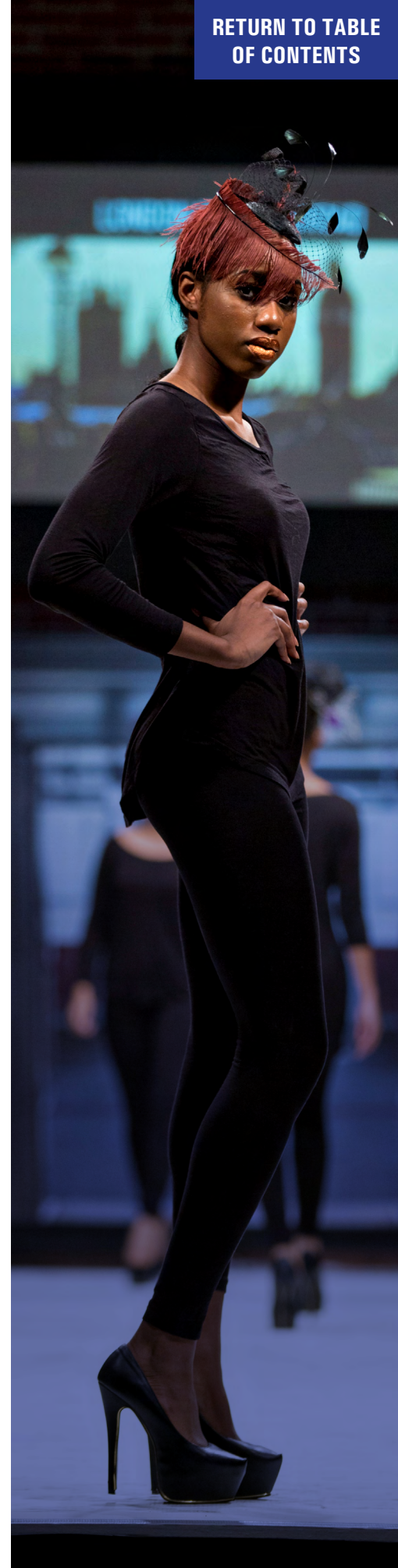


Key players in the fashion industry include:

- **Designers** such as Coco Chanel, Christian Louboutin, Donatella Versace, and Giorgio Armani.
- **Models** such as Ugbad Abdi, Chai Maximus, Carolina Burgin, and Chun Jin.
- **Photographers** such as Tim Walker, Pamela Hanson, Bruce Weber, and Sarah Moon.
- **Editors and writers** such as Anna Wintour, Robin Givhan, Liz Tilberis, and Glenda Bailey.
- **Countless fashion retailers** such as Target, Ascena Group (Ann Taylor), Qurate Group (QVC), PVH (Calvin Klein), VF Corporation, Levi's, Limited Brands, Urban Outfitters, Inc. Gap, Inc. Patagonia, etc.
- **Various target markets** within the fashion industry include Couture, Ready to Wear & Luxury, Diffusion, Bridge, and Mass Market.

There are three main sectors in which to work in the fashion industry. Fashion professionals go on to pursue careers in the **private sector** (7th Avenue, Europe, Los Angeles, etc.), the **public sector** (Federal Government), or the **nonprofit sector** (these professionals do business with not-for-profit vendors that manufacture government clothing items that give people with disabilities jobs and personal independence).

Further, technology has changed fashion from what it was even just 10 years ago. Wearable technology such as the Apple Watch and the Fitbit has softened the line between technology and fashion, leading to the rise of fabric as an interactive resource. 3D Printing is foreseen to be a multi-billion dollar industry by 2020, allowing designers to create prototypes from the office and eliminating the middleman. The increasing usage of artificial intelligence and metadata will give brands a competitive advantage. These are just a few of the ways that technology has influenced the fashion industry.





# WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FASHION DESIGN AND FASHION MERCHANDISING?

Before we examine the fashion industry further, it's important to understand the difference between two very unique disciplines: fashion design and fashion merchandising.

## Fashion Design

**Fashion Design** — is the art and application of design and aesthetics to create functional, yet appealing, clothing and accessories. It's more than cutting and sewing. Fashion design requires problem-solving to understand the needs of the consumer and respond in a way that will meet their needs and creatively express the vision of the design.

Areas of focus for professionals working in fashion design:

- Design a cohesive collection for a specific target market
- Conduct research on fashion trends in order to select colors, fabrics, and embellishments
- Use computer-aided design programs (CAD) to produce designs
- Work in a team to create prototype designs
- Showcase designs in fashion and trade shows
- Market designs to retailers and consumers

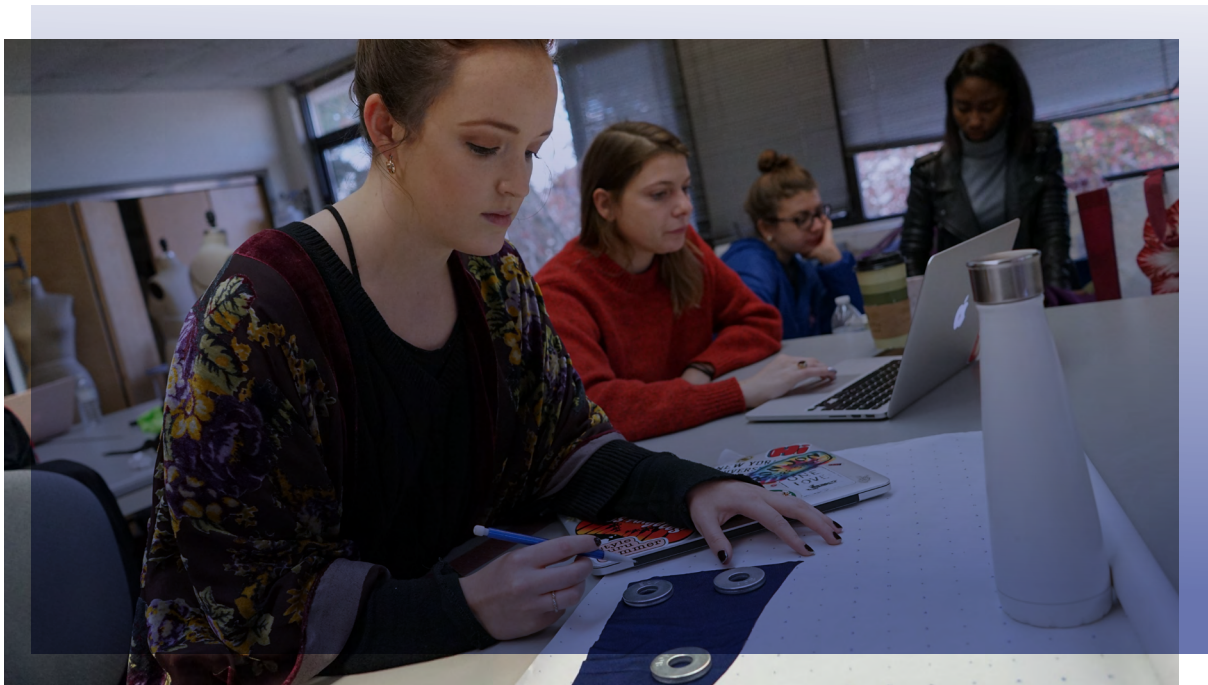


Careers in fashion design include:

- Fashion Designer
- Fashion Illustrator
- Textile Designer
- Costume Designer
- Technical Designer
- Pattern Maker
- Pattern Grader
- Pattern Digitizer
- CAD/CAM Operator
- Product Developer
- Apparel Manufacturer
- Garment Technologist
- Textile Technologist
- Quality Assurance Specialist
- Tailor
- Draper
- Fashion Stylist
- Alterations Specialist
- Fashion Journalism
- Trend Forecaster

## Fashion Merchandising

**Fashion Merchandising** — is the promotion and selling of apparel and/or accessories. It covers a wide range of different aspects in the fashion industry: visual merchandising, buying and retailing, and supply chain management. All are centered around meeting the needs and desires of the target market.





#### Areas of focus for professionals working in fashion merchandising:

- Evaluate suppliers on price, quality, and speed of delivery of their products
- Examine suppliers' plants and distribution centers to learn about products, services, and prices
- Evaluate, negotiate, and monitor contracts between the company and its vendors
- Analyze price proposals and financial reports to determine reasonable prices for products
- Making markup and markdown decisions for apparel products
- Maintain records of items bought, costs, deliveries, product performance, and inventories.

#### Areas of focus for professionals working in fashion merchandising:

- Fashion Merchandiser
- Visual Merchandiser
- Fashion Director
- Assistant Buyer
- Junior Buyer
- Senior Contract Specialist
- Contract Specialist
- Retail Manager
- Fashion Event Planner
- Fashion Brand Manager
- Fashion Journalist
- Fashion Distributor
- Textile Manager
- Apparel Supply Chain and Sourcing Specialist
- Merchandise Display Artist



# UNDERSTANDING COMMON FASHION JARGON

If there's anything that can be said about the field of fashion, it's this: **The fashion industry is always evolving.** And with it, so does the language used to define and describe processes, trends, types of apparel, and media within the fashion industry. There are many [industry-known words](#) used to describe various elements of the fashion industry, but for now, let's dive into a few specific terms you should know.

- **Bespoke** — A made-to-order garment, tailored to a specific client's measurements
- **Collection** — A selection of outfits and individual pieces that represent what a designer believes to be the upcoming trends
- **Forecasting** — Predicting trends that will be on the runway and in stores for the upcoming season
- **Haute couture** — A French word referring to high sewing or high dressmaking, also referring to the creation of exclusive custom-fitted clothing
- **Iridescent** — The property of a fabric that appears to change in color as it catches the light
- **Look book** — A collection of photos that display a specific model, photographer, style, designer, or clothing line
- **OOTD** — A commonly used hashtag acronym that stands for "outfit of the day"
- **Pop-up shop/Trunk show** — A temporary store (sometimes stand-alone); hosted by a boutique, brand, gallery, or online store
- **September** — The beginning of a new fashion season; the most important month in fashion's calendar
- **Runway** — The fashion stage where new collections are showcased



# WHAT'S NOW AND WHAT'S NEXT IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY



The fashion industry is constantly affected by the social, political, economic, and environmental changes happening around the world. Today, there is a growing need for more educated fashion designers and merchandisers than ever before. Here are several noteworthy trends and changes coming to fashion.

- **Advances in technology are speeding up the apparel production process.** Merchandise can be delivered to stores, online businesses, and homes within a matter of days. Technology is also providing growing information about consumer needs. This facilitates a fashion business' capacity to target a niche market.
- **Introducing the world of fashion applications.** If you have a smartphone (and we know you do), then you have access to a whole world of fashion-focused apps that will allow you to search and buy clothes and accessories at your leisure. Many of these apps include personalization promises that make choosing clothes virtually easy and fun. You can check out apps like Masse, Finery, and Stitch Fix.
- **There is a trending interest in sustainability.** Did you know that nearly [20 percent of global waste water](#) is produced by the fashion industry? The concept of fashion sustainability is increasing the growth of consignment and vintage shops as well as the use of sustainable materials. More and more fashion brands are prioritizing sustainability and approaching business with sustainable practices in mind.
- **With infinite choices, fashion brands must foster loyalty among consumers.** Consumers can choose to shop from an unlimited number of brands. Savvy fashion brands are using strategic marketing tactics to A) highlight the quality nature of their products, B) reduce friction and increase personalization, and C) better align with customer expectations — all as a way of fostering brand loyalty. Doing so is paramount to surviving in the ever-evolving, competitive field of fashion.



# CHARACTERISTICS OF LEADERS IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY

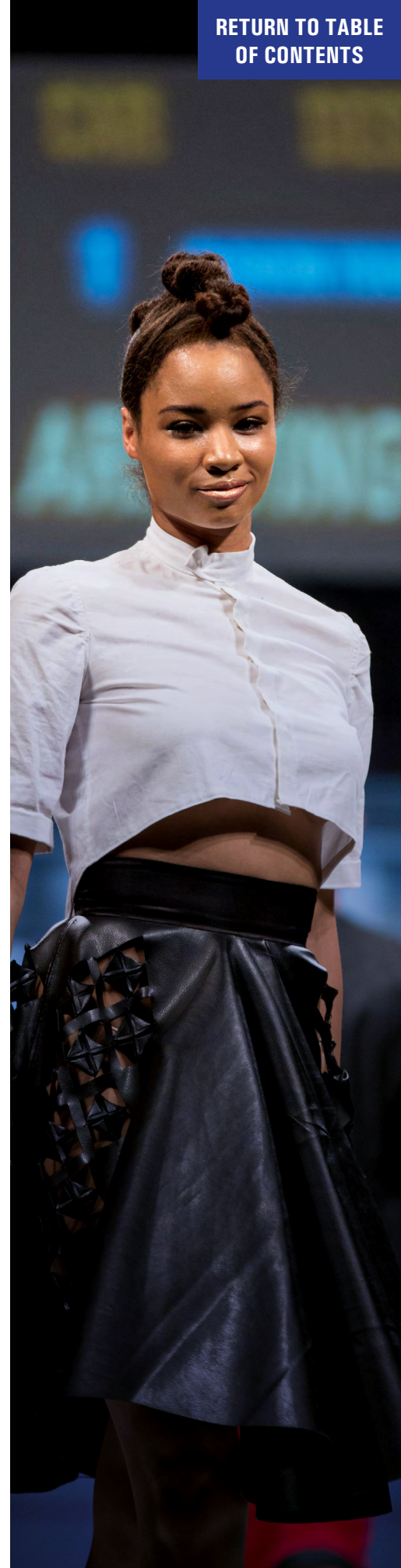
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**Drive** — The fashion industry is dynamic and demanding; students will need to have ambition and drive to make it in this profession. Careers in fashion are also quite competitive, so aspiring fashion professionals will need to be open to change, have the ability to multitask, and manage time effectively.

**Creativity** — The world of fashion is a world of art and curiosity, and it's about breaking boundaries, challenging conventional thinking, adapting and improving, embracing the disruption of traditional business practices, and taking risks. It's important for future leaders in the field of fashion to nurture their own creative instincts before, during, and after breaking into the fashion industry.

**Public Speaking Skills** — Speaking comfortably in crowds is crucial in this industry. No matter if students are presenting an original design, presenting a visual concept for a retail store, or brainstorming ideas at a press meeting, fashion is about being able to create and defend ideas. Therefore, nourishing skills in public speaking will be beneficial for a career in fashion.

**Business Sense** — Having good business sense is crucial for anyone hoping to become a leader in their field. With problem solving skills, solid communication abilities, and the business acumen needed to make strategic decisions for your business, you will make yourself indispensable to employers.



# THE BA IN FASHION DESIGN AT MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

## Fashion Design Curriculum at a Glance

[Fashion Design students](#) will take 21 courses in a sequence determined in collaboration with a faculty advisor. All students also must fulfill [Liberal Arts Core](#) and University requirements, and some of the following courses may also satisfy those requirements. Fashion Design students will take courses such as:

- **Methods in Fashion Construction** — Applying technical skills to a creative process, this course teaches students advanced techniques of flat pattern making, draping, tailoring, and couture techniques in garment construction
- **CAD/CAM Design Fundamentals** — An introduction of skills that include digital pattern making, productivity efficiency, and industry standards for product development. Students will explore software designed to enhance productivity and product management.
- **Textile Design** — A study of fibers and fabric of both natural and synthetic origins. The course includes an analysis of the use and care of textiles, design applications, and finishing. Emphasis on the use of textiles for fashion.
- **Fashion Industry and Promotion** — Students identify global and domestic fashion markets and obtain a historic overview of the fashion industry. Course develops an analysis of sources and market trends and assigns exercises in the coordination of special events. Students assist in the production of a dramatized fashion show at the university.
- **Adv Problems in Fashion Design** — Examines fashion design as both process and product. Students learn to integrate the elements of visual design, methods of pattern making, and the use of special fabrics.
- **Senior Fashion Design Portfolio** — Design for different markets is integrated with fashion presentations. Students create a portfolio for entry into the industry.





# UNIQUE FEATURES OF MARYMOUNT'S FASHION DESIGN DEGREE

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## One-on-One Attention from Faculty

Fashion Design is all about problem-solving. In order to understand all of the components that go into the production of a garment or collection, the advice and mentorship of a professor is essential. With small class sizes, students are able to have one-on-one time with a professor and receive guidance in the creative process.

## Study Abroad Opportunities for Fashion Students

The strongest and most popular locations for [Fashion Design students to study abroad](#) are London, Paris, and Florence. Studying abroad is an opportunity for students to experience the trends and fashion culture from different angles. To have the opportunity to completely immerse oneself in another culture and way of life further enhances the quality of education at Marymount.

## Internships for Fashion Design Students

As a Fashion Design student, you will [complete an internship in your senior year](#). This experience is excellent preparation for the real world, offering hands-on learning and networking opportunities with fashion industry professionals. Fashion Design students have secured internships with brands like:

- Michael Kors
- Betsey Johnson
- Ralph Lauren
- Anna Sui
- Josie Natori
- Washington Opera
- Oscar de la Renta
- St. John Knits
- Naeem Khan



# THE BA IN FASHION MERCHANDISING PROGRAM AT MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

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## Fashion Merchandising Curriculum at a Glance

[Fashion Merchandising students](#) will take 21 courses in a sequence determined in collaboration with a faculty advisor. All students also must fulfill [Liberal Arts Core](#) and University requirements, and some of the following courses may also satisfy those requirements. Fashion Merchandising students will take courses such as:

- **Digital Presentation of Fashion** — Students utilize Photoshop and Illustrator software for applications to the fashion industry, such as fashion presentations, trend boards, and mood boards.
- **Fashion in the Global Marketplace** — This course provides an understanding of the textile and apparel industries in the world economy. Emphasis is on U.S. importing and exporting and on global trends in the production and consumption of textiles and apparel.
- **Fashion Show Production** — The development of advanced planning required for a dramatized fashion show. Students will develop strategies for advertising and publicity, budgeting, floor plans, stage and program designs, and targeting an appropriate market. Students plan lighting and sound, choreograph routines, and produce the fashion show.
- **Merchandise Planning and Analysis** — Examination of the theory and practice of fashion merchandise buying and control. It covers topics such as measures of productivity, income statement, inventory, pricing decisions, and product assortment.
- **Survey of Fashion** — An analysis of fashion, including its function, history, and relation to modern economy. The course covers the principles of fashion change, fashion terminology, and the development of fashions and accessories from ancient Egypt to the present.
- **Senior Seminar in Fashion Merchandising** — The capstone course in fashion merchandising. Presents current practices, trends, and problems in the field. Students learn to analyze contemporary problems by using the case study method and by presenting a written and oral case analysis at the end of the course.



# UNIQUE FEATURES OF MARYMOUNT'S FASHION MERCHANDISING DEGREE

## One-on-One Attention from Faculty

Students in this program receive one-on-one attention with faculty. The professors at Marymount are well-equipped with years of industry and teaching experience. One-on-one time with the professors strengthens faculty-student relationships yielding a strong, well-rounded team.

This relationship opens the door for internship opportunities. Chances are, the faculty recommends students to their outside networks. The faculty can use their experience to recommend and guide students towards an internship or job that will allow them to grow in the knowledge of the industry. Fashion merchandising is about networking and teamwork and so the mentorship of faculty is essential.

## Study Abroad Opportunities for Fashion Merchandising Students

The strongest and most popular locations for [Fashion Merchandising students to study abroad](#) are London, Paris, and Florence. Study abroad programs tailored especially for Fashion Merchandising students provide a global perspective well suited to the needs of the contemporary fashion industry.

Studying abroad provides a unique opportunity for students to experience different cultures and ways of life. The fashion industry is constantly growing and evolving based on cultural movements and current events happening around the world. Working in the industry as a buyer, wholesaler, journalist, or retailer involves an understanding of and communication with businesses and brands around the world.





## Internships for Fashion Merchandising Students

As a Marymount Fashion Merchandising student, you will [complete an internship in your senior year](#). This highly rewarding experience is excellent preparation for the real world, offering hands-on learning and networking opportunities with fashion industry professionals. Fashion Merchandising students have secured internships with brands like:

- QVC
- St. John Knits
- Theory
- Saks Fifth Avenue
- Burberry, Ltd.
- Anthropologie
- Nordstrom
- Bloomingdale's



# DIVERSITY IN MARYMOUNT'S FASHION COMMUNITY

The diversity of the students at Marymount epitomizes the variegation of the fashion industry. **Ranked #1 in Global Diversity by the U.S. News and World Report**, Marymount University provides a transformational education that nurtures intellectual curiosity, service to others, and a global perspective. This means that even in our fashion programs, there is a wide range of different ethnic backgrounds and experiences.

The fashion industry is a global industry with influences coming from everywhere. Diversity in the fashion design program is valuable because it offers different perspectives on fashion from different places of the world. This allows for students to develop a unique palette and distinct taste in Washington D.C., an area that thirsts for new, unique fashion trends. Students from different parts of the world or those with experience in other countries can use their knowledge to enhance their designs and impact the education of others in a positive way.





## MARYMOUNT'S ANNUAL STUDENT FASHION SHOW: PORTFOLIO IN MOTION

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Through [Portfolio in Motion](#), Marymount's annual fashion show — produced by our fashion programs — students have the opportunity to play a role in the production of a professional fashion show.

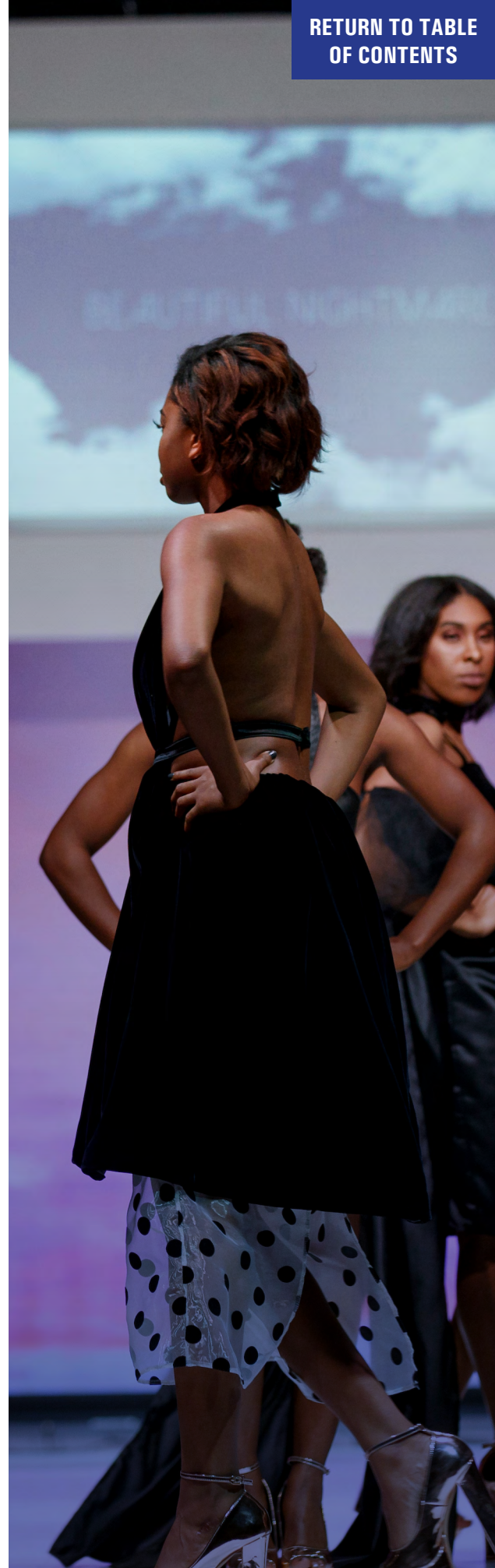
Portfolio in Motion was first introduced into the Marymount idiom in 1989 and has been headlining its runway ever since. Portfolio in Motion is produced entirely by students. Over the course of the spring semester, while [Fashion Design](#) students are busy producing their lines, [Fashion Merchandising](#) students are planning out the details of the show. Every aspect, including student model selection, fashion design, choreography, stage and set design, commentary, ticket sales, and backstage management are all coordinated by students.

# DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

The [Designer of the Year](#) event is an opportunity to have an internationally known designer review your senior portfolio. Fashion design students have the opportunity to personally meet the designer and talk to them about their experiences. As a senior, the designer will critique their senior lines, evaluate them, and offer advice.

Design of the Year Honorees include:

- 2019 Lazaro Perez
- 2018 Naeem Khan
- 2017 Lela Rose
- 2016 Reem Acra
- 2015 Sue Wong
- 2014 Jhane Barnes
- 2013 Tadashi Shoji
- 2012 Eileen Fisher
- 2011 Junko Yoshioka
- 2010 Isabel Toledo





# UNIVERSITY MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION

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The Fashion Program at Marymount is a University Member of the National Retail Federation (NRF). The NRF University membership provides great co-curricular activities, such as giving the opportunities to participate in the NRF Student Program where many executives from major retailers (e.g., Macy's) participate as a guest speaker of the event and many fashion retailing industry professionals mentor the students.

The highlight of the Student Program includes company or store tours as well as a large-scale career fair where students can identify many employment and internship opportunities and network with the industry professionals. This program and membership tremendously benefit the fashion merchandising students as they develop their future career path in the fashion or retailing industry.



# MARYMOUNT'S FASHION CLUB

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The mission of Marymount University's Fashion Club, which participates in Washington D.C.-area fashion events and charity galas, is to cultivate an environment where students can gain knowledge and experience of the fashion industry through participation in fashion and charity events, from industry speakers, workshops, and fashion-related field trips — meanwhile, building community within and outside the university.

The goals of Fashion Club are to provide excellent, professional service to businesses and companies in the D.C. area by volunteering at fashion events. Fashion events create an environment for students to interact and network with potential future employers, references, and mentors.



# FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FASHION STUDENTS

So, let's talk about [financing a college education](#). Fashion Design and Fashion Merchandising students at Marymount University are able to apply for a variety of financial aid options to help offset the cost of attending Marymount. Prospective fashion students can explore Marymount's [Office of Financial Aid](#) to learn more about what options there are for financing a college education.

## Introducing Your Guide to Financing Your College Education

It can be challenging to figure out how you're going to fund your college education. If you're thinking about how you're going to finance your college degree, check out this digital resource designed to keep you in-the-know about anything related to financial aid options for undergrad: Your Guide to Financing Your College Education.



**EXPLORE THE TOOLKIT**





## GET CONNECTED WITH MARYMOUNT'S FASHION COMMUNITY

It's so exciting that you're considering pursuing a career in the fashion industry. If you're interested in learning even more about the **Fashion Design** and **Fashion Merchandising** undergraduate degrees at Marymount University, we encourage you to reach out to us today! We are 100 percent available to answer your questions, alleviate any concerns, and guide you as you tackle the process of applying to college at Marymount.

[REQUEST MORE INFORMATION](#)

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Marymount University  
2807 N. Glebe Road  
Arlington, VA 22207  
(703) 522-5600  
[admissions@marymount.edu](mailto:admissions@marymount.edu)