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An Analysis of the Expectations of Old Dominion University Students Enrolled in the Fashion Industry Course

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An Analysis of the Expectations of Old Dominion University Students
Enrolled in The Fashion Industry Course

A Research Project Presented to the
Graduate Faculty of the Department of Occupational and Technical Studies
Old Dominion University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Master of Science

By
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Approval Page

This research paper was prepared by Jarnell Dorman under the direction of

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Education. It was presented to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science.

Approval By: _____   _12-16-05_

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Advisor and Graduate

Program Director

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Chapter I

Introduction

Fashion is a billion-dollar industry that requires not only a little business savvy, but also a well-trained eye that knows how to help spot trends. Everything from the production, to the marketing, design, and delivery of the clothes and products hitting the street in Milan and New York are going to be covered by Fashion. Your courses will be both technical and creative. All of this instruction and professional experience will make you an impresario of fads, a barker of brands. So, fine, you may not make the next cover of *Glamour Magazine*, but with this major under your belt, you'll be able to predict what will (The Princeton Review, 2005, p. 1).

Students come to Old Dominion University to pursue degrees in fashion. The fashion industry is a broad industry and the curriculum at Old Dominion University focuses on the fashion merchandising aspect. "Our curriculum is specific to the marketing of fashion and includes a solid base of fashion and marketing courses that are designed to prepare graduates to work in almost any aspect of fashion merchandising" (http://www.lions.odu.edu/~dnethert/programs/fashion_program.htm, 2003, p. 1).

"The Fashion major is a 120-hour program designed to prepare students to enter the fashion industry to become buyers, fashion coordinators, and merchandise managers" (http://www.lions.odu.edu/~dnethert/programs/fashion_program.htm, 2003, p. 1). If a student chooses to major in Fashion, the first year of classes includes satisfying the general requirements for the program. The second year includes taking classes significant to fashion. These courses include topics on advertising, personal selling, buying, personnel management and of course, the fashion industry. During the third year, students are required to take upper-level fashion and marketing courses.

After the junior year, students are required to complete an internship related to the field of fashion and during their last year, they complete remaining courses required by the program. "Old Dominion University Fashion graduates have successfully transitioned from the campus to the fashion industry. In addition to positions as buyers, they are employed as store managers, fashion coordinators, marketing coordinators, visual merchandisers, and fashion writers" (http://www.lions.odu.edu/~dnethert/programs/fashion_program.htm, 2003, p. 1).

The fashion industry is a very fast-paced industry and the course offered at Old Dominion University, The Fashion Industry, serves as an introductory course that students in the Fashion program are required to take. The course is an "overview of the fashion industry, from domestic to foreign issues" (Davis, 2004, p. 1). In this course, students learn about the many career paths in the fashion industry along with the concepts involved.

> The purpose of this course is designed to develop professional teachers, trainers, and fashion specialists to gain an understanding of the analysis of fashion from the design onto the development of content specialty areas in merchandising, economics, and promotion for professional marketing educators (Davis, 2004, p. 1).

During the course, students will evaluate many fashion concepts and predict different techniques, define fashion terminology, analyze fashion designer trends, study textiles, explore the fashion marketing system, evaluate promotion and distribution strategies, investigate technological advancements and explore retailing in the fashion industry. Although there are thousands of research studies on the concepts taught during The Fashion Industry course, the expectations before and the outcomes

after the course is completed have not been researched. There is a lack of information on the effectiveness of The Fashion Industry course at Old Dominion University based on student expectations and learning outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to analyze the expectations of Old Dominion University students enrolled in The Fashion Industry to determine the course's effectiveness to Fashion Merchandising majors.

Research Goals

Through the analysis of student expectations of The Fashion Industry course, the following goals will be answered.

1. Determine student expectations before taking The Fashion Industry course.

2. Determine student learning outcomes after taking The Fashion Industry course.

3. Determine if there was a change in expectations verses the learning outcomes of taking The Fashion Industry course.

4. Compare the attitudes that existed before taking The Fashion Industry course to those developed by completing The Fashion Industry course.

5. Determine whether The Fashion Industry course was effective compared to student expectations and learning outcomes.

Background and Significance

The purpose of The Fashion Industry course was to prepare students for an understanding of fashion. This course included the "analysis of fashion from the design phase through promotions and marketing of the finished product" (Davis,

2004, p. 1). The Fashion Program at Old Dominion University intends to develop

buyers, fashion coordinators, and merchandise managers. In order for students to learn

what is needed to pursue one of these careers, they must complete certain Fashion-

core courses. Students who enroll for The Fashion Industry course expect to explore

the apparel market. Whether they feel as though they really learned something is

relevant. However, the effectiveness of The Fashion Industry course in meeting

student expectations is not known.

> What we don't always do very well is to make it clear to our students, and
> perhaps to ourselves, the outcomes that we are looking for. The many
> advantages to describing classes in terms of learning outcomes include:
> everyone (learners, teachers) knows what the class is supposed to achieve and
> it is easier for the students to judge how well they are performing (achieving).
> It is probably easier to start at the level of an individual class. The primary
> question that you have to ask yourself is 'how will the (attentive, hard-
> working, etc...) student have been changed by this class?'
> (http://www.admin.ex.ac.uk/academic/-tls/tqa/1outcome.htm, p. 1).

Faculty must assess,

> Are you dealing, for example, with knowledge, skills or understanding? Are
> the desired outcomes more to do with values, attitudes or motivation? One of
> the key purposes of this approach is that the students are clear about the
> expectation for learning outcomes, and about the expectation of them for work
> outside the class in order to meet those outcomes
> (http://www.admin.ex.ac.uk/academic/tls/tqa-/1outcome.htm, p. 1).

The students in the course want to learn about the fashion industry from every

angle. It is important to know that the implementation of The Fashion Industry course

is having a positive impact on students in the Fashion Program. A way to know if this

course is effective is by analyzing the expectations and learning outcomes of the

students enrolled.

The result of this study will be provided to Fashion Program advisors and faculty. These results will provide a better understanding of whether The Fashion Industry course is effectiveness and contributes to the overall effectiveness of the Fashion Program. It may be used to better enhance the content of the current Fashion Industry course or other courses in the Fashion Program to ensure learning effectiveness.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations were applied to this research study:

1. The study was limited to those students in the Fashion Program at Old Dominion University.

2. The study was limited to those undergraduate students currently enrolled in the Fashion Industry course.

3. Participants in The Fashion Industry course were provided a survey which was to analyze their expectations and outcomes.

4. The research period was during the fall semester of 2005.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were applied to this research:

1. Students' attitudes will vary according to their expectations.

2. Student expectations and learning outcomes will be determined as a result of this study.

3. There will be a change in student expectations and outcomes.

4. The information and data analyzed in this study would be used to determine the effectiveness of the course.

Procedures

A survey was developed asking students enrolled in The Fashion Industry course a series of questions about what they expected from the course and what they got out of the course. Also the survey questioned whether The Fashion Industry course met their expectations. Surveys were distributed to each student enrolled in the course. The questions will require checking answers on lists and writing short answers. The expectations of the students and the outcomes will be analyzed and compared to determine conclusions.

The results of the survey will be collected, organized and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of The Fashion Industry course. The data from this study will be made available to Old Dominion University's Occupational and Technical Studies department chair and faculty for future use in determining the validity and effectiveness of The Fashion Industry course.

Definition of Terms

The following terms associated with this study were defined to provide the reader with a better understanding in this research study:

1. Fashion Industry- "Involves the makers and sellers of fashionable clothing" (Princeton University, 2003, p. 1).

2. Fashion Merchandising- "Fashion Merchandising involves all activities related to the development, buying, and selling of merchandise. This major will

develop skills associated with buying, apparel production, selection and coordination, fibers and fabrics, computer aided design, product compatibility, product development, quality assessment and control" (www.demt.tcu.edu/prog_merch.htm, 2005, p. 1)

3. Expectations- "Act or state of expecting" (Patterson, 2004, p. 97). This refers to what the student anticipates to learn in the course.

4. Learning Outcomes- "The issue; result; consequence" (Patterson, 2004, p. 196). This refers to the perceived knowledge that the student has gained as a result of taking the course.

5. Effectiveness- "Having the power to produce" (Patterson, 2004, p. 87). This refers to the overall impact the course had on the student and if the course had validity in its objectives.

6. Buyers- "Fashion buyers select and purchase apparel and accessories from designers, manufacturers or wholesalers for retail sale to their customers. Buyers use their fashion sense, knowledge of trends, and understanding of their target customers' desires to create a range of selection within their retail stores" (www. fashion-schools.org, 2003, p. 1).

7. Merchandise Managers- "Responsible for overseeing the conceptualization, design, construction, selling and distribution of a fashion product" (www. fashion-schools.org, 2003, p. 1).

8. Fashion Coordinators- "Fashion Coordinators are responsible for creating a unified look and feel across all fashion divisions of a department store, design

house, or fashion magazine. They are constantly monitoring industry publications and talking to designers in order to understand industry trends" (www. fashion-schools.org, 2003, p. 1).

9. Advertising- "Advertising is the non-personal communication of information usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature about products, services or ideas by identified sponsors through the various media" (Bovee, 1992, p. 7).

10. Personal selling- "Personal communication of information to persuade a prospective customer to buy something. Either a good, service, idea, or something else which satisfies that individual's needs" (www.google.com, 2005, p. 1).

11. Buying- Purchasing merchandise from a designer to sell at a retailer.

12. Personnel management- "Personnel management is the management task during which the human resources are managed" (www.google.com, 2005, p. 1).

13. Visual Merchandisers- "Visual Merchandisers are responsible for conceptualizing, designing and implementing window and in-store displays for both online and brick and mortar retail stores" (www. fashion-schools.org, 2003, p. 1).

14. Fashion Writers- "Fashion writers may work on staff or freelance to write fashion-related articles for various media outlets such as fashion magazines, newspapers, websites, television shows, and more" (www. fashion-schools.org, 2003, p. 1).

15. Promotion- "A message issued in behalf of some product or cause or idea or person or institution" (www.google.com, 2005, p. 1).

16. Retailing- "All activities involved in selling goods or services directly to the final consumers" (www.google.com, 2005, p. 1).

Overview of Chapters

The first chapter of this study contained a brief introduction about the Fashion Program at Old Dominion University and the requirements needed in order to complete the program. The Fashion Industry course is an essential course that students have to take to complete the program and its effectiveness is significant to the Fashion Program. An overview of the concepts learned in the course was mentioned to emphasize what the students were supposed to have learned throughout the course. Whether the effectiveness of the course is positive or negative needed to be researched.

Chapter II will provide in-depth literature on The Fashion Industry course including topics on defining the fashion industry, information on the course itself and student expectations and learning outcomes. Chapter III will reveal the methods and procedures used to collect and analyze the information needed to research the expectations and outcomes of the students in The Fashion Industry course. Chapter IV will actually present the findings about the effectiveness of the course. Finally, Chapter V will summarize the research about the effectiveness of The Fashion Industry course according to the student expectations and it will provide conclusions and recommendations for the course.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

This research study was undertaken to determine whether student expectations

matched their learning outcomes of The Fashion Industry course. Previous

investigations did not reveal current information as to what students expected from

The Fashion Industry course or the knowledge that they gained from the course.

These two factors have not been correlated. The following information was provided

to support the need for this assessment: What is the Fashion Industry? What

encompasses The Fashion Industry course? What competencies are expected from

students in this course? What is the correlation between student expectations and their

learning outcomes?

Defining the Fashion Industry

"Most Americans today are more interested than ever in having good clothes"

(Vogt, 2002, p. vix). The fashion industry is a big industry and continuously changing

and growing. If the fashion business did not change, it would not survive. The fashion

industries are "those engaged in manufacturing the materials and finished products

used in the production of apparel and accessories for women, men and children"

(Stone, 2001, p. 4). However, the fashion industry is not a clearly defined entity. "It is

a complex of many different industries, not all of which appear at first glance to have

anything of fashion among their products" (Dickerson & Jarnow, 1997, p. 2). There is

a broader term which is called fashion business. The fashion business "includes all the

industries and services connected with fashion" (Stone, 2001, p. 4). "The fashion business has intensity, vigor, energy and motion" (Stone, 2001, p. xix). Unlike most other businesses where conformity is the norm, fashion is all about innovation and creativity in those who work in the industry. Every segment of the industry has been required to change to meet new competitive challenges. "We find a fashion industry that has restructured itself to respond to global competition" (Dickerson & Jarnow, 1997, p. vii).

To understand the basics of the fashion industry, one must understand the dynamics of the fashion business. "Fashion is one of the greatest economic forces in present day life" (Stone, 2001, p. 3). The business of fashion contributes to the economy. The primary objective of business is to make a profit. "The fashion business is composed of numerous industries all working to keep consumers of fashion satisfied" (Stone, 2001, p. 70). If they do not succeed in being profitable, even the most popular fashion lines will not continue. "Although the fashion industry is among the most exciting fields in the world, it is also difficult, demanding, unpredictable and exhausting" (Dickerson & Jarnow, 1997, p. 9).

"The competitive ethos of the fashion industry revolves around seasonality" (Easey, 1995, p. 1). This means that the industry has an interest in developing new products for the consumer at the expense of existing items. "The fashion business is often paradoxical in its elements" (Stone, 2001, p. 1). It is both an art and a science. It is viewed as an art because of the creativity that is instilled in the end products. It is

also viewed as a science because of the technological advances that contributes to what it is today.

"The fashion industry has a national importance" (Dickerson & Jarnow, 1997, p. 4). It contributes significantly to the economy of the United States through the materials and services it purchases and through the wages and taxes it pays. This industry has created jobs in which millions of people are employed. Alongside the impact of the fashion industry are the major segments of the industry. They include the component suppliers, finished product suppliers and the retail distributors.

The Fashion Industry Course

The Fashion Industry course is a required three-credit course that students who are Fashion majors at Old Dominion University have to take in order to complete the program. As cited in the Old Dominion University Course Catalog:

The course is designed for marketing education and fashion students. It covers fashion as a force which alters patterns of change and growth in the fashion industry to include designers, manufacturers, buyers, retailers, and customers. Students explore the latest trends in style and materials (Old Dominion University, 2005, p. 329).

The course serves as an overview of the apparel market activity. As a result of the course, the learner should be able to analyze fashion concepts and prediction techniques, analyze trends and innovations as seen by the major fashion designers, identify terminology used in the fashion industry, relate the use of textiles to the design, production, and merchandising of apparel and home fashions, analyze the fashion marketing system from the design phase to the ultimate consumer, identify variations of promotion and distribution based on the cultural industry, select and

identify major technological advancements in the fashion industry and understand the foreign and domestic differences within retailing.

Analyzing fashion concepts and predicting techniques means that the student identifies concepts such as the fashion life cycle and analyzes them. As far as a prediction technique, students predict today's fashion trends by participating in fashion forecasting and using other prediction techniques. The next competency for the class involved reporting trends and innovations as seen by the fashion designers. With this, students participate in reporting trends based on the collections of the fashion designers. The third competency asks students to identify terminology related to the fashion industry. Fashion has its own jargon and being able to understand and use the vocabulary associated with the industry is essential. Students must be able to identify and understand the terminology. The next competency allows students to incorporate textile use to design, production and merchandising of apparel fashions and home fashions. Textiles are a huge part of fashion. "Americans use a lot of textile fabric. Each person consumes nearly 82 pounds of textile fabric annually…" (Stone, 2001, p. 105). Another competency that students should develop is to be able to know about the fashion marketing system from the beginning phase to the last phase. Students must be able to understand that "fashion marketing can be viewed as a process" (Easey, 1995, p. 11) and many variables are affected and contribute to its overall operation. The six competencies involve identifying different forms of promotion and distribution based on the diverse fashion industry. This is where students must be able to understand the channel of distribution also known as the

"fashion pipeline" (Dickerson & Jarnow, 1997, p. 7) and the different ways to promote a product. Next, students must be able to recognize how technology has influenced the fashion industry. "Without machines, clothing could never be mass-produced" (Stone, 2001, p. 2). Technology has changed the way that clothing is made. Students must be able to identify the advancements involved in the production of fashion items. The last competency that students are responsible for is knowing domestic and foreign retailing differences. The global market has a huge influence in the retailing industry and it is important for students to be able to recognize and compare/contrast differences within retail.

There are four required activities that students have to complete in order to get credit for the course. "Each activity was designed to increase a student's knowledge of the fashion business and develop strong oral and written communication skills" (Davis, 2004, p. 3). The first activity is the History of a Fashion Item. Students have to trace the history of a fashion item, which can be apparel or an accessory. They have to trace the item from its earliest recorded times and show how the item had adapted and changed throughout its use. The second project is entitled the Fashion Designer Profile, where students have to prepare a profile on a fashion designer. The project includes fashion statements or the unique character of the work for which the person is noted. Next is the third activity. This activity is called Fashion Forecasting-Identifying a Fashion Trend. This activity involves identifying, developing and presenting fashion direction in fabrics, color, and style and putting them into the content of the culture and lifestyles of consumers. The forecaster explains what is

happening, why the trend is developing, and who is leading. Fashion forecasting is a

resource for product development, merchandising, marketing and retailing executives.

Trend reporting begins by describing the appeal of a trend through labeling. The label

may be a look, a mood or spirit, a lifestyle message, a target market, a brand image, a

designer's name, a concept, an inspiration or a pop culture. The last activity involves

the choosing between one of two activities. Students can either create a Profile of a

Fashion Business or create a Fashion Magazine Evaluation. For the first activity,

students have to choose a major retailer in the fashion industry and complete a profile

on that business. For the second activity that students can choose, they have to

analyze four different fashion magazines.

Student Expectations and Learning Outcomes

"Students have high expectations of their universities, and these expectations

are of greater complexity..." (Coaldrake, 2002, p. 7). However, why are student

expectations changing?

> Changes in student expectations are often attributed to the rise of the 'student
> as customer'... anyone who has dealt with student complaints is familiar with
> students pointing out that they or their parents have paid significant sums of
> money, and expect high standards of service and quality in return (Coaldrake,
> 2002, p. 10).

Students go to college for education and training and they expect to gain the

best knowledge from the courses that they take. "It is an interactive process of co-

generation of learning outcomes" (Coaldrake, 2002, p. 24).

However, the learning process does not occur unless the learner wants to learn.

Many learners, particularly at the undergraduate level, are not sufficiently aware of their own learning styles…Rather their expectations of how learning occurs and what is 'education' are formed by their previous experience (Coaldrake, 2002, p. 25).

Students may develop unrealistic expectations or they may develop really low expectations. "Students' expectations are as much of their own roles, responsibilities and commitment as they are of universities" (James, 2002, p. 71). Student preferences and expectations are issues that need to be analyzed. Student expectations deal with both quality ("Am I getting value for money?") and personal relevance ("Is this course really right for me?").

The matching of student expectations against the realities of higher education is from satisfaction with the features of the day-to-day experience. And also to particular beliefs about the career and life outcomes that course completion might make possible (James, 2002, p. 71).

Perhaps the most vulnerable students in term of course 'fit' are those who are very idealistic about pursuing knowledge for its own sake. Students who were highly committed to learning…might be seriously dissatisfied or disappointed. Yet this disappointment may not reflect any particular problem with the course itself, for the unusually high expectations of some students and it may be very difficult for universities to meet (James, 2002, p. 75).

"A vexed question remains around the extent to which students themselves can dictate the way in which they engage with learning and access knowledge" (Dunkin, 2002, p. 33). Some individual students may prefer to score an effortless pass on an easy course to get the piece of paper that they think they paid for. Most students go into a course expecting to learn the maximum that they can. While others just sign up for a course and hardly expect anything from it but a decent grade.

So how can one identify a learning outcome? "It is probably easier to start at the level of an individual class" (http://www.admin.ex.ac.uk/academic/tls/tqa-/1outcome.htm, p. 1). There are three different types of learning outcomes. There are subject-specific outcomes, core academic outcomes and personal/transferable outcomes. Subject-specific outcomes deal with the actual subject, knowledge or skills specific to the subject. Core academic outcomes relate to the knowledge or skills outside of the subject and focus more on the academic side. Personal/transferable outcomes are "sometimes called "generic" or "life skills", and the ability to transfer knowledge, skills or values from one situation to another" (http://www.admin.ex.ac.uk/academic-/tls/tqa/1outcome.htm, p. 1).

Summary

Chapter II, Review of Literature, revealed the most intriguing, fast-paced and exciting industry in the world: the fashion industry. The fashion industry was defined and its basics and significance were explained. The review also analyzed The Fashion Industry course, explaining what it is and student competencies. Finally, research on student expectations was analyzed to determine the relationship between the student and the university. The next chapter, Methods and Procedures, will reveal how the study attained the selection of the sample, the survey instrument and its implementation.

Chapter III

Methods and Procedures

Chapter III reveals the methods and procedures used to collect the data for this research study. These methods and procedures are presented in the following sections: Research Population, Survey Instrument, Data Collection Method, Statistical Analysis and Summary.

Research Population

The data for this research was collected from all students enrolled in the Fashion Merchandising Program who were taking The Fashion Industry course at Old Dominion University between August 2005 and December 2005. The total population was twenty-two. A list of students was provided to ensure the total population was surveyed.

Survey Instrument

The type of instrument used in this research study was a survey. There were open-ended questions on general course attendance, activities and media used to help learning, course topics, course competencies, expectations and learning outcomes. The survey was developed using open-ended questions based on the research goals of the study. These goals were:

1. Determine student expectations before taking The Fashion Industry course.

2. Determine student learning outcomes after taking The Fashion Industry course.

3. Compare the attitudes that existed before taking The Fashion Industry course to those developed by completing The Fashion Industry course.

4. Determine whether The Fashion Industry course was effective compared to student expectations and learning outcomes.

5. Determine if the content learned was significant to The Fashion Industry course objectives and competencies.

The questions were open-ended. The first few questions were to determine if the instructional strategies used in the course were beneficial to the student. Then student expectations were determined through a series of questions. Checklists were provided to assist the student in remembering certain content. Next learning outcomes were determined and improvements were inquired. A copy of the cover letter is located in Appendix A. A copy of the survey is located in Appendix B.

Data Collection Method

The survey was handed to students in The Fashion Industry course during the scheduled course time. It was only distributed once because all of the students enrolled in the course were present during the allocated time. All of the students had to be in class on that day because of their in-class presentations. The time that the students had to answer the survey was at the beginning of class on November 29, 2005. A cover letter was provided with the survey. The cover letter included the purpose for the survey and attempted to convince the students to respond. Permission to survey students was received from the human subjects committee.

Statistical Analysis

The data from the survey was reviewed to ensure that the responses were properly recorded. The open-ended questions were organized based on similarity in responses and rank ordered by category. The information collected in the checklists was tabulated to the ranked order of the responses.

Summary

This chapter explained the methods and procedures used to collect data relevant to the research goals. This chapter presented the methods and procedures used to collect data The Fashion Industry course was analyzed through the use of an open-ended survey. The data collected from the survey is presented in Chapter IV, Findings.

Chapter IV

Findings

The purpose of this study was to compare Old Dominion University Fashion

Merchandising student expectations for The Fashion Industry course and its

learning outcomes. This chapter will explain the results of the research and

analyze the data collected. The research goals studied were:

1. Determine student expectations before taking The Fashion Industry course.

2. Determine student learning outcomes after taking The Fashion Industry course.

3. Determine if there was a change in expectations verses the learning outcomes of taking The Fashion Industry course.

4. Compare the attitudes that existed before taking The Fashion Industry course to those developed by completing The Fashion Industry course.

5. Determine whether The Fashion Industry course was effective compared to student expectations and learning outcomes.

The method that was used to collect the data for this study was through a survey

that consisted of open-ended questions relating to expectations, instruction and

learning outcomes. There were four checklists used to determine attendance and

the course's learning objectives expected by students and to be mastered by them.

Population Responding

The total number of individuals who responded to the survey was twenty-two. The

survey was distributed November 29, 2005. A total of twenty-two students were

enrolled in the Fashion Industry course in the Fall of 2005. The response rate for the study was 100%.

Question Analysis

The first open-ended question in the survey asked why the student enrolled in The Fashion Industry course. The results indicated that the highest percentage of students enrolled in the Fashion Industry course (68%) because it was a requirement of the Fashion Program at Old Dominion University. While only seven students (32%) wanted to take the course because of their personal interest in fashion. See Table 1.

Table 1. REASONS FOR ENROLLMENT IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY COURSE		
Reason	**Number**	**Percentage**
Requirement	15	68
Interest in fashion	7	32

Question 2 asked about class attendance and whether the student attended everyday, almost always or never. This question was in the form of a checklist. Respondents indicated that thirteen of students (59%) attended class daily, and nine students (41%) went to class almost always. See Table 2.

Question 3 of the survey determined whether the course activities helped the student achieve his/her expectations and reinforced his/her learning. Fifteen students (68%) felt the course activities were effective.

Table 2. STUDENT ATTENDANCE		
Attendance	**Number**	**Percentage**
Everyday	13	59
Almost always	9	41
Never	0	0

The seven remaining students (32%) did not think the course activities were at all effective. Among those seven students (32%), one student cited that the activities were too ambiguous, while another student felt that time on activities should have been spent on fashion terminology and fashion careers. See Table 3.

Table 3. EFFECTIVENESS OF COURSE ACTIVITIES		
Effectiveness	**Number**	**Percentage**
Yes	15	68
No	7	32

Question 4 inquired about student feelings of videos shown throughout the course. The responses to this particular question varied. Eight students (36%) said that the videos that they watched were interesting, thus effective. However, fourteen students (64%) responded that there were not any videos shown in the course. See Table 4.

Table 4. COURSE VIDEOS		
Effectiveness	**Number**	**Percentage**
N/A	14	64
Effective	8	36
Non-effective	0	0

Question 5 focused on whether resources used were beneficial to learning about the fashion industry. Fourteen Fashion Industry students (64%) stated that the resources in class were of use to them. Two students (9%) said that the resources were not effective. Of those two students one student responded that the only resource was the text and the text was only good for learning just about fashion history. The remaining six students (27%) responded not applicable concerning effectiveness of the course resources. See Table 5.

Table 5. FASHION INDUSTRY COURSE RESOURCES		
Effectiveness	Number	Percentage
Yes	14	64
No	2	9
Somewhat	6	27

Question 6 asked whether presentations in class were useful. The highest percentage of students (59%) found use in the course presentations, some adding that they were informative. Five students (23%) did not believe the in-class presentations were useful and four students (18%) felt the presentations were useful, to some extent. See Table 6.

Table 6. PRESENTATION USEFULNESS		
Usefulness	Number	Percentage
Yes	13	59
No	5	23
Somewhat	4	18

Question 7 determined student opinions about the effectiveness of the

instructor. Eleven students (50%) liked the instructor and felt her to be effective.

Seven students (32%) stated that the instructor was fairly effective. Three students

(14%) in the Fashion Industry course responded that the instructor was not

effective, while one student (4%) did not respond. See Table 7.

Table 7. PROFESSOR EFFECTIVENESS		
Effectiveness	Number	Percentage
Effective	11	50
Somewhat effective	7	32
Not effective	3	14
No comment	1	4

Question eight inquired about student overall expectations for the course.

The highest percentage of students (73%) responded that they expected to learn

more about the fashion industry. One student (4%) expected more fashion-related

activities, while another student (4%) expected the Fashion Industry course to be

simply fun. Another student (4%) expected to have fashion expertise and three

students (14%) did not have any expectations for this course. See Table 8.

Table 8. STUDENT EXPECTATIONS FOR FASHION INDUSTRY COURSE		
Student Expectations	Number	Percentage
To learn more about fashion industry	16	73
More activities	1	4
Fun course	1	4
Become fashion expert	1	4
No expectations	3	14

Question 9 focused on the topics that students expected to learn in the course. The topics were taken from the course objectives from The Fashion Industry course's syllabus. This question was in the form of a checklist. Twenty-one students (95%) looked forward to learning about fashion history. Twenty-one students (95%) expected to learn about fashion forecasting. Nineteen students (86%) anticipated learning about fashion careers. See Table 9.

Table 9. STUDENT CONTENT EXPECTATIONS		
Topic	**Number**	**Percentage**
History of fashion	21	95
Fashion forecasting	21	95
Careers	19	86
Fashion merchandise	18	82
Manufacturing	18	82
Fashion retailers	18	82
Textiles	17	77
Fashion design	17	77
Details and trimmings	17	77
Advertising/visual merchandising	17	77
Global fashion	16	73
Fashion accessories	16	73
Furs and leathers	15	68
Accessory and apparel	15	68
Resident buying offices	15	68
Intimate apparel	12	54
Cosmetics and fragrances	12	54
Home fashions	9	41

Question 10 determined the topics that students felt they learned throughout the course. The topics were taken from the course objectives from The Fashion Industry course's syllabus. This question was also in the form of a checklist. Twenty-two students (100%) felt they learned about the history of

fashion. Twenty-one students (95%) learned about careers in fashion. Nineteen

students (86%) felt they learned about fashion details and trimmings. See Table

10.

Table 10. STUDENT CONTENT KNOWLEDGE		
Topic	Number	Percentage
History of fashion	22	100
Careers	21	95
Details and trimmings	19	86
Fashion forecasting	18	82
Furs and leathers	18	82
Manufacturing	17	77
Intimate apparel	17	77
Fashion accessories	17	77
Fashion merchandise	16	73
Accessory and apparel	16	73
Fashion retailers	15	68
Global fashion	15	68
Textiles	15	68
Resident buying offices	13	59
Fashion design	10	45
Advertising/visual merchandising	10	45
Cosmetics and fragrances	7	32
Home fashions	5	23

The next question, Question 11, asked students about the

competencies they felt they have mastered. The competencies were taken from the

course competencies from The Fashion Industry. This question was in the form of

a checklist. Fourteen students (64%) felt as though they mastered how to analyze

fashion concepts. Thirteen students (59%) felt they could analyze fashion designer

trends and reports. Thirteen students (54%) also felt they could identify fashion

industry terminology. See Table 11.

Table 11. STUDENT LEARNING COMPETENCIES		
Competencies	**Number**	**Percentage**
Analyze fashion concepts	14	64
Fashion designer trends and reports	13	59
Identify fashion industry terminology	13	59
Fashion prediction techniques	12	54
Identify fashion industry technology	11	50
Identify promotion and distribution concepts	9	41
Analyze foreign and domestic retailing	6	27
Relating use of textiles to apparel and home fashions	4	18
Analyze fashion marketing system	4	18

Seven students (32%) felt that their expectations and learning outcomes for

the course did not match. Four students (18%) felt that their expectations for the

Fashion Industry course matched their learning outcomes to some extent. See

Table 12.

Table 12. STUDENT EXPECTATIONS MATCHING LEARNING OUTCOMES		
Expectations vs. Outcomes	**Number**	**Percentage**
Yes	11	50
No	7	32
Somewhat	4	18

fashion career content learned in the Fashion Industry course. Seven students (7%)

did not feel confident about careers in the fashion industry, with one student

stating that they had to teach themselves. One student (4%) stated that they learned

what was needed from the course as far as fashion careers, to some extent. See

Table 13.

Table 13. FASHION CAREER CONTENT		
Career Content Confidence	**Number**	**Percentage**
Yes	14	64
No	7	32
Somewhat	1	4

Question 14 was the last question and summed up the survey by inquiring

about any student suggestions to improve the course. Twelve students (54%) did

not have any suggestions for the course. Two students (9%) suggested a new

professor. One student (4%) advised keeping the old professor. Another student

(4%) recommended more hands-on activities and emphasized having better

professor preparedness before class. One other student (4%) stated as a suggestion

to have more time spent on the relevance of careers. Another student (4%)

suggested a more experienced professor. Again, one student (4%) proposed a

lesser workload for the 200-level course. One student (4%) recommended having

more effective communication between the professor and student. On student

(4%) proposed to have more examples. Another student (4%) advised to have less

lecturing straight from the textbook.

Summary

This chapter consisted of the findings of the research study. The research goals were provided in the beginning of the chapter as a reference to the survey questions. A brief analysis of the survey procedure was included as well. The data collected was analyzed and the results were tabulated to determine student expectation and learning outcomes, which in turn determined the overall effectiveness of The Fashion Industry course. A review of the numbers and percentages were provided within tables. Chapter V of this research study will consist of a summary of the study, conclusion that has been drawn and future recommendations.

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of the Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations was to summarize content of the study and draw conclusions in response to the research goals of the study. Recommendations were also made in response to the findings in the previous chapter.

Summary

The problem of this study was to analyze the expectations of Old Dominion University students enrolled in The Fashion Industry to determine the course's effectiveness to Fashion Merchandising majors. The fashion industry is a very fast-paced industry and the course offered at Old Dominion University, The Fashion Industry, serves as an introductory course and is an overview of the fashion industry. The purpose of this course is designed to develop professional teachers, trainers, and fashion specialists so they gain an understanding of the analysis of fashion. The Fashion Industry course is a required three-credit course that students who are Fashion majors at Old Dominion University have to take in order to complete the program. During the course, students evaluated many fashion concepts and predicted different techniques, defined fashion terminology, analyzed fashion designer trends, studied textiles, explored the fashion marketing system, evaluated promotion and distribution strategies, investigated technological advancements and explored retailing in the fashion industry. As a result of the

course, the learner should be able to analyze fashion concepts and prediction

techniques, analyze trends and innovations as seen by the major fashion designers,

identify terminology used in the fashion industry, relate the use of textiles to the

design, production, and merchandising of apparel and home fashions, analyze the

fashion marketing system from the design phase to the ultimate consumer, identify

variations of promotion and distribution based on the cultural industry, select and

identify major technological advancements in the fashion industry and understand

the foreign and domestic differences within retailing. Although there are

thousands of research studies on the concepts taught during The Fashion Industry

course, the expectations before and the outcomes after the course have not been

researched. It is important to know that the implementation of The Fashion

Industry course is having a positive impact on students in the Fashion Program. A

way to know if this course is effective is by analyzing the expectations and

learning outcomes of the students enrolled. On November 29, 2005, surveys were

given to all students enrolled in the course at the beginning of class. The survey

was distributed once and only once because all enrolled students were present on

November 29, 2005. The survey consisted of fourteen open-ended questions, with

three of the questions being checklists. All of the students volunteered to

participate in the research study. The total number of possible responses was

twenty-two, making the response rate to be 100 percent. The data collected from

the surveys were analyzed, processed, and presented in text and tables.

Conclusions

The results of this research study revealed that there were factors that played a role in the gap between student expectations for The Fashion Industry course and their learning outcomes. The following conclusions were based on the results of the research study on student expectations versus student learning outcomes. The research goals were created to assist in solving the problem of the research study. The following are the research goals and the responses to each. The responses are based on the data collected through the survey of students.

1.) Determine student expectations before taking The Fashion Industry course.

From the responses from Question 8 of the survey, "What were your expectations from The Fashion Industry course?", student expectations varied. The highest percentage of students responded that they expected to learn more about the fashion industry. One of the student's expectations was for more fashion-related activities, while another student expected The Fashion Industry course to be simply fun. Another student's expectations were to develop fashion expertise and three students did not have any expectations for this course. Wanting to learn about the fashion industry indicated that students were expecting to learn about all of the content topics presented throughout this course relating specifically to the fashion industry. It should be stated that other courses are offered in this major that cover additional content related to this major.

2.) Determine student learning outcomes after taking The Fashion Industry course.

According to the responses from Question 11, "Place a check by the learning competencies that you feel you have mastered", student learning outcomes varied. Fourteen students felt as though they mastered how to analyze fashion concepts. Thirteen students felt they could analyze fashion designer trends and reports. Thirteen students also felt they could identify fashion industry terminology. Twelve students felt that they could perform fashion prediction techniques. Eleven students felt they can identify fashion industry technology and six students felt they mastered how to analyze foreign and domestic retailing. Nine students mastered identifying promotion and distribution techniques. Four students felt they mastered analyzing the fashion marketing system. Based on the percentages, students are not mastering all their core competencies. After taking The Fashion Industry course, all twenty-two students should have been able to analyze fashion concepts, analyze fashion designer trends and reports, identify fashion industry terminology, perform fashion prediction techniques, identify fashion industry technology, analyze foreign and domestic retailing, identify promotion and distribution techniques, and analyze the fashion marketing system. Instructional methods used in the course ensured students were able to perform

these competencies effectively. However, students continue to reinforce these learning outcomes by other courses for this major.

3.) Determine if there was a change in expectations versus the learning outcomes of taking The Fashion Industry course.

According to Question 9, "What topics did you expect to learn about?" and Question 10, "Place a check by the topics that you feel you learned throughout the course", there was a change between expectations and learning outcomes. In order to determine the change, each student's differences in responses to the two questions were carefully analyzed. The topics the students checked for Question 9 and 10 are presented for each student. Students placed a check beside the topics they *expected to learn* and what they *felt they learned,* or *actually learned.* **Student 1** *expected to learn* about the history of fashion; *actually learned* about the history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing and fashion retailers. **Student 2** *expected to learn* about the history of fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* about history of fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion

accessories, details and trimmings, accessory and apparel, and manufacturing.

Student 3 *expected to learn* about history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, fashion forecasting, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, and fashion retailers. **Student 4** *expected to learn* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, furs and leathers, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, and fashion forecasting. **Student 5** *expected to learn* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, fashion merchandise, fashion accessories, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, and advertising/visual merchandising; they *actually learned* history of fashion, careers, and fashion forecasting. **Student 6** *expected to learn* about careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings,

cosmetics and fragrances, fashion forecasting, fashion design, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, manufacturing and fashion retailers. **Student 7** *expected to learn* about history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, fashion forecasting, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising. **Student 8's** *expectations were to learn* about history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, fashion merchandise, fashion forecasting, fashion design, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising. **Student 9** *expected to learn* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances,

home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, careers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, fashion forecasting, manufacturing and fashion retailers. **Student 10** *expected to learn* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, fashion forecasting, manufacturing and resident buying offices. **Student 11** *expected to learn* about history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices and fashion retailers. **Student 12** *expected to learn* about history of fashion, global

fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, details and trimmings, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, careers, textiles, details and trimmings, fashion forecasting, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices and fashion retailers. **Student 13** *expected to learn* about history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising. **Student 14** *expected to learn* history of fashion, careers, textiles, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, furs and leathers, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, fashion forecasting, accessory and apparel, manufacturing and advertising/visual merchandising. **Student 15** *expected to learn* about history of fashion, furs and leathers and fashion forecasting; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, details and trimmings and fashion design. **Student 16** *expected to*

learn history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, fashion merchandise, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing and fashion retailers; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, fashion forecasting, accessory and apparel and fashion retailers. **Student 17** *expected to learn* about history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising. **Student 18** *expected to learn* history of fashion, fashion forecasting and fashion retailers; *actually learned* history of fashion, careers, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, accessory and apparel, resident buying offices, and advertising/visual merchandising. **Student 19** *expected to learn* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances,

home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising. **Student 20** *expected to learn* about history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising. **Student 21** *expected to learn* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, fashion merchandise, details and trimmings, fashion forecasting, fashion design, manufacturing and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory

and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising Lastly, **Student 22** *expected to learn* about history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising; *actually learned* history of fashion, global fashion, careers, textiles, furs and leathers, fashion merchandise, intimate apparel, fashion accessories, details and trimmings, cosmetics and fragrances, home fashions, fashion forecasting, fashion design, accessory and apparel, manufacturing, resident buying offices, fashion retailers and advertising/visual merchandising. Only three students' expectations and learning outcomes remained unchanged, while the remaining nineteen students had significant changes in expectations verses learning outcomes. The gap between student expectations and learning outcomes is caused by lack of content on topics learned throughout the course, especially Cosmetics and Fragrances and Home Fashions, which received the lowest percentages. Overall, students were aware of possible fashion industry topics that they wanted or needed to learn about before entering The Fashion Industry course. However, when students left the course, many expectations were not fulfilled.

4.) Compare the attitudes that existed before taking The Fashion Industry course to those developed by completing The Fashion Industry course.

According to the responses from Question 1, "Why did you take this course?", the question helps figure out student attitudes prior to the course. The results from the survey indicate that the highest percentage of students enrolled in The Fashion Industry course because it was a requirement of the Fashion Program at Old Dominion University. The remaining percentage of students enrolled in the course because of their personal interest in the fashion industry. Question 13 helps figure out student attitudes as a result of the course. Knowing if the student learned about the fashion industry enough to picture a careers path in the industry influences the attitude about course content. Fourteen students stated that they learned about careers from the course, seven stated that they did not and one student responded that they grasped the content to some extent. This course is an introductory course required by the Fashion major. Some students, who took the course for the fact that it was required, may not have expected to learn about all of the content topics presented throughout the course and developing course competencies may not have been a huge factor. Those students who had an interest in the fashion industry, more than likely, expected to learn about certain content areas and develop course competencies after completing the course. Again, the major has many courses that further explore these topics.

5.) Determine whether The Fashion Industry course was effective compared to student expectations and learning outcomes.

Knowing the contents that make up a course to determine the course's effectiveness is relevant. Questions 3, 4, 5, 6 and 14 were all relevant in

determining this research goal. Question 3 determined whether the course

activities helped the students achieve their expectations or reinforce their learning.

Fifteen students felt the course activities were effective. The seven remaining

students did not think the course activities were at all effective. Among those

seven students, one student cited that the activities were too ambiguous, while

another student felt that time on activities should have been spent on fashion

terminology and fashion careers. Question 4 inquired about how students felt

about the effectiveness of the videos shown in class. Eight students said that the

videos that they watched were interesting, thus effective. Question 5 determined

whether the resources used in The Fashion Industry course were useful. Fourteen

students stated that the resources in class were of use to them. Only two students

said that the resources were not effective. Of those two students, one student

responded that the only resource was the text and the text was only good for

learning just about fashion history. The remaining six students felt unsure about

the effectiveness of the course resources. Question 6 asked if the presentation in

class were of use. The highest percentage of students found use in the course

presentations, some adding that they were informative. Five students did not think

the in-class presentations were useful and four students felt the presentations were

useful, to some degree. From the comments made in Question 14, all of the

previous responses to Questions 3, 4, 5 and 6 link together to determine if the

course was effective compared to student expectations and learning outcomes.

Question 14 inquired about any student suggestions to improve the course. Two

students suggested a new professor. One student advised keeping the old professor. Another student recommended more hands-on activities and emphasized having better professor preparedness before class. One other student stated as a suggestion to have more time spent on the relevance of careers. Another student, suggested a more experienced professor. Again, one student proposed a lesser workload for the 200-level course. One student even recommended having more effective communication between the professor and student. Another student advised to have less lecturing straight from the textbook.

All of these suggestions reflect what needs to be done to The Fashion Industry course in order for it to be more effective. Based on the results of this research study, it can be concluded that The Fashion Industry course is not as effective as it should be. Students signed up for the course primarily because they wanted to learn more about the fashion industry. As far as learning outcomes for the course, the percentages were not high enough to assume that The Fashion Industry course is an effective course for learning the fashion industry. Only three students' topic expectations matched their topics learned throughout the course. The only topic that every student felt they learned was the history of fashion. As far as learning competencies mastered in the course, the competency that received the lowest rating was being able to analyze the use of textiles to apparel and home fashions. These statistics should be at a higher rate. There was definitely evidence of a huge gap between student expectations and learning outcomes. Every aspect of The Fashion Industry course needs to be re-evaluated so students who expect

more and want to learn more about the fashion industry can have these opportunities. These aspects include course instruction methods, core content, course competencies, course objectives, course purpose and course work for students.

Recommendations

Some of the suggestions collected form the surveys suggest that students are not satisfied with the course (46%). Apparently, there is room for improvement. The course objectives and course purpose need to be re-evaluated by the Fashion Program to determine why students are not grasping the objectives intended for the course. Another suggestion would be to have an evaluator go into class while it is in effect to evaluate instructional strategies used. As far as core content, a recommendation could be to change the textbook used in the course to a more specific textbook that actually does not cover too much information; but the relevant information that students can grasp more efficiently. Another recommendation would be to analyze each learning competency and ensure that each one is covered thoroughly throughout the course. Course competencies should be re-evaluated and changed. Course competencies are the skills and knowledge that students are expected to perform in real world settings. The course work for students needs to be assessed to ensure assignments relate to the course objectives and competencies to ensure transfer of learning. After taking The Fashion Industry course, students going into the fashion industry need to know fashion terminology and how to analyze fashion prediction techniques, just

to name a few. Too many of the course competencies had low percentages of effectiveness. Having taken the course as a fashion major undergraduate at Old Dominion University, nothing has changed in course instruction methods, core content, course competencies, course objectives, course purpose, and course work for students. However, it should be emphasized that this is only one of many courses required of the fashion major. Overall, the focus of recommendations is on the aspect of redeveloping the course into an enriched course that is intended to develop students into fashion specialists.

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Appendix A

November 29, 2005

Dear Fashion Industry Students,

The Fashion Industry course is an introductory course that students in the Fashion Program are required to complete. The course was designed to develop students in the teaching and fashion tracks by providing an analysis of the fashion industry.

What students gain from a course is essential in determining its effectiveness. The gap between student expectations and their learning outcomes needs to be analyzed. Students need to know if taking a course will benefit them in the future and filling the gap will ensure this. To help fill the gap, surveys are being distributed to all students enrolled in the Fashion Industry course to determine student expectations and learning outcomes.

All information will remain confidential. Participation in the survey is greatly appreciated and will contribute to research in an effort to evaluate The Fashion Industry course, however, students are not required to participate in this survey.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in helping me as a graduate student.

Sincerely,

Jarnell Dorman
Fashion Merchandising Graduate Student
Old Dominion University

Appendix B

Fashion Industry Course Survey

Purpose: To determine the effectiveness of The Fashion Industry course by analyzing Old Dominion University Fashion Merchandising major's expectations and learning outcomes.

(All information will be kept confidential).

Directions: Please answer the following questions thoroughly.

1. Why did you take this course?

2. How often did you attend class weekly?

    _____ everyday
    _____ almost always
    _____ never

3. Do you feel as though the course activities helped achieve your expectations or reinforced your learning?

4. How do you feel about the videos shown in class?

5. Were the resources used in class helpful in learning about the fashion industry?

6. Were presentations in class useful?

7. How effective do you feel the professor was in teaching about the fashion industry?

8. What were your expectations from The Fashion Industry course?

9. What topics did you expect to learn about? (Please check those that apply).

_____ history of fashion
_____ global fashion
_____ careers
_____ textiles
_____ furs and leathers
_____ fashion merchandise
_____ intimate apparel
_____ fashion accessories
_____ details and trimmings
_____ cosmetics and fragrances
_____ home fashions
_____ fashion forecasting
_____ fashion design
_____ accessory and apparel
_____ manufacturing
_____ resident buying offices
_____ fashion retailer
_____ advertising/visual merchandising

10. Place a check by the topics that you feel you learned throughout the course:

_____ history of fashion
_____ global fashion
_____ careers
_____ textiles
_____ furs and leathers
_____ fashion merchandise
_____ intimate apparel
_____ fashion accessories
_____ details and trimmings
_____ cosmetics and fragrances
_____ home fashions
_____ fashion forecasting
_____ fashion design
_____ accessory and apparel
_____ manufacturing
_____ resident buying offices
_____ fashion retailer
_____ advertising / visual merchandising

11. Place a check by the learning competencies that you feel you have mastered:

_____ analyze fashion concepts
_____ fashion prediction techniques
_____ fashion designer trends and reports
_____ identify fashion industry terminology
_____ relating the use of textiles to apparel and home fashions
_____ analyze the fashion marketing system
_____ identify promotion and distribution concepts
_____ identify fashion industry technology
_____ analyze foreign and domestic retailing

12. Do you feel your expectations matched the learning outcomes of the course?

13. Do you feel confident that you have learned what was needed from this course as far as careers in the fashion industry?

14. Provide any suggestions to improve the course.

Thank you for your assistance and contribution to the Fashion Merchandising Program research!!!