**APPAREL, RETAIL MERCHANDISING and DESIGN/RETAIL MERCHANDISING**

Students majoring in apparel, retail merchandising and design with a focus in retail merchandising at North Dakota State University can make themselves marketable for a variety of careers in retailing fields. Retail merchandising is such a part of everyday life that people often take it for granted, but it is one of the fastest changing, most dynamic industries in the world today.

**Background Information**

New retail opportunities are emerging around the world. National and global retailers provide goods and services to consumers everywhere, via multichannel retailing involving traditional stores, catalogs, direct mail and online venues, including social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Craigslist, just to name a few. Retailers use state-of-the-art technology to respond instantaneously to changing consumer demand from around the world. These changes in the retail industry provide many exciting opportunities for college graduates interested in the highly competitive, fast paced and profitable field of retailing.

**Career Opportunities**

Retailers undertake a wide variety of activities. They raise capital from financial institutions; purchase goods and services; develop accounting and management information systems to control operations; manage warehouses and distribution systems; design and develop new products; predict and act upon fashion trends; and undertake activities such as advertising, promotion, sales force management and market research. Thus, retail firms world wide offer opportunities for people with a wide variety of skills and education.

Graduates of the retail merchandising program hold positions such as buyers, store managers, visual merchandisers, regional managers, store owners, interior merchandisers, account executives and fashion forecasters with such companies as Target, Kohl’s, Macy’s, Best Buy, Land’s End, TopShop, Vanity, Victoria’s Secret, Bath and Body Works, The Gap, The Buckle, Shop NBC, and Scheels to name a few. Many stores limit their management positions to employees who have completed a four-year degree. Often, recruiters consider the degree a minimum requirement for a management and/or buying career. A degree in apparel, retail merchandising and design with a focus in retail merchandising provides students with a firm grasp of business strategy. Graduates have a solid educational foundation that allows them flexibility in their career paths to move into positions in the wholesale sector, finance, marketing, and sales.

**The Program**

Positions available in the retail merchandising field are diverse; therefore, this option provides students with an educational background that can fit into both short- and long-range career goals. The course of study includes classes on buying and merchandising, global retailing, retail market management, merchandise promotion, financial management and control, global fashion economics, consumer behavior related to apparel selection decisions, and the analysis of textile and apparel products using textile testing equipment.

Students choose to focus on the area of textile product or interior merchandising. The textile product merchandising focus includes courses such as sewn product manufacturing and analysis, consumer behavior, history of fashion, product development, dress and human behavior. The interior merchandising focus includes courses such as history of interiors, design process and interior graphics—knowledge needed to enter retail interior careers.

A 24-credit minor in business administration provides a general business background that prepares students for in-depth work in the retail merchandising field of study. An overall 2.5 grade point average is required for this option. A very strong general education curriculum assists students in learning critical thinking skills. Computer technology is an intrinsic aspect of the program.

**Our Contacts Beyond College Walls**

Special features of NDSU’s retail merchandising program that help prepare students for a retail merchandising career include (1) acquiring sales and/or merchandising experience and earning college credit through summer retail internships, (2) participating in study tours to national or international destinations while earning college credit, and (3) obtaining a minor in business administration while earning the Bachelor or Science degree in apparel, retail merchandising and design. Another choice some students make is to attend the world renowned Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in New York City. Students can take advantage of international study abroad experiences made available by NDSU’s study abroad programs.

Through the above mentioned experiences, students gain valuable sales and/or retail merchandising experience before graduation while a faculty member helps them gain insight into store functions. Students are encouraged to work in retail stores part-time while in school, because learning takes place on the job as well as in the classroom. The study tours expose students to the fast pace of the constantly changing merchandising world.

The major benefits of a retail merchandising degree in this very competitive field are that our graduates have a better knowledge and understanding of (1) all textile products and how these products can be expected to perform, (2) product development, (3) how fashion trends evolve, (4) the impact of consumer behavior on the fashion and interiors industry, and (5) skills in managing and/or buying soft goods and interior products.

**Extra-Curricular Opportunities**

The Fashion, Apparel and Business Organization (FABO) brings in speakers and organizes field trips and other activities to provide interaction with professionals. Other organizations in the college and University provide further opportunities for leadership development and contact with professionals.

**Scholarships**

A limited number of scholarships are designated for students majoring in the department; additional scholarships are available to all college majors. For further information on scholarships, contact the Director of Student Services and Advancement.
Transfer Students

A sample curriculum is provided; other combinations are possible. Students who plan to transfer to NDSU should contact the Department of Apparel, Design and Hospitality Management for guidance in selecting courses before or during their first year.

Sample Curriculum

General Education
First Year Experience
HD&E 189 - Skills for Academic Success........................1
Communication
COMM 110 - Fundamentals of Public Speaking ......................3
ENGL 110, 120 - College Composition I, II.........................3, 3
ENGL 320 - Business and Professional Writing......................3
Quantitative Reasoning
STAT 330 - Introductory Statistics........................................3
Science & Technology
CSCI 114 - Microcomputer Packages or
CSCI 116 - Business Use of Computers ..............................3 or 4
Science and Technology Electives........................................7
Humanities & Fine Arts..........................................................6
Social & Behavioral Sciences
ECON 105 - Elements of Economics......................................3
PSYC 111 - Introduction to Psychology.................................3
Wellness................................................................................2
Cultural Diversity..................................................................-
Global Perspective
ECON 105 - Elements of Economics......................................3
Total.................................................................................40

Major Requirements
ADHM 171 - Fashion Dynamics............................................3
ADHM 271 - Visual Merchandising and Promotion...................3
ADHM 272 - Product Development........................................3
ADHM 366 - Textiles...............................................................3
ADHM 367 - Textiles Laboratory.............................................1
ADHM 372 - Global Retailing..................................................3
ADHM 375 - Professional Development.................................1
ADHM 470 - Retail Financial Management and Control..........4
ADHM 481 - Capstone in Apparel, Retail
Merchandising and Design...................................................3
ADHM 485 - Global Consumer Analysis.................................3
ADHM 489 - Study Tour.......................................................1-3
ADHM 496 - Field Experience................................................3-6
COMM 216 - Intercultural Communication or
COMM 271 - Listening and Nonverbal Communication or
COMM 383 - Organizational Communication I....................3
Total.................................................................35

Related Requirements
ACCT 102 - Fundamentals of Accounting.........................3
MGMT 320 - Foundations of Management.........................3
MRKT 320 - Foundations of Marketing...............................3
MRKT 362 - Foundations of Retailing.................................3
300-400 Business Electives.................................................9
Electives............................................................................3
Focus Area Options............................................................21-22
Total.............................................................................48
CURRICULUM TOTAL.................................................123

This sample curriculum is not intended to serve as a curriculum guide for current students, but rather an example of course offerings for prospective students. For the curriculum requirements in effect at the time of entrance into a program, consult with an academic advisor or with the Office of Registration and Records.

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This publication will be made available in alternative formats upon request. Contact the Office of Admission (701) 231-8643 or 800-488-NDSU or ND Telecommunications Relay Service 800-366-6888 (TTY) or 800-366-6889 (voice).

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