
MDSE 2490.001 Introduction to Apparel Merchandising
Course Syllabus – Spring 2026
TTH 11am-12:20pm, Cury 204



DEPARTMENT OF MERCHANDISING
& DIGITAL RETAILING
College of Merchandising,
Hospitality & Tourism

Description: Survey of the fashion and home furnishings industry including development through modern merchandising, fashion and home markets, and retailing. Introduction to fashion and furnishings theory, terminology, resources, industry participants, and career opportunities.

Objectives:

1. Explain and predict the dynamics of the fashion and home furnishings business including development, movement, and distribution.
2. Describe the nature, activity, and relationships of the various types of enterprises involved in the creation, production, and distribution of fashion and home goods.
3. Assess career opportunities in merchandising and analyze personal traits/skills necessary to succeed in the merchandising field.
4. Define and articulate terminology pertinent to the field of apparel and home furnishings merchandising.

Instructor: Ms. Marissa S. Zorola, M.S.

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Office: Chilton Hall 342F

Office Hours: Tuesday 2-3pm, Wednesday 10-11am, or by appointment

Optional Text: Burns, L. D., Mullet, K. K., & Bryant, N. O. (2020). The Business of Fashion. 6th Ed. NY: Fairchild

Attendance:

1. This class is given via in-person instruction and students are responsible for attending each class meeting and securing their own lecture notes when they miss class.
2. Attendance will be monitored using iClicker. Students with more than 8 unexcused absences may be asked to the drop the course.

Exams:

1. Exams will be given online via Canvas on the designated day on the course calendar. Exams will take place on class days and will be available for a four-hour window, from 10am-2pm.
2. Exams will be a set of questions randomized from a larger test bank of questions. The exams are timed, and students are expected to be prepared to complete exams without the aid of materials such as textbooks, notes, the Internet, or other students. Lockdown browser will be used for exams as well.
3. All makeup exams are given on an assigned date during pre-finals week. Students can only take one makeup exam. Makeup exams are for students who missed an exam, not to improve an exam grade.
4. The final exam will be given following the UNT final exam schedule, and the date and time is noted in the course calendar.

Canvas:

1. Canvas can be accessed via the following link: <https://unt.instructure.com/login/canvas>. To log in, you must know your EUID and password. If you have technological issues, please contact the help desk at (940) 565-2324, helpdesk@unt.edu, or <http://helpdesk.unt.edu>. If you have pages missing or items are not retrievable, please contact the instructor.

Assignments:

1. All assignments will be submitted online via Canvas. Assignments due online will not be accepted via email. **Students should always take the time to ensure that their assignment is uploaded correctly.** If you are having trouble uploading your assignment, you must contact CLEAR using the information provided above. **Each student is responsible for ensuring that 1) their file is uploaded correctly, 2) their file is compatible with the system, and 3) their file is within file size restrictions.**

2. Assignment due dates are available on the course calendar. Late assignments are downgraded by 30%. After one calendar day (24 hours) assignments are no longer accepted for credit. There are no exceptions, including assignments that were not uploaded correctly to Canvas, as it is ultimately the student's responsibility to make sure submissions were successful. Students are encouraged to view their assignment after submission to confirm successful submission.
3. Any team assignment requires that only one student in the team upload the assignment to Canvas.
4. Students have one week from the date assignment grades are released to follow-up on grades. After one week, assignment grades stand, and appeals will not be considered.

AI Policy:

1. Submitting an assignment that uses Generative AI without proper citation or indication of its use is plagiarism. It is a substitute for your own thought and effort. Instructors will monitor AI use and will check student work for ethical use according to their policies.
2. Every instructor has consequences stated for plagiarism in their policies. A range of disciplinary actions may result from any finding of academic dishonesty (for example, admonition, class failure, expulsion) depending upon the severity of the misconduct. In this course, the policy is that students will receive a grade of 0 for assignments found to be completed using AI, and plagiarism will be reported to the UNT Academic Integrity Officer.
3. Policies may differ between instructors and courses. Read the syllabus and course policies, especially for the consequences. If you are allowed by your instructor to use any Generative AI in a course, you must disclose and cite its use by including citations in APA style. If you are allowed by your instructor to use any Generative AI in a course, you must also carefully check for errors. AI often suffers from "hallucinations" or fictitious information, being wrong, and oversimplified, low quality, or generic results. It also tends to replicate and amplify any biases or inaccuracies that exist in the training sources or the Internet.
4. To protect student data privacy, students are prohibited from the submission of personally identifying information to Generative AI systems.

Assessment:

1. **Course Syllabus and Policies Quiz (15 pts).** This quiz will cover information from the syllabus, as well as overall course policies related to late work, attendance, and academic integrity. All resources to successfully complete the quiz are available on Canvas. Review the items carefully prior to taking the quiz. Quiz may be taken twice for the higher of the two grades. No makeup quiz is available for this quiz.
2. **APA Quiz (15 pts).** APA resources are available on Canvas. Review the items carefully prior to taking the quiz. Quiz can be taken twice for the higher of the two scores. No makeup quiz is available for this quiz.
3. **Industry Write-Ups (30 pts each, total 90 pts).** There will be a total of four industry topics that students will submit written reflections on. The topics will vary. All students will drop one grade from the Industry Write-Ups.
4. **Industry Insights (15 pts each, total 45 pts).** Guest speakers will be invited to visit with the class in-person or via Zoom through Industry Insights days to share their experiences working in the industry. Attendance is required and these points cannot be made up if you are absent for any reason. Attendance will be taken via iClicker. All students will drop one grade from the Industry Insights days.
5. **UNT Libraries Information Session (10 pts).** A representative from the UNT Libraries will visit us to share information about the UNT library resources available to students. Attendance will be taken via iClicker. There is no make-up activity for this visit.
6. **Exams (100 pts each, total 400 pts).** There will be four exams. Exams will be divided purposefully between items to assess the students' experience with the reading material and familiarity with the materials presented in class (e.g., handouts, in-class assignments, assigned readings, guest speakers, field trips, and lectures). The final exam is not cumulative.
7. Additional assignments may be added as deemed necessary to meet the course objectives.
8. The final semester grade will be determined as follows: A = 90-100%, B = 80-89%, C = 70-79%, D = 60-69%, F = below 60%.

MDSE 2490.001 Introduction to Retail Merchandising Tentative Course Calendar – Spring 2026				
WEEK	DATES		LECTURE/ACTIVITY	ASSIGNMENTS/DUE DATES
1	JAN	13	Welcome to class! Introduction to course and syllabus highlights	
		15	Industry Foundations: How the Apparel and Home Furnishings Markets Have Evolved	Syllabus Quiz opens at 6am
2		20	Industry Foundations: How the Apparel and Home Furnishings Markets Have Evolved (cont.)	
		22	Key Industry Terms and Concepts	
3		27	Library Resources presentation from Briana Knox	Attendance counts for credit
		29	Key Industry Terms and Concepts (cont.)	Syllabus Quiz closes at 11:59pm
4	FEB	3	Missions and Competitive Strategies of Apparel and Home Furnishings Businesses	APA Quiz opens at 6am
		5	Exam 1 (content from Jan. 15 – Feb. 3)	Exam available online from 10am-2pm
5		10	Sourcing Decisions Across the Apparel and Home Furnishings Supply Chains	Industry Write-Up 1 assigned
		12	Industry Insights 1 – Transformational Leadership Symposium *Details to be announced on Canvas	Attendance counts for credit APA Quiz closes at 11:59pm
6		17	Sourcing Decisions Across the Apparel and Home Furnishings Supply Chains (cont.)	
		19	Sustainable Supply Chains in the Apparel and Home Furnishings Industries	Industry Write-Up 1 due by 11:59pm
7		24	Industry Insights 2 – Disney College Program *Details to be announced on Canvas	Attendance counts for credit
		26	Sustainable Supply Chains in the Apparel and Home Furnishings Industries (cont.)	
8	MAR	3	Exam 2 (content from Feb. 10 – Feb. 26)	Exam available online from 10am-2pm
		5	Marketing Research in Apparel and Home Furnishings	Industry Write-Up 2 assigned
9		10	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES	
		12	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES	
10		17	Marketing Research in Apparel and Home Furnishings (cont.)	
		19	Industry Insights 3 – Professor Uglow – Licensing Law *subject to change based on guest availability	
11		24	Color, Material, and Trend Forecasting	Industry Write-Up 2 due by 11:59pm
		26	Industry Insights 4 - Professor Uglow – Intellectual Property Law *subject to change based on guest availability	Industry Write-Up 3 assigned
12	APR	31	Designing and Developing Apparel and Home Furnishings Products	Attendance counts for credit
		2	Designing and Developing Apparel and Home Furnishings Products (cont.)	Attendance counts for credit
13		7	Exam 3 (content from Mar. 5 – Apr. 2)	Exam available online from 1-5pm
		9	Preproduction Processes and Manufacturing Apparel and Home Furnishings Products	Industry Write-Up 3 due by 11:59pm

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WEEK	DATES		LECTURE/ACTIVITY	ASSIGNMENTS/DUE DATES
		14	Wholesaling Apparel and Home Furnishings Brands	Industry Write-Up 4 assigned
		16	Wholesaling Apparel and Home Furnishings Brands (cont.)	
14		21	Strategizing in the Modern Retail Landscape	
		23	Strategizing in the Modern Retail Landscape (cont.)	Industry Write-Up 4 due by 11:59pm
15		28	Industry Insights 5 - TBA *subject to change based on guest availability	Attendance counts for credit
		30	Makeup exams for students who missed an exam	Make-up exam available online from 10am-2pm
16	MAY	5	FINAL EXAM (content from Apr. 9 – Apr. 23) Date and time follows the UNT Final Exam Schedule	Exam available online Tuesday from 10am-12pm