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Fashion Design Art 120
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Reflective Portfolio

Teaching Philosophy:

How does a fashion designer with more than 30 years of experience working on Seventh Avenue, help to prepare fashion design students for their future in the fashion business? How do I make my past workplace experience, MA in Art History and knowledge of historical fashion relevant to the future careers of FIT students?

**From our first meeting, <u>I believe that it is most important for the students to know that our goal is not only for them to learn about the past, but to use their historical knowledge as preparation for understanding contemporary factors that affect the fashions and clothing that society will want to buy and wear in the future.</u>

Our syllabus says: "Students study menswear, womenswear and childrenswear silhouettes, textile development, construction, innovation and the arts, culture and technology of each period. Historical inspiration as utilized by contemporary designers is identified and analyzed." How can I relate that history to the fashion industry of the future?

From the start, I stress many ways that society, geography, technology and other influences of the (historical) past affected the apparel of that time---we connect those influences to today's fashions and to designs for the future.

For instance, society has been wearing jeans for leisure since the 1960s, however through the decades they have become acceptable, in many professions, as daily business attire. Since the 1980s and 1990s, we have adopted comfortable "workout" clothing, made from technically sophisticated fabrics into our daily lives. We learn that the fabric manufacturers are experimenting with tech fabrics that will keep us warm in winter and cool in summer. How may those innovations affect the manufacturing and styling of clothing that we will wear every day in the future?

Successful lesson:

I cannot give a singular example of a successful lesson. For each class, I distribute an (anonymous) evaluation questionnaire that helps me to learn about and to respond to their comments, their opinions about me, my teaching methods and class content. Also, through the years, I have adjusted and improved my teaching methods because of the many CET offerings that I have participated in and learned from; the changes are substantial and the course continues to evolve.

Introducing/Expanding the use of Technology:

Historical fashion is taught mainly using images of the apparel of the era. As I am writing this, I realize that when I began teaching the images were on thousands of slides and I picked up a cart and projector on my way to class. After a while, the slides gave way to more "modern" cds

and currently, I use a portable hard drive and computer. Because the class has no designated textbook, I have added an explanatory annotation to each of the many images that I show weekly, and for years I have posted those images on Blackboard after class for students to refer to and to use for study. The Blackboard communication is a vital link between me and my students. As an additional way of communicating with students, I am also learning and experimenting with Voice Thread, although they seem to be more accustomed to using email. Luckily, this year's snowstorms didn't affect my classes, but the ability to use Voice Thread would have enabled my class to "meet" despite the bad weather. Evolving technology has directly affected this class.

The class project requires making a Journal. Many students do their research and/or compose their designs on computer and print them for the Journal.

After participating in the Tech Innovation seminar, including the Tech Lab and Fashion MFA students' presentations, I realized that there was a way for me to give my Fashion History students a glimpse into their futures. James Pearce and Brandon were kind enough to host all 25 Fashion History students, demonstrating and letting them experiment with Tilt Brush, 3D printing, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality; the students were glowing after that experience.

Also, at the Tech Innovation program, the MFA fashion presentations were impressive and relevant to student needs. Thanks to Kyle Farmer, the class will meet with participants and learn about the FIT/MFA program, which I believe will further stimulate their imaginations; they will see a garment that was produced using experimentation, persistence, creativity, and technology and they will learn about the process(es) that the designer used.

Technology innovations affect student experience:

In this evolutionary age of computers, laptops, tablets, smart phones, smart appliances, Lynda, Blackboard, Voice Thread, Moocs and (of course) Google, it is difficult to imagine the technology of 10, 20 or 50 years in the future. By combining their knowledge of past and future, I believe that my students will be unafraid of and eager to experience and adopt, new technology for design, for manufacturing and for life.