Why Study Fashion, Merchandising, Textiles & Design at Albright?

The fashion, merchandising, textiles & design program at Albright is a distinctive and uniquely integrated field of study. It boasts a curriculum that provides students with a foundation in the fashion industry that is comparable to fashion schools, while adding the broader options and opportunities of a liberal arts college. In short, Albright’s fashion students benefit from the best of both a fashion school and a liberal arts college.

“If I had not taken Loraine Mellor’s CAD classes, I wouldn’t have been hired. Not only did she teach me the core of the drawing programs, she taught me to draw well and pay attention to the details. This has allowed me to excel in my position.”

Danielle Thibault, fashion design assistant
Via Spiga, New York, NY
A major in fashion, merchandising, textiles & design prepares students for careers such as fashion and costume design, fashion journalism, fashion business management and merchandising, computer applications, garment production and textile design.

The Academic Program

Albright fashion, merchandising, textiles & design majors have exceptional opportunities.

First, they have the opportunity to choose from three tracks within their major:
- fashion business & merchandising
- fashion & costume design
- textile design

Each of these areas provides students with a curriculum that addresses creative research and development, and the design, manufacturing and marketing of textiles and apparel products.

Second, fashion majors develop strong communication skills through oral assignments and presentations of visual displays and descriptive reports that incorporate appropriate terminology and market concepts.

Third, fashion students at Albright take a combined major. That means that they combine their fashion major with another major, such as business, theatre, communications, digital media, etc. This broadens their education, experience and career opportunities.

Finally, fashion students have access to a well-equipped Resource & Textile Library located in the department. The resource section includes an international selection of current and archived fashion magazines, fashions, books and trade publications, and the textile section is composed of extensive samples of contemporary textiles.

Internships & Off-Campus Study

Students may apply in their junior year for competitive, one-semester off-campus programs at Parsons School of Design, the Fashion Institute of Technology or Drexel University. Students may also apply for a one-semester study abroad internship/study program.

A departmental “Fashion Job Bank” assists students through extensive networking in finding internships or employment opportunities in the fashion industry.

Stacey Hardy ’04, Intern, Bill’s Khaki’s (branded men’s sportswear), Reading, Pa.

“I learned how to pick fabric, what their clientele is like, how they created an image with their product, and what decisions go into marketing. It was a great experience, especially because it’s a small company that is getting really big.”

Alexandra Kweselait ’04, Intern, Banzai Creations (tie dyed apparel), Downingtown, Pa.

“I experienced first-hand what it’s like to take a product from conception to completion. I was able to design the color scheme and pattern for the tie dye, get it approved by the owner, mix the colors, and work with the folders and tell them how to fold it.”

Kasey Patton ’04, Intern, Shimmer (specialty retail, cocktail wear and mother of the bride), Haddonfield, N.J.

“The store I worked at had just opened, so it was an awesome opportunity to go along with the owner to store openings and see the financial end of things. It also taught me so much about dealing with confrontation — the old saying, ‘the customer is always right’ — that sort of thing.”
“No one can teach a student about the fashion industry without actually experiencing it. This is what Thomas Steinbruck brings to the department — experience, creativity and, above all, professionalism. He is a great role model for students.”

- Danielle Thibault, fashion design assistant

Via Spiga, New York, NY

Faculty

**Thomas Steinbruck** – artist in residence and department chair; B.S., International School of Business; B.A., Studio Bercot Fashion College. After graduation, Steinbruck became personal assistant to Gianfranco Ferre for the House of Christian Dior. In New York, he worked for Geoffrey Beane, Gemma Kahng and Niel Bieff before launching his own label in 1997. The Thomas Steinbruck Collection was winner of the Fall 2000 Moet & Chandon Designer Debut Award, and the line sold in over 50 stores worldwide, including Bergdorf Goodman, Nordstrom’s and Sacks 5th Avenue. Steinbruck is currently fashion and style consultant for BMW.

**Loraine Mellor** – artist in residence; B.A., University of Leeds. Mellor taught in and coordinated the textile design studies program at North Carolina State University before becoming design director and co-owner of the Knit Resource Center in New York City. She was winner in the Ladies Sweater category at the 1989 Design America Competition. As design and marketing consultant for Elite Sportswear, Mellor has designed outfits for renowned world athletes for national, world and Olympic events.

**Connie Heller-Horacek** – associate professor; B.S., Midland Lutheran College; M.A., Western Illinois University; M.F.A., Maryland Institute College of Art. Heller-Horacek is certified as a Preferred ArtWorks instructor and has taught classes sponsored by the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Pennsylvania Industry Promotion Council.

For more information about the fashion, merchandising, textiles & design department, contact Thomas Steinbruck, chair, at 610-921-7811 or email tsteinbruck@alb.edu.