

Apparel and Textile Merchandising

Department of Dietetics, Fashion Merchandising and Hospitality, College of Education and Human Services



Visual merchandising students create displays

Program of Study

The WIU Department of Dietetics, Fashion Merchandising and Hospitality offers four undergraduate degree programs: dietetics, apparel and textile merchandising, hospitality management and nutrition and foodservice management. Students completing the apparel and textile merchandising program earn a Bachelor of Science degree in apparel and textile merchandising. Graduates are prepared for careers in fashion buying, fashion promotion, retail management, visual merchandising and international marketing.

The vision of the department is for graduates to be innovative, competent and critical thinking professionals who provide leadership and service within the workplace in a diverse, ever-changing environment. The mission of the department is to prepare students with the technical, human and conceptual skills for careers in consumer services.

In the apparel and textile merchandising program, students learn about apparel product development, buying, brand development, promotion, multi-channel retailing, fashion trends and forecasting, textiles and quality assurance, visual merchandising, consumer and professional practices, fashion history, dress diversity and fashion marketing in the fashion industry. Hands-on learning is emphasized throughout via lab work, supervised internship and practicum, field trips, community service, travel studies and study abroad programs. In the study abroad program students have studied in places such as Paris, London and Italy.

Faculty

Each faculty member has specialized education and industry or research experience in his or her area of instruction. Faculty hold membership in local, state and national organizations and have held leadership roles. They have earned master's and doctoral degrees in their fields of expertise.

Scholarships

The department offers more than \$10,000 in scholarships every year for eligible students in the major, based on grade point average, participation in extracurricular activities and leadership. Students should contact the academic advisor to find out about scholarship eligibility. Additional information about scholarships is found on the departmental website at wiu.edu/dfmh; through the University Scholarship Office, (309) 298-2001; or on the WIU homepage at wiu.edu/Scholarship.

Student Activities

Students have many choices in their selection of departmental organizations. Any student may be selected to join DFMH Ambassadors, a group of students representing the department at University functions, or Kappa Omicron Nu (KONu) honorary society, which is open to any student with a minimum of 45 overall semester hours and a 3.2 GPA at WIU. The Visual and Apparel Merchandising Organization (VAMO) provides fashion-related experiences, such as field trips, guest speakers and fashion shows.

Special Opportunities

Students learn theory and practice with the electronic computer classrooms, visual merchandising spaces, textile laboratory and costume collection. Students also benefit from the department field trips, guest speakers and merchandising projects with local retailers that enhance the curriculum. Students may job shadow and/or support retailers and organizations with visual merchandising and promotional activities.

Students in this program complete a supervised internship of 240 work hours at the end of their coursework. Students have successfully completed internships at JC Penney, Claire's, Nordstrom's, Buckle, Gap Outlet, H&M, Kmart, Maurices, Old Navy, Oscar de la Renta, Target, Aeropostale, Cato, Kohl's, Deb, Bella Donna Bridal, After Hours Formal Wear, Berner's, Ruehl, Lucky, Guess, Von Maur and Wet Seal.

A minor in apparel and textile merchandising is also available.

Honors College Admission Requirements

To be eligible for the Centennial Honors College, entering freshmen must have an ACT composite score of at least 28 OR have a 26 or 27 composite ACT and be in the top 15 percent of their graduating class OR have an ACT composite score of at least 24 and be in the top 10 percent of their high school graduating class. A comparable SAT score is acceptable. Transfer and current WIU students who wish to join the Honors College (including the Quad Cities Honors Program) must have a 3.4 GPA on a 4.0 scale based on 12 or more semester hours. Honors credit is given for honors coursework completed at other accredited institutions. To find out more, visit wiu.edu/Honors.



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After College

Obtain a career in the fashion industry upon graduation. Positions in apparel and textile merchandising include fashion buyer for retail stores, merchandising manager, store department manager, fashion coordinator, product developer and merchandising planner. Graduates may choose to continue their education with a master's degree in fashion merchandising or business, including entrepreneurship.

For More Information

Additional resources about the apparel and textile merchandising field of study and career opportunities may be found on the International Textile and Apparel Association (ITAA) website itaaonline.org and online in the Occupational Outlook Handbook: bls.gov.

Higher Values in Higher Education

Located in Macomb (population 20,000), with a campus in the Quad Cities (Moline, IL), Western offers a caring and supportive learning environment to more than 10,000 students in west-central Illinois. Western students have all the advantages of a large public university—strong faculty, state-of-the-art technology and facilities, and a wide range of academic and extracurricular opportunities—in an atmosphere free from distractions. Western offers a broad-based athletics program, sponsoring 19 NCAA Division I intercollegiate varsity sports. Football competes in the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision through the Missouri Valley Football Conference; all other varsity sports compete at the Division I level through The Summit League. Western's presence in the Quad Cities spans more than 40 years, and that campus offers undergraduate and graduate programs to more than 1,400 students. The core values that are at the heart of the University are academic excellence, educational opportunity, personal growth and social responsibility.

Western's GradTrac and Cost Guarantee programs ensure that students can achieve their degrees within four years while paying a fixed rate for tuition, fees and room and board.

Western Illinois University is an Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity employer with a strong commitment to diversity. In that spirit, we are particularly interested in receiving applications from a broad spectrum of people, including, but not limited to, minorities, women and individuals with disabilities. WIU has a non-discrimination policy that includes discrimination based on an individual's membership in the following classes: sex, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, genetic information, veteran status, and any other classes protected by state or federal law.

Campus Visits

The Admissions Reception Center (Sherman Hall 115) is open most weekdays from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. when the University is in session. Group information sessions are available on Mondays and Fridays at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., and individual appointments can be made on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Campus tours are conducted at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., Monday through Friday. Appointments with advisors, faculty or a financial aid advisor may be arranged separately during the week. The Admissions Reception Center is open from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. most Saturdays when the University is in session. A group information session is available at 10 a.m., and a campus tour is conducted at 11 a.m. Students may schedule a visit or tour online at wiu.edu/admissions by selecting "Visit Campus." Students may also schedule a visit, tour or individual appointment by calling toll free (877) PICKWIU (742-5948) or (309) 298-3157, or by emailing admissions@wiu.edu.

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