

**Program Assessment Report
Apparel Merchandising and Product Development
University of Arkansas
Academic Year 2022-2023**

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2. AMPD Program Mission:

The mission of the Apparel Merchandising and Product Development program is to ensure high quality graduate and undergraduate programs that provide students with multiple opportunities to gain the necessary knowledge and skills to become successful professionals; to engage in current research and outreach that services the citizens of Arkansas and the nation. The vision of the Apparel Merchandising and Product Development program is to become a nationally recognized graduate and undergraduate program in textile and apparel complex.

3. Program Goals

- a. To produce graduates who are ethical and responsible professionals and citizens, who are critical thinkers, effective problem solvers and knowledgeable in their discipline.
- b. To provide an undergraduate program that provides students with multiple opportunities to gain the necessary knowledge and skills to become successful professionals
- c. To engage in current research and outreach that services the citizens of Arkansas and the nation.
- d. To become a nationally recognized graduate and undergraduate program in the global apparel industry.

4. Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcome 3. Demonstrate an ability to use appropriate technology necessary to succeed in the textile and apparel industry.

A. Assessment Measures:

- a. **Direct Measures:** Students are expected to demonstrate proficiency through critical thinking in the capstone classes AMPD 4023 Merchandising Applications for the Apparel Industry and AMPD 4063 Advanced Apparel Production drawing conclusions and assessing data synthesizing the factors involved in the senior final projects using the *Critical Thinking Rubric* published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

B. Acceptable and Ideal Targets: the same targets will be used for each direct measure

- a. Acceptable - 80 % of graduating seniors will achieve 75% or better
- b. Ideal - 90% of graduating seniors will achieve 75% or better
- c. **Key Personnel:** Instructors for AMPD 4023 and 4063.

C. Summary of Findings

- The critical thinking was assessed for AMPD students enrolled in AMPD 4023 Merchandising Applications for the Apparel Industry and AMPD 4063 Advanced Apparel Production during the spring 2023 semester.
- Students enrolled in AMPD 4023 were challenged to develop a sustainable apparel line including product assortment, material sourcing, costing, and quality assessment. The instructor provided students with 1) social and environmental problems caused by apparel production and consumption and 2) AATCC test methods that can be used to verify product quality. The instructor asked students to consider the issue critically and use information from the AATCC website. Students interpreted and evaluated the information to develop a comprehensive analysis. The instructor graded team assignments referring to the *Critical Thinking Rubric*.
- Students enrolled in AMPD 4063 were given a portfolio assignment for their final apparel production project. The instructor challenged each student to design their project around a researchable topic. Students were then asked to create a PowerPoint presentation that analyzed the process from concept to creation, including manufacturing and pricing considerations. The instructor graded assignments referring to the *Critical-Thinking Rubric* published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities.
 - In spring 2023, 85 students were assessed (39 students enrolled in AMPD 4023; 46 students enrolled in AMPD 4063). Median values indicate that 95% of students demonstrated proficiency in critical thinking.

D. Recommendations

Critical thinking skills require a comprehensive exploration of issues and ideas before formulating an opinion or conclusion. Results from assessments in AMPD 4023 and 4063 indicate students achieved the proficiency level. Faculty should provide students with learning opportunities to develop critical thinking skills across the curriculum.

General Education Student Learning Outcome 6.1: Gain the ability to synthesize, integrate, and apply knowledge developed throughout the undergraduate years.

AMPD students were evaluated for problem-solving, critical thinking, written/oral communication, and writing skills. Two capstone courses (AMPD 4023 and 4063) meet General Education Student Learning Outcome 6.1. Students enrolled in AMPD 4023 created a fashion retail business plan throughout the semester. Students analyzed key competitive business strategies on social media, and brick-and-mortar stores, developed merchandise budgets, assortment plans, and control procedures. They applied knowledge that they obtained from 2000-3000 level merchandising courses. Students wrote an executive white paper and the fashion retail business plan. All students presented the retail business plan in class. Results indicate that 86% of students demonstrated proficiency in student learning outcome 6.1.

Students in AMPD 4063 were asked to write a paper that expresses their research and design process for the garment that was produced for the AMPD program fashion show. Each garment was designed around a researchable idea. Final papers were a minimum of 1250 words in length, included references and citations according to APA 7th ed. guidelines, and followed the format provided by an apparel industry design submission process. Results indicate that 82% of students demonstrated proficiency in student learning outcome 6.1.