



**NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY  
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS**

**BUF 4700 CONTEMPORARY TOPICS IN FASHION  
FALL 2021**

**Prerequisite:** SBS 3201; **Pre- or co-requisite:** One BUF 4000 level course

**Credits:** 3

**Instructor:** Prof. Kelly Valladares

**Faculty Office:**

**Office Hours:**

**E-mail:** [KValladares@citytech.cuny.edu](mailto:KValladares@citytech.cuny.edu)

**Meeting Date/ Time:** Mon 6:00pm – 8:30pm

**Room:** Academic A409

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

A senior level seminar course. Students investigate a specialized topic or topics related to the fashion industry. Research, discussion, and weekly readings will culminate in a final paper and presentation. Themes vary each semester.

This course is designed to provide an exploration of contemporary issues that designers, merchandisers, product developers, and consumers confront as they create, wear, and discard fashion. The course emphasizes, but is not limited to, topics such as sustainability, globalization, and ethics. The objective of the course is to develop a dialogue on practices in fashion with a sense of sustainability, ethics and socially responsible manufacturing practices.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Identify and explain current trends, and developments within the specialized topic	In class discussions, assignments, term paper & presentation
Communicate comprehensively about the specialized fashion topic.	Class discussion, term paper & oral presentation
Recognize how this particular topic impacts the fashion business.	Class discussion, assignments, midterm examination, term paper & presentations
Predict future possible directions of the topic area based on acquired knowledge.	Class discussion, term paper & oral presentation
Write a major research paper on a selected topic	Term paper
Gain experience in a seminar, graduate level style course	Class discussions & course assignments

## GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Outcome	Assessment
Demonstrate intellectual honesty and personal responsibility.	Class discussions, class demeanor, term paper & oral presentations
Gather, interpret, evaluate, and apply information discerningly from a variety of sources	Term paper & oral presentation
Demonstrate expanded cultural and global awareness and sensitivity	Class discussion, term paper & oral presentation

### RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOK:

Ethics in the Fashion Industry, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, V. Ann Paulins & Julie L. Hillery (Fairchild Books)  
ISBN: 978-1-5013-4249-3

Selected texts will be put on reserve in the library or made available electronically for student use during the course. Students will also engage in primary research from a variety of sources.

### ASSESSMENT AND GRADING:

This course is a senior level seminar course, with topics determined by the professor prior to the scheduling of each section. However, all courses will include both written and oral components, and class participation (either in class or with online discussion boards or other social media) is essential.

The professor for each section of this course will determine the weighting of the individual assignments. However, they must ensure that all Student Learning Outcomes are met.

#### GRADING:

Participation (includes homework, in-class discussions)	15%
Midterm Exam	25%
Research and Development of assignments	25%
Written Final Project	35%

**Total Percentage** **100%**

### COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

#### PARTICIPATION:

Your success in this class depends on your willingness to put effort into your work. You are expected to participate in all large and small group activities, exercises and discussions. Participation will help you understand the subject matter and will be considered when determining your final grade. Participation is 10% of your final grade. Coming to class is NOT participation.

Participation involves:

- Active Learning. Taking notes, asking questions and taking responsibility for your own learning.
- Working with others in group activities: A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. Don't drag your team down by refusing to get involved.
- Attending class regularly. If you aren't here, you can't learn.

### ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

Accordingly, this class will adhere to the following "Digital Device Policy" prohibiting the use of such devices during all in class meetings:

- Many people in our society have not yet learned professional, considerate, behavior regarding electronic devices.
- Turn off all cellular telephones, beepers, wrist watch alarms, etc. before you enter class.
- If your electronic device audibly activates during class, you will be deducted 5 points from your final grade.
- If you are expecting a life and death announcement from an immediate family member— brother/sister/parent/spouse/child — please notify me before class of that situation.

### GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

All papers **MUST** be typed. A page is the equivalent of a 2.0 line-spaced 8.5 x 11-inch paper with one-inch margins using 12- point type in black ink in Times New Roman font. Follow the page length guidelines for each assignment and number each page. All work **MUST** contain the student name(s), the course name and number, the date the assignment is *submitted*, and the name of the assignment. Please plan accordingly for all your assignment due dates.

Effective writing helps clarify ideas and communicate those ideas to others. Be organized, clear, and succinct. Grammar, punctuation, style, and spelling count. Write in college-level American English that is appropriate to the business community.

Papers will be graded on the following criteria:

- Clear and thorough application of direct and database marketing concepts and principles (including material covered in the assigned reading, lectures, and discussions).
- Demonstration of original, logical, strategic thinking including a complete analysis of facts, logical synthesis, and persuasive conclusion/recommendation. Specific examples should support the analysis. Address the specific requirements of the assignment.
- Quality of research (depth, breadth, appropriateness) and proper acknowledgement of references, including complete citations using APA style in-text notes, when appropriate.
- Appropriate language and tone, accurate spelling, correct grammar, appropriate punctuation, and logical organization. You will not receive an A if your writing is awkward, contains grammatical or punctuation errors, or is disorganized.

### E-PORTFOLIOS:

CUNY City Tech asks all students to participate in building a program-long ePortfolio of the work that they complete while taking classes at the College. Through a process of *collect, select, reflect, and connect*, students learn to judge the quality of their own work, speak about their learning, and present evidence of their current knowledge and skills. College faculty will assist

with this process by recommending that you store at least one significant piece of work from each course in your Blackboard content collection.

### **EMERGENCIES**

In a case of an emergency, you may submit your assignment the following class day. For once a week courses you may e-mail your assignment to me prior the start of the class to get full credit.

Documentation on Professional Letterhead of the emergency will be expected. Coming late to class does not constitute an emergency.

### **COLLEGE POLICIES (ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, ADA, RESOURCES):**

See standard policy document

### **SCHEDULE OF TOPICS:**

While specific details of this course will be left to the discretion and design of the individual instructor, the course will follow this basic outline.

#### **Week 1 - Week 3 Introduction to Course Topic (Chapter 1 – Chapter 2)**

Introduction of the topic and in-class lectures that provide a strong foundation for the research and investigation that will occur during the semester. This will include introduction to precedent studies, overview of appropriate methodologies for research, investigation, documentation and presentation that will be required by the course. Activities include preparing modules 1- 2 of the final project.

#### **Week 4 - Week 9 Research, Investigation and Development ( Chapter 3 – Chapter 6)**

Research, Investigation and Development will occur in parallel and include precedent studies and the development of new information in response to the materials presented to students during the course. Precedent Studies include research, presentation and discussion by students of Fashion Marketing, Merchandising, or business examples relevant to the topic of the course or the subject of research. Activities include preparing modules 3 – 6 of the final project.

#### **Week 10 - Week 15 Reporting, Documentation and Presentation (Chapter 7 – Chapter 8)**

All sections of the course will include Reporting, Documentation and Presentation of student findings and research. Presentations will occur in the form of "juried" presentations in which students will engage in discussion with both their peers and professions in the field. Activities include preparing modules 7 – 8 and finalizing project.

Final Paper will be submitted at the end of the course. This is a major paper, and should adhere to all academic requirements as described for this course.

Juried Presentations are a formal discussion of graphic, written documentation and research given in an oral presentation to both student peers and invited professionals within the field.

### **Course Activities:**

Course format will include a combination of any of the following activities:

- **Lectures:**  
Lectures will be given by either the instructor or by invited guest lecturers or experts in the field or subject.
- **Activities:**  
Students will participate in activities that provide them with the opportunity to apply what is learned in a given subject.
- **Research Activities:**  
Students will participate in research activities including case study research to address issues identified during field trips, lectures or other class activities.
- **Presentations:**  
Students will participate in written, oral and graphic presentations of final project related course subjects and issues identified through research.

## **Final Project: Ethics in the Fashion Industry**

### **Introduction to the project**

This project is designed to provide an integrative team approach for applying fundamental ethical concepts students will likely face as an entrepreneur; whether they own their own company, or work with an entrepreneurial spirit for others. Specifically, the project guides students through the process of designing their own vertically integrated company as they consider the ethical issues surrounding each phase in the company's development. By working through a series of assignments, students will integrate their knowledge related to ethical issues into a strategic business plan.

### **Module 1: Development of a Vertically Integrated Retailer: Establishing the Company**

#### **Part 1: Overview of Activity**

For this activity, you will take the first step in developing a company, determining the product you will offer. You will assess the niche in the marketplace that your company will fill, and also comprise your differential advantage. Additionally, you will determine the purpose of your company, and give your company a name.

#### **Part 2: Activities**

As a group, spend at least 15 minutes brainstorming ideas for your company. Use a sheet of paper and begin by putting every idea that member of the group come up with on the paper. There are NO bad ideas; every idea should be recorded. After brainstorming, work together to circle the top five ideas that are emerging. Discuss final plans for your company purpose, product (or service), and name.

### **Module 2: Meeting Customer Demands**

#### **Part 1: Overview of Activity**

For this Module, you will develop the customer service policies for your company. These policies will be reflective of the environment you wish to provide and should consider the topics discussed in Chapter 2 of your book.

#### **Part 2: Activities for Module**

1. Collect and discuss a variety of customer service policies from retailers and wholesalers. Using those, describe the type of environment you wish to create for your customers.
2. Discuss the type of environment you wish to create for your customers. Identify specific tangible and non-tangible elements of the store environment. Include exterior and interior spaces as well as methods in which merchandise will be displayed.

3. Discuss the potential misbehavior that may affect the well-being of your company. List potential customer misbehavior and articulate your policies for addressing these (i.e., shoplifting, fraudulent returns).
4. Develop a return policy.
5. Define the customer interaction strategies for your organization, including:
  - a. Greeting customers in the store
  - b. Follow-up after the sale
  - c. Sales associate training
  - d. Return policy

### **Module 3: Writing a Mission Statement for the Company**

#### **Part 1: Overview of Activity:**

For this activity you will be writing a mission statement for your company. The mission statement should answer three basic questions:

- a. What are the needs that the company satisfies?
- b. What values does the company embrace?
- c. Who is the target market?

#### **Part 2: Activities for the Module**

Meet as a group to brainstorm ideas for the mission statement. Each group member should review several mission statements from companies to discover how the mission statements reflect the values of the companies. What are some examples of the values found? You will need a packet of post-it notes to complete the following exercises. After completing each exercise, post the answers where each group member can see them and discuss the findings before moving onto the next exercise:

- a. To begin, on separate post-it notes, have each group member write down two words that they think should be included in the mission statement. These should be values that the company will represent.
- b. After reviewing the values from group members, each member should complete this sentence on a post-it-note: Our mission should be \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. On three separate post-it-notes, answer each of the three questions listed in Part 1 above concerning mission statements.
- d. To conclude your exercise, review common themes and words that should be included in your mission statement. You may also want to discuss any ideas you have that have not been included.

#### **Writing the Mission Statement:**

Draft your mission statement keeping these writing guidelines in mind:

- a. Keep the statement simple
- b. Avoid using industry jargon that outsiders will not understand
- c. Keep it short enough so that it is easily memorized
- d. Make the statement inspirational to employees

Return to Part 1 and make sure your mission statement answers the three basic questions.

## **Module 4: Writing a Code of Ethics for the Company**

### **Part 1: Overview of Activity**

Code of Ethics: A code of ethics is the explanation of HOW you execute your company mission statement. It “drives” your mission statement.

### **Part 2: Activities for the Module**

1. Before meeting, each team member should review at least three companies’ codes of conduct/ethics.
2. Each team member should analyze their statements separately by making a list of the components they feel are important. After doing so, meet as a group to compare your lists.
3. From your group discussion and the reference list in your textbook, write your own company code of conduct/ethics. As part of the code, you should establish a mechanism for reporting problems (e.g., anonymously, via written or phone communication, in person, a signed statement, etc.).

## **Module 5: Product Design and Development**

### **Part 1: Overview of Activity**

For this activity, you will decide how you will develop the products or services you offer.

### **Part 2: Activities for Module**

1. Discuss as a group the products your company will offer.
2. List the potential conflicts that may arise related to the products you offer (i.e., copyright infringement, safety issues, regulatory issues).
3. What (if any) uncompromising principles will you apply to design and development?
4. Discuss as a group how your design and development team interact with company management, the sales force, and your retail outlets.
5. Describe, as specifically as possible, your products you will sell. Also, describe how your product/service will be renewed over time (i.e. How you will maintain market share?).

## **Module 6: Manufacturing and Sourcing Products**

### **Part 1: Overview of Activity**

This activity is designed to further determine what products you will offer and provide the guidelines to consider in the manufacturing and production of those products.



## **Part 2: Activities for Module 5**

1. Consider the process you used to determine what to sell, and the characteristics of the product(s) that you will manufacture. As a group, discuss the potential ethical issues that may arise in the manufacturing and sale of your product. Make a list of the issues on the form provided, and create a plan for addressing the individual ethical concern.
2. As a group, find three products that are similar to your own and research the production processes for each. Examine what difficulties have been associated with such products (consider materials, waste generated, disposal after consumer use of product, etc.).
3. Based on your findings, create a visual supply chain model for your product that outlines the steps that will be taken to acquire your product.

## **Module 7: Advertising and Marketing**

### **Part 1: Overview of Activity**

For this module, you will establish the basic ad campaign and marketing materials for your company. This includes the development of a company logo and tagline, a company business card, and an example of an online ad.

### **Part 2: Activities for Module**

#### **Designing your company logo and tag line:**

1. Each group member should find 3 company logos and 3 company tag lines that appeal to them. It would be most helpful to look for companies who are similar to your proposed company (if possible). Bring them to your group meeting and be prepared to discuss the following:
  - a. What appeals to you about each logo and tag line?
  - b. How do the logo and the tag line reflect the company's mission?
2. Based on your discussion and using the suggested resources below, design a logo and a tag line for your proposed company. .

#### **Designing your company business card:**

3. Once you have established your logo and tag line, design and develop a company business card. You may wish to make your card two-sided.

#### **Designing an online ad:**

4. Meet as a group, collect a portfolio of advertisements that reflect the type of ads that you wish to do to best reflect the mission and the products for your company.
5. Make a list of the elements of the ads you collected that are appealing to you or that you believe would be good components for advertising your company.
6. Design a print ad for your proposed company.

## **Module 8: Selling Decisions, Practices, and Professional Ethics**

## **Part 1: Overview of Activity**

Ethics can be especially important in sales. For this activity you will develop a code of ethics for your company's sales personnel. You will also explore the advantages and disadvantages of commission sales over flat-rate sales and examine strategies for developing and maintaining a client base.

## **Part 2: Activities for Module**

1. Using the resources provided, develop a list of pros and cons for both commission and flat rate sales environments and explain what policy you will take with your sales personnel concerning commission.
2. Using the resources provided and your own sources, gather information on tips and tools for building and maintaining a client base. As a group, outline the steps that need to be taken in order to build and maintain a client base.
3. Review your Company Mission Statement established in Module 2 and your Company Code of Ethics established in Module 3. Consider how the sales environment in your company should reflect these. Review all of your findings in this module, along with the code of ethics for the American Marketing Association (provided below in the additional resources).

Additional Resources: *AMA Code of Ethics* <https://www.ama.org/codes-of-conduct/>

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

Paulins, V. A., & Hillery, J. L. (2020). *Ethics in the fashion industry*. Fairchild Books.