Professor: Sarah Scaturro
Email address: scaturrs@newschool.edu
Office hours: By appointment

Course Description:
In this course students will be introduced to the analysis of textiles and fashion through material culture methodology. Utilizing objects in the school’s study collection and the Professor’s private collection, students will be guided through the various steps in the process of identification, documentation and interpretation of artifacts. By engaging hands-on in the analysis of garments, students will become familiarized with the vocabulary of dress and textiles, learn to identify materials, processes and technologies, and conduct research leading to a historical contextualization of garments. The course further provides students basic insights into museum practice and ethics, introducing them to guidelines for object handling, cataloging, documentation, and condition reporting.

Course Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPICS COVERED IN CLASS</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 1</td>
<td>1/29/13</td>
<td>-Exercise: Looking at objects</td>
<td>-Look on BlackBoard for assigned readings.</td>
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<td>-Review Syllabus</td>
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<td>-Review Object Handling Guidelines</td>
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<td>-Discussion: Material culture methodologies and how they are applied to fashion studies.</td>
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<td>-Determine times/dates of future additional lab sessions/archive access</td>
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<td>WEEK 2</td>
<td>2/5/13</td>
<td>-Exercise: Looking at objects</td>
<td>-Look on BlackBoard for assigned readings.</td>
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<td>-Lecture: Fibers and yarns</td>
<td>-Assignment: Presentation on unknown textile, DUE 3/5/13</td>
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<td>-Unknown textile assigned</td>
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<td>WEEK 3</td>
<td>2/12/13</td>
<td>-Exercise: Looking at objects</td>
<td>-Look on BlackBoard for assigned readings.</td>
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<td>-Lecture: Textile structures</td>
<td>-Continue work on presentation for unknown textile.</td>
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<td>WEEK 4</td>
<td>2/19/13</td>
<td>-Visit: Fashion and Technology and Shoe Obsession exhibitions at MFIT.</td>
<td>-Continue work on presentation for unknown textile.</td>
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<td>-Participation: Pinterest exercise</td>
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<td>WEEK</td>
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| 5    | 2/26/13 | - Lecture - Dyes and Patterning  
- Assign unknown garment  
- Lab exercise: begin analyzing fiber and fabrics of unknown garment. |
|      |        | - Assignment: Oral progress report on unknown garment, **DUE 4/23/13 or 4/30/13**  
- Assignment: Paper on unknown garment, **DUE 5/14/2013** |
| 6    | 3/5/13 | - **PRESENTATIONS ON UNKNOWN TEXTILE**  
- Look on BlackBoard for assigned readings. |
| 7    | 3/12/13 | - Lecture: Construction of fashion garments  
- Assignment: Sketching exercise  
- Lab Exercise: begin sketching assigned unknown garment |
|      |        | - Assignment: Sketch 3 Garments, **DUE 4/9/13**  
- Look on BlackBoard for assigned readings.  
- Continue work on paper and oral progress report for unknown garment. |
| 8    | 3/19/13 | - Lecture/Discussion: Condition reporting and documenting objects  
- Lab Exercise: Practice condition reporting. Begin condition reporting/documenting assigned garment. |
|      |        | - Look on BlackBoard for assigned readings.  
- Continue work on sketch assignment. |
| 9    | 4/2/13  | - Lecture/discussion: cataloging and contextualizing objects.  
- Lab Exercise: Practice cataloging. - Continue work on sketching exercise if time allows. |
|      |        | - Look on BlackBoard for assigned readings.  
- Continue work on sketch assignment. |
| 10   | 4/9/13  | - Lab: Finish sketches and work on assigned garments.  
- **SKETCH ASSIGNMENT DUE AT END OF CLASS** |
|      |        | - Continue work on paper and oral progress report for unknown garment. |
| 11   | 4/16/13 | - Lab Exercise: Write an 80-100 word catalog entry for your assigned garment. |
|      |        | - Look on BlackBoard for assigned readings.  
- Continue work on paper and presentation for unknown garment. |
Learning Outcomes
By the successful completion of this course, students will:
1. Gain proficiency in identifying fibers, fabric structures, and garment construction techniques
2. Develop a vocabulary relating to the materiality of fashion garments
3. Establish a basic understanding of the technologies and processes used to create fashion garments
4. Become familiar with standard museum practices of handling, cataloging, documenting and condition reporting
5. Contextualize and interpret object findings within the field of fashion studies using material culture methodologies

Assessable Tasks
1) Participation and attendance
Participation is critical for this course. Much of the coursework will be hands-on and discussion-based. Students should make every effort to engage in class discussions about readings and in the “Looking at objects” exercises. All required readings will be posted in BlackBoard, so students are expected to check BlackBoard each week.

2) Pinterest
A Pinterest account has been created for placing inspiring, instructive and helpful images.
Name: FashionMaterial
Login email: Materialityoffashion@gmail.com
Password: Materiality2013

Each student is expected to post several images that they find useful as comparative sources (comparanda) for their Unknown Textiles and Unknown Garments, and at least one image as comparanda for an object in MFIT’s Fashion and Technology exhibition. Each student should start their own “Board” to which they will post images of their unknown objects and other useful comparanda images. Students should fully identify object and source.

3) Mid-term oral presentation - DUE 3/5/2013
Each student will give a 5 minute presentation on the assigned unknown textile. Each student must identify object (including date and origin), describe likely fiber content, analyze structure (weave structure and thread count) and briefly contextualize it within design history using comparanda and other primary sources, paying special attention to textile technologies. Make sure to check the rubric on
BlackBoard for this assignment.

4) **Sketch assignment - DUE 4/9/2013**
Students will sketch three garments from a selection of garments from the archive, one of which must be the assigned unknown garment. Each sketch must correctly identify garment, including type of garment, approximate date, possible origin and likely fiber/materials. Sketches need not be made to scale, although measurements/dimensions, correct proportions and front and back views must be included. Make sure to check the rubric on BlackBoard for this assignment.

Each student will give an 8-10 minute presentation on an assigned unknown garment and their findings thus far. Students must identify object name, date, origin, fabrication/materials, and basic garment construction. Students should begin contextualizing garment within fashion history using *comparanda* and other primary resources. Make sure to check the rubric on BlackBoard for this assignment.

6) **Final paper - DUE 5/14/2013**
Each student will write an 8-10 page paper on the same assigned unknown garment they presented on. Students must identify object name, date, origin, fabrication/materials, and basic garment construction. Students must contextualize garment within fashion history using *comparanda* and other primary resources. A condition report, including photographic and sketched documentation must accompany the paper. Make sure to check the rubric on BlackBoard for this assignment.

**Final Grade Calculation**
1) Participation (in class) and attendance = 10%
2) Pinterest participation = 5%
3) Mid-term presentation on unknown textile = 20%
4) Sketch assignment = 20%
5) Oral progress report on unknown garment = 15%
6) Final paper = 30%
TOTAL = 100%

**Important Note on Final Grade Calculation:** Proper object handling is critical in this course. Once object handling guidelines are presented to the class in Week 1, students will be held to these standards. **Persistent object mishandling by a student will result in their participation grade being lowered.**

**Required Reading**
All written papers must follow this reference: Turabian, Kate. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. 6th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. All required weekly readings will be posted on Blackboard two weeks in advance. Additional weekly readings might be assigned, so check BlackBoard each week for possible announcements of additional required readings.

**Recommended Reading**
A bibliography of recommended resources is located on BlackBoard in the “Additional Resources” section.

**Resources**
There are innumerable resources that can be used in studying the materiality of fashion. Students should investigate sources such as museums, private collections, art galleries, art dealers, historic houses, auctions, vintage resellers, photographs, films, ephemera, literature, rare book dealers, library special collections, periodicals, newspapers, advertisements, contemporary and vintage fashion rental companies, online databases such as the Berg Fashion Library, etc. Blogs may also be used as long as source is critically appraised.
Materials and Supplies
Students will need the following:
- Camera
- Sketchpad/paper
- Pencils
- Soft measuring tape

The following materials will be provided:
- Thread counters
- Gloves
- Muslin for covering tables

Grading Standards
Rubrics for each assessable task, exclusive of participation/attendance, are available on BlackBoard. Look under the “Rubrics” folder in the “Assignments and Readings” section to find all rubrics.

Divisional, Program and Class Policies

- **Object Handling**
  See note above about how proper object handling requirements can affect your Final Grade. In order to practice proper museum protocols all students must conform to the following:
  - No pens, markers or highlighters are allowed when objects are in the room. Students may only use pencils.
  - No gum, food or drinks are allowed when objects are in the room.
  - Students must always wear gloves when handling objects.
  - Objects must not be placed on bare surfaces or on the floor.
  - Only soft measuring tapes may be used.
  - More thorough guidelines will be handed out in class.

- **Additional Lab Work Is Required**
The Sketch Assignment, Final Paper and Final Presentation will require time outside of class handling archive objects. Due to archive security policies, these additional “lab sessions” must be held from 9 - 5, Monday - Friday in a predetermined location. While time has been built into regular class sessions to work on your assignments, you will be required to attend some of these additional lab sessions in order to successfully complete your assignments. We will collaboratively determine the dates and times of these sessions during Week 1.

- **Responsibility**
Students are responsible for all assignments, even if they are absent. Late papers, failure to complete the readings assigned for class discussion, and lack of preparedness for in-class discussions and presentations will jeopardize your successful completion of this course.

- **Participation**
Class participation is an essential part of class and includes: keeping up with reading, contributing meaningfully to class discussions, active participation in group work, and coming to class regularly and on time. Active participation in Pinterest is required.

- **Attendance**
Faculty members may fail any student who is absent for a significant portion of class time. A significant portion of class time is defined as three absences for classes that meet once per week.
Lateness or early departure from class may also translate into one full absence.

- **Blackboard**
  Use of Blackboard is a requirement for this class. Students should check it for announcements before coming to class each week.

- **Delays**
  In rare instances, I may be delayed arriving to class. If I have not arrived by the time class is scheduled to start, you must wait a minimum of thirty minutes for my arrival. In the event that I will miss class entirely, a sign will be posted at the classroom indicating your assignment for the next class meeting.

- **Academic Integrity**
  This is the university’s Statement on Academic Integrity: “Plagiarism and cheating of any kind in the course of academic work will not be tolerated. Academic honesty includes accurate use of quotations, as well as appropriate and explicit citation of sources in instances of paraphrasing and describing ideas, or reporting on research findings or any aspect of the work of others (including that of instructors and other students). These standards of academic honesty and citation of sources apply to all forms of academic work (examinations, essays, theses, computer work, art and design work, oral presentations, and other projects).”

  It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

  Every student at Parsons signs an Academic Integrity Statement as a part of the registration process. Thus, you are held responsible for being familiar with, understanding, adhering to and upholding the spirit and standards of academic integrity as set forth by the Parsons Student Handbook.

- **Guidelines for Written Assignments**
  Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas in any academic work using books, journals, internet postings, or other student papers without proper acknowledgment. For further information on proper acknowledgment and plagiarism, including expectations for paraphrasing source material and proper forms of citation in research and writing, students should consult the Chicago Manual of Style (cf. Turabian, 6th edition). The University Writing Center also provides useful on-line resources to help students understand and avoid plagiarism. See [http://www.newschool.edu/admin/writingcenter/](http://www.newschool.edu/admin/writingcenter/).

  Students must receive prior permission from instructors to submit the same or substantially overlapping material for two different assignments. Submission of the same work for two assignments without the prior permission of instructors is plagiarism.

- **Student Disability Services**
  In keeping with the University’s policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations is welcome to meet with me privately. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to meet with Jason Luchs in the office of Student Disability Services, who will conduct an intake, and if appropriate, provide an academic accommodation notification letter to you to bring to me. At that point I will review the letter with you and discuss these
accommodations in relation to this course. Mr. Luchs’ office is located in 79 Fifth Avenue, 5th floor. His direct line is (212) 229-5626 x3135. You may also access more information through the University’s web site at http://www.newschool.edu/studentservices/disability/.

Suggested Bibliography for Materiality of Fashion, PGHT 5556
*starred entries have been placed on course reserve or are in reference section of the Gimbel Design Library

Material Culture and Connoisseurship


**Fiber**


**Fabric**


*Emery, Irene. *The Primary Structures of Fabrics: An Illustrated Classification.* London:
Thames & Hudson, 2009.


**Costume**


**Museology**


“Vocabulary of Basic Terms for Cataloguing Costume,” ICOM International Committee for the Museums and Collections of Costume.