FM Program Assessment Report for AY 2019-2020

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Introduction

The Fashion Merchandising (FM) program was formally moved to the Marketing & Logistics Department, Craig School of Business in the fall 2018 semester from the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology. The FM program started its program assessment effort in the fall 2019. We updated the Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (SOAP) in the fall 2019 and conducted two assessment activities during the spring 2020 semester based on the SOAP. This report will briefly describe each assessment activity, present findings from each activity, and discuss the significance of the findings.

Assessment Activities and Findings

Buy simulation project

FM 134 Fashion Retail Buying is a core FM course. FM 134 was identified to advance student learning outcomes A1, A2, B1, B2, B3, and B4. Based on the Timeline for Implementation of Assessment Methods on our SOAP, we planned to use the Buying Simulation Project of FM 134 for the program assessment. To assess the success of learning outcomes A1 A2, B1, B2, B3, and B4, a survey instrument was developed.

There were 10 students enrolled in FM 134 in spring 2020. Students worked on their Buying Simulation project in groups. There were three groups formed; therefore, three student projects were collected for the program assessment purpose at the end of spring 2020. The instructor of FM 134 used the survey to evaluate the quality of students' Buying Simulation Projection. Table 1 below contains the data from this assessment. The learning outcomes that we intended to evaluate, and corresponding items on the questionnaire, are specified in Table 2 below.

Table 1. FM 134 Buying Simulation Project Assessment Data (1 to 5 Likert scale, 1 = poor, 5 = excellent).

#	Items	Project #1	Project #2	Project #3	Aver.
1	Understanding of the basic structure and operations of the fashion industry	4	4	4	4
2	Analyzing the demand of fashion consumers based on consumer demographic and psychographic characteristics	5	4	4	4.3
3	Predicting the sales volume based on past sales performance and future economic outlook	5	4	4	4.3
4	Developing assortment plan based on market demand and consumer characteristics	4	2.5	2.5	3
5	Developing market trip itinerary and market meeting agenda	4	3.75	4	3.9
6	Developing a basic six-month merchandising plan	4.5	3.65	3.25	3.8

7	Making critical purchasing decisions	4	4	4	4
8	Problem solving and decision-making skills	4.5	4	4	4.2
9	Locating and investigating industry and business data	5	4	3.5	4.2
10	Presenting industry and business data	5	3.5	3.5	4
11	Knowledge, skill, and dispositions necessary for professional success in the fashion industry	4.5	3.5	3.5	3.8

The data reveal that all the FM program learning outcomes assessed were met (average >3.5) (see Table 2). Specifically, the learning outcome A1, A2, B1, and B2 results were better (average > 4.0). However, the B3 and B4 were weaker. For application of merchandising tool (B3), more effort must be put on assortment planning in the future.

Table 2. Buying Simulation Project Assessment – Learning Outcome Analysis

Program Learning Outcomes	Corresponding Survey Items	Average of Each Survey Q.	Average for the LO
A1. Outline and describe the basic structure and operations of the fashion industry.	Q1. Understanding of the basic structure and operations of the fashion industry	4	4
A2. Analyze fashion products from the perspective of materials, construction, and esthetics. Q2	Q2. Analyzing the demand of fashion consumers based on consumer demographic and psychographic characteristics	4.3	4.3
B1. Apply critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making skills.	Q7. Making critical purchasing decisions	4	4.1
	Q8. Problem solving and decision-making skills	4.2	
B2. Locate, investigate, organize, analyze, cite, and effectively present information in oral and written formats. Q5, 9, 10	Q5. Developing market trip itinerary and market meeting agenda	3.9	4.1
	Q9. Locating and investigating industry and business data	4.2	
	Q10. Presenting industry and business data	4.2	
B3. Apply merchandising principles and tools to start or enhance the profitability of a fashion business. Q3, 4, 6	Q3. Predicting the sales volume based on past sales performance and future economic outlook	4.3	3.7
	Q4. Developing assortment plan based on market demand and consumer characteristics	3	
	Q6. Developing a basic six-month merchandising plan	3.8	
B4. Demonstrate knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for professional success, including but not limited to starting a new business or seeking employment. Q11	Q11. Knowledge, skill, and dispositions necessary for professional success in the fashion industry	3.8	3.8

Senior survey

A senior survey was developed and distributed at the capstone class, FM 140 Fashion Entrepreneurship course. The survey was intended to measure all the program learning outcomes from senior students' perspectives. A Likert scale was used for the survey: 1= strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree. Nine students enrolled in FM 140 in spring 2019 semester; 7 of them were FM majors. Students were invited to fill out the survey during the last week of the semester. Overall 7 students filled out the survey.

The Figure 1 and Table 3 present the senior survey results. The data reveal that all program learning outcomes were achieved.

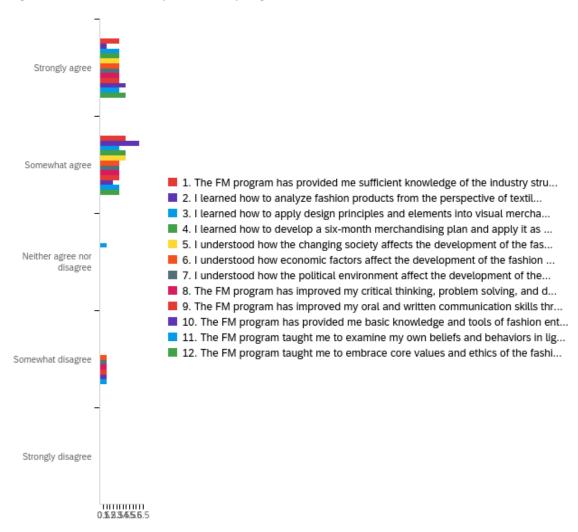Figure 1: FM Senior Survey Results – Spring 2020.

1. The FM program has provided me sufficient knowledge of the industry stru...
2. I learned how to analyze fashion products from the perspective of textil...
3. I learned how to apply design principles and elements into visual mercha...
4. I learned how to develop a six-month merchandising plan and apply it as ...
5. I understood how the changing society affects the development of the fas...
6. I understood how economic factors affect the development of the fashion ...
7. I understood how the political environment affect the development of the...
8. The FM program has improved my critical thinking, problem solving, and d...
9. The FM program has improved my oral and written communication skills thr...
10. The FM program has provided me basic knowledge and tools of fashion ent...
11. The FM program taught me to examine my own beliefs and behaviors in lig...
12. The FM program taught me to embrace core values and ethics of the fashi...

Table 3. FM Senior Survey Results – Spring 2020

#	Field	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	1. The FM program has provided me sufficient knowledge of the industry structure and operations.	1.00	2.00	1.57	0.49	0.24	7
2	2. I learned how to analyze fashion products from the perspective of textile materials and esthetics.	1.00	2.00	1.86	0.35	0.12	7
3	3. I learned how to apply design principles and elements into visual merchandising.	1.00	3.00	1.71	0.70	0.49	7
4	4. I learned how to develop a six-month merchandising plan and apply it as a retail buyer.	1.00	2.00	1.57	0.49	0.24	7
5	5. I understood how the changing society affects the development of the fashion industry and demand of fashion goods.	1.00	2.00	1.57	0.49	0.24	7
6	6. I understood how economic factors affect the development of the fashion industry and demand of fashion goods.	1.00	4.00	1.86	0.99	0.98	7
7	7. I understood how the political environment affect the development of the fashion industry and demand of fashion goods.	1.00	4.00	1.86	0.99	0.98	7
8	8. The FM program has improved my critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making skills.	1.00	4.00	1.86	0.99	0.98	7
9	9. The FM program has improved my oral and written communication skills through class assignments and in-class presentations.	1.00	4.00	1.86	0.99	0.98	7
10	10. The FM program has provided me basic knowledge and tools of fashion entrepreneurship.	1.00	4.00	1.71	1.03	1.06	7
11	11. The FM program taught me to examine my own beliefs and behaviors in light of multiple perspectives.	1.00	4.00	1.86	0.99	0.98	7
12	12. The FM program taught me to embrace core values and ethics of the fashion industry	1.00	2.00	1.43	0.49	0.24	7

Summary

The 2019-2020 FM program assessment results reveal that the program did a satisfactory job preparing students for their future career. However, more effort should be put into enhancing the learning effectiveness of merchandising tools, especially assortment planning.