

**CHANGE THE WORLD ONE SEQUIN AT A TIME:
A CONTEMPORARY FASHION DESIGN ART EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

By

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A CAPSTONE PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS OF THE
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OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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I would like to thank my tremendous family for their support through these two years of graduate school. They missed out on a lot of time with me, and I am looking forward to making it up to them soon. I hope that I will be a good example to my daughter Ana to strive to always do her best, and to have a life-long love of learning.

I have had some amazing professors while in the University of Florida Online Art Master's Degree Program, who have opened my eyes up to a whole new world of art education that is much richer and complex than I ever knew possible. They have inspired me to change my own approach to teaching art. By sharing these new ideas in this curriculum I have created, I hope to inspire other art educators. I would also like to thank my committee, members Craig Roland and Jodi Kushins, for their positive encouragement and excellent contributions for this capstone project.

ABSTRACT OF CAPSTONE PROJECT
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Abstract

Celebrity pop star Lady Gaga once said “Now I’m just trying to change the world, one sequin at a time.” How could the art of fashion make political and social statements about our culture strong enough to change the world? This capstone project involves curriculum research, development, and implementation of a new type of high school art course in fashion design. Historically, fashion design has typically been taught in high schools as a home economics or sewing course. However, I see it as a rich subject for high school art students to study. Fashion is currently of high interest to adolescent students, due to television shows such as *Project Runway* and *America’s Next Top Model*. Contemporary art educators and their students can explore the topic of fashion artistically, aesthetically, multi-culturally, historically, globally, and through visual and popular culture. The fashion design curriculum I have created contains five

comprehensive units, which I have posted on my website www.MrsTsArtEducation.weebly.com, that explore themes such as identity, self-discovery, ethics, social justice, and socio-political culture that are at the heart of art-making.

This approach to secondary art education can create an avenue for self-discovery and self-actualization in high school students. This curriculum includes traditional techniques of fashion sketching and illustration, as well as a variety of ways to use new technology to design fashions and artwork with a computer. In addition, feminist themes are examined in this new curriculum raising questions about fashion and power, the influence of advertising, sexualization of teens, and societal ideals of beauty. Teaching fashion design to today's 21st century student with this curriculum will provide an opportunity to "change the world, one sequin at a time."

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Introduction

As a high school art teacher who has been learning about exciting new ideas in the field of art education in graduate school, I asked myself “What kind of course could I create that students would find meaningful and relevant to their lives?” From this key question, other questions arose. What about a course that would teach students the drawing and painting skills of human proportion, fabric rendering of light and shadow, and the realistic skills they crave to know? What about a course that could also help students look thoughtfully at personal and cultural values and ethics, at history, and at other cultures’ aesthetics as well? Could there be a way to include global citizenship and the local and world community in such a course? I have created such a course for my high school art students. This new fashion design class is designed to be an art course that does not require sewing. It focuses on designing, drawing, and painting fashion illustrations, as well as creating other projects such as videos, PowerPoint presentations, posters, persuasive essays on hot-button fashion topics, and recycled fashions and accessories. In addition, the course will include class discussions and evaluations of historical, social, cultural and religious meaning of fashions such as Muslim burkas, Japanese kimonos, or Amish attire.

The topic of fashion is replete in ways the art educator can capture and hold the interest of students, while including areas of contemporary art study that are valuable and worthy areas to explore. Above all, it is my opinion that it is the responsibility of today’s art educator to go beyond teaching the formal skills such as the elements of art and principles of design, and technical skills of various media. We should simultaneously assist students to develop critical and aesthetic awareness, to understand social and cultural influences, and to enlighten them to become future citizens that will work to improve global conditions with multicultural sensitivity.

Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study

Based on my participation and studies in the online graduate art education program at the University of Florida I have become aware of several approaches in art education that have come about since I was trained in my undergraduate studies in Art Education. My undergraduate preparation for teaching was based primarily on the discipline-based art education (DBAE) approach (Alexander and Day, 1991). My graduate capstone research incorporates some of these new approaches to art curriculum development and teaching that I recently learned, especially Visual Culture Art Education and Globalism. I created a curriculum framework that includes both new topics and new teaching approaches, and combined them with teaching methods I was already using.

Overarching Theme of the New Fashion Design Curriculum

The intended aim of this curriculum is to teach art in a deeper more meaningful way. Students will still learn art media, skills, and techniques as always. However, employing the Visual Culture Arts Education (VCAE) method can engage students more, and empower them to make art in a way that is more similar to the way contemporary artists work in the real world. Students discuss, interpret, and analyze art through the topic of fashion with an aesthetic and cultural perspective. By examining meanings, values and beliefs about fashion, the students will uncover essential truths about life and their own identity. The ultimate goal of this curriculum is to help produce a student who becomes an enlightened citizen that is multi-culturally sensitive, socially responsible, and globally conscious.

Research Questions

I have based my research activities and my curriculum around these underlying questions:

1. How can I incorporate contemporary approaches to my high school art curriculum and teaching to develop an art course that is interesting, engaging, meaningful and relevant to high school students?
2. How can I enrich a high school Fashion Design course with contemporary issues concerning global citizenship and responsible care of the environment?
3. How can I encourage art students to understand and question the social, political, and cultural influences and values surrounding the topic of fashion while simultaneously learning technical and formal art skills?

Rationale and Significance of the Study

I am in a slightly unusual circumstance. I obtained my undergraduate degree and was trained as an art teacher in 1999, with the discipline-based art education (DBAE) approach and an emphasis on multicultural art education. However, due to a successful career as a professional photographer continuing after graduation, I did not begin teaching at a public high school until ten years later in 2009. I began my graduate degree program online at the University of Florida in 2011. There I started to learn about exciting new ideas in art education that had come about in the decade since my undergraduate years. I wanted to incorporate these new ideas into my teaching practice in order to enrich my students' learning. For the purposes of this study, two of the new areas I incorporated include visual culture art education (VCAE) and globalism. Not only do I feel this will improve my teaching and my students' learning, but I also

hope that this study can inform other art educators, and inspire them to have a course like it in their school.

Background to the Study

Three years ago when I left my full-time professional photography studio to become a high school art educator, I was hired especially to create, design and teach a digital photography program. However, I was stepping into the previous teacher's schedule. She had been granted permission to offer a Fashion Design course through the art department. Previously the home economics teacher taught this as a "learn-to-sew" course, but there were a lot of problems due to the constant upkeep of sewing machines and cost of materials. My predecessor intended her new course to be taught as a drawing course, but became engaged and moved out of state over the summer before starting the class. I was hired just a few days before school started. With no books, curriculum, rubrics, tests, or anything in place I was left in the frightening, yet wonderful, position to create the curriculum in any way I wished. I immediately consulted and observed local art schools and colleges in Boston that offered fashion design, including Massachusetts College of Art and Boston School of Fashion, to discern what skills they would like in a high school senior applicant. These visits gave me some great ideas to start off with (See figure 1). At that time, I excitedly began designing the curriculum utilizing the discipline-based art education approach that I had learned in teacher training years before. With my own money I began ordering several books on fashion illustration from Amazon.com to help familiarize myself with the techniques of fashion design. With these basic tools I began the course. Shortly after I started teaching, I enrolled in graduate school at University of Florida. As I quickly became aware of the many other educational approaches I began adding to my overall art curriculum, enriching it with some of these new ideas bit by bit. Now with this capstone project I have

redesigned it and elevated it to a much higher level, and it now covers many more aspects than ever before.



Figure 1. Massachusetts College of Art Fashion Design Program – Student display

One important thing to note is that I do not consider myself a “fashionista” in any way. While I appreciate the artistry and aesthetics of fashion, I am more often dressed for comfort than for cutting-edge style. In fact, being an art teacher means I am more likely to have paint *under* my nails than on them. I have clay on my clothes and shoes most days, and frankly I wouldn’t have it any other way. In fact, I readily and comically admit that to my fashion students right from the start, and it seems to relieve them of the burden of being judged on the same account. I am not as interested in the topic of fashion in terms of *style* as much as I find the topic fascinating from a social and cultural standpoint. Therefore, it is rich topic to explore in art education. In fact, the more I researched it the more convinced I became that a fashion curriculum such as this can be the perfect vehicle to explore many worthy art educational topics and big ideas.

Goals That Drive This Curriculum

Students will:

1. Examine and evaluate personal and cultural values and beliefs regarding media, body image, gender, and sexualization and exploitation of teens.

2. Describe and apply responsible care of the natural environment, ecological awareness, global concerns particularly in the fashion industry such as animal and human rights, fair trade.
3. Explain the role and influence society, culture and fashion have on one another.
4. Analyze and compare the aesthetic contribution of world cultures to the subject of fashion, and examine the religious or political meanings of some articles of clothing.
5. Evaluate the power of imagery, and deconstruct and investigate images in media, toys, and advertising about fashion, to make informed choices as consumers and citizens.
6. Demonstrate how art can effect social and political change, and what motivates artists, and apply it in their work.

Important Human Themes Covered In This Curriculum

Personal Ethics	Creativity
Body Image	Self-Expression
Personal and cultural values	Exploitation
Cultural understanding	Belonging
Self-Inquiry	Acceptance
Identity	Consumption/consumerism
Multiple points of view	Sexism/Feminism

Essential Questions

1. In what way do media (movies, television, magazines, advertising) influence fashion?
2. What are the purposes and reasons we wear the clothes we choose to wear?
3. How do our culture, community, and social group affect our fashion choices?
4. How is fashion perceived in various cultures?
5. What articles of clothing or wearable items are considered sacred? Why?
6. How are fashion and identity influenced by one another?

Assumptions

I have created my curriculum with an assumption that other schools may be like mine and do not have a large budget from which to draw on in order to implement a fashion design course. Therefore, my course in fashion design is created to run on a shoestring budget, with very little additional expense to my school. Most supplies are the ordinary media used in art rooms anyway, such as watercolor and drawing paper, colored pencils, markers. For the recycled creations, students collected objects from home, or even from the school cafeteria. If other educators have more funds available then they could offer additional opportunities beyond what I have described here. Another assumption I have in creating this curriculum, is that high school students in this program will have the ability to use technology such as computers, digital cameras, video cameras, or their cell phones, in order to research and create videos or presentations in addition to their art work. If those options are not available, projects could still be created with posters, journals, mixed media art, other non-technical or traditional forms to expression ideas, if that is preferred.

Based on my own experience, I am assuming that high school students will enjoy the study of fashion design, and find relevance and meaning to their own lives by learning about the

social and cultural influences while also learning art techniques. I am also making the assumption that a Fashion Design course can be created without the necessity of sewing machines or sewing skills, or a main emphasis on creating Trashion and fashion shows, which is the norm. Instead it can be taught utilizing a visual culture approach with a socio-cultural emphasis, as is shown in my curriculum.

Literature Review and Definition of Terms

The following definitions describe the various new art educational approaches I have incorporated in my curriculum project. Included with these definitions is a summary of what experts in the field posited in each particular approach that I found when reviewing the literature.

Multicultural Art Education. Multiculturalism in art education was developed in hopes that it would promote intercultural appreciation and positive views of cultural diversity (Stuhr, 1994). Multiculturalism is based on the democratic principles of equity, diversity and social justice (Delacruz, 1995). Proponents of multicultural education argue that this educational approach would help to change stereotypes and misrepresentations of racial groups, and that it would help students gain an understanding and appreciation for diverse people by challenging their cultural assumptions (Delacruz, 1996; Stuhr, 1994; Freedman, 2003). In art education, multicultural education proponents argue that it is also our obligation as art educators to include diversity in the art curriculum as well, to prevent a study of art that is racially biased toward the typical white European male stereotype (Heise, 2004). Through examination of other cultures in the context of their fashion, we can understand their aesthetic and their people in a way that cannot be fully understood by learning facts from textbooks. Art students develop an appreciation for cultural diversity, which is more important than ever in our evolving local and international communities (Stuhr, 1994). Although the DBAE approach also recommended

studying art in the cultural context in which it was produced, multiculturalism in art education goes further. It also includes emphasis on contemporary social issues (Lanier, 1984), social reconstruction and revision. Delacruz states that “multicultural art education involves teaching multiple aesthetic and artistic perspectives” (Delacruz, 2006, p.10). While it can be difficult in public education to teach about art that portrays controversial social issues or subject matter, these are often found in the study of multicultural art. While job security and propriety should be kept in mind-an attempt must be made to avoid selecting only safe uncomplicated art that is merely pretty or nice if we want students to gain a greater understanding of the purpose and meaning of art. Some art educators have attempted to incorporate multiculturalism into their curriculums by having students create works that replicate art from around the world, known as ethnic tourism. However, this remains only a superficial understanding of the work, without including the social, political, and spiritual meaning and cultural context in which the work developed (Delacruz, 2006).

Visual Culture Art Education (VCAE). In today’s world, most of us are being inundated with images every day. With the VCAE approach, art is studied in its social context, and combined the study of popular as well as the traditional fine arts. One important aspect of this approach is to teach students to read and interpret visual text and messages to reveal their political and sometimes covert messages. This includes evaluating the source of the images we see, and who has the power and money to convey or control what we see. The VCAE approach also helps students critically examine the influence and power of the mass media, and interpret those images they see every day (Freedman & Stuhr, 2004; Walker, 2004; Duncum, 2001, 2010). VCAE approach acknowledges that we live in a world filled with visual content in media, advertising, photography, fashion, television, movies, the Internet, shopping malls, theme parks,

and other aspects of student's everyday lives (Walker, 2004). VCAE theory holds that varying forms of "high" culture (traditional fine arts) and "low" or popular culture (Duncum, 2001) are all valuable forms worthy of study in art education. It is important to be more inclusive of everyday cultural experiences of students, because it is studied in the social context of the present. Art educators need to remove hierarchical biases of ranking fine arts as more valuable than popular arts (Irvine, 2011). A VCAE approach requires a paradigm shift in that it includes the study of historical, cross-cultural, and values aesthetics as well as social issues and values (Sriram, 2012).

Where DBAE introduced the idea and benefits of studying aesthetics and critically examining works of fine art, Duncum proposes that students benefit from critical analysis of visual culture (Duncum, 2010). He also argues that VCAE should include historical and cross-cultural studies, social issues, and values aesthetics. The study of culture helps students to better understand their world and their place in it, and visual images can influence their perception of self (Freedman, 2004). They can derive meanings from their cultural surroundings. Therefore, the high school art room maintains a vital role to assist students in interpreting the meanings from visual images, and to help them form their values and identities.

Globalism. Like multiculturalism, teaching globalism in art education exposes and sensitizes students to human values and concerns of others (Delacruz, 2009). However, rather than studying one culture at a time, a globalism-oriented approach revolves around community, both the local and the world community. The hope is that students develop an understanding and appreciation of the planet, and the future of the world and its inhabitants (Delacruz, 2009). This includes concerns for the environment, human rights, and animal welfare. Including global issues in art education is predicated on the belief that educators can encourage students to

become responsible global citizens who can create the kind of world we wish to live in. Most school systems now desire 21st century students to have global awareness.

Eco-Fashion. In the fashion world, there is a trend to becoming more environmentally friendly and globally aware. Consideration to the carbon footprint created by clothing manufacturing is given more thought by companies as well as consumers. There is an effort to be more humane in the ethical treatment of farmers, factory workers, and chemicals used in creating garments in the industry. Some designers, companies, and boutiques offer clothing specific to the globally-aware and environmentally-conscious consumer (Thomas, 2007).

Trashion. Trashion is a term for art, jewelry, fashion and objects for the home that are created from used, thrown-out, found and repurposed elements. Trashion is a sub-genre of found art. As recycling and green fashion have become more prevalent, the term “trashion” describes any wearable item or accessory that is constructed using all or part of materials that have been recycled, thrifted or reconditioned. Trashion is a combination of environmentalism and innovation (Wikipedia, 2012). Trashion projects are one way the art curriculum can teach about globalization and environment. For example, awareness about overconsumption and environmental waste is taught by introducing students to upcycling, vintage clothing, and creating new fashionable objects from recycled materials. These types of accessories, such as bracelets made from soda can pop tops, and handbags made of recycled seat belts are becoming the new cool in some circles. Teaching students about the effects of the corporate manufacturing and production of clothing in the garment industry can help them understand the global implications of the choices they make as a consumer.

Limitations of the Study

This study is focused on how selected contemporary art education approaches can be incorporated into a fashion design curriculum designed for high school art students. Since the fashion design curriculum framework I created can cover one or even two semesters, it would be beyond the scope and time limitations of this study to test all of the lesson plans and examples for the entire curriculum. However, the units, lesson plans and relevant links have been posted online at my art education website. In addition, it would be impossible to do action research on the entire curriculum, but I have done action research for one selected unit and a student survey to assess the effectiveness of student learning using the various new approaches to teaching art.

What Makes an Excellent Contemporary Art Curriculum?

Another aspect of my literature review was to look at what the experts in the field of art education say about creating an excellent contemporary art curriculum. Some suggest art curriculum must include the study of visual and popular culture (Walker, 2004; Heise, 2004), in order to even out the playing field with “high” culture held in museums, and to help students make sense of all the visual information they receive from the various sources and media (Freedman & Stuhr, 2004). Tagg (2010) argues that media such as photography matter more than ever before. Others endorse a holistic approach that allows for personal identity discovery and finding meaning through artmaking, which will lead ultimately to self-actualization and growth (Lanier, 1984). Holistic art educators concern themselves with the whole child; seeking to engage body, mind and spirit (Cummings, 2010). Other approaches to art education, such as modeled by Olivia Gude, argue that a quality art education involves local and global themes that lead students to insights and experience. This method guides students to heightened self-awareness and self-inquiry. An excellent art curriculum, according to Gude (2007), and Stewart

& Walker (2010), is not just about aesthetic and cultural content, but also about important ideas and themes. The *Understanding by Design*, or UbD approach to curriculum planning asks the art educator to consider first what student outcomes they wish to achieve rather than start by asking what media or topics a course will cover (Wiggins and McTighe, 2008). The aim of an excellent art curriculum should be to awaken, not just train the mind.

Some art educators advocate for inclusion of content that engages students in the study of the social functions of art (Lanier, 1984). Interaction with the community, whether it be local, national, or the world community is an important aspect in contemporary art education curricula (Delacruz, 2008; Gude, 2007). These approaches have the common goal that the student will become comfortable and develop sensitivity to others in an increasingly diverse world. Plus they will learn empathy and become more engaged citizens in the future (Delacruz, 2010).

Studying art in a historical and social context is an important part of the art curriculum as proponents of DBAE and multiculturalism maintained. Studying art within the context it was made in helps students to better understand the values and aesthetic sensibilities of the people who created it (Stewart & Walker, 2010). Other art educators state the importance of including contemporary artists and artwork since the future of art will build on this (Lanier, 1984, Gude, 2007). However, art curricula must be balanced with what teachers think is important for them to know, and what students see as a significant contribution to their lives (Cummings, 2010).

Some scholars contend that the pacing of art lessons and learning activities should be slowed down to allow time to consider deep and meaningful topics, while others see it as a means to well-being, just for the sheer joy of creating and expressing oneself as Viktor Lowenfeld and Franz Cizek suggested (Duncum, 1982). Cizek believed that every child was innately creative and should be allowed to use their imagination, without possibly harmful adult

influence. While Cizek believed in unfettered self-expression of the student artist, and his “hands off” approach became synonymous with art education for some time, Paul Duncum believed that approach was a fundamental mistake. Some see the teacher’s role as guide and inspirer rather than information transmitter. Other experts state the need to include a democracy of materials and art forms to ensure equity to both the fine and the expressive arts (Stuhr, 1994; Heise, 2004). Elliot Eisner raises perhaps the most significant point to creating an art curriculum when he stated:

The outcomes of art education are far wider than learning how to create or to see the objects populating museums and galleries. The world at large is a potential source of delight and a rich source of meaning if one views it within an aesthetic frame of reference (Eisner, 2001, p.8).

Vincent Lanier writes in *Eight Guidelines for Selecting Art Curriculum Content* that selecting content for art education can be difficult because there is such an abundance of available and appropriate material to choose from. He suggests that above all the selection of content and construction of curricula, the most important aspect of any curriculum’s success is an inspired and knowledgeable teacher who enthusiastically transmits his or her love of art to others (Lanier, 1984).

Which Approaches Should Be Included?

I researched literature on the art approaches that I feel are pertinent to the design of the new fashion design curriculum created. I was already using the DBAE approach created by Paul J. Getty foundation, which moved art education away from an exclusive focus on art production and free expression to include a four-pronged approach that included the disciplines of art history, art criticism, and aesthetics along with art production. One of the disciplines advocated

by DBAE proponents was the study of art history, to connect the art that students made with a historical context. It also included the study of aesthetics including the formal qualities of art, with emphasis on the principles of art and elements of design as a visual language anyone could learn. Another part of this approach was in art production teaching the techniques of traditional art. Finally, art criticism was studied so that students could understand and appreciate art long after they left the high school art studio. While the DBAE discipline-based art education method was a great improvement to the mere art production that came before it, in my mind, I began to see that incorporating some of these other new art education approaches could improve my curriculum even further.

Freedom to Include Meaningful Content

I set about finding ways to incorporate selected aspects from all of the art approaches and methods discussed above because they were all powerful and important. I wanted to take up the challenge and find ways to incorporate these methods, while also keeping in mind the various standards and frameworks that my curriculum was expected to meet. Since art is not yet subject to the same kind of scrutiny and accountability that core subjects are, we are fortunate that we still have the freedom to create the kinds of curriculum that matter (Delacruz, 2008). In this work I strove to create a curriculum that matters, that is modeled around issues that students, artists, and I connect to and feel passionately about. The art curriculum is enriched by the theme of making connections between fashion and culture. This can mean culture in a local, multi-cultural, or global sense. It can also mean societal, political, or religious culture. Or it can mean visual culture, high culture, low culture, popular culture, or even school culture. Keeping with this research on what the experts say should be included in a contemporary art education, I created my new curriculum with units that contained with these components. (See Figure 2).



Figure 2: Components of This Contemporary Fashion Design Curriculum

Methodology

The research methodology I employed for this project is *curriculum research development and implementation*. The NAEA Research Commission, in their Proposed Research Agenda, stated what would most meet the needs of arts education for the 21st century (NAEA Research Commission, 2012). My study covers at least three out of eight of these key areas; curriculum, instructional evaluation, and student learning. Their *Research Needs Assessment* asked how the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that we create reflect the needs of preparing students for a global and just society (NAEA Research Commission, 2012). Since I incorporated contemporary methods of art education such as globalism and multiculturalism, my study addresses this need in the field in various ways; in the topics, projects, and discussions that make up my new curriculum.

Although the largest portion of my research method was curriculum research and development, I also conducted an action research study when I implemented a few of the lessons that comprise my fashion design curriculum. I evaluated the content through action research methods, which include informal evaluation, analysis of student art products, student reflection worksheets, classroom observations, and analysis of conversations during class critiques. In addition I also conducted an anonymous survey with students at the completion of the semester to get their assessment of what they learned.

Subjects and Research Site

I teach fashion in a high school setting with 9th to 12th graders who have a mixed level of abilities, from special needs to high honors AP students. The course can be taken for one or two semesters. The research site is in a suburban school that has around 120 students per grade, and the high school (9-12) and middle school (7-8) are attached. The two schools have separate

administrators and academic teachers, but they share the art, music, physical education teachers, and cafeteria. The community is diverse with around seventy percent of the students Caucasian, and about 30% Wampanoag (Native American), Black, and other ethnic groups. These Wampanoags are the descendants of the original Native American tribe that welcomed, and later fought with, the pilgrims in Plymouth Colony, twenty miles away. There are two art teachers in the school serving all six grades. The students have many choices in electives. My colleague teaches Seventh Grade Art, Film Photography, Art Foundations, and Drawing & Painting. I teach 8th Grade Art Explore, Pottery 1 & 2, Digital Photography & Photoshop, AP Studio Art, and Fashion Design. Class size and diversity varies greatly from semester to semester depending on other factors in the school such as availability of electives, scheduling issues, and AP course offerings that compete for students. One semester I had 27 students in the Fashion Design course, and this past semester I have only eight students. This semester I have all female students, but previously I had eight players from the football team enrolled in the course, including the team captain and quarterback since they needed an art elective to graduate and it is all that fit into their schedule.

Data Collection Procedures

I have conducted a very thorough investigation of articles, websites, social media, museums, scholarly journals and books for several types of data for my capstone project. The first type of information was on the topic of curriculum planning for art, particularly using the visual culture approach. The second type research was on the topic of fashion. This data included items such as: contemporary fashion designers, relevant links, photographs, fashion illustrations, historical fashions, fashions from other cultures, and costume design in movies worn by celebrities today.

The other type of data I collected is from the action research portion of this project. I gathered both quantitative and qualitative data to help me determine if the new curriculum is effective in helping students learn and understand the research questions I have stated earlier. This data includes student artwork, field notes from conversations, class critiques, self-evaluations, and an informal course survey. Using qualitative methods of research I examined student artworks created over the course such as portfolios, projects, observations, discussions, peer and self-assessments, and student reflections or journal entries. I used rubrics, checklists, and anecdotal descriptions to observe, record, compare and analyze student learning.

I have divided the curriculum into the following segments:

Illustration Skills. This section contains links to tutorials, handouts, and information on topics like: how to draw the fashion figure, faces, hair, fashion accessories like shoes, handbags, and hats, and how to draw drapery. Students begin with learning the different proportions when drawing a fashion figure, as shown here.



Figure 3. Students learn to draw figures in proportion

Socio-Cultural. This section contains PowerPoint presentations, handouts, articles, and other items relating to issues of power created by clothing, like uniforms, high heels, or corsets

provide interesting topics for social justice and feminist discussions.

Globalism. Eco-fashion, human rights, child labor, Walmart corporate practices, shopping with a conscience, vegetarians wearing Ugg boots, animal rights and PETA, and consumerism are some of the topics that are covered in this section. Projects include making protest art (posters, videos, paintings, or sculptures) on one of these topics that the student cares the most about, and creating Trashion projects (entire outfits or accessories made from recycled, reused and repurposed materials).

Hot Topics. Various articles on controversial topics regarding fashion are posted. These can be used for class discussions, or as persuasive writing assignments for homework. Some of the topics include: school uniforms, toddlers wearing heels, teens tanning, and plastic surgery.

Visual Culture. This section relates fashion to visual culture, popular culture, high and low culture. An examination of meanings, communication, and social and cultural values of fashion will be analyzed and deconstructed. Visual culture such as movies, celebrities, and advertising are researched for their influence on fashion. The proportions of Barbie dolls, Abercrombie & Fitch business practices, Lady Gaga's meat dress, American overconsumption, aesthetic concepts of beauty, dieting and weight, are scrutinized in this portion of the curriculum. Students explore personal ethics and values through journal work, and related art projects.

Multicultural. This section looks at various forms of body decoration that are popular today, and compare them to their roots and meanings from other cultures throughout history. Examples of these would be tattooing, piercing, body shaping, scarification, and body painting. It studies the religious and personal meanings behind certain apparel or items considered fashion. Projects include Mendi hand designs, and creating Japanese kimonos.

Resources. This section has a fashion vocabulary page, recommended books, museum

shows, homework ideas, themes, and links to further resources and tutorials.

Student Work. Examples of student work are posted throughout the website including photos of their fashion illustrations, Trashion projects, and presentations.

Data Analysis Procedures

I have created an anonymous and optional exit survey to provide insights into the perspective of my students who were finishing the term with me. I have analyzed the results by making a record sheet, and tallied the answers into positive, negative or neutral. I assigned these a numerical value, created percentages from the results, and created a chart to compare answers and organize my findings. The survey questions and results can be found in the appendix of this document.

Results of Study

I have posted the units and lessons I created onto my art education website (figure 4) which is at MrsTsArtEducation.weebly.com. I have made the lessons online into downloadable PDFs for ease of use.

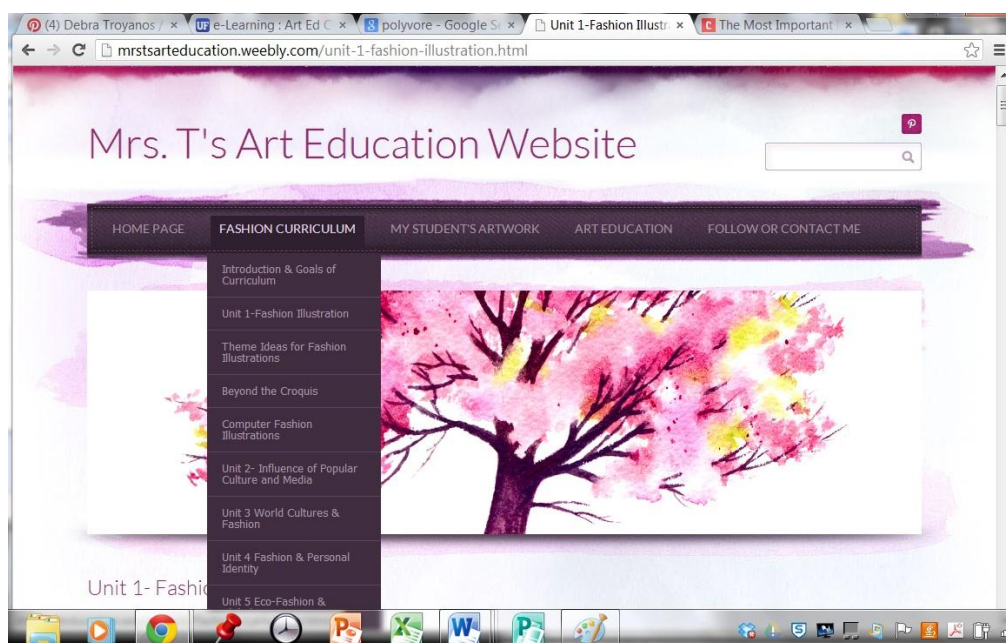


Figure 4. Homepage of my art education website.


I also created a [curriculum framework map](#) (See Table 1 below). It is my hope that other art educators would be inspired to offer this as a course in their schools and that they could use the curriculum framework laid out for them. Even if an art educator does not run the full course, the individual lessons could also be used in other art courses such as AP Studio Art, or art foundations courses if a teacher wishes to include the new art approaches that I have incorporated. You can also click [here](#) to open the table as a separate page.

Table 1- Change The World-One Sequin at a Time Fashion Design Curriculum Map

Unit Theme	MEDIA	WORLD CULTURES	GLOBALISM/ ECO-FASHION	IDENTITY	HISTORY
Key Concepts	Interpreting images in advertising, magazines, and other media. Fashions and costuming in T.V. and movies. How are teens and women depicted?	Multi-cultural aesthetics, Burkas, Kimonos, Wompanoag ceremonial regalia (this is a local native American tribe with members in our school).	Consumption, consumerism, Recycled fashion “Trashion” and accessories, UR What U Wear, Animal and Human Rights , and environmental concerns. Global awareness	Cultural/Social meanings of Clothes, Uniforms/Power, Gender Issues, Sexualization, Personal values, Body Image, Dressing for Success	Fashions examined in history: Egyptian, Greek, and American. The history of certain articles of clothing are also examined: i.e. Jeans, Hoodies, Bikinis, the little black dress, hats, shoes. Body Decoration origins- tattooing, piercing, etc.
Essential Questions	In what way does media influence fashion?	How does our culture, community and social group affect our fashion choices? What clothing is considered sacred? What is the aesthetic of other cultures?	How can artists make political and social change through their work? What is my social responsibility in the choices I make as a consumer?	What are the reasons we wear the clothes we choose? Who and what influences us?	How has fashion changed? What remains the same? Is there an underlying pattern?
Activity 1	Influence of Movies and Celebrities on Fashion- Advertising for Abercrombie and Fitch	Multicultural Look at and discuss teacher created PowerPoints. Class breaks into groups to compare and contrast various cultures.	Eco-fashion Overview- show videos and clips about environmental damage from the garment industry, and human and animal rights in 3 rd world.	Why we wear clothes- handout and group discussion.	History of Jeans, History of Hoody What the historical and cultural roots are of individual pieces of clothing.
Activity 2	Barbie- Discovering the actual proportions if Barbie were a real woman Bratz- What messages are little girls being sent abt fashion?	Multi-cultural- Students can make or draw a sacred fashion object from their own or another cultural background on the croquis of their choice.	Trashion Designs- Clothing or accessories made from recycled materials.	Body Image program- Dove, Seventeen, etc.	Body Decoration- looking at how other cultures decorate their bodies, with tattooing, scarring, piercing, etc. (see website)
Activity 3	Lady Gaga Fashions: Meat Dress Kermit the Frog coat Gun Bra	Mendhi Henna Hands: Designs on sculpted hands of plaster, paper, or on student’s own hand.	Advocacy Thru Art: Poster, Video, Interview, PowerPoint, Painting, Sculpture created to make social statement advocating student’s opinion on an Eco-Fashion issue & presented to class.	Power Issues in fashion- Uniforms Sexualizing girls Women in non-functional clothing. Tanning, Plastic Surgery.	Kimonos- Creating clay sculptures of Japanese kimonos or draw designs on paper “flats” or on croquis. Alternate: Japanese fan accessory.

In addition to sharing my curriculum framework and lesson plans online, I have collected and archived relevant links to the fashion course on a Pinterest Board at <http://pinterest.com/mrstspphoto>. This provides students and other art educators with inspiration, tutorials, and direct links to contemporary fashion illustrators. Below is a screenshot of the Pinterest page (See Figure 5).

Fashion Like 0

 **Debra Troyanos** Edit Board 185 followers, 1,987 pins



croquis

[solarsea.ca](#)



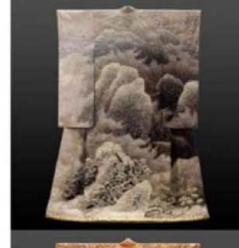
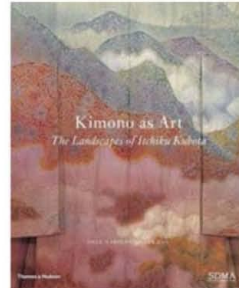
History of Kimonos

[web-japan.org](#)



1 repin

[angel.ge](#)



Pop Top



Kot Çanta Modelleri 2012

[sosyalmekan.net](#)

HOW TO: Bleach Art Tees



By [MayaInTheMoment.com](#)

How to Bleach T-Shirts Art

[ilovetocreateblog.blogspot.com](#)



Shoulder-Hip Tilt



Figure 5. Fashion Curriculum Pinterest Board

My final products for this capstone are the newly designed fashion curriculum, divided into five units with several lessons in each, a website, and Pinterest board. It is enough to cover one or two semesters. The way I planned it, each of the five units last approximately two weeks each, depending on how in depth the teacher or the particular class wishes to pursue a topic. Each unit contains 3-5 activities or projects to choose from, including pertinent links, articles, and homework assignments to augment the lessons. The activities are varied, with some for the whole class, some for small groups, pairs, and some for individual students. Below are some examples of student drawing croquis (fashion figures), and creating collages, with a sample of student's fashion collage.



Figure 6 Student drawing prom gowns on croquis



Figure 7 Students creating collages in their journals



Figure 8 Mixed Media Fashion Collage

Students create the fashion figure (croquis) in many variations and themes, but also draw “flats” which are the apparel alone, and accessories like shoes, handbags and hats. This is how they are acting as fashion designers and illustrators in the real world. In addition, they create journal pages, mixed media collages, protest art and persuasive writing about hot topics are part of the curriculum.



Figure 9 Student Drawing of Flats (Apparel)



Figure 10 Student Drawing of Shoes



Figure 11 Sample of Croquis on Design Board



Figure 12 Fashion Croquis created for Figure Type



Figure 13 Fashion Croquis for Theme



Figure 14 Fashion Board Sample with Various Themes



Figure 15 Handbag Designs

You can see much more student fashion design work, in larger versions, on my website at: <http://mrststarteducation.weebly.com/unit-1-fashion-illustration.html>.

My Observations

I made many observations during the action research portion of my Fashion Design study. Here are a few of the highlights.

Like in sports, practice makes perfect. Although students complained about finding it repetitious having to draw so much while in the class, they later agreed that they improved a great deal in their skill of drawing human figures by the end of the course. At times when they got discouraged I found it helpful to reiterate how practice improves any skill, often using sports as an analogy. Almost every student has played a sport of some kind, and it helps when you point out the similarities in drawing to sports. I remind them how the coach has them do drills over and over during practice to learn how to play soccer, basketball, or baseball. They nod and concede because this makes sense to them. I also point out that they were probably not great at it the first time they tried to play, and that the repetition helped them improve. This helps them stick with it. Unfortunately, in this hurried-up, instant gratification time in our society, it is hard for adolescents to be patient to learn drawing by repetition. They want to be a master at it immediately, and if they don't get results right away, they can become frustrated. Another tactic I used when they are feeling like they are drawing too much, (and by that I mean a mere few!) is I tell them about how teachers from top fashion schools make beginner students do 100 croquis for their first assignment, because by the time you have drawn 100 of anything you are bound to get good enough and fast enough to do it with your eyes closed. Since I am only expecting them to do about twenty-five drawings in the entire semester, they feel better.

One thing that can also make students feel more empowered is to give them some choices in the drawings. I found that if I wanted them to do three croquis for a particular assignment, it is better to give them six croquis to choose from and let them pick which three they like whenever possible. It is more work for the teacher, but the students feel more excited when they have more choices in what they are drawing. I thought having the choices in the clothing they made was enough, since that was their choice already. But the croquis provoke very personal opinions and strong emotions since they may remind artists of someone they know, or may or may not like. I found that students are more invested in the croquis they choose themselves.

In addition, I also interspersed the drawing activities with other hands-on activities, so that it does not get monotonous. This can be done with making recycled accessories or fashions such as tee-shirt makeovers, tie-dying, jeans makeovers, painting silk scarves, or creating activist art, videos, or posters for an eco-fashion cause such as animal or human rights, environmental awareness, child labor, etc. All of the social, cultural, global, and visual topics are woven in through class discussions, homework, and other projects, all the while that they are improving their drawing skills.

Boys care about fashion too. When I was told I would be teaching a course on fashion design, I incorrectly assumed it would be female students who would be enrolling in the course, since it is an elective. However, due to scheduling conflicts within the school, students quite often find themselves in an art course that they have not chosen simply because there are few other options at a particular time. Thus, much to my astonishment, I found myself facing half the football team in my class, along with some female students who were very serious about taking fashion course and others who didn't care one way or the other. I knew that most of the students were not planning a career or continuing education in the field of fashion. I realized the wisdom

in making the curriculum less based on just drawing pretty clothes, to a broader sense of art education. One thing that took me by surprise immediately was that the boys didn't mind taking the class, and were quite eager to begin. Just to make everyone feel even more comfortable, we discussed the various male and female clothing designers, and the big money they make and that got their attention. I wondered if it was because they wanted to draw female fashion figures, but the opposite was true. After a few weeks of the figures I provided, which I obtained from the books I could find available on the market, one of the male students said that he and the boys were wondering when we would be doing male figures, because they wanted to design men's fashions. I thought that was a great request, and although it took some research (because perhaps the fashion design books are geared to the female student) I finally found one book out of seventeen that had several versions of male figures. There were two other interesting things I noted about having the boys in the class. One was that they enjoyed designing athletic shoes immensely, since that is a major and expensive part of a teenage boy's wardrobe. The second observation about the boys is that they also made drawing their fashions into a competitive sport. They did this by comparing with their friends, and teasing and cajoling one another if the arms on the figure they were drawing were too long, or the head was too small, etc. They would say things like "Man, I'm having trouble drawing this hand. It looks like a claw." Then he would turn it around and show the two guys across from him. They would crack up, and say something like "Her *hand*, what about those arms!?! They are *waaay* too long dude!" Then another friend would respond "Well, you should talk. You made your hair so weird she looks like a Medusa!" They peer-assessed and kidded one another, in this way, but it was all in the humorous way males tend to joke with friends. If anyone out of class made any jokes about their masculinity for taking the fashion design course, the boys told me they told them there were famous male

fashion designers that are extremely wealthy and work with gorgeous models all day. In addition, plenty of rappers and celebrities have their own clothing lines, and it has made fashion cool for anybody.

The other interesting dynamic was that the boys had more at stake to succeed in the class since the captain of the team, the quarterback, was interested in getting an A in the class because he was waiting for acceptances from big colleges. Since their leader was putting in an effort, the other boys followed and did so too. The boys found the course more interesting than they expected. I found their contributions to class discussions and essays on relevant topics to be enlightening and it enriched the class atmosphere to have both gender perspectives.

Fashion illustration teaches art skills. Drawing skills are transferable to any subject matter. So the same skills of making a still life in another course can be used when making a fashion illustration. Shading, proportion, texture, and pattern are all applicable to figure drawing and clothing. Many times art foundation courses do self-portraits of faces, but fashion design allows the students to do full-length self-portraits, with the clothing that represents their values and culture. Many students and adults crave to be better at art, but believe that “good art” is being able to draw realistically. Learning to draw figures gives students confidence in themselves because they achieve a level of realism they felt was impossible to them before. Of course, once they grasp the techniques of realism, they can later be set free to become more stylized as they wish.

Students draw in their own image. I found it fascinating that when drawing the “croquis,” or fashion figure, students would often unconsciously create the figure in their own image. This especially came to light with regard to race. When provided a croquis that was essentially a transparent contour drawing (unless you count the white of the paper), the student

was free to interpret the race or ethnicity of the person they were drawing. However, I observed that most often they drew the figure to be the same race, ethnicity (and even eye and hair color) that they themselves had.

There was one intriguing exception. I had one female sophomore student whose family had recently emigrated to the U.S. from the Middle East. One day we talked privately about how fashion was different in the country she was from, as compared to here. She told me that her parents allowed her and her brother to dress as an American teenager would, so that they could fit in. They had been told not to stand out or they risked being bullied or harmed because they looked different, especially following the Sept. 11 attacks. So she bought her clothes at the local mall, and selected clothes, shoes, backpack, and accessories that would help them “blend in.” The one place that they just could not compromise was their cultural values of modesty that said that she could not show bare skin on her tummy, arms or legs. She was not allowed to wear shorts, high-cut shirts, skirts, or even short-sleeved or sleeveless shirts on hot days. She pointed out the long sleeves she was wearing that warm day, and I realized I had never noticed that before. However, I began looking at her drawings and realized that she reveled in being able to express the freedom she couldn’t have in real life. She created her female figures to look like herself, but with the revealing and racy clothing that she would never wear. It gave her a safe way to explore through her art without having real-world consequences. During the class lesson where we discussed how modesty in clothing changes over history, and from culture to culture, she explained to the class what the middle-eastern values are on modest dress for women. This led to further discussion about the purposes and beliefs about the Burka.

Following student interest on the upcoming prom, I made one assignment for students to draw a design for a prom outfit for themselves and a date, including accessories. They enjoyed

drawing themselves as the croquis with a beautiful prom dress of their own invention. They either added their significant other, if they had one, or they could add their “dream” date, which got a lot of laughs. Some would draw a secret crush, or a famous celebrity or musician.

One immigrant student who happens to be of mixed race, created a large fashion figure of herself with a face that was literally divided into segments. It had various colors of skin in each section, in order to show her multi-racial background. This was not prompted or requested, but how she decided to depict herself. When I asked her why she said it was because she couldn’t really choose what *one* race or color she is, so she wanted to show *all* the parts of herself.

Different is good. The Boston School of Fashion had a regional contest for high school students in New England who may be interested in a fashion career. Students must submit five original fashion illustrations in various categories. The winner gets a full scholarship to their summer pre-college program, and two tickets to attend their end-of-year fashion show where their work would be on display. I encouraged my students to enter, but I wondered how they would compare to other students in high schools that have had a fully developed fashion course for years. My course is rather unorthodox, and unlike the way anyone else teaches fashion. However, more schools concentrate more on the sewing and creating recycled designs, rather than on the fashion illustration and the cultural aspects that mine do. To my surprise, one of my students *won* the contest. She was so thrilled, and she asked me to accompany her to the fashion show rather than a parent. This student had never been to a fashion show before, or even to my surprise ever been to Boston that is just one hour away. She confessed on the way that she had also never been to a “fancy adult party” with waiters bringing around hors d'oeuvres, so she was nervous and excited. We had a tremendous time. Here are some photos of the runway, the student and her portfolio, and the two of us backstage at that event:



Figure 16 Fashion Show at School of Fashion, Boston



Figure 17 Student with Portfolio Display



Figure 18 Student and I at Fashion show

Social Media Uses. I used the social media site Pinterest to gather resources, websites, inspiration, and tutorials for my students (and other art educators) to use on the topic of a fashion design class. By the end of the course 92% of the students showed that they were using Pinterest for their own fashion collections. Students also found and shared other social networks related to

fashion and design with the class. A very popular one they introduced me to is *Polyvore*, which is described as the “web's largest fashion community” where you create and share fashion ensembles onto a design board, which they call “collages.” In fact if you use Pinterest, you may have seen these design boards with outfits put together by someone on *Polyvore* that have shared them. It is a fun, easy-to-use web app. These fashion collages you create can be saved and collected, and you can collect the creations of others as well. I got the idea to have students create a collection on *Polyvore*, print it out, and use that as the resource to practice drawing “flats” (which are the clothing apparel alone, without the figure in them). Again, students enjoyed this activity because it involved clothing that they chose and therefore liked best so they liked drawing them more.

The problem with croquis. When fashion designers draw fashion illustrations they purposely elongate the figure in order to better show the garments they are creating. The figures are drawn the equivalent of nine or ten head-lengths tall from head to toe, rather than the eight that the normal human figure proportions are. That is the reason Mattel made the original Barbie doll the way they did, because she was a “fashion doll” meaning she was an elongated three-dimensional fashion illustration. Also, fashion models on runways and in magazines began to be hired tall and inhumanly thin to match the illustrator’s drawings. Since we are teaching students to work like a real fashion designer in the field, I use the nine-heads method. However, as a mother of a daughter and a woman concerned with feminist issues, I did not want to contribute to the body issues and problems that are caused by girls comparing themselves to distorted expectations for their figures. Therefore, I used this as an opportunity to explore visual culture and placed a few lessons in one of the units that covers body image and the media. I also stress

always that the fashion illustrations we draw are for fun, and not to be taken literally as a goal or expectation for their own figure.

Correlation of anime and fashion. I discovered that students who love Anime are a natural fit for Fashion Design because many of these Anime lovers are dedicated to learning to draw human figures, clothing, hair, and to depict emotions as well. These students are often self-taught, or have learned with online tutorials, or from a fellow Anime enthusiast already, as a hobby. So drawing the croquis comes quite naturally to them. The only thing they have to learn is to bring the distorted proportions of Anime figures such as the oversized head, or super large eyes, into human proportion. Later, once they have learned the realistic proportions, and have moved into the stylized stage, I let them do a mix of both as show in the images here.



Figure 19 Example of Anime/ Fashion Combo



Figure 20 An Anime Fan's Fashion Croquis

Incorporating Technology. In this fashion design curriculum, technology was embedded in many different ways. First, it is used in research, using social networking for resources, and for online tutorials and inspirational ideas as previously described. It also can be utilized in computer-aided design which I do using Photoshop. This works well since our school already has Photoshop installed on our school computers, and it is what *I* am most familiar with since I am coming from a professional photography background. Students catch on very quickly to it, as they seem to with all technology. However, I prefer them to learn the traditional drawing methods first, and then the computer-aided designs toward the end of the semester. Below are some images of students working on computer-aided designing, and some of their results. (We still have to work on shading and value to get dimensionality on the computer, but we ran out of time in the semester before they could learn more.) What I like about having students do digital designing is that it replicates real world experience. Students work as professional artists and designers. My next goal is to try to get grants to buy IPADs for students to design with.



Figure 21 Student creating fashion design in Photoshop

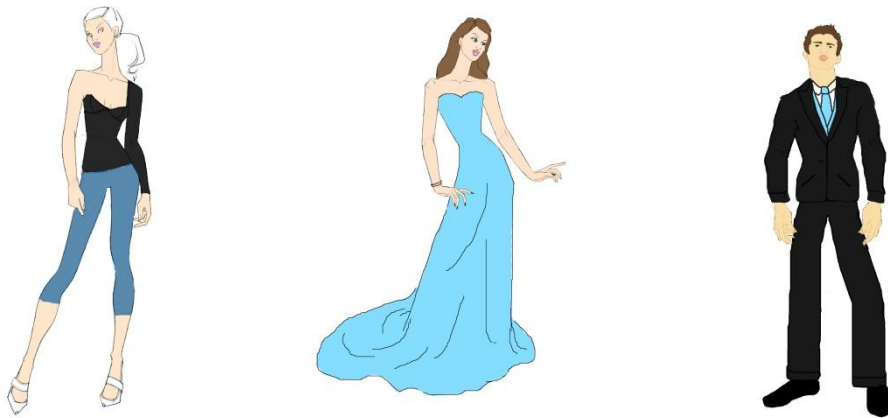


Figure 22 Student Clothing Designs Created in Photoshop

Standards and Frameworks. In testing the results of the curriculum, not only did I want to be sure it answered the research questions I had, but it was also my responsibility when creating a curriculum to be sure it aligned with the standards and frameworks. However, there are so many different ones. I have the local Mashpee Public Schools Art Standards, the Mashpee High School Values, Beliefs, and Expectations, the state frameworks for Massachusetts State Visual Arts Frameworks, and the National Standards for Art. In addition, I also have been mindful of the new national Common Core Standards for Art, which are soon to be released. This curriculum was made with all of these considered, and after much research and data analysis I find it meets the requirements of all of them.

21st century skills that school administrators want. In the effort to have art be respected for the serious and important topic that it is, this curriculum teaches the kinds of 21st century skills that school administrators want their students to have. It offers multiple opportunities for exercising higher-order thinking, with students comparing, evaluating, and identifying influences and values about fashion from so many different angles. The contemporary art educator *must* include multi-cultural awareness, globalism, community, and technology studies to be relevant in today's changing world. This curriculum covers these crucial components. It also helps students become aware of their own identity and realize personal values as they become future citizens that will shape the world. The principal of my school observed me one day when I was teaching a lesson from one of the units in the curriculum called Globalism and Fashion. We watched a short video clip about the environmental impact and carbon footprint created from the production of denim jeans. The principal commented on how much she enjoyed and learned from the lesson personally. Even more importantly, she liked how much the students were interested and engaged in the lesson. Their assignment was to create protest art to bring awareness to one of the subjects in Eco-Fashion we had learned about. She was impressed that the topics were fresh and relevant to today's students, and had them collaborating and working on real world problems and solutions, as they hopefully will in the future someday. It also teaches them excellent art skills and techniques, and how artwork can have a deeper meaning, and a way to discover and express their own feelings and thoughts about life.

My Findings

My action research in the classroom was to study, analyze and evaluate the content and effectiveness of both the lessons and the underlying goals and design of the curriculum I created.

In addition to studying the results in student projects, journals and conversations during class discussions, I also had the students do an assessment of the curriculum on an anonymous survey with sixteen questions. Twelve students responded to the survey, out of fourteen. The full results of the findings in the survey are attached at the end of this paper. Overall, students reported that they found the topics of the curriculum interesting, engaging and meaningful (85% agreed, and 14% strongly agreed). Students felt that they were more aware of global citizenship and responsible care of the environment (71% agreed, 14% strongly agreed). Students also stated that they learned to understand and question the social, political, and cultural influences, ethical issues and values surrounding the topic of fashion. Finally, 72% of the students reported that they felt they had improved technical and formal art skills in drawing human figures. In discussions with students, they told me they really loved doing making the recycled accessories a great deal, and painting the silk scarves a great deal because they didn't feel the same pressure they felt about drawing the croquis. They also enjoyed free choice of which croquis they got to draw. I try to do this when possible, but at times students will choose the path of least resistance and try to pick something that they perceive as easiest to draw so they can get the project grade. However, with lots of encouragement students can learn to take on something that frightens or challenges them if you point out their past successes and how far they have come.

Summary and Reflections

Now that the curriculum framework, units and lesson plans are created, website posted, and Pinterest board filled with inspirations, I reflected upon the results and how they tie in with my original research questions and goals for my new curriculum. Students who study fashion design through this curriculum will learn it through the several art education approaches I have discussed throughout this paper and incorporated. After researching what the experts say makes

an optimal art curriculum, I wanted to add aspects of each into it. In addition to the DBAE (discipline-based art education) approach, which I taught previously, I added these approaches in separate units with various lessons in each.

Unit One covered fashion illustration, and students learned the real world skills and art techniques used by fashion designers today. They learn traditional and digital fashion design skills, as well as art techniques and media such as watercolor, drawing and painting human figures in proportion, drapery and shading. This unit teaches art production as well as twenty-first century real-world skills that are desired in today's students.

In Unit Two they learn about the influence of popular culture. The study of visual culture art education was incorporated into this fashion design curriculum by analyzing how media influences fashion. Students examined hidden messages in advertising and practices of a favorite teen store, Abercrombie & Fitch. They also scrutinized the fashions of Lady Gaga, and the social messages behind her infamous meat dress and other outrageous fashions. As part of the visual culture and fashion unit, students also learned about the relationship between movies and fashion such as the American practice of wearing jeans, and later hoodies which spawned from influence of movies. A study of VCAE includes many aspects of popular culture, including toys. So this unit also takes a look at Barbie and Bratz dolls, and the social and cultural implications they have on girls and fashion. This unit corresponds to two of the goals of this curriculum, as I stated in the introduction of this paper. One goal was to have students examine and question personal and cultural values and beliefs regarding media, sexualization and exploitation of teens. The second goal this unit covers was to have students learn the power of imagery, and how to deconstruct and investigate images in media, to make informed choices as consumers and citizens.

Unit Three incorporates multiculturalism by looking at the aesthetic contributions to fashion of various world cultures. Students discover the differences in modesty, and what fashion objects are considered sacred. They learn about how forms of body decoration such as tattoos, piercings, and body modifications have their roots in cultures from around the world throughout history. This unit meets the stated curriculum goal of teaching students to understand the role and influence that fashion and society or culture have on one another.

Students in this course will learn about their own personal values and identity when studying Unit Four. This unit is about body image, and what they and their culture considers beautiful. Students evaluate why we wear clothes, the social and cultural purposes, hidden meanings, and power issues involving apparel such as uniforms, or high heels. Students examine their own feelings and emotions regarding fashion through visual and written journal work in this unit. This unit also covers the goal stated earlier in the paper of examining and questioning personal and cultural values and beliefs regarding body image, gender, sexualization and exploitation of teens.

Globalism and eco-fashion are studied through fashion in Unit Five. Students create recycled fashion accessories, “Trashion” projects, and advocacy or protest art projects on eco-fashion issues such as child labor in sweatshops, wearing fur, or environmental damage caused by the production of cotton. This unit answers the curriculum goal of helping students learn how art can effect social and political change, and what motivates artists in their work. It also corresponds to the curriculum goal to promote responsible care of the natural environment, ecological awareness, and global concerns in the fashion industry such as animal rights, human rights, and fair trade.

The research questions I proposed at the beginning of this Capstone have been established through this curriculum. I asked how I could incorporate contemporary approaches to my high school art curriculum and develop a course that is interesting, engaging, and meaningful to students. Many agreed that they became aware of their own values and ethics as we discussed various topics. As I have shown, I have incorporated the various approaches, and according to the results from the student survey, class discussions, and student work, students found the curriculum to be very engaging and interesting.

The next research question I asked was how I could include contemporary issues concerning global citizenship and responsible care of the environment, which is the basis of the globalism unit. Finally, I asked how the topic of fashion could be used to teach the social, political, and cultural influences and values surrounding the topic of fashion, and that is what this curriculum does.

Conclusion

In conclusion, utilizing the topic of fashion, and high student interest in it (regardless of gender), an art educator can address and explore a plethora of human issues while teaching traditional art skills like the techniques of drawing. A fashion design course such as this can address deeper meaning and understanding about students' identities, cultural values, and their roles in the world. Students evaluate social, political, and cultural influences on fashion, and applied their knowledge in their own work. My fashion students learned art techniques and how an illustrator or designer works in the fashion profession.

Therefore, taking these units into consideration, my curriculum answers and affirms my original research questions. Based on my research, it is my hope that this capstone project, curriculum design, website, Pinterest boards, and lesson plans will be of value to other art

educators wishing to begin such a course, unit or lesson on the rich subject matter of fashion design. Most importantly, teaching art with these contemporary methods will enrich art education, and have a meaningful effect on students. They will never think of art or fashion the same way again, and may perhaps be moved to change their world in some small or large way, “one sequin at a time.”

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Author Biography

Debra Troyanos has been a Professional Photographer for over 25 years, photographing hundreds of weddings, high school seniors, and family and children's portraits. Her work has been exhibited throughout the United States, as well as gracing the covers and interiors of several magazines such as Cape Cod Life, and M.D. News. With her successful studio located on Cape Cod, in Massachusetts, she captured the beautiful light and scenic locations of the area in her work. In high demand, she grew to become a respected leader in the field, especially in her role as President of the Professional Photographers of Cape Cod. Having excelled in her degree in Fine Art in her undergraduate degree, Debra tutored Art History to college students, and became a volunteer Art History teacher to elementary students for fifteen years throughout her photography career. She received the prestigious Shea Scholar award, for her thesis work on the future of art education in the 21st century. While running her busy studio, she also taught other professional photographers in the field how to use the ever-changing technology of digital cameras, Adobe Photoshop, and Corel Painter.

Eventually Debra decided to utilize her teaching skills more formally, by teaching at a local public high school four years ago. There she teaches Digital Photography and Photoshop, as well as Pottery, AP Studio Art, Fashion Design, and 8th grade Art Exploration. Debra is enthusiastic about passing on her love for art to her students, and looks forward to researching, writing, and developing new art educational theories and curriculum in the future. Debra is currently a member of the National Art Education Association, the Massachusetts Art Education Association, and the Cape Cod Art Educators Association.

Appendix: Results of Student Feedback on Curriculum

These are the results of an anonymous questionnaire for student opinions on the fashion design course content. The twelve students who participated, circled the statement they most agreed with.

1. Did you find the fashion design course content interesting, relevant, and meaningful to you?

Disagree Strongly Disagree Neutral Agree 85% Agree Strongly 14%

2. Since taking this course have you gained a better understanding of the global issues, such as human rights, animal rights, and environmental issues, in the fashion industry?

Disagree Strongly Disagree Neutral 28% Agree 57% Agree Strongly 14%

3. Do you feel that this fashion design course has made you more aware of body image and sexualization in the media, and how it can affect you?

Disagree Strongly Disagree Neutral 14% Agree 71% Agree Strongly 14%

4. Did you find that the use of the social media site Pinterest has been helpful to you in acquiring information and inspiration?

Disagree Strongly Disagree 14% Neutral 14% Agree 42% Agree Strongly 28%

5. Have you become more aware of ethical issues and values surrounding fashion?

Disagree Strongly Disagree 14% Neutral 14% Agree 42% Agree Strongly 14%

6. Have you improved your art skills and ability to draw humans in proportion?

Disagree Strongly Disagree 14% Neutral 14% Agree 14% Agree Strongly 57%

7. Do you know more about other cultures since the lesson on Body Decoration and World Cultures, where we learned about the origins of tattooing, piercing, shaping, scarring, etc.?

Disagree Strongly Disagree Neutral Agree 71% Agree Strongly 28%

8. Did you find drawing fashion illustrations enjoyable once you got used to it?
- Disagree Strongly Disagree 14% Neutral 14% Agree 57% Agree Strongly 14%
9. Did you enjoy drawing fashion accessories such as hats, handbags, and shoes?
- Disagree Strongly Disagree Neutral 14% Agree 14% Agree Strongly 71%
10. Do you understand more about how fashion and our culture or society's influence each other such as we learned in the history of jeans, or hoodies?
- Disagree Strongly Disagree Neutral Agree 85% Agree Strongly 14%
11. Have you developed an appreciation or greater understanding of fashions from other countries such as Japanese kimonos or Muslim burkas?
- Disagree Strongly Disagree 14% Neutral Agree 42% Agree Strongly 14%
12. My teacher has helped me to improve as an artist.
- Disagree Strongly Disagree 14% Neutral 28% Agree 42% Agree Strongly 14%
13. Did you enjoy learning about and creating the recycled accessories?
- Disagree Strongly Disagree Neutral 14% Agree 57% Agree Strongly 28%
14. Have you gained an understanding of the social/cultural values and meanings behind clothing choices?
- Disagree Strongly Disagree Neutral Agree 71% Agree Strongly 28%
15. Did you find the topic interesting enough that you would want to take Fashion II or AP?
- Disagree Strongly Disagree 28% Neutral 14% Agree 28% Agree Strongly 28%
16. My teacher has provided me with opportunities to become a responsible, caring and ethical contributor to the world.
- Disagree Strongly Disagree Neutral 14% Agree 71% Agree Strongly 14%