



Fashion Design and Merchandising - Education Abroad Advising Guide

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Why study Fashion abroad?

- Invest in your future and add value to your degree
- Improve your chances of getting a job and expand career options
- Earn credits towards your degree
- Become more independent and self-confident
- Gain intercultural communication skills and expand your problem-solving skills
- Stand out to employers and prepare you to work in an increasingly diverse world
- Gain new perspective on your field
- Improve your language skills
- Develop a global network of faculty, students, friends, and locals

When is the best time to study abroad?

Junior year either semester is the best time to go, but second semester sophomore year is fine as well. We discourage students from participating the fall semester of their senior year, but it is best to go and that is a possibility. We do not recommend study abroad for freshmen.

What courses should I take?

Most programs that are more focused on Merchandising seem to have equivalents for the following classes that usually fall in students' junior year:

FASH 343 Fashion Forecasting

FASH 451 Importing and Exporting

FASH 350 Fashion Promotion (required for all students coming in Fall 2016, would count as a fashion elective for students that are already in the program)

FASH 380 Fashion Branding

Any marketing class

Any art history class (to count as the art history elective requirement)

How can I afford to study abroad?

Studying abroad does not have to be expensive! VCU offers a variety of program options to fit most students' budgets and the Education Abroad office assists students with identifying and applying for funding. Consider the following:

- **Use what you already have!** Most financial aid and scholarships that you already receive can be used toward study abroad. Other sources of funding may also help: pre-paid tuition plans, veteran's benefits, etc.
- **Scholarships:** There are VCU scholarships to study abroad as well as nationally competitive scholarships. Begin your search on our site and at StudyAbroadFunding.org and DiversityAbroad.com
- **Program length:** Per day expenses are often less expensive on semester programs than on summer programs and airfare may cost the same regardless of the length of your stay
- **Program type:** Programs with more structure that include group activities or excursions may be more expensive than exchange programs which include tuition, room, and board.
- **Cost of living:** If you're looking to save money on studying abroad, avoid destinations with a high cost of living like capital cities and popular tourist destinations.
- **What's included?** When considering the cost of a program, determine what the program fee includes...and what it doesn't. Some are almost all-inclusive and will cover the cost of a cell phone, insurance, group excursions and welcome/farewell receptions whereas other programs cover only the basics.

Notable Funding Opportunities for Fashion Majors

Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship: For US undergraduates with Pell Grants; for programs at least 28 days in length; diversity of student and destination is a priority; scholarships up to \$5,000 available; additional \$3,000 available to study critical need languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Turkish, Indic, Korean, Russian, etc.

Boren Awards for International Study: For US undergraduates to study in areas critical to US interests including Africa, Asia, Central & Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Latin America, and the Middle East; scholarships up to \$20,000; preference is given to study less commonly taught languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, and Swahili.

Phi Kappa Phi: For undergraduates with at least a cumulative GPA of at least 3.75

Fund for Education Abroad: General scholarships up to \$10,000 for US undergraduates planning to spend a minimum of 30 days abroad; Hilary Echo Douglas scholarship for study in Vietnam; Rainbow Scholarship for LGBTQI students

What are my next steps?

1. **Attend a First Advising Session.** These group advising sessions are held Monday-Friday at 12:30 in the Education Abroad office.
2. **Investigate Programs.** Explore global.vcu.edu/programs and talk to advisors and past participants for guidance
3. **Inform your academic advisor** of your interest in studying abroad
4. **Explore the approved course database** to view pre-approved courses; talk with your academic advisor for approval on other courses
5. **Explore your funding options.** Speak with a Financial Aid counselor, investigate and apply for scholarships

Featured Education Abroad Programs

The following are a list of programs recommended for Fashion majors. The sections below are organized by program type and include many different program models including group and individual programs, study abroad, service-learning abroad, research abroad, and internship abroad programs. While these are featured programs for Fashion majors, students are by no means limited to these opportunities. For all available programs, please visit global.vcu.edu/programs or contact an Education Abroad advisor - Annia.

GEO Short-Term Programs

VCU faculty members lead groups of VCU students for short-term programs during the summer, spring break and winter intersession. Participants earn VCU credit. New programs are created every year, and most are open to students from any major. See our [website](#) for the most current list of faculty-led programs.

Fashion in Florence with [Santa Reparata International School of Art](#)

The Global Education Office and the Department of Fashion Design and Merchandising, in collaboration with Santa Reparata International School of Art, are proud to present a program in Florence, Italy. Students will have the wonderful opportunity to spend one month drawing inspiration and fueling their creativity from the art, culture, and fashion of Florence and other Italian cities.

Departmental and Partnership Exchanges

VCU's relationship with the universities below allows students to study at the institutions for a semester or an academic year while paying standard tuition and fees to VCU. Other expenses – such as room, board, airfare, insurance and spending money – are the responsibility of the student.

VCUQ

The exchange program at VCUQatar is a unique opportunity to earn VCU credits while studying design in a fascinating location. You will have an insider's view of life in the gulf region and the rich culture that suffuses the area. The turquoise-blue waters of the Persian Gulf provide a picturesque backdrop for the constantly changing landscape of Doha. Each year, students from the School of the Arts apply for this very competitive program.

Westminster

As the first and only university in the U.K. to offer a degree program in fashion merchandise management, as well as its location in one of the safest and most exciting cities in Europe, the University of Westminster serves as a great place for students interested in studying fashion merchandising. This exchange is not open to Fashion Design students. Courses offered have included: Sourcing in the Fashion Industry, Professional Experience in Business, Brand and Branding, Cultural Difference and People Management, Personal and Professional Development, Fashion Trends and Consumer Culture, London Fashion, Visual Merchandising, Industrial Placement, Commercial Skills, Fundamentals of Textiles, Law for Fashion Management, and Fashion Trends.

International Student Exchange Program (ISEP)

Choose from over 300 universities around the world offering summer, semester and year-long programs. Apply to up to 10 institutions on a single application. ISEP offers two types of placements: ISEP-Exchange (program fee based on VCU's in-state tuition, room and board) and ISEP-Direct (program fee based on host university's tuition, room and board). For best chance of exchange placement, apply by August 15 for spring programs and January 15 for fall/full-year programs.

ISEP institutions offering Fashion courses taught in English:

AUSTRALIA: RMIT University

AUSTRALIA: University of Technology, Sydney

KOREA: Keimyung University

UNITED KINGDOM: University of Central Lancashire

UNITED KINGDOM: Ulster University

Affiliate and Alternative Programs

The following programs are sponsored by 1) study abroad organizations/providers, 2) other US institutions, or 3) foreign universities who accept visiting international students. There are many other programs available aside from the ones listed below.

ENGLAND: [University of the Arts London](#) (available through [API](#))

Term: Fall, Spring, and Summer **Courses include:** Fashion Styling and Image Creation I and II, Visual Merchandising, Social Fashion Studies, Fashion Research Studies, Product Development UK, and Fashion Label

ITALY: [Istituto Europeo di Design](#) (available through [KEI](#))

Term: Fall, Spring, Year, and Summer **Courses include:** Made in Italy, Fashion Design Management, Fashion Styling Technique

ITALY: [Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti](#) (available through [SAI](#))

Term: Fall, Spring, or Summer **Courses include:** Fashion Styling Workshop, Fashion Retail Management

ITALY: [Lorenzo de' Medici](#) (available through [API](#))

Term: Fall Spring, Year, or Summer **Courses include:** Visual Merchandising, Special Topics: Fashion

ITALY: [Santa Reparata International School of Art - SRISA](#) (available through [CEA](#) and direct enroll)

Term: Fall, Spring, or Year **Courses include:** History of Italian Fashion, Fashion Collection, Clothing and Society, Textiles Design: Silk, Garment Construction II, Fashion Illustration II, and Discovering Florence through Photography

SCOTLAND: [Heriot Watt University](#) (available through [KEI](#))

Term: Fall, Spring, Year, and Summer **Courses include:** Intro to Fashion Print and Knit, Textile Design Knit, Fashion Design and Make, Fashion Theory into Practice, CAD Digital Imaging, Fashion Design for Commercial Context, Writing for Design Practice, Fashion Design for Function