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A study of the perceived value of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) accreditation by fashion students in fashion programs at public and private colleges

Cynthia R. Williams

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A STUDY OF THE PERCEIVED VALUE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF

SCHOOLS OF ART AND DESIGN (NASAD) ACCREDITATION BY FASHION STUDENTS

IN FASHION PROGRAMS AT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COLLEGES

A dissertation in partial satisfaction

of the requirement for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, Administration, and Policy

by

Cynthia R. Williams

April, 2018

Joseph D. Green, Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

Cynthia R. Williams

under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Doctoral Committee:

Joseph D. Green, Ed.D., Chairperson

Stephen Kirnon, Ed.D.

Karen Robinette, Ed.D.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my fashion students, colleagues, and industry employers. My transition from the field to the classroom has been an easy one. I have found my niche and purpose for being in the classroom and staying involved in higher education. My continued hope is to make education for the fashion student more practical and create a fearless and equitable transition into the fashion marketplace.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation could not have been completed in a timely manner without the support and guidance from my advisor, and chair: Dr. Joseph Green. Thank you for your encouragement, interest in my topic, and courage to take on the responsibility of chairing my dissertation committee. Likewise, the support of my committee members was invaluable as I neared completion of my degree. Thank you, Dr. Steve Kirnon, my capstone coach; your advice to create the right instrument has gone along way in shaping this study. Also, a special thanks to Dr. Karen Robinette, Emeritus faculty member at California State University Northridge (CSUN). She encouraged me long ago, while participating on my thesis committee for my masters in art, to pursue my Education Leadership Administration Policy (ELAP) doctoral degree in education. She has provided tremendous support, which greatly enhanced my understanding of academics in fashion education within the CSU system. Thank you to Dr. Thomas Granoff, who was instrumental in coaching me through the statistical analyses.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge a small group of professionals. Thank you Richard Early, retired California State Warden, whom I've known since I was 9 years old, and Dr. Karla Pelletier, Director of the College of Engineering and Computer Science and Equal Opportunity Provider (EOP) director at CSUN, and a former sewing student. These professionals were confident I could and should pursue my doctorate degree, and submitted recommendation letters to Pepperdine on my behalf. I am grateful. Thanks to Regina Meister for her time with writing support throughout my experience at Pepperdine; you have shown such patience. Lastly, thanks to my fellow students in C12; your plethora of intelligence in education has greatly contributed to my professional growth as an educator.

VITA

CYNTHIA R. WILLIAMS

EDUCATION

Master of Arts in Studio Art, 2008 - California State University, CA

Bachelor of Arts in Apparel Manufacturing, 2005 - Woodbury University, CA

Associate of Arts in Fashion Design 1978 - Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising, CA

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Lecturer - Apparel Design & Merchandising (ADM)
 California State University Northridge (CSUN) 2009 - Present
- Lectured Subjects: Apparel Construction; Senior Fashion Studio; Introductory Textile; CAD; Creative Expressions, Principle & Elements of Design
- Art Department Participation: Fashion Art Exhibition
- Fashion Department Organizer: International Fashion Tours
- Career Symposium Guest Speaker
- Career Symposium Moderator

Lecturer - Apparel Design & Merchandising (ADM)
 El Camino College, CA 2017-Present
- Lectured Subjects: Beginning Flat Patternmking

Lecturer & Interim Director - Apparel Design & Merchandising (ADM)
 Santa Monica College, CA 2009-2010
- Lectured Subjects: Draping 1; Apparel Construction; Senior Studio
- Interim Director: Raised $20,000 for LA Mode annual college and industry fashion show.
- Negotiated venue contract: union and non-union college personnel event participation.

Lecturer - Apparel Design & Merchandising (ADM)
American Intercontinental University, CA 2008
- Lectured Subjects: Senior Directed Study; History of Fashion

Lecturer - Apparel Design & Merchandising (ADM)
 Pasadena City College, CA 2004 - 2012
- Lectured Subjects: Introduction to Fashion; History of Costume;
- Community Education College Department Fashion Retail Program
- Organizer: Annual Fashion Show
- Organizer: Annual Fashion Show for Black History Week

Lecturer - Apparel Design & Merchandising (ADM)
    Woodbury University 2003 - 2005
- Lectured Subjects: Technical Studio 1
- Fashion Department Participation: Fashion Show Judge, Charity Costume donation
- College Representative on the Education Panel at Los Angeles Expo
- Moderator for the Annual Entertainment, Arts and Fashion panel of professionals.
- Author of the "Woodbury Handbook   Student Procedure Guide" for working in a fashion studio.

Lecturer - Fashion Design Department
    Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising (FIDM) LA, CA 2002 - 2012
- Lectured Subjects: Creative Design Theory & Elements; CAD; Sketching 1, 3

FASHION INDUSTRY POSITIONS

The Jewelry Collection by Cynthia R. Williams
@ www.cyrestudios.com
Los Angeles, CA 1995-2013

Designer, Owner - Cyre' Studios
Los Angeles, CA 1990-2010

Technical Designer
Sweeties by Mellies, Inc., Beverly Hills, CA 2005 - 2006

Technical Designer / Contractor - Sweaters
GUESS? Jeans   Los Angeles, CA 2002

Designer - 4-6x Girls
Disney Retail Stores - Glendale, CA 2001 - 2002

Designer / Design Director - Women's Pro Surfing & Missy
Bodywaves Inc., Garden Grove, CA 1999-2001

Brand Manager - Target Stores Division - Missy / Large Sizes
Tarrant Apparel Group, Los Angeles, CA 1998 - 1999

Corporate Merchandiser - 750 Stores
House of Fabrics (now JoAnn), CA 1995 - 1998

Designer / Design Director - Children's 4-6x / 7-14
The Cherokee Group, Los Angeles, CA 1993 - 1995

Designer / Design Director - Children's 4-6x / 7-14
Cherokee Licensee (Gemini Shirtmakers), Los Angeles, CA 1988 - 92

Designer - Fashion Uniforms
PL of California, Simi Valley, CA 1986 - 1988

Assistant Designer / **Fit Model** - Juniors
Tomboy of Domino, Los Angeles, CA 1980 - 1985

Fashion Model / **Runway** / **Print**
Mary Webb Davis / Pacific Artist , Los Angeles, CA 1977 - 1982

Fit Model - Dresses
Bee Darlin', Los Angeles, CA 1977 - 1982

RELEVANT COMPUTER PROFICIENCIES

PC / *Macintosh*: SPSS, Adobe Professional, various art/design applications

Open-source learning management systems: Sakai, SmartBoards, Canvas, Moodle, TurnItIn

ABSTRACT

When one thinks of the fashion industry, one might think of famous designers and celebrity fashion shows. Today, fashion is a $1.2 trillion global industry, employing 1.9 million people in the United States, creating a positive impact on regional economies across the country (JEC, 2015; US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). Presently, 90% of apparel design and production has gone overseas or elsewhere in the world (Robinson, 2013). Manufacturing today requires "universal participation" (Bill, 2011); meaning garments designed in one country, made in fabric from a second country, assembled in a third country, then shipped back to the country of the original design, to be sold at retail in a matter of weeks.

In the past, all one needed to know was some sewing skills, fabric knowledge and garment construction to begin a career in fashion. Today, a career in fashion requires a different set of skills, making fashion education more prevalent and crucial than ever before. The interest in a fashion career has grown over the last decades, requiring many schools once offering degrees in home economics to revisit their fashion courses, revamp their curriculum and rehire faculty with academic degrees, who are currently out in the fashion field. But do students know what actual skills are needed to transition from the classroom out into the field, or recognize good indicators of what a fashion program should offer? This study is designed to research, measure and analyze this phenomenon.

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the topics of fashion education, the fashion industry, and specialized accreditation for fashion programs in the USA, including the research questions that form the foundation for this study. Chapter 2 researches the literature review of previous studies, NASAD, the only accreditation in the USA for all art and

design programs and profiles of four colleges that offer fashion programs. Chapter 3 discusses

methodology and the survey instrument used to collect data. Chapter 4 discusses the results of

the survey and Chapter 5 presents conclusions and recommendations drawn from data findings.

Chapter 1: The Problem

The fashion industry is more transparent and professionalized then ever before, making a fashion career more accessible than in the past. A degree in fashion design typically covered sewing, draping techniques, and some pattern-making skills; but today, on-the-job skills include machine technology, computer-aided design, and leadership knowledge, on top of the basic sewing and pattern-making foundation. The skills of today are not just pertinent for design positions but prevalent for all areas throughout the fashion industry (Wang, 2013).

Most importantly, the needed connection between industry needs and job readiness must be reflected in the fashion design curriculum, starting with specific coursework. Fashion education today can be tailored for many specialized fields focusing on product development knowledge and skills required for creating, branding, and mass-producing fashion items all over the world. Engagement in the fashion trade requires education that includes how garments and other fashion products are made, how they work, and how they can be taken apart and reconstructed. Areas of fashion education explain the interaction between creative thought, artistic expression, and how giftedness and creative aspirations can be useful in the fashion business.

In the United States (US), one might think of New York City and Los Angeles, as the number one and number two fashion centers (Joint Economic Committee [JEC], 2015). Some of the nation's most prominent fashion schools (i.e., Parsons, Pratt, and the Fashion Institute of Technology [FIT]) are located in New York. While, Los Angeles is home to The Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising (FIDM), an expensive, 2-year private college well-known for superior connections to local industries and Hollywood celebrities aligning their names with

popular fashion brands. FIT, Parsons, and FIDM are always rated in the top 1% of the best

fashion schools in the USA for fashion education (Business of Fashion, 2017; Fashionista, 2017;

FS Staff, 2015; US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017a). All three schools

are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). These

schools offer students a realistic picture of the fashion industry and curricula that are more

rigorous than one might think. Programs that integrate business and technology with specific

fashion courses, are to achieve the needed balance for a more practical and contemporary study

in preparing students appropriately for employment; while addressing the fashion industry needs

of today (FIT, 2015).

Proponents for specialized accreditation agencies, specifically, NASAD, give status and

relevance to the instruction and quality of a particular fashion program. Accreditation often

attracts quality faculty and students with knowledge of the benefits accreditation offers (Bell &

Youngs, 2011; Bitter, Stryker, & Jens, 1999; McFadden & Sheerer, 2006; Pringle & Michel,

2007; Roberts, Johnson, & Groesbeck, 2006; Roller, Andrews, & Bovee, 2003; Wood, 2006;

Zionts, Shellady, & Zionts, 2006). Currently, a variety of literature exists on administrators'

perceptions of national accrediting agencies, but few studies have been conducted on students'

perceptions of specialized accreditation for fashion programs. Without knowledge of a school's

accreditation status, the student has no assurance that the fashion program is a quality one.

Moreover, students may not be aware of the benefits that come from attending a NASAD-

accredited school, such as the type of curriculum needed for a successful transition into the

fashion trade. A good indicator for a quality program is NASADs' SDC for fashion programs.

Their standards are based on the skills of professionals who work in this field. NASADs' SDC

represent the curriculum, standards, and guidelines along with the knowledge, methods, and history of the fashion industry (NASAD, 2016).

According to NASADs' SDC mission, institutions with a sufficient number of qualified working fashion design faculty, contemporary technological resources, and comprehensive curricula, including core and specialized courses in fashion design, have the prerequisites to offer fashion design degrees of quality to prepare students for entry-level professional practice in fashion design (NASAD, 2016). Some examples of NASADs' quality requirements for accreditation include (a) Curricular Structure; (b) Course Studies; and (c) Important Competencies, Experiences, Opportunities, and Collaborative skills beyond the classroom.

    (a) Curricular Structure content and time requirements focus on developing the skill competencies expected from a baccalaureate degree program in fashion design (Standard VIII).

    (b) Courses in art and design make-up 25-35% of the fashion program, art and design history represent 10-15%, and GE studies (business, math and social science) represent 25-35%, while the history of art and design represent 65% of the curriculum (Standard VIII.A.6 / III.C).

    (c) Essential competencies include collaborative skills, such as internship (industry working requirements) required before graduation (Standards VIII.B. and C).

According to Robinson (2013a, 2013b), there is a significant gap when it comes to matching academic readiness with industry expectations.

Background Overview

What is required in higher education to prepare students to understand the education and skills they need in the current fashion industry? How can fashion education train students to become better prepared to transition into the fashion trade? What are good indicators in quality fashion education that will address new industry challenges? Most importantly, what factors influence students when they are selecting a school or program for education in the field of fashion? To answer these questions, one must understand what is currently happening in the fashion industry, the effects these changes are having on fashion education, specialized accreditations for fashion programs, and the fashion student.

Fashion industry. The fashion industry has been in reconstruction mode over the last several decades, since 90% of apparel design and production has gone overseas or elsewhere in the world (The Made in America Movement, n.d.; Robinson, 2013a, 2013b). No longer is a garment designed and produced in one location or the same location as the designer or production contractor. This type of global trade now requires universal participation to provide fashion products for a fast turnaround, referred to as *fast fashion*. Lowson, King, and Hunter (1999) defined fast fashion as quick manufacturing at an affordable price for a quick turnaround. Fast Fashion became a market-based model in the late 1990s, and is now part of the current manufacturing protocol (Lowson et al., 1999). Global participation is the new method of creating garments. It requires sample garments to be designed in one country and produced in other countries. The timetable to produce these products in enormous quantities at lower prices includes producing these quantities in different countries in a quick response time frame. These products will need to arrive back in the US, ready to be shipped to the stores within as soon as

3-4 weeks. Universal participation changes the way manufacturers operate in today's fashion industry. While sewing factories still exist across the US and the world, many sewing methods are replaced today by machines and computers. For example, attaching pockets and sewing, turning, and top stitching side seams in one operation (i.e., double stitched side seams on jeans) can all be done by machine. Retail devices and computerized machines require technology, computer design skills, and global procedure knowledge to expedite the production process. Because of the new turnarounds (as soon as 3-4 weeks) to bring a garment to the marketplace, designers must anticipate changes in consumers' tastes and design twice as many products at twice the speed.

Most clothing created for the mass market suggests fashion designers must work in many different ways to bring their ideas to reality. The actual procedure of developing a garment depends on the fashion designer, fashion house, or mass manufacturer. Sketching and draping fabric on a dress form is often still done in couture houses (i.e., Chanel) where custom dressmaking still occurs. But at a mass manufacturer where fast fashion is required, sketching and pattern-making are often done by computer or computer technicians. Fast fashion designers have just enough time to draw their ideas on paper and use computer-aided design software to complete the original concept. When the original concept(s) are approved either by hand or via a computer system, the written measurements, fabric swatches, trim, and written instructions are sent by email or post to a country overseas. The required timetable for a designer to send out approximately 80 new sketches for 80 different articles of clothing to be developed in another country can be limited to two weeks. The completed samples are then sent back to be fitted on a human body (a fit model) to make sure they are of operational fit (able to move appropriately

and fit the body correctly). Embroidery or silkscreen applications (part of the design) require artwork to be sent to a third party in another country, created and applied to the sample garment, then sent back to the first country for completion. The overseas factory has a minimum of one week to start sending back samples to be fitted and forwarded to the store buyer for approval. Once garments are approved, these procedures are repeated for pre-production. The timetable to produce thousands of clothing items to be sent back to the US turnaround can be as fast as 3-4 weeks from the time the stores approved the sample garment. These procedures require the designer to use computer-aided-design software, hand illustrations, color knowledge, and math skills, plus organizational, technical, and leadership experience. The main point here is to equate how the state of product development changes are happening in the fashion trade today. The object of mass manufacturing is to bring fashion items to the retail floor for quick consumption.

Studies have been conducted on fashion principles, trade practices, product development techniques (Faerm, 2012) and transitional experiences of the fashion design graduate (Faerm, 2014). NASAD itself answers Frequently Asked Questions (see Appendix A) on their website; regarding how students can apply to art/design schools. However, very few studies have been conducted on students' perception of NASAD or what common criteria students use to choose a fashion program or school. Faerms's (2014) study explored fashion graduates' transition from academia into professional practice, emphasizing the purpose of the students' education as providing a foundation and lucid transition into the professional field. However, data from his study revealed that not all graduates found the transition easy. According to his data analysis, 44% students found the transition into the industry to be fluid and easy, whereas over 28% of the students found the transition was filled with many surprises, such as how the industry operates,

despite internship experiences throughout college; understanding the designer's role within a larger organizational system; the time and action calendar for product activity; and how to work with overseas factories. Faerms's study revealed that some schools provide a *fantasy world* that does not reflect actual industry operations. According to the New School of Design study at Parsons in New York, fashion design education programs across America are reexamining curricula and instructional practices in order to respond to these new circumstances (Parsons the New School for Design, 2011).

Fashion education. How can fashion education train students to become better prepared to transition into the fashion trade? The restructuring of the fashion industry requires relevant courses (see Appendix B) that parallel industry needs. These courses are pertinent to (a) instruction from teachers current in the industry, and (b) instruction that correctly prepares students with practical skills conducive to the new standard of producing fashion goods all over the world. Student must be exposed to global procedures and the need to work with factories overseas. The student is expected to have some practical knowledge of these factors before they apply for their first job (Wang, 2013). This experience at top schools is obtained through an internship, or collaborative study with industry manufacturers while the student is still in school.

This specialized education could relate its history to home economics. In the past, caring for the home, baking pies, and sewing a dress was seen as women's work. But then the age of industrialization, land grants, and scholarship donations created a roadmap to higher education for the American woman (Berlage, 1998). The study of home economics—which emphasized the correlations among home life (cooking, sewing), family, and consumerism—ultimately evolved into Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS; American Association of Family and Consumer

Sciences, 2016). The study of relationships between people, their environments, human behavior, development and the impact on consumption represents FCS, today. The growth of consumerism has created a demand for many state college campuses to offer undergraduate and graduate degrees under the FCS banner. In the California State University (CSU) system, FCS includes six areas, often referred to as *option* areas or majors, including Nutrition, Dietetics & Food Science; Family Studies; Interior Design; FCS Education; Consumer Science; and Apparel, Design & Merchandising (ADM). All or most of these majors require some exam, certificate, or license to work in these chosen fields.

Restructuring of the fashion industry, courses that parallel industry needs, faculty who are current in the industry, and practical skills conducive to the new standard of producing fashion goods all over the world are just a few important criteria one should consider when selecting a particular fashion program. Other criteria should include students' knowing what is the career path they intend to pursue; when selecting a fashion training program. The fashion industry offers a variety of career paths. Associate's degree programs (offered at schools like FIDM) provide specific fashion curricula in the skills needed for entry-level positions. Although bachelor's degree programs (offered at 4-year institutions such as FIT, Parsons) include liberal arts studies and leadership courses to help graduates advance from entry-level positions to team leader positions (assistant pattern-maker to an assistant designer) and graduate programs (offered at 4-year institutions, like FIT's Masters in Organizational Leadership [MOL] graduate degree), which is good for corporate positions such as Vice President (VP) for product development, Buyer or Divisional Merchandise Manager. Although full-time fashion design positions usually top the list as the most popular positions of interest, they are highly competitive.

Fashion programs. What are good indicators in quality fashion education that will address new industry challenges? Industry challenges include consumer interests changing at an enormous rate, an evolving generation of students interested in fashion and competing for the same job, and learning the new set of skills and proficiencies required by the fashion profession. A college or university already awarded specialized accreditation to the institution, can also be granted programmatic accreditation to a particular department or program within the institution. This type of accreditation status has long been recognized as "the quality of regional, career-related and programmatic accrediting organizations," "an affirmation to students, parents, faculty, and staff that a school has met critical standards and is fully qualified as a program or institution to offer quality education in a particular field" (Council for Higher Accreditation [CHEA], 2015b, p. 1).

The current fashion industry requires different skills for entry into the fashion trade than required in prior years. These skills require faculty instruction from industry professionals, studio time, hours, and different courses containing contemporary content. For example, when it comes time to take a certification exam for cutting machine operators in the fashion industry, a certain amount of hours and certain courses are needed to even sit for the exam. These courses were not offered or ever mentioned in the past under American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) accreditation. However, structured development criteria are suggested under the NASAD accreditation. Many CSU institutions under AAFCS accreditation have never offered graduate courses that meet the competencies needed for the fashion trade other than upper-level textile classes. Graduate students have begun to realize further education is required for career advancement in all fashion fields: organizational leadership, financial management,

retail chain allocation, or overseas sourcing. Course content approval, additions, or removal affect not just the institution's curricula requirement process but also the accreditation standards approval process (CSU, n.d.; California State University Northridge [CSUN], n.d.).

If global manufacturing today involves universal participation, then this new standard of design and production will require managers to possess a global perspective of qualitative analysis, organizational leadership, and different understanding as well as a knowledge of clothing and environmental and textile sustainability. These learned skills include consumer purchasing habits and overseas team leadership in higher management positions. The focus of preparing students to enter today's changing apparel industry through ground experience and further education through organizational leadership courses has impacted some CSU accreditation approval processes (CSU, n.d.; CSUN, n.d.).

Accreditation impaction can include courses currently being offered as graduate courses but only containing content equivalent to undergraduate level. Also, graduate programs may not provide enough graduate level courses to confer an adequate graduate degree in a particular major (i.e., fashion merchandising, buying). For example, graduate studies for a fashion designer may not be as important to their field as it it would be for someone pursuing a buying career. A buyer, buying products for a major department store or retail chain needs practical knowledge and experience with financial, managerial leadership, allocation, distribution, and supply chain executive managerial decisions. A major proponent for accreditation includes benefits for students regarding improved curriculum, classroom experiences, and entering a good graduate program. A graduate program that also helps assist in possibly obtaining employment positions for graduates, positions that pays significantly higher than entry-level positions. However, the

question arises as to whether or not students are even aware of the perceived value of what accreditation for quality fashion programs can offer them.

There are two types of accreditations many 4-year public and private schools use: the AAFCS certification (for family consumer/home economic education) and the NASAD accreditation (for art and design education). Some state schools are accredited to cover all aspects of sewing and art and design curricula through both NASAD and AAFCS. Under AAFCS, not all FCS programs will necessarily offer specific courses or provide the industry connections needed for a smooth transition into the fashion trade. In contrast, NASAD accreditation is specific to the evolving field of creativity and production, as well as industrial design for schools that combine art and design with an emphasis on industry partnerships as part of the industry learning process for both public and private colleges (NASAD, 2016).

NASAD-accredited programs represent structured curricula focusing on practical art and design course content such as fashion illustration, computer-aided design (CAD), perfected design presentations, historical and theoretical thinking toward the creative design process through internship, and collaborative study with industry leaders. In contrast, AAFCS was established to accommodate the need for home economics degrees and certifications for instructors for upper-level grade schools (K-12), colleges, and sewing education accountability as it relates to human health and development. Since the 1990s, however, the ever-changing fashion industry has required different skills for entry into the fashion trade. For many higher education 4-year public schools still offering FCS degrees, this evolution requires accrediting agencies like AAFCS to present, or rewrite a more structured standard focus and research-based

evidence to substantiate that FCS programs are essential in the lives of students (Browne, Myers, Gentzler, & Hausafus, 2006). Including curriculums with broad-based conceptual frameworks that includes critical and creative thinking and problem-solving related to present and future applications of skills and concepts (i.e., education for more than just learning to sew) (p. 26).

Fashion students. What influences students when selecting a school or program for education in the field of fashion? Can students who are familiar with NASAD accreditation recognize a quality fashion education? Does their knowledge of NASAD influence their decision to attend a particular program at a public or private college? For those fashion students who are not aware of the perceived value placed on NASAD accreditation, are they informed about what makes a competent fashion program? Is it possible that students who are looking for a fashion degree look to attend a school based on other factors?

The Problem

Research for this study has uncovered a gap between what students should expect to learn during their fashion education training, what many schools offer by way of a fashion program, and most importantly, what is a good indicator of what is a quality fashion program. Therefore, a need for this type of study has been demonstrated.

This study examined if fashion students are familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs and if this knowledge is a common criterion used in the students' decision to attend a particular fashion program. Students with or without the knowledge of NASAD may be looking for a fashion degree, and may choose to attend a school based on other criteria. Other standard measures could include college or institutional rankings, school location, tuition costs, and reputation/prestige of the school. College rankings often result in status and

prestige for an institution, which students and parents consider when deciding to attend a particular school (McFadden & Sheerer, 2006; Roberts et al., 2006; Roller et al., 2003; Wood, 2006; Zionts et al., 2006). These rankings provide an overview of each school's strengths and highlights of their unique attributes, listing schools in order of achievement and industry opinions. School rankings are created via the inclusion or exclusion of criteria from many sources. Criteria for a school ranking list may differ depending on who is creating the list. For example, in 2016, US News & World Report ranked CSUs by combining many factors into the ranking profiles, such as academic reputation, selectivity, graduation rate, freshman retention rate, and the financial resources of the institutions (US News & World Report, n.d.). In contrast, the Top 50 Best Fashion Design Schools in the United States, posted by Francois de Villepin, Founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the (Business of Fashion [BOF], 2017) and editor of the fashion school ranking process, used government data provided by the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015) and JEC (2015), when submitting his lists of the best fashion schools in the country. Data used by Villepin included: jobs procured by statistical polls (US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017a) and opinions from people in the industry recommending standout program offerings.

Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study were to: (a) identify the extent to which, if at all, fashion students in Southern California are familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs; (b) identify the most common criteria students used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program; and (c) if the students' decision is related to demographics.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- To what extent, if at all, are fashion students in Southern California familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs?

- What are the most common criteria used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program?

- Are decisions of the fashion students in Southern California to attend a particular fashion program related to their demographics?

Conceptual and Operational Definitions of Key Terms

The conceptual model for the NASAD accreditation and curriculum is built on NASADs' Standard Development Curriculum (SDC). NASADs' (2016) SDC describes curriculum, standards, and guidelines that coincide with fashion industry needs. The NASAD model seeks to support a seamless transition for fashion program graduates into entry-level employment in the fashion industry. The following are both conceptual and operational definitions of the terms as they relate to this study:

- *Apparel Design and Merchandising (ADM):* ADM on CSU campuses is one of six areas that offer undergraduate and master degrees within the department of FCS.

- *American Association of Family Consumer Sciences (AAFCS):* This organization accredits freestanding institutions offering degrees in FCS for secondary and post-graduate levels.

- *California State University (CSU):* The CSU system consists of 23 state-funded public universities; of the 23 campuses, only six offer undergraduate and master degrees in areas of ADM.

- *Cross-Sector Collaboration:* Academic Courses that connect two or more plausible methods or decision-making processes involving collaborative projects to better understand the complexities and nuances in the fashion trade (i.e., fashion combined with interior design) (The Inter-sector Project, 2017)

- *Family Consumer Sciences (FCS):* Once known as home economics, FCS is the study of the correlation between consumerism and family developmental science. FCS includes Nutrition, Dietetics, and Food Science, Family Development, ADM, Interior Design, and Consumer Affairs ("Home Economics," n.d.).

- *Fast fashion:* According to Lowson et al. (1999), fast fashion is quick manufacturing at an affordable price for a *quick response*. It became a market-based model in the late 1990s, now part of 21st century manufacturing protocol.

- *Fashion-specific courses:* In fashion design schools, this refers to classes with only topics or course content related to fashion theory, practices, tools of the trade, industry standards, terms, and procedures (i.e., pattern-making, fashion illustration, quality control, etc.).

- *Internship programs:* California colleges and universities provide internship programs as part of collaborative study with fashion industry companies. They benefit the candidate's full-time work experience and fulfill preliminary or professional credential coursework requirements. The holder of University Internship Credentials

(UIC) permits are earned by enrolling in an approved internship program. This allows

the holder to provide service on the credential coursework subject (California

Commission on Teacher Credentialing [CCTC], 2007).*National Association of*

Schools for Art and Design (NASAD): This organization, designated in 1981 by the

United States Department of Education (USDOE), is responsible for the accreditation

of art and design schools throughout the United States.

- *Quick Response (QR):* Initially created to improve the manufacturing process in the
  textile industry, the goal of QR is to remove excess time from production timetables.
  This process was initiated by the US Apparel Manufacturing Association in the 1980s
  to address the competitive threat of textile manufacturers who imported textiles from
  low-labor-cost countries. The concept of QR is used to support fast fashion by
  creating new products to draw consumers back to the retail experience for
  consecutive visits (Hines, 2007).

Importance of the Study

This study has the potential to add to existing literature as a more current exploration of

the perceived value of the NASAD accreditation. A study such as this one can prove valuable in

helping students recognize, and moreover, understand what is expected in a quality fashion

education. For instance, NASASD suggests certain standards (see Appendix E) as good

indicators for quality faculty and training requirements (Ewell, 2008; McFadden & Sheerer,

2006; Roller et al., 2003; Roberts et al., 2006; Wood, 2006). Certain standards include using

outcome-based standards as opposed to content-based standards. As discussed earlier, a good

example of outcome-based standards is the New School of Design study at Parsons in New York.

Parsons is re-examining their current practices to respond to the student's transition from their fashion program into the industry (Parsons New School for Design, 2011). Furthermore, data from this study may serve as an education tool in determining whether national accreditation is a determining factor in the student's decision to attend a particular fashion program or school.

Assumptions

It is assumed that participants will provide honest answers on the survey instrument. This assumption seems reasonable because the respondents will be informed of the importance of the study and that their identities will remain anonymous.

Limitations

Creswell (2009) suggests that all research strategies and statistical procedures have limitations as well as delimitations. Limitations are factors the researcher has little to no degree of control. This study utilized a quantitative descriptive and correlational design method. The descriptive correlational method of collecting data means that the researcher did not interact directly with the participants in a way that would cause any changes related to the responses.

Delimitations

Delimitations are factors which the researcher has some control. A quantitative survey allowed for expediency of data collection, easier data analysis and definitive answers (i.e., yes or no) from closed-ended questions.

Chapter 2: Review of Relevant Literature

Overview

An arduous search of other studies on specialized education uncovered one previously conducted case study: Prather's (2007) dissertation on *Specialized Accreditation In Collegiate Aviation*. In addition to this study, the review of other specialized fields may prove beneficial in understanding the current issues being faced in the fashion industry as it relates to fashion education. The theoretical model that drove Prather's study on aviation is similar to the driving approach for this study.

Prather's theoretical model. Prather (2007) sought to understand many areas of concern in collegiate aviation: (a) the benefits special accreditation provides programs like aviation; (b) why few aviation programs are accredited by the Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI); (c) the lack of student and industry awareness; and (d) student perception of specialized accreditation and what role, such accreditation played in the student decisions as to which institution to attend. Prather's study also examined aviation curriculum such as content-based standards versus outcomes-based criteria (Council on Aviation Accreditation [CAA], 2003; Prather, 2007). He believed that specific aviation courses should explicitly spell out student learning outcomes and provide evidence of those learning outcome accomplishments. Lastly, Prather noted that some standards that are widely used by specialized accrediting agencies may be outdated, the same specialized programs at institutions also remain outdated, and this obsolescence could affect accreditation membership.

Theoretical model for this study. The three areas of focus—curriculum, specific accreditation, and student awareness of specialized accreditation for a quality education—are

interests similar to Prather's concerns. Research for this study found similar issues related to Prather. Such as: (a) content-based standards versus outcome-based criteria where course content should be *parallel* to fashion industry needs and required skills; (b) specialized accrediting agencies for fashion programs may be outdated (i.e., AAFCS accreditation); and lastly, (c) whether students are even familiar with accreditation for fashion programs. Although there are several accrediting agencies art and design schools can join—such as the NASAD, the American Council on Education (ACE), the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and the AAFCS—NASAD (2016) specifically offers national standards for undergraduate and graduate degrees, including other credentials needed for art and design and art/design-related disciplines.

Chapter 2 reviews extant literature relating to students' perceptions of specialized accreditation, specifically fashion students' perceived value of the NASAD accreditation for fashion programs. The purpose of this study was to identify if fashion students are familiar with the perceived value of NASAD accreditation standards for fashion programs. Specifically, this study investigated whether the most common criterion used in the students' decision to attend a fashion education program at a public or private college is related to their demographic characteristics, such as gender, race, age, and socio-economic status (SES). In the absence of NASAD accreditation knowledge by fashion students, does status and college ranking influence their decision to attend a particular fashion program? The focus of this study was whether demographic characteristics, SES, and college rankings are related to the students' perceptions of specialized accreditation, specifically, NASAD. This literature review also investigates how these factors also relate to students in other specialized programs.

This literature review begins with public information about three types of accreditation, then moves into open studies about specialized students (fashion or non-fashion) and if they have a perception about accreditation in general. Historical and theoretical backgrounds for several topics are presented and followed by related empirical studies to justify the rationale for this study. In addition to fashion programs, this section will examine the perceived value and factors versus other specialized programs such as recreation, nursing, and aviation.

This chapter contains seven relevant themes. *Section 1: Accreditation* gives a brief history of regional, national, and specialized accreditation. This section provides a historical and theoretical background overview of accrediting agencies for fashion programs, including specialized accreditation curriculum, standards, and guidelines. *Section 2: Specialized Programs* explores frequently asked questions by fashion students and researches the perception of non-fashion students in other specialized areas. *Section 3: Fashion Programs* discusses changes affecting these programs, graduation rates, instruction, and faculty. This section profiles four NASAD-accredited schools: (a) FIT, (b) California State University Chico (CSUC), (c) Woodbury University (WU), and (d) California State University Northridge (CSUN) all are accredited institutions offering 4-year degrees in fashion education. These schools address their support for NASAD accreditation in fashion, art, and design in their Self-Reports documents for NASAD membership renewal process. *Section 4: Demographics* reviews students' decisions to attend a particular school or program based on gender, race, economics, the location of the school, age, and years of experience. *Section 5: Status and College Rankings* reviews some of the nation's top fashion schools based on the top 50 fashion design schools and colleges in the US (FS Staff, 2015), best college rankings and lists (US News & World Report, n.d.), and

statistics offered by CSU (2016). Ranking lists provide an overview of strengths, highlights, and quality attributes, as well as data on job procurement, opinions of professionals in the fashion industry, and exemplary fashion programs at many institutions. *Section 6: Employment* explores what qualities employers are looking for when hiring the best employment-ready students from fashion programs. This chapter will conclude with *Section 7: Summary,* which features discussions related to commonalities and conclusions applied to not only NASAD accreditation, but also the perceptions, concerns, and recommendations related to the specialized accreditation process.

Research for this chapter found within various databases, including ProQuest Dissertations & Thesis Global Search, as well as other online sources. Sources such as articles and reports that provide additional information about specialized accreditation (e.g., self-reports, related accreditation agencies, fashion academics, and fashion professionals) are included in this review if the research focused on accreditation perceptions. To be included in this review, studies must have reported historical or theoretical content related to curriculum, standards, guidelines, and objectives relevant to specialized accreditation, student satisfaction, student perception, student dissatisfaction, and empirical data through quantitative research methods focusing on the issue of certification.

Section 1: Accreditation

Historical. Literature implies that accreditation in the United States is an important part of accountability in higher education. Furthermore, post-secondary educational institutions in the United States are quite diverse, but all focus on one common goal: educational excellence. Therefore, these systems push for educational prominence through quality academic content,

federal funds acceptance, students transferring among institutions, and employer confidence regarding future graduates (Eaton, 2000).

Achieving academic goals through accreditation has been an American tradition tracing back to the 19th and 20th centuries. In response, to established admission standards, and the standard for all colleges; the first establishments in the United States conducted secondary education at primarily religious institutions first. Secondary education consisted of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, logic, and philosophy classes. External control over the first educational institution came from the Board of Regents of the University of New York in 1787. The board reported findings to the state legislature after their annual visits to every college in the state of New York. Regional accreditation in the United States began in 1885, and a national phenomenon began after the turn of the century. Along with other colleges, the National Association of State Universities, and the Association of Land-Grant Colleges in Williamstown, Massachusetts, along with other colleges established admission and administration standards and recommendations, specifically, the recommendation of regional associations and certificates from accredited schools in other regions. Additionally, a proposal was created for college entrance certifications and commissions for accrediting schools. Today, this is known as post-secondary accreditation (Alstete, 2004). The New England Association of Colleges and Schools founded the sole purpose of regional associations, was just as important as national associations (Kniess, 1986). For example, the six New England states, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Specialized accreditation for medical education began in 1904 with the American Medical Association Council on Medical Education (Alstete, 2004).

The Council on Medical Education's ratings became the standards for existing medical schools, joining the American Medical Association (American Medical Association, 2018; JAMA [Journal], 2018). Through a neutral foundation, the Carnegie Commission improved medical education; from this outcome came the Flexner Report, published in 1910. The report evaluated programs on their objectives, policies, administration, facilities, instructional personnel, and all education programs. Reports on poor quality schools caused these schools to close, while higher quality schools improved. In 1920, the Flexner Report brought more recognition to professional accreditation, making professional accreditations widely accepted by professional organizations (Flexner, 1910). Other occupational disciplines were in effect by 1945 such as architecture, forestry, optometry, and social work (Prather, 2007). Without concern for a particular curriculum by intercollegiate or governmental agencies, students, and academic diversity grew. The end of the 19th century saw American institutions changing from a homogenous category to variability sectors, including accredited schools that met minimal standards (Alstete, 2004).

Types of accreditation. The accreditation process (a system of academic review) periodically solicits independent opinion by peers, a prerequisite part of the process, to support an institution or program in meeting educational objectives and standards. These objectives established by accrediting associations, hope to address operational and curricular issues pertinent to educational quality. As with other specialized fields like medical, aviation fields, business, nursing, nutrition, and recreation, the field of art and design (including areas of fashion design, apparel merchandising, and marketing) fall under specialized accreditation (CHEA, 2015). Three types of specialized accreditation exist today: regional, national, and specialized.

- ▪ Regional accreditation consists of seven agencies in six regions comprising approximately 3,049 institutions with the enrollment close to 23 million students (CHEA, 2013). Regional accreditation applies to the entire system, specific programs, and distance education within an institution. Institutions holding regional accreditation are non-profit organizations.

- ▪ Approximately 3,500 institutions; enrolling 4.75 million students in trade schools, often seek national accreditation (Prather, 2007). National accreditation applies to the entire system, specific programs, and distance education within an organization.

- ▪ Specialized accreditation accredits freestanding institutions or specific programs within the institution. This type of accreditation has grown today to approximately 48 specialized accrediting organizations recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA, 2013).

CHEA accredits a particular program of an already regionally or nationally accredited institution. Specialized accreditation of a specific academic program represents status or prestige for an already accredited institution, such as the Chicago Art Institute, or the Rhode Island School of Design (CHEA, 2013; Wellman, 2003). The CHEA (2013) recognizes 67 programmatic accreditation at accrediting organizations, which accredits programs that enrolled 3.9 million students in 2012-2013 (see Appendix C). The AAFCS and NASAD, both accredited freestanding (separate stand-alone buildings or institutions offering specialized courses in a particular field such as fashion education) institutions are recognized by CHEA (see Appendix D).

History of AAFCS. AAFCS (2016) is an accrediting agency for colleges that offer fashion degrees in FCS, formally known as home economics. Most of these colleges are state funded and offer undergraduate and graduate level degrees. According to the AAFCS, the study of home economics, which emphasized the correlation among home life (cooking, sewing), family, economics, and consumerism, evolved into FCS.

Today, FCS is the study of relationships between people, and the impact on environments, human behavior and consumerism. FCS on the CSU campuses encompasses undergraduate, and graduate degrees in six areas, often referred to as *option* areas: Nutrition, Family Studies, Interior Design, FCS Education, Consumer Science, and ADM. The sewing part of the home economics of the past falls under the area of ADM in FCS. ADM in FCS on CSU campuses offers undergraduate degrees in Apparel Design, Apparel Merchandising, Textiles, and Apparel Marketing.

AAFCS (2016) was established to accommodate the need for home economics degrees and certifications certifying instructors for upper-level grade schools (K-12), colleges, and sewing education accountability that relates to human development and health needs. ADM under the FCS banner is the outcome of home economics. The term *home economics* may suggest a concern that the standards promulgated by AAFCS accreditation are outdated and not that is in keeping with the current fashion industry needs.

History of NASAD. NASAD (2016) is composed of approximately 323 collegiate schools of art and design but also includes postsecondary non-degree-granting schools for visual art disciplines. NASAD standards intend to inject an atmosphere of understanding and respect among schools and departments that combine art and design. The primary mission of NASAD is

to offer accreditation membership to educational programs that meet established curricular standards and guidelines for art and design disciplines. NASAD is the only accrediting agency covering the entire field of art and design recognized by the USDOE.

The history of NASAD started as early as 1944. Art school representatives around New York met at the Metropolitan Museum of Art by invitation of the museum's Dean of Education, Richard F. Bach. The dean's goal was to focus on the new field of industrial design through schools that could develop design education programs. Because of the positive response, the meetings continued until 1948; by then NASAD was a stable organization. Soon structured conferences and schools visit encouraged the exchanging of ideas to consider broader problems in art and design education (NASAD, 2016).

The NASAD included 22 schools as charter members (NASAD, 2016). In 1966, the National Association of Schools of Design changed its name to the National Association of Schools of Art; then renamed it again in 1981 to what it is called today: the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). These name changes were an effort to more accurately represent the broad interests of the organization, in turn, supporting the membership of prestigious leading art and design schools, college and universities, as well as artists and designers from around the United States.

Fashion design, fashion marketing, fashion merchandising, and retail curricula, standards, and guidelines often include content or coursework in fields deemed appropriate to education in a design specialization. Although these areas of the fashion trade are different specialized fields, they all share an interest in particular content that usually addresses various purposes, perspectives, and structure in their study, and produces different results. Within these specific

majors, institutions designate the possibility of areas of emphasis, minors, or *option* areas (e.g.,

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Design may include areas of focus in various design specializations).

Typically, coursework in a field of emphasis in liberal arts or Bachelor of Fine Arts studio

program is no less than 25-30% of the total credits designated as a major, and coursework in a

minor is at least 12% (NASAD, 2016: Section IV.C. Pg. 83 b-d). Specific majors may allow

areas of emphasis or minors. For example, a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Art provides

Painting, Printmaking, Art History, etc., as areas of focus. A Bachelor of Fine Arts in Design may

include areas of focus in studio specializations (i.e., sculpting, pottery). Typically, coursework in

an area of focus occupies at least 30% of the curriculum and 12% coursework in a minor

(NASAD, 2016: Section IV.C. Pg. 84 e).

     NASAD versus AAFCS. AAFCS accreditation accommodates fashion courses that apply

to human and health development. The NASAD accreditation is specific to the evolving field of

creative as well as industrial design for private and public colleges that combine art with design

(NASAD, 2016). This study focused on specialized programs that combine art and design with

fashion programs at public and private institutions. In that regard, the perceived value of

NASAD accreditation and their standard criteria was the focus of this research.

Section 2: Specialized Industries

     Whether a student is seeking a fashion program or other specialized programs in

industries requiring specific skills, knowledge, and experience, he/she must face the decision of

what particular specialized education program to attend. This study explores whether fashion

students are familiar with the perceived value of the NASAD accreditation standards for fashion

programs. In addition to fashion programs, this section will review the perceived value and

factors regarding other specialized programs, namely: (a) student learning outcome; (b) faculty; and (c) internships, and on-the-job success in recreation, nursing, aviation, and fashion.

Specialized programs. The term *accreditation* can be confusing. Regional accreditation, the most commonly recognized term can be confused with words like *national*, *programmatic*, or *specialized* accreditation. Programmatic, or specialized accreditation can be status symbols designated for specialized departments, programs, schools, or colleges within a college or university. Programmatic, or specialized accreditation focuses on particular aspects of a department, program, school, or institutions' specified academic field of study. Example, a specialized professional or programmatic accreditation status represents a particular quality in academic fields, such as nursing, aviation, or recreation, among others. A student looking to enroll in a non-specialized program may look for a school that focuses on academic rigor, which ensures the curricula are academically focused and relevant, but their academic major is not necessarily a specialized field (liberal arts, history, English, etc.). The following examples of specialized programs present both proponents and opponents who question the perceived value of whether specialized accreditation curricula are academically focused, relevant, and parallel to the industry skills needed for specialized fields.

Recreation. A student looking to enroll in a recreation program requires not only an academically rigorous education, but also one that focuses on a particular set of skills, certificates, and knowledge for the trade. Kniess's (1986) study focused on accreditation by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA, n.d.), focusing on the few recreation and park programs that seek NRPA accreditation, while others do not. Many respondents felt specialized accreditation in recreation was not important. Administrators believed graduation from an

accredited program was not a prerequisite for employment and "alumni were successful without accreditation" (Kniess, 1986, p. 119). Furthermore, administrators did not want to justify the expense of the accreditation process for something they were already doing. In the end, Kniess's study revealed that program officers just did not feel the specialized accreditation process was worth the time.

Nursing. The specialized field of nursing also has both proponents and opponents who question the perceived value of the nursing accreditation status. Some baccalaureate nursing programs criticize costs and uncertainty regarding the validity of the specific certification criteria. Litwack (2013) conducted a study on specialized accreditation in nursing programs. Her survey focused on the attitudes of program and college administrators and the quality of accredited programs versus non-accredited programs. Her survey data found that 77% of program directors and 59% of vice presidents were in favor of seeking accreditation and appreciated the benefits of this type of certification. The same group recognized that specialized accreditation played a significant role in funding for the programs, as well as an important role for funding graduate school (Litwack, 1986).

In Litwack's 2013 study, she compared 14 accredited nursing programs with 14 non-accredited nursing programs regarding curriculum quality. She conducted interviews with program administrators from accredited and non-accredited programs and found no differences in program goals, objectives, course hours, and student exam scores for nursing licenses. For those institutions, the study suggested the following reasons for supporting accreditation: faculty preparation at the doctoral level and the number of graduates working in the field providing

status, prestige, and confidence for faculty, and more options for students in their future activities.

Aviation. In 2007, Prather conducted a study on the perceived value of specialized accreditation for aviation. He surveyed four groups: administrators at AABI accredited and non-AABI accredited aviation programs, students enrolled in aviation programs, and employers in the aviation industry. Prather's findings found administrators believed AABI accreditation enhanced the quality of an institution's aviation program and provided an improvement of the curriculum. His conclusions also discovered these goals stimulated content-based standards, and program excellence. Also, similar educational quality standards further increased the credibility, integrity, and acceptance of collegiate aviation programs (CAA, n.d.). Formally called Civil Aeronautics Authorities, the AABI now utilize content-based standards to accomplish a uniform standardization that ensured all programs had the same criteria for their accredited programs. These content-based rules still stand under the AABI criteria (Prather, 2007). Prather's findings also suggest that AABI accredited program administrators supported the AABI rigorous curricula, which ensured that graduates received quality training and could perform a range of professional competencies. In older studies by Kuhns (1994) and Lindseth (1996, 1998, 1999), researchers found that the number one signifier of a high-quality aviation program was the number of high-quality faculty recruited. This finding was supported by Prather (2006) and Sherman's (2006) newer research on the quality of specialized aviation programs and overall education. Although Prather and Sherman's surveys replicated Lindseth's model, which included: curriculum, faculty recruitment, program activities, leadership, and reputation. Eventually, newer assessment standards provided support for 4-year degree aviation programs.

Fashion. The art and design programs at CSUC, and FIT in New York support

accreditation. These two schools support the theory, that accreditation has provided essential

stimulation for an institution's program, faculty recruitment improvement, and internship

placement. An internship helps graduates meet industry requirements for employment readiness,

for employment readiness, for employment readiness, thus, encouraging program evaluations. In

Bill's (2011) study, she found the fashion education system was not congruent to the new global

changes in the fashion industry. According to her study, fashion programs were not in keeping

with the current skills needed in the growing economy. Her findings supported a tertiary style

strategy. New Zealand, first introduced in 2002 *a tertiary style strategy* at a time, when there

was a significant disconnection between fashion curricula and required on-the-job-skills, even

though current fashion content-courses included manufacturing competencies employers said

were needed. These competencies included pattern making skills, garment construction,

merchandising and marketing strategies. Bill's study recounts how, unlike fashion degrees in

larger labor markets; fashion courses differentiated themselves by specializing in different

aspects of managerial, professional or conceptual skills; fashion courses in New Zealand aspired

to produce a *one size fits all* theory. This idea, according to Bill, consists of equipping design

graduates with the hands-on skills in creating fashion garments.

Globalization in the fashion industry has changed from United States assembly line

production to 90% offshore assemblage Robinson's (2013a, 2013b) study on manufacturing

issues found that manufacturing today is highly technical, requiring more understanding and

proficiencies for a variety of competencies. In addition to this finding, Bill (2011) surveyed

students in fashion programs in New Zealand; her results indicated a "re-evaluation of program

offerings" (p. 15) was also in demand. A student found that, after completing a fashion career in a fashion-focused program at a non-accredited school or a school where there were no industry professionals as instructors, students' hard work did not qualify them for an entry-level job in the fashion industry. The fact that they did not have the specialized knowledge to handle a particular machine, use a computer program, or possess procedural knowledge of designing a garment to be produced in China while they were in New Zealand made it impossible to keep their jobs as designers. Unfortunately, students found not having this procedural knowledge was imperative and losing their jobs because of this lack of experience was happening far too often.

Section 3: Fashion Programs

As in other specialized fields, NASAD accreditation is an entity of academic review (NASAD, 2016). The aims and objectives of the NASAD (2016) accreditation process are to periodically evaluate an independent opinion by peers, focusing on the prerequisites that support the particular institution or program. This support sets standards for academic and curriculum review and assists if able, to other stakeholders (students, parents, and the general public). Although NASAD provides a public listing of accredited members; it does not rank the institutions or its programs.

School rankings. Ranking schools are not part of the NASAD mission. Rankings can be useful in a variety of areas (i.e., an institution's past achievements). However, top schools appearing on any particular list, may or may not be the best fit for the development of a specific individual. The NASAD mission grants accreditation membership by the Commission on Accreditation to signify that an institution has complied with the NASAD procedures, standards,

and guidelines (NASAD, 2016). Although membership is voluntary, the process consists of

regularized self-evaluation and peer review.

  Membership benefits. NASAD accreditation is a stamp of status and quality for the

institution. The accreditation stamp symbolizes, the institution supports and believes they have

met relevant criteria for its art and design programs. In some schools, NASAD accreditation

endorses the transfer of credits from one institution to another. All schools benefit from a

foundation of standards in such a fashion that provides academic strength and operational

integrity (NASAD, 2016).

  Accreditation standards. NASAD (2016) standards are developed and approved by

members of NASAD in conjunction with other art and design professionals and organizations.

According to the NASAD 2015-16 Handbook, a basic framework for the accreditation process,

allows objective analysis of art and design units, which includes all curricular offerings in art and

design programs. An objective analysis includes basic dialogue in the following areas: within an

institution that prepares a self-study for NASAD review, between an institution and NASAD

visiting evaluators and the Commission, and between NASAD and the public as a whole.

NASAD does not develop specific formulas, coursework, or other specifications that impinge on

the freedom of an institution; instead, it develops standards and guidelines associated with a

specific level of educational quality. These directives are not restricted solely to experimentation,

innovation, and individuality of a particular program's content. NASAD creates standards and

guidelines for degree-granting programs in art and design, including 2-year degree-granting

colleges, non-degree granting institutions, and community education art and design programs.

NASADs' SDC for fashion programs. NASADs' SDC for fashion programs includes

development of educational standards in art and design and has contributed greatly to a more

uniform understanding and respect among schools. The perceived value of NASADs' art/design

SDC for Fashion Programs (see Appendix E) represents a perceived value of the curriculum,

standards, and guidelines associated with the knowledge, methods, and history of many fields

and professions within the fashion trade as suggested by actual working industry professional

(NASAD, 2016).

Fashion design, fashion marketing, fashion merchandising, and curricula, standards, and

guidelines may include content or cross-sector course study in fields appropriate to education in

a design specialization (i.e., business courses combined with fashion design). Although these

areas of the fashion trade have different professional majors that frequently address different

purposes, perspectives, and definitions of producing different results, they all share an interest in

fashion-based-content courses. Within these specific majors, institutions designate areas of focus,

minors, or option areas (e.g., a Bachelor of Science in ADM, may include areas of focus in

design, merchandising, textiles, or marketing).

According to NASADs' SDC for fashion design, merchandising and marketing, fashion

curricula integrate the visual and technical aspects of designing, wearing, producing, selling and

buying fashion products and fashion services. This integration combines aesthetics and

technology, with the goal of enhancing function and value. In addition to the perceived value of

NASAD specialized programs in fashion, the next section will review the perceived value and

factors regarding other specialized programs (NASAD, 2016). Just over 300 higher education

institutions in the United States offer art and design programs accredited by NASAD. A degree in

fashion design from a NASAD-accredited institution will require an application, including the

following: completion of prerequisite courses in art and design before being admitted and

demonstrating artistic and creative ability through a portfolio presentation by hand illustrations,

digital imaging, or mixed media (NASAD, 2016: Section V. A., B., C., D., E., F., G. p. 87 [1-5]).

A bachelor's degree in various fashion majors—design, merchandising, textiles, or

marketing—is the minimum requirement for entry-level positions that lead to career

advancement and other opportunities within the fashion industry. Fashion design programs teach

students about fashion, design concepts, industry trends, analysis, textiles, fabrics, and how to

use CAD to develop fashion ideas and apparel designs. Fashion design programs are

instrumental in helping students develop a strong portfolio, which is a key to landing top design

positions. Besides experience, employers may decide whether or not to employ or hire a designer

based on formal education in fashion design, excellent portfolios, and industry experience (US

Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2017b). The specialized field of the fashion

industry requires a particular set of skills, knowledge, experience, and capabilities. A fashion

student looking for a career in the fashion industry will want a college that offers a curriculum

that is taught by industry professionals, academically focused, and relevant for fashion academic

majors within this specialized field. There are many fashion programs or schools across the US

noted for a variety of reasons, such as: status and US ranking; programs offered or for largest

enrollment in a major fashion producing area (i.e., New York, Los Angeles, etc.). The following

fashion, art, and design programs are profiled in this study:

i.   FIT, a 4-year public state university in New York, was chosen because it is always ranked in the top 1% of fashion schools in the US.

ii. CSUC was chosen because it is the second oldest CSU, known for its art and communication programs

iii. Woodbury University (WU), was chosen because it is one of the few 4-year private institution offering a full fashion program in Southern California.

iv. CSUN was chosen because it one of the largest enrollments in ADM of all CSUs.

All four institutions are NASAD-accredited and all address views regarding the value of NASAD accreditation in fashion, art, and design.

Fashion program profile 1: Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT).

History. FIT is a college of the State University of New York (SUNY), accredited by the NASAD. In addition to state funding, FIT receives support from the Board of Education of the City of New York. This type of support combined with renowned world-class faculty and relevant curricula keeps allows the school to continue offering fashion education at a top institution for an affordable cost. In 1944, FIT began preparing skilled and educated people to work in the fashion industry. Starting as a community college, it quickly became one of the first institutions to grant an associate of applied science (AAS) degree in the state of New York. FIT ranked in the top ten best fashion colleges in the US ranking (BOF, 2017) offers more than 45 degrees in art, design, business, and technology. These programs lead to Associate of Applied Science (AAS), Bachelor of Science (BS), Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA), Master of Arts (MA), Master of Fine Arts (MFA), and Master of Professional Science (MPS) degrees (FIT, 2017). Fashion programs at FIT keep evolving along with fashion itself, but some FIT traditions never

change; like close ties to the fashion industry by way of faculty, designers at top manufacturers and top retailers. This involvement includes job placement for FIT graduates. Internships at leading fashion houses give FIT graduates valuable experience and meaningful connections; connections with industry leaders at guest lectures and industry events help build a network of useful contacts. The program provides studies at the museum on the campus, which contains historical garments and world-class collections from couture designers. The opportunity to study abroad is offered through the international fashion design degree, which allows first-year students to begin their studies in Italy.

FIT programs. In 2012, a FIT's application for reaffirming NASAD status, included a self-study, a visitors' report, and response. The report supported NASADs' SDC, stating, "The overall importance of FIT, is always to capture a close connection to fashion and related industries to ensure that the curriculum remained current and prepares students for bachelor degrees with industry skills" (FIT, 2015, p. 5). The strategic curriculum at FIT includes learning the fundamentals of professional draping, patternmaking, and sewing. Before graduation, students must master CAD and illustration, know how to take a design from concept to finished garment, and pass a portfolio evaluation (FIT, 2017). The 2015 FIT visitors' report for NASAD revealed several restraints that affect program offerings in several areas within the fashion program: (a) the size and scale of the classrooms and facilities, and (b) the collective bargaining agreement and assignments of class-based on enrollment minimums and maximums. Bargaining contracts stress a class enrollment of 25 students maximum in all subjects, but NASAD recommends 20 or fewer (NASAD, 2016). Economies can drive classroom minimums to over the maximum capacity, thus,creating crowded conditions in studios.

Student perspective. As part of the SUNY system, FIT, administers a survey called the Student Opinion Survey (FIT, 2017). This survey is conducted every 3 years to collect information on students' satisfaction with academic experiences, student support, and campus resources and academic programs. This information is used in the strategic planning process, as well as informal and administrative improvement efforts.

Fashion program profile 2: California State University Chico (CSUC).

History. CSUC is a public university located in Northern California. Founded in 1887, it is the second oldest CSU. CSUC is part of the California 23-campus State University system and is regionally accredited by the Senior Commission of the Western Association of Schools and College (Education Corner, n.d.; Western Association of Schools and Colleges [WASC], n.d.), CHEA which acknowledges NASAD, of which CSUC's Communication Design department (CDES) art and design program is a member. CSUC CDES has a high freshman retention rate (87%); many graduates go on to careers in scriptwriting, producing, directing, and other facets of media production and broadcasting. CSUC describes their communication programs that comprise the CDES specific to product design, communication processes, practices, media, and institutions in the larger context of design education (CSUC, 2005).

NASAD accreditation. CSUC supports NASADs' SDC accreditation, which provides certification for their design option areas by annually evaluating student outcomes. Student work displayed in the public arena through exhibits receives professional feedback from portfolio reviews and is also assessed by the professional community, providing opportunities for assessment data. Student achievement is evaluated via two reviews a year that result in a pass

rate of 50-60%. Student and graduate performances are measured at the portfolio stage by faculty and professional graphic designers (CSUC, 2005).

Student perspective. The CDES reported that the student-to-faculty ratio in their skills-oriented classes is sufficiently low to provide ample one-on-one interaction, noting that the skills courses require hands-on experience (another suggested NASAD criterion). From 2001-2005, data gathered from seniors in the CDES department regarding their perceptions and attitudes about learning opportunities and preparedness for a future professional career revealed overall satisfaction with the department. CDES graduates reported that they are extremely satisfied regarding career preparation and quality of instruction. A review of faculty academic preparation and professional development also revealed that students were confident and felt exceptionally qualified for their instructional assignments (CSUC, 2005).

Fashion program profile 3: Woodbury University (WU).

*History***.** Founded as the Woodbury's Business College in 1884 and named for F. C. Woodbury, a partner in Healds Business College in San Francisco (WU, 2016). WU is the second oldest institution of higher education in Los Angeles, California and is one of the oldest business schools west of Chicago (WU, 2016). WU is a private, non-profit, coeducational, nonsectarian university located in Burbank, part of Los Angeles County. WU was accredited by NASAD in 2008. As of 2015, approximately 39% White, 28% Hispanic, 17% international 9% Asian, and 4% Black students were enrolled at WU. WU is usually ranked in the top 25 of US colleges. *Money Magazine* in 2014, ranked WU 15th out of the top 25 colleges; signifying WU as a school most value for your money. This recognition identifies WU as a school that changes the trajectory of its students. In addition to a satellite campus in San Diego, WU offers

undergraduate and graduates degrees from four schools: Architecture; business; media, culture, & design; and liberal arts (WU, 2016).

Fashion programs. The School of Media, Culture, & Design houses fashion programs, specializing in fashion foundation, CAD, digital literacy, apparel design process, history/theory, and costume elective offerings. The curriculum promotes standard illustration methods, strong technical skills, and creative thinking, placing emphasis on developing the student's personal design aesthetic. WU's hands-on fashion program helps students utilize research, design process, and conceptual thinking to produce functional and inventive contemporary trends. Graduation requires the creation of an industry-level portfolio and offers opportunities to participate in the annual fashion show.

Student perspective. NASAD recommends having 20 or fewer students in a studio class at one time (NASAD, 2016). According to WU students class sizes are small: 12-15 students, which is the norm. It is important for instructors to remember everyone's name and tailor learning deficits for struggling students. Collaborative learning and partnership programs are enhanced at WU because of the smaller class sizes, making relationships with classmates advantageous for group projects. A survey done by Joye Swan, Professor & Chair of the Department of Psychology and Social Sciences at WU, found that students approved of collaboration with other students and considered it helpful to learning (WU, 2015).

Fashion program profile 4: California State University Northridge (CSUN)

History. CSUN founded in 1952, an extension of San Fernando Valley State College. It was the first state college to own a computer lab. CSUN has the CSU system's largest enrollment with over 36,000 undergraduates, 4,600 post-graduates, and since 2012, the largest enrollment in

the fashion program of all CSUs: over 350 students. *Forbes* magazine recently ranked CSUN the 87th best college in the West and 448th top university overall (Symonds, 2016a). CSUN campus has nine academic colleges, awarding 68 bachelor's, 58 master's, two doctoral, and 14 teaching certificate programs. CSUN offers BA, MA, and MFA programs in art, accredited by the NASAD, and BS and MS programs in FCS (the current term for home economics, i.e., cooking and sewing) accredited by the AAFCS (AAFCS, 2016).

ADM programs. ADM options are accredited by the AAFCS. As part of FCS, ADM has seen tremendous growth since 2002. The accreditation bodies for this area have changed their rules, such as requiring a particular set of courses and relevant course content, in order to confer a master's degree (CSU, n.d.; CSUN, n.d.). This impaction, along with the continuing enrollment and desire for a traditional 4-year degree, has caused many CSUs to review their graduate programs.

The ADM option area gives students the ability to select a major in apparel design, production, apparel merchandising, or textiles. The ADM option also offers an analytical study of concepts and application relating to these majors. Students will then apply knowledge of the physical, social sciences, technology, aesthetics, and business to their projects, including the theory of principles and elements. ADM combines computer-aided-design technology, business strategy, and fashion merchandising approaches to manufacturing, processing, and retail sales. CSUN's ADM department's mission is to prepare students for unlimited career opportunities, throughout the apparel and textile industry, such as opportunities for internships and networking partnerships through the fashion student organization, called TRENDS. Networking with professional organizations such as the International Textile and Apparel Association (ITAA) and

fashion industry tours is an integral part of the overall CSUN fashion educational experience. Internships in the students' chosen career field introduce students to the day-to-day operations of the profession. Internship experience (credits toward the degree), can be fulfilled by working at California's Merchandise Mart, major department stores, design showrooms, textile testing labs, apparel manufacturers, and museums.

Student perspective. One of the strengths of the Apparel Design & Merchandising program at CSUN is the cross-sector design collaboration projects between interior design and fashion design students. Collaborations between these two different majors involve using CAD and product lifecycle management systems.

Section 4: Demographics

A literature search for this study reviewed the factors that influence decisions to attend a particular fashion school or program based on demographic characteristics (gender, race, economics, location or distance of school from where one lives, and age) in many fashion centers across the US.

Gender. Numerous studies have investigated the relationship among gender, fashion education, and fashion career choices, such as Gonzalez (1995) and Singer's (1992) studies on specialized careers found among females. Also, Morvant, Gersten, Gillman, Keating, and Blake (1995) and Singh and Billingsley (1996) conducted research on specialized career choices among males. Some studies did not reveal enough data or significant correlations between gender and fashion school choices, but revealed mixed conclusions regarding gender and education in general. According to Gonzalez and Singer, the largest group to choose a specialized career was found among females. Morvant et al. and Singh et al. did studies on specialized career choices

among males, in which the numbers of males in these types of careers was found to have

increased in the last decade. This increase has become noticeable in the fashion fields, such as

apparel construction, marketing, merchandising, and graphic design.

A survey by Boe, Bobbitt, and Cook (1997) on specialized programs and accreditation

found a variety of demographic characteristics related to the status change in education standing

(retention, transfer, or second careers). National estimates were also predictors for the national

numbers of female students choosing fashion as their first education choice or choosing to be

entrepreneurs in fashion as a second career choice. Results of their study were statistically

significant as an indicator regarding a relationship between gender and fashion as an educational

choice in some areas where the fashion trade is the highest moneymaking industry.

Cross and Billingsley's (1994) findings regarding relationships between gender and the

choice of which particular program to attend were similar to the findings of Boe et al. (1997).

Their investigation showed that many prospective students were not aware of the perceived value

of specialized accreditation; furthermore, the students who were more aware of NASAD were

mostly women in New York, Chicago, and Rhode Island. Importantly, Miller, Brownell, and

Smith (1998) surveyed 1,576 specialized program students in Los Angeles, a top fashion industry

center in the US Their study found that a significant amount of male and female students were

unaware of NASAD and chose a fashion program based on other factors.

Morvant et al. (1995) interviewed 868 fashion students and 17 fashion education

instructors in three metropolitan areas. Both respondent groups chose to teach after attending

fashion programs. Data techniques appropriate for quantitative (surveys) and qualitative

(interviews) were used to analyze the responses. The results from fashion educators found that

females represented a larger teaching population in collegiate fashion education. The results from fashion students, were many students chose a fashion program with a pathway to graduate studies for teaching qualifications, than a program where they need to work out in the fashion field (i.e., become a buyer). Although Morvant et al. (1995) and Singh and Billingsley's (1996) studies found that more women than men remained in fashion education as instructors; the number of males entering the fashion field as professionals over women is becoming more prevalent than in the past.

Race. One of the purposes of this study was to identify the extent to which students were familiar with specialized accreditation. Research studies by Cross and Billingsley (1994) and Lundberg and Schreiner (2004) found race to be a predictor for perceptions of accreditation and choice of a particular school. Cross and Billingsley found that White students were more knowledgeable of the value placed on specialized accreditation than Black, Asian, and other groups. Today, more than 20 years later, the number of Black, Asian, and other small percentage groups has risen and continues to grow when it comes to enrollment at top fashion schools and other fashion programs across the US (US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017b). According to California Statistics, CSUN awards the country's seventh highest percentage of bachelor's degrees to Hispanics. In 2014, approximately 39% White, 28% Hispanic students, 17% international students, 9% Asian students, and 4% Black students, were enrolled at WU in Burbank, California (WU, 2016, p. 6). These numbers reflect the racial composition of the surrounding communities. WU is a private 4-year university located within 20 miles of the downtown Los Angeles garment district, and the Los Angeles apparel industry employs a large part of the Hispanic sector. The number of Hispanic students continues to rise as

WU's program continues to stress financial aid and graduation rates for fashion programs. Thus noting, most students attending the college come from the surrounding communities.

Meixner, Kruck, and Madden (2010) revealed student relationships with faculty and students taught by full-time faculty versus part-time faculty increased graduation rates. Meixner et al. study found students would return their sophomore year in college, when the faculty included more industry working professionals as opposed to the tenured non-industry working instructors. Lundberg and Schreiner (2004) also identified faculty relationships as a strong indicator of student learning outcomes for minority students. Specifically, the quality of the relationship between students and faculty had a positive effect on student performance. Although all ethnicities shared a commonality when it came grading fairness, and faculty relationships (whether as mentors or guiding counselors), these commonalities were important indicators of improved student learning experiences (Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004).

Economics. A study by Billingsley (2004) supported the finding that finances play a major role in students' decision of a particular program or school to attend. This decision outweighs knowledge of or perceived value of specialized accreditation when choosing a school. Specifically, student perceptions and expectations were influenced by financial aid. When less financial aid was received than anticipated, minority students, excluding Asian students, were discouraged from attending college. Therefore, customizing financial packages with non-institutional monies to meet the unique needs of students from different race/ethnic backgrounds is to ensure all students enroll in colleges (Kim, DesJardins, & McCall, 2009). Black students were sensitive to their financial considerations of top fashion colleges. Grants and tuition had a direct influence on Black students' persistence in college. Some institutions relied on grant

monies to offset tuition and promote college diversity, encouraging Black students to enroll and

continue at some colleges. However, the higher the tuition rate, the less likely Black students

were to receive funds to offset other costs of living. In spite of the higher grants and loans

offered to Black students versus other minorities, Black students were only able to afford less

expensive colleges compared to Whites (St. John, Paulsen, & Carter, 2005). England-Siegerdt

(2010) further revealed that Asian students were less likely to resort to loans than White students.

Location. Billingsley's (2004) study revealed that the location or distance of a particular

school or program influences a student's choice of where to enroll; this decision can be based on

the student's ultimate goal, post graduation. Billingsley's study responded to findings regarding

differences in females and males who chose an entrepreneurial position (owning or starting their

own business) post graduation. The data found the labor force was vastly different between the

1980s and 2015: time periods that reflected students who started their businesses right after

school and those whom chose schools in proximity to the industry.

Woosley and Shepler (2011) researched first-year experience and first-generation college

students regarding how location influenced their decision to attend a particular school. Their

study sampled 2,744 first-year students entering a large, public, residential Midwestern

institution, using Tinto's (1975, 1987) model as a predictor for integration in college, specifically

integration into social settings, academic retention, and homesick-related distress. Results found

student perceptions of campus life were important to them as well as a first-generation student's

ability to adjust to university life socially, academically, and emotionally. These perceptions were

predicted on the location of the school of choice: specifically, a location in proximity to where

loved ones lived. The study found that social support would mean students would be able to

make friends,and not struggle or feel homesick. Academic and material factors also revealed that social support from the faculty was critical to the students. Students wanted to interact with approachable and supportive staff and faculty members who demonstrated they cared about teaching. When the students experience conflict either academically or socially, this could lead to attrition. These findings related to students not returning to school the following year further supported Tinto's (1975) student integration model. His model theorizes that students socially integrate into the campus community, thus increasing their commitment to the institution and likely to graduate (Tinto, 1975).

Age, years, and experience. Age and years of experience in education, change of career, and other variables seem to be the key demographic characteristics linked to the decision to attend a particular fashion program or school (Billingsley, 2004). When compared to students in other specialized programs, students with age or years of experience and interested in fashion education were reported as being more apt to change, transfer, or choose to be an entrepreneur in fashion as a second career choice. The decision to attend a particular program or school was influenced by the location of potential jobs in the fashion field, where one wanted to live at this time in their lives, or the best school (status and ranking) for obtaining a fashion education. Prior experience with higher education, admissions, and financial aid improved confidence in choosing the best school the second time around. Results showed that first-time students indicated that they would transfer or change majors if a fashion education did not work out. The more experienced students would finish the fashion program of choice, because the the time it would take to complete the degree would only be 9 months to a year if they had a baccalaureate degree in hand (Morvant et al., 1995).

Morvant et al.'s (1995) dual purpose study also focused on professionals choosing a

graduate program after years of working in the field, which included: (a) advancement in the

field or (b) going into teaching. Regarding advancement in the fashion field, Morvant et al.

collected data from 10 industry professionals in fashion marketing at several fortune 500

companies. Qualitative analysis was used to identify themes in the interview responses. Results

found that industry professionals with 15 or more years in the field with only a baccalaureate

degree felt continuing education to receive a master degree would be advantageous for

promotion. Studies for a new direction in fashion includes transitioning from a full-time working

professional to a career as an educator. Data collection included a survey of 10 industry

participants. Results of the study's questionnaire, which was analyzed utilizing descriptive

statistics, found the following; professionals with 20-plus years of full-time work were looking

for a career change due to unemployment, the need for steady pay, and a job that would utilize

their expertise. This career switch would require an upper level academic degree in a related

field.

Section 5: Status and College Rankings

The new era of the fashion trade has become widespread all over the world. Very few

people are considered good at designing clothes, which is why it is considered very challenging

and competitive work. The industry is nonstop, and designing means coming up with new ideas

all the time. However, being a good fashion designer is easy if you are talented and passionate in

your chosen market. The work requires you have a creative idea to invent new styles. If you want

to pursue a career in the fashion business, finding the right fashion program is the first step.

Imran Amed, Founder, CEO and editor of the Business of Fashion (2017) believes approximately

95% of fashion start-ups fail in the first five years. He suggests that students lack practical, applicable skills to help them in their careers. A 2012 survey by his magazine found that participating fashion students and alumni felt unequipped with the practical business skills and training needed to succeed in the field. Furthermore, Amed suggests students' thrive harder when they enter full-time employment or go on to start their own business. Although a growing number of schools offer courses that embrace digital technology and innovation, many alumni commented that students would like to see more business and marketing courses.

Rankings can be useful in a variety of contexts. Status and ranking of fashion schools provide an overview of a school's strengths and highlight some of their unique attributes. When the Business of Fashion assembles their own list of world's best fashion programs, global influence, learning experience, long term value, and jobs procurement, are considered when compiling the lists (BOF, 2017). Status and prestige often serve as a common tool for parents and students, when deciding on which particular school to attend (NASAD, 2016). However, the outcomes of teacher educator training programs were measured by graduation rates and financial aid. Good fashion programs are not just limited to New York (JEC, 2015, p. 4-5); they can be found on campuses all over the US. Many fashion design programs may not offer courses in fashion design specifically, but offer other programs that prepare students for a career in fashion (JEC, 2015, p. 4-5).

Lastly, some rankings usually represent subjective opinions about an institution's past achievements rather than a review of its current ongoing quality work (Symonds, 2016b). Furthermore, institutions vary in their purposes and priorities. When considering the results of any ranking, it is essential to know: who asked; what they asked; and for what purpose did they

ask. Example, *Forbes* magazine pulls together schools offering degrees in business or money-making industries from America, Europe, Asia and Latin America when considering best school rankings. The criteria focus on education in terms of value, indicating that world class education does not have to be expensive (Symonds, 2017). The best schools on any list may or may not be the best school for a particular individual (NASAD, 2016). Many reputable ranking agencies consider certain aspects of any given college to determine how it ranks overall. Rankings of fashion schools can include: (a) being the most affordable school, (b) a superior reputation in the world of art, or (c) having the most convenient location. Agencies then calculate scores based on factors such as (a) peer assessment, (b) financial resources, (c) graduation and retention rates, (d) faculty resources, (e) program offerings, and (f) student selectivity. These factors carry a certain amount of weight, which helps to calculate the overall score (i.e., smaller classes carry more weight than larger classes and the number of students that graduate in four years instead of six).

The following list of the 15 best fashion design schools in the USA (only 4-year degree programs are listed) highlights programs and degrees that are considered excellent education for fashion (BOF, 2017; Fashionista, 2017; FS Staff, 2015; JEC, 2015; Symonds, 2016b; US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017b).

Top 15 fashion design schools and colleges in the US

Fashion Institute of Technology, New York. FIT, considered in the top 5% of schools, the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York is home to 10,052 students enrolled in 37 majors and 12 certificate programs. FIT encompasses five schools: the School of Art and Design, Jay and Patty Baker School of Business and Technology, School of Liberal Arts, the School of Graduate Studies, and the School of Continuing and Professional Studies. FIT offers graduate

programs, allowing FIT fashion design students the opportunity to study abroad and intern at companies in Europe, Australia, and Asia. All students may participate in the annual FIT fashion show (FS Staff, 2015).

Parsons School of Design at the New School, NY. Parsons is always in the top 5% tier. The school was established in 1896 by William Merritt Chase (an American impressionist). Parsons is home to 5,000 plus students and offers 27-degree programs. There are five schools, offering degrees from Accessories Design, Drawing, Fashion to Materials, Fabrication, Sustainable Design, and Textiles. BFA degrees are also provided in Fashion Design and Integrated Studies, and Master degrees in Fashion Studies (Design and Society, History, Materials and Fabrication, Computing/Wearable Technology, Textiles, and Research). Students have the opportunity to attend programs at Parsons in Paris, participating in the annual fashion show, and work with the schools' magazine. Notable alumni include Anna Sui, Donna Karan, Marc Jacobs, Isaac Mizrahi, Mark Badgley and James Mischka, Narciso Rodriguez (FS Staff, 2015).

Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), Savannah, GA. SCAD is considered in the top 5% of schools, started in 1978. Approximately 11,000 plus students are enrolled at SCAD, where more than 40 areas of concentration exist in art and design including 60-plus minors, and three certificate programs. The school has campuses in Savannah, Atlanta, and Hong Kong, with programs offering BFA, MA, and MFA degrees in Accessory, Fashion, Fibers, and Jewelry. Design; MFA degrees are offered online. The 2015 SCAD catalog, is the first art and design university to receive the Instructional Technology Council's award for Outstanding Distance Education Program of Excellence in Institution-Wide Online Teaching and Learning

from the Sloan Consortium (p. 1). Some of the most prominent highlights of attending SCAD

include participation in the annual fashion show, and internship opportunities (FS Staff, 2015).

Kent State University, Kent, OH. Kent, considered in the top 5% of schools, started in

1910. Kent State University (KSU or Kent State) has 27,500 students enrolled in 300-degree

programs across dozens of colleges, schools, and departments. The College of the Arts, School of

Fashion Design and Merchandising (The Fashion School) offers programs including BA and

BFA degrees in Fashion Design and Crafts (Jewelry, Metals and Textile Arts), as well as an MFA

in Design/Technology and Costume Design. All fashion students are eligible to participate in the

annual fashion show. Study tours to Europe and Asia are offered on a regular basis, including, the

Fashion Schools' studio located in New York's Fashion District. The New York studio provides

full-semester programs for Kent State fashion students year-round (FS Staff, 2015).

Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), Providence, RI. RISD considered a top-tier

school, started in 1877. RISD is home to 2,449 students enrolled in the Department of Apparel

Design. The school offers BFA degrees in Apparel Design and Fine Arts and MFA degrees in

Textiles, Jewelry, and Metalsmith. Design students have the opportunity to participate in the

schools' annual runway show (FS Staff, 2015).

Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY. Pratt considered in the top 5% of schools, started in 1887.

Pratt enrolls 4,556 students in 22 undergraduate and 26 graduate degree programs. The school

offers various certificate programs across five schools in Architecture, Art and Design, Liberal

Arts and Sciences, and the School of Information and Library Sciences. A BFA degree in Fashion

Design and Jewelry is offered from Pratt's Center for Continuing and Professional Studies.

Fashion Design can intern with designers such as Rag & Bone, Ralph Lauren, and Donna Karan (FS Staff, 2015).

  Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA. Drexel considered a top tier school, started in 1891. Drexel University's Antoinette Westphal College of Media Arts and Design enrolls 26,359 students in 200-degree programs offering BS and MS degrees in Fashion Design. The Fashion design students have access to studios, specialized labs, and the Robert and Penny Fox Historic Costume Collection (FHCC). The school offers students to study abroad in the UK, and Europe. Students can also submit their designs upon completion of requirements to show in Drexel's annual fashion show (FS Staff, 2015).

  Iowa State University (ISU), Ames, IA. Iowa State considered in the top 10% tier of schools, began in 1858 as Iowa Agricultural College and Model Farm. Today, ISU enrolls approximately 34,734 students throughout ten colleges and schools on the campus. Apparel and Hospitality Management (AESHM) offers BA, MS, and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in ADM at the College of Human Sciences. ADM students have the opportunity to study in New York, Chicago or abroad in Europe; participation in ISU's Annual Fashion Show is optional (FS Staff, 2015).

  University of Minnesota, Twin Cities (Minneapolis-St. Paul), MN. U of M considered in the 10% tier of schools, started in 1851. The University of Minnesota enrolls 69,221 students in 400 degree programs across the school's 17 colleges. BS degrees in Apparel Design and MA, MS, and Ph.D degrees are offered at the College of Design. Apparel Design students have access to design and technology labs, and the opportunity to show their collections in the annual fashion

show. All students have the opportunity to study abroad in Australia; Europe, the Netherlands,

the Middle East, the UK and Ireland (FS Staff, 2015).

  Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA. Otis considered in the 10% tier of

schools, started in 1918. Otis enrolls 1,100 students in dozens of art and design programs. Once

partnered with Parsons in New York (Otis Parsons' School of Design), Otis now offers a BFA in

Fashion Design and a BFA in Costume Design. Character development for film, television, live

performance, concept art, and video is the emphasis in costume studies. A major in the

Sustainability option offers a single course in Fashion Design, Textile/Surface Design, Jewelry

Design, and Illustration. Otis fashion students are mentored by major brands such as Billabong,

Nike, BCBG, Hurley, and Johnny Was. Students also have the opportunity to showcase their

designs at the annual fashion show and display their work in the windows of Neiman Marcus in

Beverly Hills, California (FS Staff, 2015).

  Auburn University, Auburn, AL. Auburn considered in the top 10% of schools, began in

1856 as the East Alabama Male College. Today, the college is the co-ed institution with 25,912

enrolled students. The Department of Consumer & Design Sciences (CADS) within the College

of Human Sciences offers BS degrees in Apparel Merchandising, Design and Production

Management, an MS in Consumer and Design Sciences, and a PhD. in Consumer Design

Sciences. Apparel design students have the opportunity to intern at local stores and apparel

manufacturers as well as study in New York, Europe, London, Fiji, Jordan, Peru, and South

Africa (FS Staff, 2015).

  Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. Cornell considered in the top 10% tier of schools, began

in 1865. Today, 21,593 students are enrolled in 80 undergraduate majors, 90 minors, and 108

graduate programs. A number of colleges (14), schools, and 100 academic departments make up

the Cornell campus. The Department of Fiber Science & Apparel Design (FSAD) within the

College of Human Ecology offers degrees in Fashion Design, Fiber Science, and Fashion Design

Management. A BFA and BA dual degree can be obtained from the College of Arts and Sciences.

BS, MA and Ph.D. degrees in Apparel Design, Fiber Science, and Human Ecology programs

degrees can be obtained from the College of Human Ecology, and a Minor in Fiber Science from

the College of Engineering. 10,000 items of apparel dating from the 18th century to the present,

along with ethnographic textiles and costumes can be found on campus at the Cornell Costume

and Textile Collection studio. Cornell is considered an Ivy League school, and home to the

Cornell Institute of Fashion and Fiber Innovation (CIFFI), established to encourage

collaborations between academia and the fashion industry. In addition to fashion design,

marketing, fiber science, technology, and materials testing; students at Cornell have access to the

Textile Collection and CIFFI, FSAD and the opportunity to compete for the Cornell Design

Award and display their collections at the Cornell Fashion Collective runway show (FS Staff,

2015).

School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL. Chicago's Art Institute considered

in the top 10% of schools, began in 1866. Chicago's Art Institute enrolls 3,519 students in the

Fashion Design department where BFA and Master of Design (MDes) degrees can be earned in

the following options: Fashion, Body, and Garment design. Students have the opportunity to

participate in study tours in Antwerp, London, New York, and Paris (FS Staff, 2015).

Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO. Colorado State began in 1870, considered

in the top 15% of schools; today Colorado State enrolls 30,000 students in 150-degree programs

across 14 colleges and school. The Design and Merchandising Program is located within the College of Health and Human Sciences. BS and MS degrees are offered in ADM and ADP (Apparel Design and Production). Apparel Design students can work with individual collections from designers, such as Calvin Klein, Carolina Herrera, Dior, Yves Saint Laurent, Valentino, and Versace. 1,500 pieces of historic lace and lacemaking tools can be located at the Avenir Museum on campus. All design students have the opportunity to participate in internship programs abroad in Italy, France, Peru, Ghana, and Australia, including participation at sea (FS Staff, 2015).

Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK. Oklahoma State University (OSU) considered in the 15% tier of top schools, started in 1890. 35,000 students are enrolled in the Department of Design, Housing, and Merchandising located within the College of Human Sciences. OSU offers programs in one of only 13 apparel programs in North America to receive the American Apparel and Footwear Association (AAFA) approval. The AAFA approval is a symbol that the curriculum and facilities meet the stringent standards for the AAFA. BS, MS, and Ph.D. degrees are offered in Design, Housing, and Merchandising. Design students have the opportunity to intern with designers and brands such as BCBG, Lands' End, Vera Wang, Liz Claiborne, and Victoria's Secret. Travel-study programs (New York, Dallas, Mexico, Paris, and Berlin) allow students to study aboard (FS Staff, 2015).

California Fashion Programs. The state of California is home to 454 Title IV degree-granting institutions, and the city of Los Angeles, considered one of the top fashion centers in the world (JEC, 2015). Out of the 683 California colleges, 56 schools offer fashion degree programs, many of which are top-tier. Many fashion programs are offered at schools in the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas. Although the FIDM, located in Los Angeles, is a 2-year college, it is one of

the most recognizable names on the West Coast for fashion education. FIDM is a specialized, private college located in the heart of the Los Angeles garment district. FIDM school offers AA degrees in every major fashion market and a BA in the fashion business to continuing FIDM graduates with an Associate of Arts (AA) degree. FIDM is known for their industry-focus mission, and one of few colleges with career center services available to FIDM Alumni for as long as they choose to work in the fashion industry FIDM serves. FIDM students, graduates, and alumni have access to a job search website, covering over 24,000 employer contacts and 1,800 plus job postings each month. According to a 2017-2018 FIDM school catalog, with an expensive tuition of $60,000 plus for their 2-year fashion design program (FIDM, 2018, p. 206); over 8,000 students pass through the gates of the campus within 1 week. The California Department of Education (2006, 2007) reported that 590 students graduated from FIDM in 2005, with credentials in fashion design, the largest number of fashion degrees awarded in at one institution at one location in California.

Another top rated California school offering fashion programs is the Art Institute of California, which has campuses throughout the state: San Francisco, Hollywood, the Inland Empire, San Diego, and more. The Art Institute offers AA, BS and MA degrees in fashion and art studies. Tuition is moderately expensive, and the small campuses have above average on-campus housing when it comes to quality. Other top schools like Otis and Art Center, both located in the Los Angeles area, are well-known for fine art education. These schools offer Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Fine Art with fashion design as a minor with moderate to expensive tuition and small to medium enrollment. Art Center has a major connection to the auto industry for industrial design internship, and Otis has a good connection to art galleries and museums for

exhibitions and display. Although there is not much distinction between CSU colleges, tuition, location, and industry connections present major differences between many of the top schools in California that offer fashion programs when it comes to selectivity and reputation (CSU, 2016).

California State University (CSU) system. There are 23 campuses in the CSU system; the biggest differences between them are related to location, enrollment size, programs offered, and percentage of commuter students. California State University, Sacramento (CSUS); California State University, Long Beach (CSULB)l and CSUN have the largest enrollment of 335 fashion students out of a total of 14,567 enrolled in a fashion major in the CSU system (CSU, 2016).

Section 6: Employment

Specialized, professional, or programmatic accreditation focuses on a department, program, school, or college's particular academic areas of study. For instance, academic fields of fashion, recreation, nursing, and aviation, among others.

Fashion industry skills. What are employers looking for when hiring the best employment-ready students from these fashion programs? Successful fashion designers come up through the ranks of the industry (JEC, 2015), starting with an apprenticeship, internship or by working as an assistant for a while. Internships can be beneficial to students who want experience in the industry while completing their degree. Successful designers are artistic, creative, detailed oriented, and familiar with design technologies. As decision-makers, designers must be good at communicating with others. Designers can obtain the best job opportunities in fashion design with degrees from reputable schools who have experience and working portfolios (designs currently or have been in stores before) that showcase their work. It is vital for apparel

production workers to possess technical skills; and for team leaders, it is crucial to maintaining

team-based skills, conflict resolution skills, and problem-solving skills.

Job outlook. The US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017b, (USDOL/

BOL) estimates that between 2012 and 2022, the fashion design career will experience a 3%

decline in employment (USDOL/BOL, 2017b). The USDOL/BOL study estimates fashion

designer positions in apparel manufacturing will decline over 50% in the US at which time, an

increase in apparel production will rise in most cost efficient international markets. The decrease

in fashion designer positions will overall decrease by 3%; which will be about the same as the

average for all occupations nationwide (USDOL/BOL, 2017a). Any growth in employment for

fashion designers who design clothing and accessories for retailers and the mass market will

continue to be active over the next decade because of the innovation in fabrics, and technologies.

Clothing style changes will also spur demand for fashion designers over the next ten years.

However, due to the number of employment seekers, such as fashion designers, competition for

positions will be even stronger. The job opportunities for fashion designers will be found mostly

in metropolitan areas like New York and California (Career Profile and Job Search Guide, n.d.),

see Table 1.

Table 1

Job Location Statistics

State	Employment Totals	Location Quotient	Hourly wage	Mean annual wage
New York	7,190	6.2	$39	$80,9000
Massachusetts	270	0.61	$37	$76,900
New Jersey	340	0.66	$35	$74,100
California	5750	2.9	$35	$73,300
New Hampshire	90	1.04	$35	$73,500

Note. Adapted from Career Profiles and Job Search Guide. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.careerprofiles.info/fashion-designer-career.html#overview

Salary and wage statistics. When considering employment opportunities, applicants should consider all factors, including wage, location quotient, overall employment, and cost of living. The highest paying metropolitan areas for fashion designers include St. Louis, MO ($97,300 annually), San Francisco, CA ($83,100 annually), NY-NJ Metro Area ($81,000 annually), Portsmouth, NH ($78,500 annually), Oakland, CA ($77,800 annually), Boston, MA ($77,200 annually), Los Angeles, CA ($74,400 annually), Portland, ME ($72,000 annually) and Santa Ana and Anaheim, CA ($71,400 annually). These annual figures are based on mean wage. Therefore, the actual figures may be higher or lower (Career Profiles, n.d.), as is the case with fashion designer salaries which are influenced by many factors: experience, skill, reputation, and employer. Until a fashion designer has substantial experience in the industry, his/her pay tends to be relatively low compared to other occupations that require a Bachelor's degree. Fashion designers receiving an on-staff salary (a more stable income and job position) than those who work as a freelancer, independent or consultants (Career Profiles, n.d.), see Table 2.

Table 2

Median Pay for Apparel Industry-Related Positions

Positions	Salary
Corporate and Enterprise Management	$78,600
Specialized design services	$62,600
Apparel production	$62,400
Apparel and merchant wholesaling	$60,600
Electronic markets and brokers	$58,000

Note. Adapted from Career Profiles and Job Search Guide. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.careerprofiles.info/fashion-designer-career.html#overview

According to the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017a), the median pay for fashion designers is between $43,780-88,339 a year. As of 2016, 50% of fashion designers earned more than $65k a year. However, fashion designers who can develop their brand and clothing line can become more well-known and be paid accordingly. The top 10% of fashion designers make over $127,000 a year, with a few hugely successful designers making well into the six figures. The lowest 10% of wage earners in this industry make less than $43,780 a year. The highest annual mean wage for fashion designers by state and across the US is in California, Washington, Ohio, and New York, as seen in Figure 1.
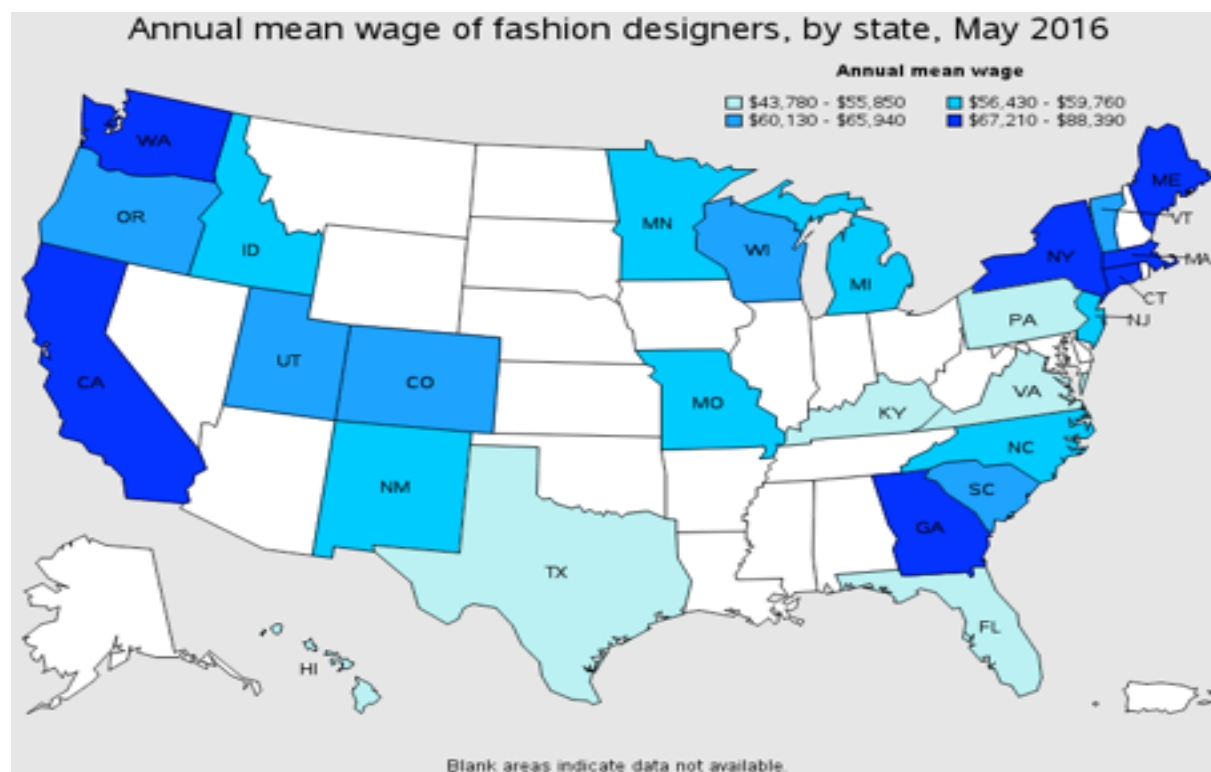
Figure 1. Annual mean wage for fashion designers by state, May 2016. Reprinted from "Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2016," 2017, by the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, retrieved from https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/ oes271022.htm#st. Copyright 2017 by the author. Reprinted with permission. https://www.bls.gov/opub/#copyright

Section 7: Summary

The information presented in Chapter 2 is specific to collegiate fashion education and the

fashion industry. The literature review examined public and private colleges that have NASAD

specialized accreditation programs and support the perceived value of NASAD accreditation for

fashion programs.

The historical, theoretical, and empirical studies on specialized programs, demographics,

school rankings, and employment readiness also included curriculum, standards, and guidelines

within fashion programs which provide a foundation for specialized accreditation, specifically

NASAD. Regardless of the popularity of a particular school or the NASAD organization, this

chapter reveals that many fashion schools seem to have both proponents and opponents of what

is expected of specialized accreditation, specifically NASAD and fashion curricula for a successful transition into the fashion field.

As NASAD is of value to some administrators and many educational institutions, it is still uncliar whether many students are familiar with NASAD or if the knowledge of accreditation influences the students' decision to choose a particular fashion program or school. In that regard, the next chapter discusses the methods to measure perceived value of NASAD accreditation by fashion students in fashion programs at public and private colleges.

Chapter 3: Methods and Procedures

As the fashion industry continues to grow through globalization, the need for knowledgeable and seasoned fashion professionals is imperative. Undergraduate and graduate fashion students throughout the US are in need of education through fashion programs that parallel the current fashion industry changes of today. There is a need for education that continues improving quality curriculum and strives for employment readiness and educational practices that prepare students for entry into all areas of the fashion trade.

The previous chapters have uncovered a gap in the current research on fashion education. Current studies suggest what students should learn from a quality fashion education. But how do students actually choose a particular fashion program or school? A good indicator of a quality fashion program could start with the NASADs' SDC, which is structured by industry professionals and academic requirements (NASAD, 2016) to help students to recognize, and moreover, understand what is expected in a quality fashion education. Because there is insufficient research regarding fashion students' knowledge or perceived value of the NASADs' SDC for fashion programs, this study was designed to investigate this phenomenon.

The purposes of this study were to identify: (a) the extent to which, if at all, fashion students in Southern California are familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs; (b) the most common criteria students used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program; and (c) if the students' decision to attend a particular fashion program is related to demographics. A description of the methods provided in this chapter are: research questions, population, sample group, selected participants, data collection methods, human subject considerations, anonymity, data analysis and interpretation.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. To what extent, if at all, are fashion students in Southern California familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs?

2. What are the most common criteria used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program?

3. Are decisions of the fashion students in Southern California to attend a particular fashion program related to their demographics?

Research Design and Rationale

This study used a quantitative descriptive and correlational design to collect and analyze data (responses). This type of design supports the purpose of generalizing responses from a smaller group of participants rather than a larger population. The responses made by the participants for this study are inferences regarding the relationship between characteristics, attitudes, or specific behaviors (Babbie, 1990).

In addition to generalizing the attributes from a smaller participant group (Babbie, 1990; Creswell, 2009; Fowler, 2008), a quantitative survey instrument represents the responses at this given time. Furthermore, quantitative methods are advantageous for the expediency of data collection at a minimal cost (Creswell, 2009). As the objective of this study was to investigate the current knowledge and perceived value of NASAD accreditation among fashion students in California colleges that offer fashion programs, a quantitative survey was deemed most appropriate for this type of study.

Population, Sample Group, Selected Participants

Target population. The target population for this study are students currently enrolled in a fashion program in the state of California. According to the California Department of Education (2006, 2007), 130,456 students in the state of California enrolled in some fashion program, of this amount, 30,456 students are in Southern California alone, including both public and private colleges offering fashion programs and degrees. These numbers include 47,275 California Technical Education students enrolled in manufacturing, fashion, or interior design programs within the California Community College system. The highest enrollment of fashion students is in the Los Angeles area, with 21,821 students. Surveying California's large population of fashion students across California was not possible. Therefore, a smaller sample group consisted of students in the L.A. area of Southern California containing the highest amount of fashion students.

Sampling group (participants). The sampling group for this study consisted of: (a) 50 fashion program students attending the 4-year CSU with the largest student enrollment in a fashion program among all CSUs (a public college), and (b) 50 fashion program students attending a 4-year private college, one of the few colleges that offers a full fashion program with a BS degree in Apparel Design. Both colleges are in the Los Angeles area of Southern California and are NASAD-accredited.

Selected participants. Due to the broad fashion areas associated with the fashion trade, the participants consisted of students from two institutions with fashion programs and contained a good cross-section of the three most essential majors—fashion design, merchandising, and marketing. The participants also came from various academic backgrounds: full-time, part-time,

and transfer students with Associate's, Bachelor's, or Master's degrees looking to pursue a certificate or 4-year degree in a fashion major.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection, survey instruments, and data analysis will be based off responses to a questionnaire for fashion students from both public and private colleges in Southern California. The survey was created to identify if fashion students in Southern California are familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs and if the students' decision to attend a particular fashion program was related to their demographics. Dillman's (2000) tailored design method guided the researcher in understanding the development of a survey, and also in the manner in which the participants were contacted.

Data collection methods include: (a) the initial contact to the participating schools; (b) a pilot survey instrument (delivered, collected and analyzed) for reliability and validity review; then (c) the final survey instrument to be (provided, collected and analyzed) for data analysis and interpretation.

Although this survey research effort required the collection of data from two specific groups, each group received the same questionnaire and the same guidelines before taking the survey(s). Before piloting the survey and analyzing the participants' feedback from a small group of fashion students, approval from an Institutional Review Board (IRB) was necessary. The timetable for survey respondents, upon receiving IRB approval is shown in Table 3, and the implementation described as a first, second and third contact.

Table 3

Implementation and Timetable

Action	Time Frame	Date
Pilot survey		November 2017
First Initial Contact: Email to Instructors		
Second Contact: Permission granted to deliver survey	4-5 days after first contact (to set date for survey)	November 2017
Third Contact: Delivery of Survey by Researcher	On set date	November 2017

1. First Initial Contact: After receiving IRB approval, the first initial contacts (to the instructors) via email were sent to request permission to give a survey during class time. Therefore, two emails were sent: email to a fashion instructor at a NASAD-accredited 4-year public California State University (Appendix F), and email to a fashion instructor at a NASAD-accredited 4-year private college (Appendix G). Both emails identified the researcher as a doctoral candidate and requested the instructor to administer the survey to the students during class.

2. Second Contact: When permission was granted to administer the survey, a date for the survey was set.

3. Third contact: The 11-question survey was delivered by the researcher at the earliest convenience to the instructor. The survey was then administered by the instructors to the students in class on the day of delivery. Survey participation as voluntary. The instructor distributed and collected surveys, placing the completed surveys into an envelope (envelope was marked *Public* or *Private* College) and giving the envelope to the researcher. This sealed envelope method allowed students to drop off the completed

questionnaire as they left the classroom. The researcher picked up the envelopes

containing the questionnaires from the two schools after each class.

Survey Instrument

To understand the role NASAD accreditation plays in decisions made by students

regarding the institution they chose to attend or in their general awareness of NASAD, a survey

instrument titled "Survey of Fashion Program Students on NASAD Accreditation" was

developed for this study (Appendix H). The survey instrument is quite brief, only containing 11

questions. Based on an extensive review of factors identified in the literature about the perceived

value of the NASAD accreditation standards for fashion programs, the researcher reviewed other

survey instruments used in other studies. Based on the peer-reviewed studies, related to the

students' perceived value of specialized accreditation, Prather's (2007) 10-question survey

instrument was selected to be modified for this study.

Prather's (2007) 10-question survey was developed to examine the perceived value of

AABI accreditation from four groups: administrators from AABI accredited, and non-AABI

accredited aviation programs, students enrolled in an aviation program, and employers within the

aviation industry. Prather's 10-question survey instrument "Survey of Aviation Program Students

on AABI Issues" (p. 237) was chosen because it is a direct match to measuring the perceived

value of specialized accreditation. Consent to modify this instrument was obtained through email

communication with Prather. The survey modifications, with Prather's consent (Appendix I), are

outlined in Appendix J.

Prather's (2007) research efforts during his survey development, addressed validity and

reliability, using several efforts to minimize any error in conducting the survey. Therefore,

validity and reliability was accomplished through (a) face validity, (b) content validity, and (c) internal and external reliability measurements.

Validity. Alreck and Settles' (1995) survey research principles state that "a measurement of any kind is valid to the degree it measures, and only what is supposed to be measured" (p. 58), including the specific research questions proposed for the study. Additionally, refinement of the questions and the results to be measured by using this principle reflected an effort to ensure the validity of the questionnaire adapted for this research project.

- *Face Validity,* as in Prather's (2007) survey, was reinforced for this study by informally allowing people not involved in the study to review the questionnaire for accuracy. Second, the researcher's chair and a professional statistician had the opportunity to review the questionnaire and provide comments as to how accurately each survey question addressed the specific research questions proposed for this study.

- *Content Validity* was reinforced by refining the questions resulting from this exercise. This process was enhanced by allowing a professional statistician to review each of the questions (Gay & Airasian, 2000). Prather's (2007) "Survey of Aviation Program Students on AABI Issues" (p. 237) was selected for this study because of similarity and paralleled premise for specialized education. Prather's study and survey questionnaire aimed at aviation students, was designed to determine, what effect AABI accreditation had on the student's decision as attend a particular aviation program or institution. Prather's student survey represented a contemporary view to assessing the students' awareness of specialized accreditation.

The survey instrument for this study needed to assess the students' awareness of specialized

accreditation, specifically NASAD accreditation for fashion programs, thus Prather's survey was

adapted as the survey instrument for this study. The first question on the survey contains a

checklist (14 common criteria choices students might choose when selecting a school). Next, the

student was asked to rate his/her knowledge or awareness of NASAD accreditation on a 5-point

scale of agreement: *Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree,* or *Strongly Disagree*. Finally, they

were asked questions regarding their demographics such as gender, age, and current grade level.

Some categories from the original aviation survey, such as asking "students what category they

might choose when selecting a particular program" (Prather, 2007, p. 237. Item #1), were similar

to the categories from which fashion students would choose (e.g., cost, location, financial aid),

excluding categories not usually pertaining to fashion schools (e.g., athletic team's reputation).

Categories like athletic choices were changed to suit fashion students in a fashion program (e.g.,

fashion studio facilities). Utilizing Prather's (2007) survey, adjustments were made (see

Appendix I) and questions related to AABI knowledge were changed to reflect NASAD. These

changes were incorporated to further refine the survey eventually used for this study.

Reliability. A "freedom from random error" even though, reliability is repeatability is a

suggested definition regarding reliability from a 1995 study by Alreck and Settle (1995, p. 58).

Prather's (2007) survey administered to four different participant groups, purposed to investigate

the perceived value of AABI accreditation by seeking the perceptions of the four respondent

groups. These four groups consisted of administrators from non-accredited and AABI accredited

aviation programs, aviation employers, and aviation students. Prather's survey was modified for

use in this study but administered to two student groups instead of four.

In a final effort to address issues of validity and reliability, the main goal of Prather's (2007) study was to determine if the questions were easily understood and could be completed within a reasonable period. Therefore, a pilot survey was conducted by Prather and administered to five students randomly selected from similar sample populations before the final survey was administered. Internal and external reliability measurement for consistency for Prather's study was accomplished via the Cronbach's α (alpha), an appropriate measurement for survey instruments where there are no right or wrong answers to the questions. Cronbach's reliability coefficients were used to measure the four groups ranging from 0.479 to 0.855 (see Table 4).

Table 4

Prather's Questionnaire Reliability

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha
Survey of Administrators of AABI Accredited Programs	0.750
Survey of Administrators of Non-AABI Accredited Programs	0.546
Survey of Aviation Program Students on AABI Issues	0.479
Survey of Aviation Industry Employers on AABI Issues	0.855

Prather, C. D. (2007). Specialized accreditation in collegiate aviation: An analysis of the perceived value of specialized accreditation by the aviation accreditation board international (Doctoral dissertation pg. 40). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (UMI No. 3284113).

As McMillan (2004) stated, reliability coefficients of 0.65 are acceptable for measuring non-cognitive traits. Traits that represent patterns of thought, feelings, and behavior (Borghans, Duckworth, Heckman, & Ter Weel, 2008). McMillan further stated that some focus groups can tolerate a lower reliability, often as low as 0.50 in similar studies. Table 4 shows that Prather's (2007) survey has the lowest reliability coefficient of 0.479, but close to the 0.50 acceptable level

suggested by McMillan. Similar to Prather, additional efforts to minimize the lower than desired internal consistency for this survey, were implemented. Like Prather, a quantitative survey as a standard method of data collection, allowed both participant groups of fashion students to be given the same directions. The 11-question survey formulated at an appropriate reading level and language for the participants to understand.

Furthermore, the fashion survey instrument keeps the questions brief, reducing any problems associated with lengthy surveys. In addition to the reliability and validity issues discussed previously, McMillan (2004) suggested that two areas of error are associated with measuring non-cognitive traits. A *response set* is where participants give the same response, regardless of the content of the questions and deliberately give inaccurate perceptions. As with Prather's (2007) survey questions, where many respondents answered *neutral* to all items, this was thought to be due to peer pressure or the fact that the response was considered socially acceptable. Efforts were made to minimize this occurrence through participants' anonymity and describing the importance of this survey to students as motivation for giving honest answers. McMillan suggested that another area of concern occurs when subjects deliberately give inaccurate perceptions. This could happen if the respondent feels the results will have positive personal consequences, or provide a negative picture that does not exist. Efforts were made to minimize this occurrence by establishing good rapport with participants via the instructor and the researcher's familiarity with the institution where the surveys were administered.

Pilot survey instrument. Similar to Prather's (2007) research efforts to address validity and reliability, a pilot survey instrument was utilized to minimize measurement error for this study. An informal pilot survey, in the form of a paper questionnaire, was conducted before the

final survey was distributed. Administering a pilot survey allowed the researcher to review responses from the participants for constructive feedback on the survey and also help eliminate research bias. The pilot survey contained two questions, #12 and #13; the questions were located at the end of the 11-question survey. Students were asked to answer yes, no, or don't know to these two questions. Question #12 asked: "Was this paper questionnaire a more convenient way to take the survey rather than a verbal/interview?" Question #13 asked: "Were the questions easy to understand?"

Pilot participants. Five students from a public university which offers fashion degrees in three majors across the ADM area of FCS; to participate in the pilot survey.

Survey outcome. Responses to the reliability questions were 100% in agreement with yes, indicating that the questionnaire was a more convenient way to take the survey rather than an oral/interview and that the questions were easy to understand. Responses to the reliability questions were 100% in agreement with yes, indicating that the questionnaire was a more convenient way to take the survey rather than an oral/interview and that the questions were easy to understand. The responses to the reliability questions were sufficient enough to prepare the final survey instrument. Using the pilot survey with the removal of questions #12 and #13 and making minor grammatical corrections; the final survey instrument was ready for distribution to the sample group of 100 students.

Human Subject Considerations

Survey participants. The human subjects connected to this study were protected from potential risks relating to their participation in data collection.

Informed consent. Participants were instructed to provide informed consent if they chose to complete the survey. Informed consent was accomplished for all participants in this study. To avoid any logistical problem of having to ask the prospective 100 participants to fax or mail back a signed consent form; the 100 participants provided informed consent in the classroom before they took the survey. Participants provided informed consent by answering the following question, (found underneath the study description at the top of the survey): "Do you wish to take this survey? Yes or No" (see Appendix H).

The survey description indicated the intent was to (a) assess their awareness of NASAD accreditation, and (b) ask students to choose common criteria or demographic characteristics that may have influenced their decision to attend a particular fashion education program at a public or private college. Participants were not required to participate and were informed that participation or non-participation would not affect their grade in the class. Before the survey was distributed, the purpose of the survey and anonymity was explained. After potential participants read the informed consent and answered yes to the question, they continued with the rest of the survey. If any student responded no to the informed consent question, they returned the questionnaire to the instructor and left the class.

Anonymity

The researcher obtained permission from instructors at the public and private universities where the surveys were administered and collected. The email request for permission to administer the survey during class time also specified that the participants would have anonymity. Participants were informed that their participation in this research effort was voluntary and without compensation, and anonymity was assured for those who chose to

participate. Participants in the study were subject to minimal risk, which might have included

possible boredom or loss of time to complete the questionnaire (Williams & Protheroe, 2008).

Therefore, the following measures were employed to protect the identity of the subjects surveyed

for this study:

- The use of a quantitative anonymous survey;

- Although, the survey does not ask for the participants' name, school or current degree

  major, the survey did ask the respondent to give their age, gender, and year in school

- All other questions were closed-ended, requiring yes, no, or multiple choice answers;

- The same questions were asked of all participants;

- The responses were "de-identified," yielding no identifying information that could be

  linked back to the response from whom it was originally collected;

- Additionally, response data were combined with those of many other respondents and

  summarized in a report to further protect participants' anonymity. Per Pepperdine

  IRB, the data is to be kept securely for 5 years, as the data may be used again by

  another investigator. The raw data will be kept secure via password protection in an

  electronic spreadsheet format on the researcher's personal laptop.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The modified survey for this study is designed to measure three variables: (a) awareness

and familiarity variable, (b) decision variable, and (c) decisions related to demographics. To

demonstrate alignment of the survey instrument with the research questions and variables that

were measured in this study, the researcher developed Table 5.

Table 5

Research Questions, Survey Questions, and Statistical Approach

Research Questions	Variables	Survey Questions,	Statistical Approach
1. To what extent, if at all, fashion students in Southern California are familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs?	1. Value of fashion students familiar with NASAD (the awareness variable)	3-8 (NASAD awareness)	Means & Standard Deviation
2. What are the most common criteria used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program?	2. Value of the most common criteria decisions (the decision variable)	1A-1N (decision criteria) 9-11 (demographics variables)	Frequency counts and percentages
3. Are decisions of the fashion students in Southern California to attend a particular fashion program related to their demographics?	3) Value of decisions related to demographics (demographics variable)	9-11 (demographics variables) 1A-1N (decision criteria)	Spearman Correlations

Variables

Value of fashion students aware or familiar with NASAD. Survey items 3-8 were used to investigate the fashion students' perceived value or knowledge of the NASAD accreditation. Like Prather (2007), this section employed a Likert style scale that was worded exactly like his survey except for the acronym AABI, which was replaced by the acronym NASAD; the use of frequency counts was in keeping with Prather's statistical approach. Survey item #2 was created to measure the students awareness of NASAD accreditation, by requiring a yes or no, to the question: "What type of school (NASAD-accredited or non-NASAD-accredited) is the student currently attending?"

Value of the most common criteria decisions. Survey items 1A-1N were used to investigate a checklist of 12 categories; these categories represent many factors students might

consider when selecting which institution and fashion program to attend. In alignment with

Prather (2007), the categories used the same wording except for categories not related to a

fashion school (i.e., athletic team reputation). Otherwise, questions 1A-1N were worded in the

same way as in Prather's survey with the exception of the acronym AABI being replaced with

NASAD.

Value of decisions related to demographics. Survey items 9, 10, 11 were used to

investigate demographic factors. Similar to Prather's (2007) aviation survey, these questions are

multiple choice. This section survey requested fashion students' demographic information (i.e.,

gender, age, level in school).

Data Preparation

To prepare the data responses for analysis and interpretation, first, the researcher

mitigated the effects of missing data, making sure respondents did not have more than two

missing responses. For a questionnaire to be included as a respondent, the participant could have

no more than two missing responses. After the data set was reviewed thoroughly, the data set was

input into a statistical spreadsheet, which documented the number of respondents, responses,

frequencies, and percentages.

Addressing the Research Questions

Research question 1. *To what extent, if at all, are fashion students in Southern*

California familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs? For research

question 1 (corresponding to survey items 3-8), the researcher used means and standard

deviations as a statistical approach (see Appendix H for the complete survey). The researcher

conducted a descriptive analysis that included providing tables that show the means and standard deviations for the fashion students who were familiar with NASAD.

Research question 2. *What are the most common criteria used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program?* For research question 2 (corresponding to survey items 1A-1N, which were the 14 items students considered when selecting which institution and fashion program to attend), the researcher used frequency counts and percentages as a statistical approach, analyzing the number of students and percentage of students (how many out of the total surveyed) influenced by the same criteria or categories. This question use frequency counts and percentages to analyze the correlation between responses to survey items 1A-1N (the decision variable, which were the 14 items students considered when selecting which institution and fashion program to attend) and survey items 9-11 (which addressed demographics).

Research question 3. *Are decisions of the fashion students in Southern California to attend a particular public or private fashion education program related to their demographics?* For research question 3 (corresponding to survey items 9-11, related to demographics), the researcher used Spearman correlations as a statistical approach to analyze whether decisions to attend a particular public or private fashion program were related to the students' demographics.

Spearman correlations examine the strength of the relationship between variables but do not determine causality or the effect of one variable on another. The two variables in this question are the decision criteria variable and demographics variable, (see Table 5).

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion

The purposes of this study were to identify: (a) the extent to which, if at all, fashion students in Southern California are familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs; (b) the most common criteria students used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program; and (c) if the students' decision to attend a particular fashion program is related to demographics. Survey data was gathered from 100 fashion students to measure the three variables. The findings of the study and the results of the data analysis as they apply to the study's research questions are shown in tables in this chapter. This chapter is organized in following way:

A. Study Timeline and Pilot Survey Response Rate

B. Research Questions

    1. To what extent, if at all, are fashion students in Southern California familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs?

    2. What are the most common criteria used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program?

    3. Are decisions of the fashion students in Southern California to attend a particular fashion program related to their demographics?

C. Additional Findings

D. Summary

Study Timeline and Pilot Survey Response Rate

Collection of data started on November 22, 2017, after receiving IRB approval (see Appendix K), starting with a 13-question reliability pilot survey, then followed by the delivery of the actual survey to student participants at two selected schools. As noted in Dillman's (2000) tailored design method in Chapter 3, an in-person pilot survey was adopted to enhance response rates versus a traditional mail survey.

Pilot survey. On November 22, 2017, a pilot survey was conducted with a total of 10 students. The pilot participants were selected from a CSU public university with the largest enrollment of fashion students among all CSUs in California. These 10 students represented three different fashion majors (fashion design, merchandising, and marketing). The pilot survey (see Appendix L) was an 11-question survey, with two reliability questions, #12 and #13, added to the end of the survey. Students were asked to answer yes, no, or don't know to these two questions. Question #12 asked: "Was this paper questionnaire a more convenient way to take the survey rather than a verbal/interview?" Question #13 asked: "Were the questions easy to understand?" The response rate to the reliability questions were 100% in agreement; indicating that the questionnaire given in class proved to be a more convenient way the questionnaire was given and the ease of which the questions could be understood. Another indicator of convenience for the survey responders occurred, when students left the classroom, several students made comments, they preferred a survey as opposed to individual or group interviews. Students were not comfortable with having their opinion heard or being recognized because of it (which would have happened, if interviewed). Therefore, after the pilot survey evaluation, one email was sent to a fashion instructor at a 4-year public college and one email was sent to the fashion instructor

at a 4-year private college asking the instructors' permission to administer the actual (final) 11-question survey during class time. Both schools are NASAD-accredited. After both instructors agreed to administer the survey, the survey was then hand delivered by the researcher 4-5 days later to the instructors at the selected schools. The frequency and percentages of responses to the pilot survey based on demographics is seen in Table 6.

Table 6

Frequency Counts for Pilot Survey Reliability Questions

Variable	Category	*n*	Yes	No
School	Public	5	5.0	0.0
	Private	5	5.0	0.0
Gender	Male	3	3.0	0.0
	Female	7	7.0	0.0
Year in School	Freshman	2	2.0	0.0
	Sophomore	3	3.0	0.0
	Junior	2	2.0	0.0
	Senior	3	3.0	0.0
Age [a]	18	0	0.0	0.0
	19	2	2.0	0.0
	20	3	30	0.0
	21	0	0.0	0.0
	22	1	1.0	0.0
	23 to 25	2	2.0	0.0
	26 to 51	2	2.0	0.0

Note. N = number of students who answered the question.

Research Questions

     Research question 1. *To what extent, if at all, are fashion students in Southern California familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs?* The following survey items were developed to answer this question related to *awareness of, familiarity with,* and *perceived value of* NASAD:

- ▪ Survey items #3 through #7 (using a Likert scale) asked about the participant's level of awareness of NASAD accreditation (see Table 7).

- ▪ Survey item #2 asked participants to state whether they were currently attending a NASAD-accredited school/program (responding *yes*, *no*, or *don't know*; see Table 8).

- ▪ Survey question Item #8 (using no-value versus high-value scale) examined the perceived value students place on NASADs' standards for art and design programs (see Table 9).

     Table 7 shows the participants' level of awareness sorted by highest mean. Ratings were based on a five-point metric: 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 5 = *Strongly Agree*. The highest level of agreement was earned for "Unaware of NASAD accreditation" (M = 4.19, SD = 1.15), while the lowest level of agreement was earned for "Employers prefer NASAD accredited graduates" (M = 3.42, SD = 0.99).

Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations for Survey Items 3-7

Item	*M*	*SD*
Unaware of NASAD accreditation	4.19	1.15
Decision based on other factors	3.96	1.09
Greatly benefit students program NASAD accredited	3.52	0.78
Important to attend NASAD accredited program	3.52	0.73
Employers prefer NASAD accredited graduates	3.42	0.99

Note. Ratings based on a five-point metric: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree (M = 3.42, SD = 0.99).

Table 8 shows the frequency counts for whether the student was aware that the program he/she was currently attending was NASAD-accredited. Students knew the program or school was NASAD-accredited (23%), believed that they did not attend a NASAD accredited fashion program (34%), or did not know if the program they were currently attending was NASAD-accredited (43%).

Table 8

Frequency Counts for Survey item #2 (N = 100)

Variable	Category	*n*	%
Attend NASAD accredited fashion program	Yes	23	23.0
	No	34	34.0
	Don't Know	43	43.0

Note. N = number of students who answered the question.

Table 9 represents the rankings of the value students placed on NASAD accreditation. Ranges ranged from 1 = *No Value* to 10 = *High Value* with a mean of *M* = 6.78 and *SD* = 2.35. This survey item (survey item #8) was created to add more support to research question 1. Students responded to this question by selecting a level of 1 to 10 regarding the value they place on NASAD. The following values most selected by the students are represented in percentages: (12%) selected a level between 1 to 3; (55%) selected a level from 5 to 7; and (33%) placed the highest level of 8 to 10 on the perceived value of NASAD accreditation.

Table 9

Frequency Counts for Survey item #8 (N = 100)

Variable	Category	*n*	%
NASAD accreditation value			
	1 to 3	12	12.0
	5 to 7	55	55.0
	8 to 10	33	33.0

Note. [a] *M* = 6.78.

Research question 2. W*hat are the most common criteria used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program?* Using frequency counts, the following survey items was developed to answer this question regarding common criteria factors. Survey items 1A-1N asked students to choose from 14 criteria categories they considered when deciding on a particular fashion program or school to attend (see Table 10).

Table 10

Frequency Counts for Common Factors When Selecting a Fashion Program and Institution Sorted by Highest Frequency (N = 100)

Rating	*n*	*%*
Location of School	88	88.0
Specific academic program	87	87.0
Cost	86	86.0
Financial Aid/Scholarships	85	85.0
Reputation of School	80	80.0
Help Me Find A Job	77	77.0
4-year fashion program	73	73.0
Reputation of the program	62	62.0
NASAD accreditation	59	59.0
Fashion Studio Facilities	49	49.0
Accreditation Standing	42	42.0
Particular professor	17	17.0
Friends	10	10.0
Alma Mater	8	8.0

Table 10 shows the frequency counts sorted by highest frequency *(N = 100)* of the common criteria used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program. Location of school (88%) and specific academic program (i.e., fashion design, fashion merchandising; 87%) were the number one and number two most common criteria among students from both schools. However, cost (86%), financial aid/scholarships (85%), and reputation of school (80.0%) were also in the 20% percentile. Job assistance (77%), attending a 4-year program (73%), reputation of the program (62%) and NASAD accreditation (59%) received moderate responses. Particular professor (17%), friends (10%), and alma mater (8%) received the lowest response counts.

Research question 3. A*re decisions of the fashion students in Southern California to attend a particular fashion program related to their demographics?* The following survey items were developed to address this twofold question regarding the relationship between the most common decision criteria factors and demographics. First, to answer this question, Spearman correlations as a statistical approach were used to analyze the demographics for Survey items #9, #10, #11. Survey question item #9 asked, "What is your gender?" Survey item #10 asked, "What year are you in school?" and Survey item #11 asked, *"How old are you?"*

Table 11 presents the Spearman correlations for the 14 common factors for selecting the institution and fashion program to attend with the four demographic variables (type of school, gender, year, and age). Of the 56 correlations, six were significant at $p < .05$. Specifically, female students were more likely than male students to consider the reputation of program ($r_s = .22$, $p = .03$) and the specific academic program ($r_s = .41$, $p = .001$). Those earlier in the program were more likely to consider fashion studio facilities ($r_s = -.26$, $p = .01$). Younger students were also more likely to consider fashion studio facilities ($r_s = -.23$, $p = .03$) as well as the reputation of the program ($r_s = -.25$, $p = .01$). Older students were more likely to consider accreditation standing ($r_s = .22$, $p = .03$).

Additional Findings

In addition to providing data to answer the three research questions, the survey questionnaire collected data to show if there was a difference between students attending a public college fashion program versus a private college fashion program. This data was not directly necessary for answering the research questions; but recognized as an effort to present the entire data collected during this research, the data are presented here.

Table 11

Spearman Correlations for Common Factors Based on Demographics When Selecting a Fashion Program and Institution Sorted by Highest Frequency (N = 100)

Variable	Year in School	Gender		School		Age	
Cost	-.12	.03		.11		.09	
Alma Mater	.07	-.01		-.11		-.05	
Fashion Studio Facilities	.02	.05		-.26	**	-.23	*
Financial Aid/Scholarships	-.03	.10		.07		-.07	
Friends	-.07	-.08		-.18		-.11	
4-year fashion program	-.02	.05		.04		-.11	
Accreditation Standing	.00	.00		.08		.22	*
Reputation of School	.00	.12		.09		.01	
Location of School	-.06	-.04		.00		.12	
NASAD accreditation	-.02	.01		.02		-.01	
Particular professor	-.03	-.08		-.09		-.02	
Reputation of the program	.00	.22	*	-.11		-.25	**
Specific academic program	.03	.41	***	.12		-.02	
Help Me Find a Job	.02	-.06		.06		-.05	

Note. * *p* < .05. ** *p* < .01. *** *p* < .001.
 ∗ a School: 1 = Public 2 = Private / b Gender: 1 = Male 2 = Female / c Year in School: 1 = Freshman to 4 = Senior.

This study used a sample population of 100 fashion students to identify the extent to which, if at all, fashion students in Southern California are familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs and if the most common criteria students used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program were related to demographics (see Table 12).

Table 12

Frequency Counts for Selected Demographic Variables (N = 100)

Variable	Category	*n*	%
School	Public	50	50.0
	Private	50	50.0
Gender	Male	12	12.0
	Female	88	88.0
Year in School	Freshman	23	23.0
	Sophomore	28	28.0
	Junior	24	24.0
	Senior	25	25.0
Age [a]	18	5	5.0
	19	16	16.0
	20	26	26.0
	21	11	11.0
	22	20	20.0
	23 to 25	12	12.0
	26 to 51	10	10.0

Note. School: 1 = *Public* 2 = *Private* [b] Gender: 1 = *Male* 2 = *Female* [c] Year in School: 1 = *Freshman* to 4 = *Senior*

The four demographic variables in Table 12 show that 50 of the participants were from a public university (50%) and 50 were from a private university (50%). Most students were female (88%), and each school year had relatively equal representation, with sophomores representing the largest group (28%) and freshmen representing the smallest group (23%). Ages ranged from 18 to 51 with a mean age of *M* = 21.73 years (*SD* = 3.99; see Table 6).

Summary

In summary, the results of the collected data for all three research questions were interpreted and displayed in tables. These interpretations include: (a) whether or not statistical significance was obtained, (b) how the results answered each research question, and (c) explanation of the findings as they pertain to the hypothesis. Although the findings would provide sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a certain amount of unawareness or familiarity of NASAD among 100 Southern California collegiate fashion students, these students seem to believe there is some sort of perceived value in NASADs' accreditation standards for their fashion education.

Research question 1. In an effort to address this research question, three survey items asked each participant to rate their level of awareness of NASAD. The responses to these three survey items revealed a high level of unawareness of NASAD criteria.

Research question 2. Of the 14 common criteria used in the students' decision when choosing a particular fashion program or school, the frequency of responses (in order) are: location of school (88%); specific program offered (87%), cost (86%), financial aid/scholarships (85%), reputation of the institution (80%), the assistance from the school to help find a job (77%), must be a 4-year program (73%), reputation of the particular program (62%), NASAD status (59%), studio facilities (49%), institution status (42%), particular professor (17%), friends attending (10%), and family alma mater (8%).

Research question 3. Using Spearman correlations, frequency and percentages as statistical approaches; four items were measured to determine if criteria decisions were related to demographics. Table 12 showed demographic differences among the following groups: women

more frequently chose specific programs offered than men, men more frequently chose reputation of the program than women, and freshman students were more interested in studio facilities than seniors.

Key findings. Research for this study found the following: (a) 80% of students were unfamiliar with NASAD standards for fashion programs and (b) unaware if they are attending a NASAD-accredited program, while 57% felt there is some value to NASAD accreditation. But only 45% of the students felt NASAD accreditation was an important criteria when choosing a school.

Chapter 5: Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

This final chapter draws conclusions, begins discussion of the results from the data

presented in Chapter 4, discusses contributions of the study, and recommends areas for future

research, then concludes with a final summary.

Conclusions and Comparison of Study Findings with Extant Literature

The inferred conclusions drawn from the findings are discussed as they relate to the three

research questions that guided this study.

Research question 1. *To what extent, if at all, are fashion students in Southern*

California familiar with NASADs' accreditation standards for fashion programs? The title of this

dissertation, "The Perceived Value of the National Association Of Schools of Art And Design

(NASAD) Accreditation by Fashion Students in Fashion Programs at Public and Private

Colleges," represents the variable (*the perceived value)* in this research question. This question

aimed to determine the level of *familiarity with and awareness of* NASAD among fashion

students. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement regarding

awareness in response to four different 5-point Likert scale survey questions. The results of this

study found students at both NASAD-accredited schools equally were *unaware* of NASAD. To

gain insight into the collegiate students' *familiarity with, awareness of, or perceived value of*

serialized accreditation for a specific trade like fashion, other specialized fields like aviation,

nursing, and parks and recreation were researched. These other fields require certification,

examination licenses, and specific training for transition from academic education, similar to the

fashion industry. The findings for this study were similar to several of these studies.

Familiarity and awareness. Research for this study found that out of one hundred

fashion students in Southern California - 61% were not aware of NASAD or NASADs' standards

as a good indicator for quality fashion education. This finding was consistent Prather's (2007)

study on aviation training and education, which found that 60% of aviation students he surveyed

tended to agree that they were unaware of AABI standards.

Perceived value. Research for this study revealed the following: one hundred respondents

were asked to indicate how valuable on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 representing *no value* and 10

representing *high value*) they feel NASAD accreditation is to them as a student. Fifty-five

percent of students placed a value between 5 to 7, whereas 33% placed value between 8 to 10.

The responses indicate the students believe there is or should be high value placed on NASADs'

standards for fashion education; although, the same level of value did not influence their decision

when choosing a particular fashion program. This finding was consistent with Prather's (2007)

aviation study. He found students took the middle ground (5.386) when it came to placing a high

value on accreditation or recognizing specialized accreditation as a good indicator of higher

quality curriculum criteria, faculty recruitment, and exam training when choosing a particular

school or program to attend.

Other studies. Several studies also concluded that specialized accreditation was of no

value to students for other reasons. Bill's (2011) study on educating designers for a creative

economy found that students who wanted to be designers, specifically in the area of fashion,

chose schools based other criteria that had nothing to do with the quality of the education, or any

accreditation status or value. In contrast, students with accreditation knowledge still did not place

high value on accreditation. Kniess's (1986) study on accreditation by the NRPA found why

some recreation and park programs seek NRPA accreditation, while others do not. According to

study, many respondents found that specialized accreditation in recreation was not important,

including administrators who believed graduation from an accredited program was not a

prerequisite for employment, since many "alumni were successful without accreditation" (p.

119). Litwack's (2013) study on nursing found students also placed a median value on

accreditation. Her study found no differences between accredited and non-accredited programs

regarding program goals and objectives, course hours, and student exam scores for nursing

licenses.

      Research question 2. *What are the most common criteria used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program?* This question sought to

measure the common criteria that influenced students when deciding what school to attend.

Students were presented with a 14-item checklist (survey items 1A-1N) and asked to mark any

and all factors they considered when selecting which institution and fashion program to attend.

Based on an analysis of the data using the means and deviation approach, the data provided

sufficient evidence to conclude there is a preference among students regarding the items they

considered when selecting a particular fashion program or school to attend. Based on frequency

of responses, over 80% of students considered location of school, cost, and financial aid/

scholarships when deciding where to begin their fashion education.

      Other studies. Although some studies suggested that one of the most common criteria

used in the students' decision to attend a particular public or private fashion education program

was status and prestige of a particular college, Symonds's (2017). Other research studies

revealed confidence in faculty and student career assistance were major decision influencers. As

well as the reputation of a specific program (i.e., fashion merchandising program), which was similar to Litwack's (1986, 2013) study on nursing. Litwack's study indicated that facilities and job placement were more important factors when choosing a program to begin their nursing training than the accreditation status of the school or program. She also found exam scores at non-accredited programs (exams required for nursing certification), were higher than students attending accredited nursing programs. With that said, accreditation would not be considered an important decision criterion when choosing a school, although of the 100 students surveyed for this study, 59 felt NASAD accreditation status should be an influencer when deciding on a particular fashion school to attend.

   Research question 3. *Are decisions of the fashion students in Southern California to attend a particular fashion program related to their demographics?* This twofold question addressed the relationship between the most common decision criteria and demographics. Using Spearman correlations, frequency, and percentages as statistical approaches to analyze the demographic variables related to the decision criteria, demographic variance was found to be more important when deciding which program or school to attend.

   Based on the findings for research question 2; 80% of respondents indicated the location of school, reputation of the specific program, cost, and financial aid/scholarships were major influences when deciding where to begin their fashion education. Significant differences were found between men and women. Women from both schools surveyed considered the reputation of the program important more important than men did, whereas men were more interested than women in the specific academic programs offered. These findings were similar to those yielded

by numerous other studies (Billingsley, 2004; Boe et al., 1997; England-Siegerdt, 2010; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004; Morvant et al., 1995; St. John et al., 2005; Woosley & Shepler, 2011).

Additional findings of interest. According to the survey responses in this study, there were several commonalities between the findings and literature review; the level of awareness, criteria importances between both the public and private school, and similarities between male and females with the exception (as noted in research question 3). Regarding the discussion of status, prestige, and socio-economic demographics, the main influence for the vast majority of respondents was the status of a particular major, tuition cost, and financial aid assistance.

Alignment with the theoretical framework. Another finding of interest was the alignment of the theoretical framework between this study and several other studies. The theoretical framework for this study focused on three areas: curriculum, specific accreditation, and student awareness of specialized accreditation for a quality education. The findings in this study were similar to those obtained by several other studies: Prather's (2007) research on specialized accreditation in collegiate aviation and Bill's (2011) study on fashion education for fashion designers in today's creative economy. Both studies found: (a) students lack awareness of good indicators for what a quality education in their respective fields entail; (b) what is required in the real world for them to make a successful transition from the classroom to the field; and moreover, and (c) the importance of what factors should be considered when choosing a school or program to attend for their specialized education. Prather found that most students were unaware of aviation accreditation, and Bill found students had no interest in a quality education, but simply wanted to find jobs and be recognized as fashion designers. The findings for these

studies agreed that contemporary curricula should encompass content-based standards versus outcomes-based criteria; in other words, course content should be parallel to industry needs which focuses upon the skills needed to transition successfully from the classroom out into the field (CAA, 2003; Prather, 2007). Lastly, Prather noted that some standards widely used by specialized accrediting agencies may be outdated, indicating that most specialized programs at institutions are similarly outdated. This study found outdated programs and course content was prevalent in how it affected accreditation and student skills upon graduation. For example, although the AAFCS accreditation for fashion majors at many state schools focuses on fashion courses as they relate to FCS content, the current curriculum acceptance for AAFCS accreditation membership is outdated (CSU, n.d.; CSUN, n.d.)

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Recommended Methodological Enhancements

Methodological strengths and weaknesses can be attributed to this study. Although the methods used to obtain the final findings were strong in many ways; a definitive analysis of this study could support methodological enhancements for future research. The data collection tool used in this study was a quantitative survey, borrowed from literary and statistical scales for which validity and reliability were established by other researchers, and then adapted for this study. A quantitative survey as the data instrument allowed the researcher to collect data from a selected sample of participants. Because the survey and collected data were quantitative in the analysis stage, the risk of researcher subjectivity was eliminated. Respondents were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality, which may have provided the needed 100% response rate and honesty in participant responses. Another strength in the methods of this study was that the paper

survey was administered by hand. All of these methods allowed for expediency of data collection, ease of analysis, and collection of data done at the time of survey completion.

Discussion

Existing assumptions. The literature overview for this study suggests program administrators realize the benefits of NASAD accreditation, including improved credibility, protection of the program, and positioning of the program as a leader in collegiate fashion. This implication suggests, once the program and school are NASAD-accredited (even though the process may have required a great deal of work on the part of faculty and administration), the benefits seem to outweigh the costs. These findings surely challenge existing assumptions. For instance, administrators of NASAD-accredited programs point to their NASAD accreditation status on schools websites as important in marketing and attracting high quality students to specific programs. When measuring the level of awareness of NASAD, schools, marketing departments, and administrators seem well aware of NASAD. However, the level of awareness seems to go no further than administrators. Students, for instance, were generally unaware of NASAD accreditation, general.

Perceived value. A frequently challenged assumption is that NASAD-accredited programs indicate accreditation membership ensures that specialized programs meet standards established by the profession." However, 43% percent of responding students in this study were not even aware if their program was accredited before receiving the survey. Participants from both schools responded in similar ways to questions regarding the value they place on NASAD accreditation. Even though the majority of current fashion students were not familiar with NASAD, nor did they know whether or not the program they currently attend is accredited by

NASAD, (29%) had a shared agreement that there was some sort of high value placed on NASAD.

Implications for fashion students. As discussed earlier, determining the perceived value of NASAD accreditation among students was the main objective of this study. As determined by the statistical analysis of the data related to research question 1, most students felt there is some type of value in NASAD accreditation, but not to them. Studies by Roller et al. (2003) and the Business of Fashion (2017) found that many educational non-accredited institutions hold administration and departments chairs accountable for program improvements, marketing advantages, faculty recruitment; not the membership to an accrediting agency.

Perceived value. These findings seem to support the fact that students never asked if their program was accredited, challenging assumptions of academia and NASAD that schools or fashion program websites with NASAD accreditation advertised are not registering with prospective students. Although schools advertise on their websites they are accredited through NASAD, many students may not care about this fact if they generally feel confident enough to transition into the field, and there is no requirement that graduating from a NASAD-accredited program is required for job placement (as in other fields where national certification/licensure tests require the applicant to have graduated from an accredited program). It appears that neither the NASAD nor the schools are meeting the needs of various stakeholders (such as students and industry employers).

What school to attend? Another implication of students was what influenced the students' decision criteria when choosing a fashion program or school to attend. Only 7%

responded that NASAD accreditation status of a school or program had an effect on their decision making process, but the reputation of the program was important. These findings lead one to question the degree to which NASAD has fulfilled its original purpose. Is this finding because of a lack of awareness of NASAD? The most responses received by students was for "Prior to receiving this survey, I was unaware of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) accreditation" (CSU 31% and private 30%, respectively).

Implications for NASAD. As noted previously, NASAD (2016) supports several specific purposes: (a) curriculum standardization, (b) courses being parallel to needed industry skills, (c) students learning contemporary product development standards, and (d) offering directives on how to protect students and other stakeholders against academic fraud. On the surface, it appears that NASAD is generally fulfilling these purposes. However, if NASAD has accomplished some curriculum standardization within collegiate fashion, it is not clear if the universities and other stakeholders have fulfilled their promises to students, as outlined by NASAD. Students not knowing if they are attending a NASAD-accredited program or being aware enough awareness to ask if the program is NASAD-accredited further complicates the issue.

Perceived value. If there is no demand for NASAD accreditation from the students attending fashion programs, there will be little demand for NASAD accreditation. If future college students do not seek out NASAD-accredited programs and industry employers do not demand graduates be from NASAD-accredited programs, then what is the purpose of accreditation? Understandably, without demand for NASAD-accredited fashion programs, a good reason a program would seek NASAD accreditation for self-improvement. No one wants to

spend the time and effort to acquire a fashion degree if, upon completion, it is only recognized by the family.

Implications for NASAD-accredited programs. The findings reveal a substantial interest in maintaining NASAD accreditation for the surveyed institutions.

Faculty. To some degree, the position in which NASAD and collegiate fashion finds itself today seems to be only recognized by academia: that close group of administrators and some faculty of collegiate fashion programs. Many students want their degree, especially one earned from a NASAD-accredited promoted fashion program, to assure job placement.

Job placement. A little over half of the responding students felt NASAD does not offer any direct or indirect benefits to job placement or current faculty experience. In contrast, if faculty are not familiar with current industry standards, procedures, or NASAD structure; curricula will not be questioned or updated, which affects the standards of collegiate fashion instruction and program.

Contributions of Study

This study makes contributions to the field of specialized accreditation in general, and collegiate fashion education in particular. First, of the literature reviewed for this research effort, only a handful of studies could be located addressing the perceived value of specialized accreditation among fashion students and the reasons why NASAD accreditation of a program is not a decision criterion when choosing a particular program or school to attend. Due to the lack of literature on this topic in the field of collegiate fashion education, other fields had to be included in the literature reviewed. However, even then, only few studies could be located, with most dating from the mid-1980s. Thus, this study will provide much needed reference in the area

of specialized accreditation that will be useful to those conducting research within the field of collegiate fashion.

Another important contribution of this study will be in providing a better understanding of the only specialized accrediting organization in collegiate fashion art/design. Chapter 2 provides much insight into the history of the NASAD accreditation and subsequently the AAFCS. Additionally, the steps outlining accreditation are highlighted. The NASAD standards (both old and new) are presented and discussed as well. In general, this dissertation presents the reader with a somewhat brief review of NASAD versus AAFCS and their role in standardization in fashion education.

The study also plays an important role in providing insight as perhaps the first study to investigate what influence, if any, NASAD accreditation has on student decisions as to which institution to attend. Rather than continuing to examine NASAD accreditation from within the halls of academia, this study may have been the first of its kind to branch out and consider the views of the most important stakeholders: the fashion student. In that regard, the results of this study will not only contribute to the lack of existing literature on this topic, but also prove useful to the NASAD, the AAFCS, and fashion programs in the CSU and University of California (UC) systems, as well as collegiate fashion programs at other public and private accredited fashion schools.

It is hoped that NASAD will use the findings of this study to improve its image, services, and outreach. As NASAD (2016) recognizes the need to increase the number of accredited programs as one of its top five goals, the results of this study will hopefully shed light onto many areas of concern. As the author presents these findings to academia and NASAD, it is hoped that

NASAD will digest these findings, consider the many recommendations, and implement a concerted effort to not only maintain NASADs' national standing as the only collegiate specialized accrediting body for art/design (NASAD, 2016; US Department of Education, 2011), but also greatly enhancing the value of NASAD to collegiate fashion students and fashion industry employers.

Recommendations

Challenging existing assumptions. This study and other studies explored the perception of the student regarding specialized accreditation by identifying the student's decision influences when deciding on a particular school to attend (Bill, 2011; Billingsley, 2004; Boe et al., 1997; Prather, 2007). This survey included no qualitative style questions, which would have allowed the participants an opportunity to express personal perspectives, thus challenging the existing assumptions (using NASAD accreditation status on schools websites as important in marketing and attracting high-quality students to specific programs), which might have enhanced data. Example, the use of a quantitative approach does not measure the actual reasons a student pursues a fashion career (Bill, 2011). Findings from this studies' investigation found NASAD accreditation did not influence students.

NASAD-accredited programs. The perceived value amongst fashion students could be brought to greater heights. The lack of awareness of NASAD could be attributed to high school guidance counselors and their lack of awareness and knowledge regarding the purpose and benefits of NASAD. To increase the awareness of NASAD accreditation among potential fashion students and those who assist in college placement, should acknowledge, that students need to be captured before deciding about which institution and fashion program to attend.

Students career goals. A mixed method approach could be used in future research to employ correlational or comparative methods to gain examine a student's career plans to support an actual major appropriate to longterm goals. Example of a survey question relating to this thought might be to ask: *To what extent, if at all, is there a relationship between why students pursue a career in fashion and their career plans?* A qualitative approach might reveal a retrospective phenomenological exploration regarding the transition experiences of graduates who have graduated from the same school and are actually out in the field.

NASAD-accrediting agency. Due to the lack of understanding regarding the perceived value students place on NASAD as a good indicator of what a quality fashion education should entail; NASAD should develop a comprehensive marketing program towards the various stakeholders (prospective students, parents and recruiting schools). This particular recommendation could ignite a realization in the fashion industry that the benefits of NASAD accreditation, enhance and provide more confidence when hiring graduates; knowing the student graduated from a NASAD-accredited program.

Areas for Further Research

This study did not include faculty members of collegiate fashion programs, the general public, and related industry employers. It would have been helpful to survey faculty members to determine if, in fact, they were attracted to a NASAD-accredited program because of its NASAD accreditation status, or whether they feel there are adequate benefits or differences between accredited and non-accredited NASAD programs. Further research into whether the general public is aware of specialized accreditation, specifically, NASAD accreditation for promising fashion designers in particular? If so, what effect does that awareness have on the visibility of a

specific fashion program or the confidence prospective fashion students have in fashion programs? For instance, some collegiate fashion students transfer to other fashion schools upon graduation from a state school where they just received a 4-year degree in fashion. Future research could be conducted surveying different samples groups such as graduates and employers in the field. Surveying graduates and industry employers would involve a comparison of competencies required by graduates from both a public NASAD-accredited and a private NASAD-accredited school. Comparison of competencies would likely involve a subjective measurement of the quality of graduates, and how employment-ready graduates upon graduation. Also, surveying employers who hire graduates from a public or private NASAD-accredited school, would be interesting to discover whether NASAD-accredited programs are indeed producing more successful graduates with enhanced industry skills and a broader knowledge base than non-NASAD-accredited programs. If so, one could then make a case that industry awareness of this fact could increase (due to greater marketing by NASAD for example), demand for graduates from NASAD-accredited programs. Thereby having a positive effect on the number of public NASAD-accredited and private NASAD-accredited schools for the benefit of their future graduates.

Future research should examine the relationship between a student's intended major, and career plans. Also, the exploration into instruction and the relationship between teaching fashion education vs. the instructors' professional industry employment, including the instructors' professional industry employment commitment (the intent to remain in the field).

Final Summary

Chapter 1 reviewed fashion education from its past history to the present, highlighting the current problems facing fashion education. In the past, all one needed to know was how to sew, some fabric draping techniques, and some pattern skills to begin a career in fashion in the US. Over the last several decades, however, 90% of apparel design and production has gone overseas or elsewhere in the world (The Made in America Movement, n.d.; Robinson, 2013a, 2013b). No longer is a garment designed and produced in the US where the designer or production contractor is located. The new way of manufacturing requires "universal tertiary participation" (Bill, 2011, p. 13); garments are designed in one country, made in fabric from a second country, assembled in a third country, then shipped back to the country of original design to be sold. The whole operation, from original sketch to retail floor, takes a matter of weeks.

The problem with today's fashion education is that a career in fashion requires a different set of skills than in the past; making fashion education more crucial than ever before. This means that relevant courses that parallel the new industry needs for a successful transition from academics classrooms into the field are pertinent.

In Chapter 2, a thorough review of literature was made of other comparable studies to understand if the current issues facing the fashion industry and the effect industry changes are having on fashion education are similar in other specialized fields. Very few studies relating to the students' perceived value of specialized accreditation, specifically, NASAD for fashion programs, were found. Of the few, Prather's (2007) study examined aviation curriculum regarding the following: (a) content-based standards versus outcomes-based course criteria (CAA, 2003); (b) the students' perception of accreditation for the aviation field; (c) and what

role, if any, such accreditation played on the student decisions as to which aviation program to attend. Bill's (2011) study on fashion education for fashion designers in today's creative economy examined why students want to be fashion designers, and what influences their choice of where they will start their education. There were also studies on specialized accreditation for fashion/art and design programs and self-reporting studies of schools accredited by NASAD and AAFCS.

The goal of Chapter 3 was to present the methods by which the research questions were to be measured. The main objective of this study was to identify if there is a perceived value of the NASAD amongst collegiate fashion students. To meet this objective, the following tasks needed to be conducted: (a) measure the *familiarity with, awareness of, or perceived value of* NASAD accreditation among collegiate fashion students, (b) identify *common criteria* among students when choosing a particular fashion program or school to attend, and (c) determine if the decisions are related to the students' *demographics*. The study was guided by three research questions related to these variables.

The perceived value of NASAD was measured by two groups of fashion students from the Los Angeles area of Southern California. The participants consisted of 50 fashion program students attending a NASAD-accredited 4-year college and 50 fashion program students attending a NASAD-accredited 4-year private college. This study utilized a quantitative descriptive and correlational design to collect and analyze data (responses from the participants). In essence, this study aimed to research the current perceived value of NASAD accreditation by seeking the perceptions of these two groups of fashion students from NASAD-accredited 4-year colleges (McMillan, 2004). Additionally, an informal pilot survey was conducted first to gain an

initial response to this particular topic concerning the fashion students' familiarity with, awareness of, and perceived value of NASADs' accreditation standards. The survey instrument for this study contained 11 quantitative questions. To analyze the responses, the various data analysis techniques also contained content analysis in every possible instance to facilitate a deeper understanding of how the data addressed the research questions. Even though some of the related literature is over 20 years old, the findings were similar to those obtained in this current research study.

Chapter 4 examined the findings this study gained from the data collected in the previous chapter. The review of literature related to other specialized fields, and specialized accreditation, such as nursing, aviation, and recreation; the findings from this study, regarding the perceived value amongst fashion students, have nothing to do with their decisions when deciding which program or school to attend. Instead, the choice of school or program is influenced by: (a) personal/demographic factors (e.g., age, gender, and location, cost), (b) employment factors (e.g., help with locating a job, certification), and (c) school offerings (e.g., reputation of a specific major, finical aid/scholarships).

Chapter 5 compared the results to literature that concurred with, contrasted with, or challenged assumptions regarding fashion education, NASAD accreditation and the perceived value of NASAD by collegiate students in fashion programs at both public and private colleges in Southern California. The results in this study found that few students were aware of NASAD and fewer considered the importance of the NASAD accreditation status of a program when selecting a particular institution to attend. This could indicate that NASAD does little to help potential students choose a quality training program.

It is helpful to know that based on the literature review and the schools profiled in this study; some fashion program administrators feel it is essential to have the NASAD accreditation; even though this study found that a vast majority of students are unaware of NASAD. The fact, so few students, surveyed were unaware of NASAD or even that the program they were attending was even NASAD-accredited leads one to assume, a lack of awareness of NASAD accreditation could be perceived as NASAD not being of value to those unfamiliar. However, it seems that even though collegiate fashion students surveyed were unaware of NASAD, the same students perceived that there was some sort of value in NASAD accreditation. The Findings in this study indicate students did not know if the program they were currently attending was NASAD-accredited, and furthermore, did not feel NASAD was a significant influencer when deciding to attend a particular school. So what do the results of this study mean regarding the perceived value in attending a NASAD accredited fashion program?

Several insights based on the findings that connect back to the research begins with: (a) NASADs' mission (NASAD, 2016) for higher ed fashion programs, (b) NASAD accreditation assists potential students in school selection, and (c) does NASAD accreditation effect employment outcomes for students?

NASADs' mission for higher ed fashion programs is to ensure institutions have met NASAD SDC standards. As NASAD is the only accrediting agency for art and design schools for higher ed, NASAD should spread the news of NASAD accreditation so that prospective and current students, industry, and the general academic community are aware of NASAD accreditation and the many benefits that can be derived from the membership. These benefits can be attributed to not only to the administrators but other stakeholders (parents, prospective

students). Another NASAD mission to assist potential students may be minimal. Based on the student responses detailed previously, it would appear that NASAD-accredited programs sought and maintain NASAD accreditation to assist potential students in selecting a quality fashion program could be consequential. If one is familiar with NASAD, who they are and what they are about; then NASAD assistance can be found on NASADs' website, and could be beneficial to some when choosing the right school that matches one's career goals.

So is NASAD still pertinent? Very few students considered the NASAD accreditation status of a program necessary when selecting an institution to attend or that the NASAD name did little to influence potential students to choose a specific fashion program. A more aggressive marketing campaign from NASAD to the many prospective collegiate fashion students intending or pursuing a fashion career could help in widening the awareness of their mission. Likewise, NASAD-accredited programs should ensure sure that students considering their program are well aware of NASAD, to capture students for recruiting purposes.

Lastly, the survey results for this study indicate students want job assistance and the confidence they have learned the proper on-the-job-training from their chosen school. Every time a student graduates from a fashion program or institution, once the student applies for a job, interviews, or must complete a project as a recruitment policy; the reputation of the schools' fashion program is on display. While NASAD professes the agency is composed of industry professionals and their standards and guidelines are parallel to current industry standards, it is up to the individual program to ensure their faculty is up to *current standards.*

In closing, not only was the purpose of this research to complete a dissertation to obtain a doctorate, but also designed to be useful research. I believe NASAD's standard is a good indicator for starters in recognizing what a quality fashion program should entail. I was however disappointed to learn how few collegiate fashion students are even aware if they were attending a NASAD-accredited school, or what NASAD means. In particular, as compared to other academic fields, several of the public and private colleges surveyed for this study are not offering specific content-courses that parallel pertinent industry needs. Thus, some of these courses need to be added to the NASADs' standards. NASAD-accredited fashion programs owe students a quality fashion education, especially if they advertise their NASAD accreditation (on the school's website). A quality fashion education should ensure current instruction is facilitated by current faculty practitioner's who meets industry standards. Only then can NASAD standards be challenged, and continue to align with what the industry wants.

This research effort was not only designed to examine why so few Southern California fashion students are unaware of what they need to know for today's fashion industry but also to direct students toward good indicators such as NASAD, to understand what a quality education in fashion entails. These recommendations may be useful to NASAD in not only increasing the number of NASAD-accredited programs but also to enhance the perceived value of NASAD accreditation among both prospective and current fashion student. Schools that hire or do not require faculty to stay currently working in the fashion field must realize, outdated course content and industry skills are counterproductive to developing student skills needed for a successful and self-confident transition from the classroom into the fashion field.

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APPENDIX A

Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions of NASAD	NASAD Response	Relevant Literature Review	Relevant Survey Questions
1. What is the difference between specialized education vs traditional education?	Specialized education programs like fashion studies is to provide a particular type of curriculum that focuses on particular methods and standards parallel to the fashion industry. This specialized curriculum, taught by industry professionals will fully benefit the student and prepare them for a smoother transition into the workplace within the fashion industry. Traditional educational approaches with specialized instruction can be confusing and not-sufficient enough to enable them to benefit from their education.	Section 1: *Accreditation* Section 2: *Specialized Programs*	4 (status, ranking and location) 5 (student perception) 6 (perceived value)
3. Does NASAD rank schools?	The granting of accredited Membership by the Commission on Accreditation signifies that an institution has successfully demonstrated compliance with the procedures, standards, and guidelines of the Association. Integral to this voluntary process is ongoing, regularized self-evaluation and peer review.	Section 1: *Accreditation* Section 5: *Status and Ranking*	1 (other factors: 1C) 4 (status, ranking and location) 8 (student perception)
5. Is a degree from a specialized program important for fashion students?	Most employers want candidates with required skills. A degree from a specialized fashion program suggests your education was focused on developing the knowledge and skills requisite for work in the industry.	Section 3: *Accreditation* Section 6: *Employment-Readiness*	4 (status, ranking and location) 5 (student perception) 6 (perceived value)
6. What choices do I have if I want to study fashion, graphic, or communication design?	Two things are important to remember: (1) an ideal set of knowledge and skills goals for college-level applicants; (2) competencies needed by artists, designers, scholars, and teachers as they practice the various aspects of the profession in college and beyond.	Section 3: *Fashion Programs*	1 (other factors: 1M)
7. What is specialized education supposed to do for me?	While specialized education focuses on specific skills and knowledge needed for a specific field. Specialized education is often required to qualify to sit for a certification exam.	Section 1: *Accreditation* Section 2: *Specialized Programs*	3 (no knowledge of NASAD)
10. What is giftedness and its relationship between giftedness, art study and work?	Individuals with natural abilities in one or more of the art forms are said to be gifted in dance, music, theatre, or the visual arts. While most people have the capacity to gain basic access to all areas of human action, almost everyone is more gifted in one or more areas and less so in others. Specialized work is carried on across the whole field of human creativity and action. Each area uses particular habits of mind, subject matter, and processes to make its particular contribution: (a) Ask questions of people at institutions and in your community; (b) Include your possibilities for artistic and intellectual growth; (c) Understand your commitments and responsibilities if you enroll; (d) List specifics regarding conditions and environments you seek; and (e) prioritize your requirements.	Section 2: *Specialized Programs* Section 4: *Demographic*	1 (other factors: 1H, 1K) 9, 10 (demographic)

APPENDIX B

Relevant Fashion Courses

Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising (FIDM)			
Course #	Course Name	Course Description	Units
DESN 1150	Fashion Sketching for Design l	Students learn the proportions and techniques for sketching the nine-head figure.	3
DESN 1250	Industry Sewing	Introduces students to industry sewing techniques with an emphasis on operating the power sewing machine. Students produce a completed garment by applying all of the techniques taught in the course.	3
DESN 1420	Applied Draping Techniques (6 Hours) *	Students apply the techniques learned in DESN 1220 Basic Draping Techniques to create garments using various fabrics. Includes a three (3) hour lab. Prerequisites: DESN 1220, DESN 1250	3
DESN 1550	Fashion Sketching for Design ll	This course emphasizes the perfection of fashion figure poses, the accurate illustration of garments, and the development of the students own sketching style. Students learn to render, using colored pencil, markers, and pen. Prerequisite: DESN 1150	3
DESN 1760	Pattern Drafting l (6 Hours)	Students develop an understanding of how to use the basic block in constructing muslin samples. Includes a three (3) hour lab. Prerequisite: DESN 1420	3
DESN 1850	The Business of Fashion	In surveying the major business components of the textile and fashion apparel industries, this course defines the role of materials, designers, producers, and retailers in the creative and business cycles. Prerequisite: TSCI 1800	3
DESN 2160	Pattern Drafting ll (6 Hours) *	Students create flat patterns from sketches and produce completed garments with an emphasis on fit. Includes a three (3) hour lab. Prerequisite: DESN 1760	3
DESN 2280	Creative Design Applications	Students apply basic elements of design and expand their creativity by examining social, artistic, and historical influences as they relate to the development of a group and/or collection. Prerequisites: DESN 1550, MPDV 2200, TSCI 1800	3
DESN 2530	Computer-Aided Fashion Design l	Development of technical sketches utilizing Adobe Illustrator. Hands-on experience in drawing of flat technical sketch and creating accurate garment detail. Prerequisite: MPDV 1800	3
DESN 2540	Computer Pattern Drafting l	In this introduction to the fundamentals of pattern drafting techniques using Gerber Technology, students reinforce skills developed in previous manual pattern drafting classes and apply their knowledge to producing patterns using the computer. Additional pattern drafting techniques are explored. Students also produce markers. Lab. Prerequisites: DESN 2160, MFTG 2330	3
DESN 2560	Pattern Drafting lll (6 Hours) *	An advanced pattern drafting class emphasizing comprehensive use of acquired pattern making skills as well as advanced techniques. Includes a three (3) hour lab. Prerequisite: DESN 2160	3

(continued)

Course #	Course Name	Course Description	Units
DESN 2680	Creative Design Analysis & Collection Development	After analyzing and researching the components necessary to create a fashion collection, students in this course engage in the challenge of designing and developing collections for specific customers, including major manufacturers. Prerequisites: DESN 1850, DESN 2280	3
DESN 2700	Collection Development (6 Hours) *	This class emphasizes the comprehensive use of acquired pattern making and design skills. A complete design look is selected from each student collection. Patterns and garments are developed according to industry requirements. Cohesive design development includes; pattern drafting, garment construction, pattern cards, cost sheets, and style books. Includes a three (3) hour lab. Prerequisite: DESN 2560	3
DESN 2840	Computer Pattern Drafting ll	In this advanced course in developing patterns using Gerber Technology, students further develop their skills in creating patterns from sketches as well as from finished garments. Students also produce markers on the computer. Prerequisite: DESN 2540	3
DESN 2980	Portfolio Preparation & Presentation	Students prepare, develop, and expand a professional portfolio of work while exploring creative and practical techniques to enhance the marketability and appeal of their portfolio. They also analyze and practice interviewing skills to communicate with prospective employers. Prerequisite: DESN 2680	3
GNST 1040	English Composition	In this process-oriented course, students combine deep, disciplined research with careful writing and revision to produce a thoughtful, creative, and personally meaningful research essay. They learn to formulate focused research questions, identify and investigate credible sources, and synthesize expert opinion with their own insight in support of a clearly defined, complex thesis. The emphasis is on curiosity, exploration, and discovery. As part of the process, students also gain confidence and competency in two primary areas of written expression: organization and mechanics.	3
GNST 1170	History of Costume	This course provides an overview of costume history in Western culture from ancient civilizations to the present. Students examine cultural, social, and historical events and analyze their effect on the history of costume and apparel, including the influence of historical costume on fashion today. Students develop a broad fashion vocabulary and become familiar with period costume terminology.	3
GNST 1230	Color & Design Theory	An introductory study of the principles and elements of color and design theory. Students critique aspects of a visual representation by analyzing the components of design and the use of color by the artist.	3
GNST 1440	Textile Science	A practical analysis of the basic components of textiles and their relationship to performance. Students examine the characteristics of fibers, yarns, methods of fabric construction, such as weaving and knitting, and survey dyes, prints, and finishes. Emphasis is placed on performance and the determination of fabric suitability in the apparel design industry.	3
GNST 1450	College Mathematics	An application course focusing on mathematical concepts used in everyday life. Students integrate computation and analysis with authentic learning in graph analysis, Venn diagrams, analytical geometry, statistical measures of central tendency and variation, and financial mathematics. Prerequisites: To register for GNST 1450, students must successfully pass the math placement test or pass GNST 450.	3

(continued)

Course #	Course Name	Course Description	Units
GNST 1600	Effective Speaking	A course in oral communication designed to give students poise, speaking confidence, and the ability to develop and produce a focused, well-organized speech that holds the audiences attention through effective delivery methods. Presentational skills and audience-centered communication are emphasized.	3
GNST 1650	Critical Speaking	Designed to foster independent thinking, this course strengthens students capacity to reason clearly, critically, and creatively, including the ability (1) to analyze the arguments of others, (2) to synthesize effective arguments of their own, and (3) to solve problems skillfully. Students also gain experience in reading closely and conducting purposeful, imaginative research skills essential to the examination of demanding social, moral, political, and personal issues. Prerequisite: GNST 1040	3
GNST 2020	Survey of Western Art I	A survey of art, architecture, and design from the Prehistoric Period through the Middle Ages. Included are the social, economic, cultural, political, and religious influences which have prompted or affected the art of each period. Students examine works of art and their iconography, stylistic techniques, and different media, with the goal of being able to recognize, understand, and discuss various art forms in their broader contexts.	3
GNST 2420	Survey of Western Art II	A survey of art, architecture, and design from the Renaissance through the 20th century. Art movements such as Realism, Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, Abstraction, and Surrealism are studied. Particular emphasis is placed on the artist's role in society and the effect of society on art.	3
GNST 2960	American Political & Economic History	A survey of American history from 1930-2000. Emphasis is on the political and economic features, both domestic and foreign, that contributed to the emergence of the welfare state and the nations rise to global leadership after World War II. The course provides an understanding of the Great Depression, the Second World War, the Cold War, Americas eventual emergence as the worlds only superpower, and the interrelation of all these factors.	3
GNST 2980	Professional Practices	To become more self-reliant and enterprising in the job search, students investigate career opportunities and the career path, personal traits, job responsibilities, and qualifications necessary to be competitive and promotable. Students build research tools that enable them to develop a plan of action, conduct informational interviews, practice interviewing skills, and produce a digitized professional resume, biographical statement, and cover letter for immediate submission to prospective employers.	3
MFTG 2330	Computer Grading, Marking & Cutting	This course introduces students to the principles of pattern grading, including manual techniques of chart and stack grading. The course uses Gerber Technologys computerized digitizing, grading, and marker-making system. Industry spreading and cutting techniques are demonstrated. Prerequisites: MFTG 1700, DESN 1760 (For Fashion Design Majors)	3

APPENDIX C

CHEA Programmatic/Number of NASAD Accredited Programs

Figure 3-2 *(continued)*

III. Accredited Programs

Programmatic Accreditation

ACCREDITOR	Date Founded	Number of Programs	Number of Students
Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education	1996	1,128	324,570
Commission on English Language Program Accreditation	1999	233	600,000
Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation	1996	85	8,000
Commission on Opticianry Accreditation	1985	21	470
Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs	1981	603	39,502
Council for Interior Design Accreditation	1970	180	21,500
Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs	1975	113	5,115
Council on Chiropractic Education Commission on Accreditation	1971	15	10,000
Council on Education for Public Health	1974	153	25,000
Council on Naturopathic Medical Education	1978	7	1,800
Council on Rehabilitation Education Commission on Accreditation	1972	98	5,108
Council on Social Work Education Office of Social Work Accreditation Commission on Accreditation	1952	723	113,903
International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education	1997	1039	*
International Fire Service Accreditation Congress-Degree Assembly	1990	26	2,750
Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology	1971	727	35,322
Joint Review Committee on Educational Programs in Nuclear Medicine Technology	1970	87	1,350
Liaison Committee on Medical Education	1942	158	74,394
Midwifery Education Accreditation Council	1991	10	497
Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education	1991	123	2,200
National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences	1973	604	9,531
National Architectural Accrediting Board, Inc.	1940	117	43,310
National Association of Schools of Art and Design Commission on Accreditation	1944	307	163,234
National Association of Schools of Dance Commission on Accreditation	1981	72	5,499
National Association of Schools of Music Commission on Accreditation and Commission on Community/Junior College Accreditation	1924	635	119,715

Reprinted from CHEA Handbook (2013), p. 5, Figure 3-2: Programmatic Accreditation

APPENDIX D

Accrediting Organizations Recognized by CHEA

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation known as CHEA is a national advocate and institutional voice for self-regulation of academic quality through accreditation, CHEA is an association of 3,000 degree-granting colleges and universities and recognizes 60 institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations. The following are the recognized specialized/professional accrediting organizations by CHEA:

AACSB International—The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)
Web: www.aacsb.edu
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2002

Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, Inc. (ABET)
Web: www.abet.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2003

Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE)
Web: www.acpe-accredit.org Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2004

Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA)
Web: www.arc-pa.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2004

Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC)
Web: www2.ku.edu/~acejmc
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2002

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE)
Web: www.aamft.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2003

American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS), Council for Accreditation
Web: www.aafcs.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, May 2001

American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs (CoA-NA)
Web: www.aana.com
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2001

American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) Committee on Accreditation
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, May 2001

American Council for Construction Education (ACCE)
Web: www.acce-hq.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2001

American Culinary Federation Educational Institute Accrediting Commission (ACF)
Web: www.acfchefs.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2004

American Dietetic Association, Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE-ADA)
Web: www.eatright.org/cade
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, May 2001

American Library Association (ALA)
Committee on Accreditation (CoA)
Web: www.ala.org/accreditation/
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, May 2001

American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE)
Web: www.aota.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2002

American Optometric Association (AOA)
Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE) Web: www.theacoe.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, May 2001

American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)
Web: www.capteonline.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2002

American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA)
Council on Podiatric Medical Education (CPME)
Web: www.cpme.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2004

American Psychological Association (APA)
Committee on Accreditation (CoA)
Web: www.apa.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2002

American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) Web: www.asla.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2003

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology
Web: www.asha.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2003

American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)
Council on Education
Web: www.avma.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, May 2001

Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)
Web: www.acbsp.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2001

Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI)
formerly Council on Aviation Accreditation (CAA)
Web: www.aabi.aero
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2002

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)
Web: www.caahep.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2001

Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME)
Web: www.cahme.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2003

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)
Web: www.aacn.nche.edu/accreditation
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2002

Computer Sciences Accreditation Commission (CSAC) of
the Computing Sciences Accreditation Board (CSAB)
Merged with Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, Inc. (ABET), September 30, 2001

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)
Web: www.cacrep.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2002

Council for Interior Design Accreditation
Formerly Foundation for Interior Design Education Research (FIDER)
Web: www.accredit-id.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2002

Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE)
Commission on Accreditation
Web: www.cce-usa.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2005

Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE)
Commission on Standards and Accreditation
Web: www.core-rehab.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, May 2001

**Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Offi ce of Social Work Accreditation and Edu-
cational Excellence** Web: www.cswe.org/CSWE
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2003

Foundation for Interior Design Education Research (FIDER)
See Council for Interior Design Accreditation

Joint Review Committee on Education in
Radiologic Technology (JRCERT)
Web: www.jrcert.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2004

**Joint Review Committee on Educational Programs in Nuclear Medicine Technology (JRC-
NMT)**
Web: www.jrcnmt.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2002

National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS)
Web: www.naacls.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, April 2002

National Association of Industrial Technology (NAIT)
Web: www.nait.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2002

National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD)
Web: www.arts-accredit.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2001

National Association of Schools of Dance (NASD)
Web: www.arts-accredit.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2001

National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)
Web: www.arts-accredit.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2001

National Association of Schools of Public Aff airs and Administration (NASPAA), Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation (COPRA)
Web: www.naspaa.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2004

National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST)
Web: www.arts-accredit.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2001

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
Web: www.ncate.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2002

National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, Inc. (NLNAC)
Web: www.nlnac.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2001

National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA)
Council on Accreditation
Web: www.councilonaccreditation.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, January 2003

Planning Accreditation Board (PAB)
Web: showcase.netins.net/web/pab_fi 66/index.htm
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, May 2001

Society of American Foresters (SAF)
Committee on Accreditation
Web: www.safnet.org/educate/accnews.htm
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, May 2001

Teacher Education Accreditation Council, Inc. (TEAC)
Web: www.teac.org
Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, May 2001

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Source: CHEA Handbook (2013)

APPENDIX E

NASADs' Standards Development Criteria for Fashion Programs

b. An understanding of the possibilities and limitations of the medium, including its aesthetic and structural properties.

c. Knowledge and skills in the use of basic tools, techniques, and processes sufficient to produce work from concept to finished object. This includes knowledge of various woods and technical procedures such as joining and finishing.

d. Understanding of industrial applications of woodworking techniques. Studies in product design are particularly recommended.

e. Understanding of the place of fine woodworking in the history of art.

f. Functional knowledge of basic business practices.

g. Preparation of a wide variety of objects in the wood medium. Such preparation should provide experiences in the broadest possible range of technical procedures. Experience in the fabrication of models of larger pieces is strongly recommended.

h. Easy and regular access to materials, equipment, and library resources related to the study of woodworking.

i. Completion of a final project related to the exhibition of original work, as well as opportunities to submit to exhibitions, galleries, and retail outlets.

X. SPECIFIC PROFESSIONAL BACCALAUREATE DEGREES IN DESIGN

The professional undergraduate degree in a design specialization is structured to provide in-depth, formal education that will prepare students for entry into professional practice upon graduation. This is the case whether the degree rubric is Bachelor of Fine Arts with a design specialization or another appropriate title.

Appendix II.A. provides a useful guide to various purposes, issues, and NASAD standards locations applicable to all types of design curricula. It may be especially useful for institutions developing or revising curricular programs in design. For further information about the relationship of the professional undergraduate degree in a design field specialization to other professional and liberal arts degrees, see Appendix II.A., especially Sections 5. and 6.

A. Common Curricular Elements Incorporated in All Specific Professional Undergraduate Degrees in Design

Common critical elements in the strategic environment for design impact, are reflected, and are integrated differently in the work of various design specializations, and thus, in the realization of curricular programs to develop the student competencies required to begin professional practice in those specializations.

Specific detailed competency development decisions regarding these common elements are the prerogatives of institutions. However, to maintain fundamental curricular currency with developments in each field, each professional undergraduate program in design is expected to prepare students to understand and work with the following in terms of their area of specialization or focus.

1. Context. The role of the designer is not only to achieve the goodness of fit between form and context, but also to determine how much of the surrounding context will be considered as a specific design problem is addressed and solved. Basic competence in both framing and solving design problems is essential for graduates. In all design specializations, this competence includes knowledge of and ability to address the following:

a. Usefulness. The value of communication, objects, environments, or services to persons and society.

    b.   *Usability.* The cognitive or physical ease, efficiency, and satisfaction of people as they learn and use communication, objects, products, environments, systems, or services.

    c.   *Desirability.* The perceived emotional, social, or cultural benefits of communication, objects, products, environments, systems, or services.

    d.   *Sustainability.* The consequences of design in interdependent systems, lifespan of designed objects, and use and disposal of resources.

    e.   *Feasibility.* The technological ability to produce and/or disseminate and/or distribute communication, objects, environments, or services.

    f.   *Viability.* The economic potential and consequences, for example, for return on investment, economic sustainability, and growth.

2. **Complexity.** The context for design problem solving is increasingly complex and design activity is typically nested within a web of interconnected systems. Basic understanding of how such complexity is addressed and expressed in design practice is essential. Competencies include familiarity with:

    a.   *Trans-disciplinary/interdisciplinary collaboration.* Basic understanding of the nature, content, and process of trans/interdisciplinary work, including experiences working in trans-disciplinary teams toward the solution of design problems. To address critical aspects of the content component, where possible, curricula and courses should facilitate understanding of the relevance of knowledge in a variety of fields associated with addressing complex design issues and problems. Fields include the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and business, and other fields associated with various areas of specialization.

    b.   *Designing at the level of systems.* Basic knowledge of means for considering, evaluating, and anticipating the consequences of design action in a variety of systems, even when working at the level of products and components. This competence is normally developed through studio and other studies and activities.

    c.   *Geographic dispersal of effort.* Basic understanding of the management and labor structures and issues associated with the design, production, dissemination, and distribution of communication, goods, and services in the global context. Students should be encouraged to gain work experience in settings that represent a variety of economic and social opportunities.

    d.   *Issues of lifespan and sustainability.* Ability to justify the use of resources and identify long-term consequences of design action in their solutions to problems.

3. **Designing for and with People.** Contemporary design practice addresses varying levels of responsibility between designers and users. For example, control for design decisions can shift proportionally from project to project. Knowledge and skills to understand and begin to work in this environment are essential. Competencies include the ability to:

    a.   Choose and apply research and other methods for understanding potential users' wants, needs, and patterns of behavior.

    b.   Recognize social, cultural, and perspective differences on scales ranging from individual to global.

    c.   Consider and evaluate strategies for addressing or resolving competing values in the process of finding design solutions.

    d.   Work with issues and projects associated with participatory design and its processes.

4. **Technology.** A rapidly evolving technological context presents both challenges and opportunities for design education. While the resources of institutions may limit how quickly programs can respond to industry changes in specific software and hardware, overarching knowledge and skills for working with the impact of technology on design are essential. Competencies include the ability to:

   a. *Learn how to learn technology.* Because change will be a constant, students' technological studies and experiences need to prepare them to learn new technologies on an ongoing basis.

   b. *Make critical choices among different technologies.* Through various curricular studies and experiences, students are expected to become critical users of technology, able to match technological choices to specific problems and their respective contexts.

   c. *Design tools and systems.* The democratization of technology places a greater burden on designers in certain specializations to invent the systems through which users create their own experiences. For students majoring in those specializations, competencies include basic understanding of the development of such systems and of the fundamental relationships between the invention of systems and the invention of technology. Experience in projects associated with the invention of technology as well as its use is strongly recommended.

5. **Research.** Research is an integral component in designing for and with people in a context that encompasses complexity and technology. Research sensibilities and comprehensive capabilities are gained through study and practice over a lifetime. At the undergraduate professional degree level, basic understanding of research methods, and the ability to read and use findings in studio projects are essential. This competence includes basic knowledge and skills to develop research-supported design decisions for specific circumstances that address:

   a. What people want and need.
   b. What is needed that does not exist.
   c. How people learn and know.
   d. What particular contexts demand.
   e. How things get planned, produced, and distributed.
   f. The effects of design action on people, communities, the environment, and the future.
   g. Tools, theories, and methods for exploring these issues.

B. **Common Essential Resource-based Opportunities and Experiences for All Students Enrolled in Professional Undergraduate Design Degrees.** Institutions must provide the following in terms of each specific specialization or field of design it offers.

   1. Easy access to studios appropriately equipped for teaching, learning, and work. See Standards II.F.

   2. Easy access to libraries with (1) appropriate design collections in the field of specialization, (2) resources that are current and appropriate to the specific curricula being offered, and (3) reference material in other relevant disciplines, such as the social sciences and the humanities. See Standards II.G.

   3. Easy access to tutorials that develop software and other technical capabilities. See Standards IV.B.1.

   4. Easy access to appropriately equipped labs and technological support necessary for the execution of design solutions. See Standards II.F.

   5. Continuous regular access to instruction and critique under faculty with educational and professional backgrounds in the area of design specialization. Instruction for the number of students enrolled, and sufficient numbers of qualified faculty to provide the diversity of expertise required for a comprehensive current education in the field of specialization. See Standards II.E.

D. **Fashion Design.** Fashion designers integrate the visual and technical aspects of wearing apparel to produce products and services. They integrate aesthetics and technology, with the goal of enhancing function and value.

The title normally used to identify professional undergraduate programs with a major in this field is the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Fashion Design. See also Standards for Accreditation VII.B.2.

Only institutions with a sufficient number of qualified fashion design faculty, technological resources, a comprehensive curriculum, and core and specialized courses in fashion design have the prerequisites to offer this fashion design degree or other degrees with different titles having objectives to prepare students for entry-level professional practice in fashion design.

1. **Curricular Structure**

   a. **Standard.** Curricular structure, content, and time requirements shall enable students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree in fashion design as indicated below and in Standards VIII.

   b. **Guidelines.** Curricula to accomplish this purpose that meet the standards previously indicated normally adhere to the following structural guidelines: studies in fashion design comprise 25-35% of the total program; supportive courses in art and design, 20-30%; studies in art and design history, 10-15%; and general studies, 25-35%. Studies in the major area, supportive courses in art and design, and studies in visual arts/design histories normally total at least 65% of the curriculum (see Standards III.C. regarding forms of instruction, requirements, and electives).

2. **Recommendations for General Studies** (*see Standards VIII.A.6.*). Studies related to anthropology, business, psychology, and sociology are particularly useful for fashion designers.

3. **Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities** (*in addition to those stated for all professional degree programs in Standards VIII.B. and C.*):

   a. Understanding of how design elements, including color, texture, and pattern, contribute to the aesthetic, illusionistic, and practical functions of three-dimensional forms, particularly as related to principles for draping the human body and the design and construction of garments. Development of this understanding continues throughout the degree program in such areas as form analysis and integration, color, and design.

   b. Knowledge and skills in the use of basic tools, techniques, and processes sufficient to produce work from draft or specifications to finished product, including skills in portfolio preparation. This involves functional knowledge of human form and function and awareness of the potentials and professional capabilities in the uses of current and developing materials, media, and technologies, including sketching, life drawing, rendering, and computer-assisted design.

   c. Ability to determine design priorities and alternatives; research, define and evaluate criteria and requirements; coordinate project elements; and communicate with involved personnel at all stages of the design process.

   d. Ability to design for a number of markets based on a working knowledge of the characteristics and organization of those markets.

G. **Textile Design.** Textile designers address the aesthetic and technical aspects of fabrics and related textile arts to produce products and services. They integrate aesthetics and technology, with the goal of enhancing function and value.

The title normally used to identify professional undergraduate programs with a major in this field is the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Textile Design. See also Standards VII.B.2.

Only institutions with a sufficient number of qualified textile design faculty, technological resources, a comprehensive curriculum, and core and specialized courses in textile design have the prerequisites to offer this textile design degree or other degrees with different titles having objectives to prepare students for entry-level professional practice in textile design.

1. **Curricular Structure**

   a. **Standard.** Curricular structure, content, and time requirements shall enable students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree in textile design as indicated below and in Standards VIII.

   b. **Guidelines.** Curricula to accomplish this purpose that meet the standards previously indicated normally adhere to the following structural guidelines: studies in textile design comprise 25-35% of the total program; supportive courses in art and design, 20-30%; studies in art and design history, 10-15%; and general studies, 25-35%. Studies in the major area, supportive courses in art and design, and studies in visual arts/design histories normally total at least 65% of the curriculum (see Standards III.C. regarding forms of instruction, requirements, and electives).

2. **Recommendations for General Studies** (*see Standards VIII.A.6.*). Studies in anthropology, business, material culture, psychology, and sociology are useful for textile designers.

3. **Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities** (*in addition to those stated for all professional degree programs in Standards VIII.B. and C.*):

   a. Understanding of visual forms and their aesthetic functions, particularly as related to the design and production of fabrics. Development of this understanding continues throughout the degree program in such areas as form analysis and integration, configuration and composition.

   b. Knowledge and skills in the use of basic tools, techniques, technologies, and processes sufficient to produce work from concept to finished product. This includes awareness of the potentials and uses of current and developing materials, media, and technologies, and involves studio work in two-dimensional design for woven, printed, and knit fabrics and in contemporary fabric structures.

   c. Ability to determine design priorities and alternatives; research, define, and evaluate criteria and requirements; and coordinate project elements in multimedia, high tech, and advanced applications.

   d. Acquisition of collaborative skills and the ability to work effectively in interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary teams.

   e. Understanding of the history of textile design.

   f. Functional knowledge of professional design practices and processes, including but not limited to professional and ethical behaviors and intellectual property issues such as patents, trademarks, and copyrights.

APPENDIX F

Contact Letter to University Fashion Program Instructor

Dear Instructor,

My name is Cynthia R. Williams, and I am a lecturer at California State University Northridge (CSUN) in Apparel Design & Merchandising. I am also a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership, Administration, and Policy Program in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University. In order to successfully complete my dissertation research study, I need your help. This research study, entitled A STUDY OF THE PERCEIVED VALUE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF ART AND DESIGN (NASAD) ACCREDITATION BY FASHION STUDENTS IN FASHION PROGRAMS AT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COLLEGES is being conducted among fashion program students in Southern California.

There is limited research regarding if the perceived value of NASAD, or what other factors influence the students' decision to attend a particular fashion program. A good indicator of a quality fashion program could start with NASADs' standard development criteria which is structured by industry professionals and academic requirements (NASAD Handbook, 2015) to help and assist students to recognize, and moreover, understand what is expected in a quality fashion education to prepare them for the fashion trade.

Therefore, the purposes of this survey is to identify the extent to which, if at all, are fashion students familiar with the perceived value of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) accreditation standards for fashion programs. Specifically, if it is a common factor used in their decision to attend a fashion education program at this particular public or private college and/or if their decision is related to their demographic characteristics or career plans. **Please allow my survey to be handed out in the classroom. The survey that will only take approximately 10 minutes to complete.**

Results from this study may enable NASAD, and other collegiate institutions to better meet the needs of fashion programs, students, and industry. This completed survey will form a doctoral dissertation that should prove useful to the academic community and others conducting future research on this issue.

I am again deeply grateful for your participation and permission to allow this process to take place. It is the researcher's intent to contribute to the NASAD accreditation and fashion education's body of literature and information for the fashion student. Your help and support mean very much to me. If you have a concern or question, please do not hesitate to contact me at the email address below, and I will respond immediately.

With appreciation,

Cynthia R. Williams, MA
Doctoral Student 2017
Pepperdine University /

APPENDIX G

Survey of Fashion Program Students on NASAD Accreditation

This survey has been designed to assess your awareness of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) accreditation and the role, if any, your knowledge of NASAD accreditation may have played in your decision as to which fashion program to attend.

Although, you are not required to participate, and that neither participation nor non-participation will not negatively affect your grade in this class; your participation in this research effort is voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality is assured for those who choose to participate.

Do you wish to take this survey?   Yes   No

The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), is the recognized accrediting agency designated by the United States Department of Education (USDOE), to cover the whole field of art and design. NASAD is required to create a more detailed evaluation program for financial aid rules and degree requirements at many schools offering undergraduate and master degrees in fashion art and design. 307 NASAD accredited program, currently exists nationwide.

1) Please check all items that you considered when selecting which institution and fashion program to attend.

A.   **Cost**

B.   **Family member's alma mater**

C.   **Fashion studio facilities**

D.   **Financial Aid /Scholarships**

E.   **Friends attending**

F.   **Interested in a 4-year fashion program**

G.   **Institutional accreditation status**

H.   **Institution reputation**

I.   **Location of the school**

J.   **NASAD accreditation status**

K.   **Particular professor**

L.   **Reputation of institution or fashion program**

M.   **Specific academic program (fashion design, fashion marketing, fashion photography etc.**

N.   **Will help me find a job**

2) Do you currently attend an NASAD accredited fashion program?

Yes
No
Don't Know

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3) Prior to receiving this survey, I was aware of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design's (NASAD) accreditation standards for fashion programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) If you were unaware of NASAD, when deciding which fashion program to attend, choice was based on other factors such as status, ranking, and location of the program or school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) I feel that fashion industry employers prefer graduates from NASAD accredited fashion programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) It greatly benefits students to attend fashion programs that are accredited by NASAD	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) In deciding which fashion program to attend, it was important to me to attend a program accredited by NASAD	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8) On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 representing no value and 10 representing high value), please circle how valuable you feel NASAD accreditation is to you as a student.

1 - no value   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10 - high value

9) What is your gender?

Male

Female

10) What year are you in school?

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Graduate Student

11) How old are you? _____

Thank You for your Participation
Your participation, time and effort in completing this questionnaire, will greatly contribute to the success of this research project.

APPENDIX H

Consent from Dr. Prather for Survey Adoption

From: Williams, Cynthia (student)
Sent: Thursday, May 11, 2017 @ 2:21pm
To: Dr. Daniel Prather (███████████████)

Subject: Your 2007 Dissertation on *Specialized Accreditation In Collegiate Aviation: An Analysis Of The Perceived Value of Specialized Accreditation by the Aviation Accreditation Board International Dissertation*

Dear Dr. Prather,

Hello my name is Cynthia. I am writing to you from class at Pepperdine University. I am beginning my dissertation for the education doctoral program. I would like to start by telling you how much I found your dissertation on the perceived value of specialized accreditation for aviation, interesting. Your topic on collegiate aviation, and the students' perception of the Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI) is similar to my area of focus: fashion education and the perceived value of NASAD (the National Association of Schools of Art and Design accreditation for art/design programs at public and private colleges.

I currently teach Apparel Design & Merchandising (ADM) at California State University Northridge (CSUN). Over the past 8 years, I have taught at top private fashion schools that only specialize in fashion curricula and public universities that offer fashion programs. My years as a fashion designer for top companies, plus owning my own company has lead me to investigate, why the newest generation of fashion designers choose the profession of fashion, and what influences where they choose to receive their education. When I first began teaching fashion education 7 years ago, my mentor told me that I had the fashion industry experience but was unsure if I could transfer that knowledge or be comfortable in the classroom or academic setting. While, it is true most designers I know would never consider teaching for various reasons: not enough money in teaching, dealing with uninformed students regarding the reality of the industry, explaining the amount of responsibilities designers must take on, and the rules and red tape one must go through to change something in the academic world, etc, etc. The only thing that might interest a designer to teach would be if they were unemployed, receive a steady paycheck with flexible hours to continue to look for a job. But the money would always be an issue. Well, I told my mentor, I thrive on getting the word out on the reality of the industry and the responsibilities designers must take on to become the force in the company. Although, I enjoy teaching, I keep one foot in education and one foot in the industry. My mentor soon realized I could bring so much to the classroom, but I needed to pursue my doctorate if I was going to make significant changes to education at the university level.

Why does your study interest me? You speak to many areas of concern such as: content-based standards vs. outcomes-based criteria (Prather, 2007; CAA, 2003a); specific courses which should clearly spell out student learning outcomes and provide evidence those learning outcomes have been achieved; and lastly, the standards widely used by specialized accrediting agencies may be outdated, to which, the same specialized programs at institution also remain outdated. These issues and more, I found

correspond to the issues and concerns regarding fashion education and the accreditation for these programs. During my 3rd year, while teaching at both public, private and owning my studio, I became quite concerned about faculty, students, and course content that *is not* parallel to the industry needs and skills. I also found schools only wanted the benefits of NASAD accreditation, faculty wanted a steady teaching job and say they teach fashion courses without ever seriously working in the industry, and most important, students wanted to be designers because they like to shop. Most faculty and students have no idea what NASAD accreditation is, or the value of NASADs' standards, which could enhance their knowledge of what should be taught in an art or design program.

Fashion Education. Over the last several decades, 90% of apparel design and production has gone overseas or elsewhere in the world (Robinson, 2013). No longer is the garment designed and produced in one location or the same location as the designer or production contractor. Global participation requires garments designed in one country and production in several different countries. This type of global trade now requires "universal participation" to provide fashion products for a fast turn around,

referred to as [1]"fast fashion."One of the most pressing issues which remains constant, is how the restructuring of the fashion industry requires relevant courses parallel to industry needs and skills. This includes instruction from teachers current in the industry, which will correctly prepare students with practical skills conducive to this new standard of producing fashion goods. This amounts to job skills that transfer from school to easy entry into the fashion industry. With regards, to these issues, I decided to pursue an education doctoral study so I could research student perception of NASAD and what influences their decision to attend a particular fashion school. In my dissertation, I hope to be able to document the trends and range of reasons why specialized accreditation is valuable for selecting a fashion program. Once I complete my doctoral program, I plan to continue doing research in this area. I would like to put together an action plan for my CSU to use to help promote a fashion-design curriculum of specific coursework, parallel to industry needs for on-the-job skills and inform students with the correct perception of what makes a competent fashion program.

Why I am writing you? I would like to replicate parts of your 2007 study (Specialized Accreditation In Collegiate Aviation: An Analysis Of The Perceived Value of Specialized Accreditation by the Aviation Accreditation Board International Dissertation), specifically, regarding the students' perception. I believe I can make a valuable contribution by repeating parts of your study. I believe the methodology and instrumentation you used for your 2007 study would be of tremendous value to a similar study with a different geographic area and a different population. I may adapt the research instrument (specifically, the Survey of Aviation Program Students on AABI Issues), but I would like to get your permission to use your exact instrument if my chair and other committee members feel it would be appropriate for my study. Of course, I would acknowledge the replication and compare the findings of your study (which represents, other specialized accreditation for non-fashion programs) with my study. Please let me know your thoughts. I very much hope you will consider my request. Thank you.

Cynthia R. Williams, Doctoral Student
Educational Leadership, Administration, and Policy Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Pepperdine University

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[1] *Fast Fashion* according to Lowson et al., 1999, is quick manufacturing at an affordable price; for a "quick response". It became a market-based model in the late 1990s, now part of 21st century manufacturing protocol (Lowson et al., 1999).

From: Daniel Prather (█████████████████)
Sent: Thursday, May 11, 2017 @ 2:21pm
To: Williams, Cynthia (student)

Hello Cynthia-

My apologies for the delayed response.

It is great to hear from you, learn more about your background and expertise in fashion and apparel, the topic of your proposed dissertation, and how your study relates to my dissertation topic.

Please consider this email as written permission to utilize/adapt the methodology and research instruments in my 2007 dissertation to further your research in fashion-design curriculum, with the understanding that my study will be properly cited and referenced in your completed work.

Please also send me a copy (or link to digital commons) once your dissertation is complete.

All the best,

C. Daniel Prather, PhD., A.A.E., CAM
www.calbaptist.edu/aviationscience

From: ██████████████████████
Sent: Monday, May 15, 2017 @ 9:46am
To: Prather, Daniel
Subject: RE: Request for Permission to Adopt Survey

Dr. Prather,

THANK YOU so much for the OK. I'm still working through all the planning and the form the study takes will probably evolve many times over before my first prelim. However, I feel pretty certain at this point that I'd like to use the survey you used for the "Students' Perception of Specialized Accreditation" from your dissertation. I will properly cite and reference your study and send you links to my completed work. Thank you.

Cynthia R. Williams, Doctoral Student
Educational Leadership, Administration, and Policy
Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Pepperdine University

APPENDIX I

Adjustments Made to Prather's (2007) "Specialized Accreditation In Collegiate Aviation Student Survey"

Item Number	Original Wording	Changes Made	New Item Number	Rationale
Question 1 (A to N)	1. Please check all items that you considered when selecting which institution and aviation program to attend.	1. Please check all items that you considered when selecting which institution and fashion program to attend.		
A	Athletic team reputation	Institutional rating status	G	
B	Aviation training facilities	Fashion studio facilities	C	
C	AABI accreditation status	NASAD accreditation status	J	
D	Cost	Cost	A	
Added Variable		Institution reputation	H	
F	Family member's alma mater	Family member's alma mater	B	These 14 categories are important variables that appear to be related to the most common criteria used in a students' decision to attend a particular fashion education program at a public or private college.
G	Financial aid/scholarships	Financial Aid / Scholarships	D	
H	Friends attending	Friends attending	E	
I	Institution accreditation status	Interested in a 4-year fashion program	F	
J	Location	Location of the school	I	
K	Particular professor	Particular professor	K	
Added Variable	Reputation of institution or aviation program	Reputation of institution or fashion program	L	
Added Variable	Specific academic program	Specific academic program (fashion design, fashion marketing, fashion photography etc)	M	
Added Variable		The school will help me find a job	N	
Question 2	Do you currently attend an **AABI** accredited aviation program? Yes No Don't Know	Do you currently attend an **NASAD** accredited aviation program? Yes No Don't Know		This relates to the variables regarding the fashion students' knowledge or perceived value of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) accreditation.
Section header for Questions 3-6	Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements. Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree	No Change		

Item Number	Original Wording	Changes Made	New Item Number	Rationale
Question 3	Prior to receiving this survey, I was <u>unaware</u> of the **Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI).**	Prior to receiving this survey, I was <u>aware</u> of the **National Association of Schools of Art and Design's (NASAD) accreditation standards for fashion programs**		These are important variables related to the fashion students' perceived value of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) accreditation.
	Question added	If you were unaware of NASAD, when deciding which fashion program to attend, choice was based on other factors such as status, ranking, and location of the program or school	Question 4	
Question 4	I feel that fashion industry employers prefer graduated from **AABI accredited aviation programs.**	I feel that fashion industry employers prefer graduates from **NASAD accredited fashion programs**	Question 5	
Question 5	It greatly benefits students to attend **aviation programs that are accredited by AABI.**	It greatly benefits students to attend **fashion programs that are accredited by NASAD.**	Question 6	
Question 6	In deciding which aviation program to attend, it was important to me to attend a program accredited by **AABI.**	In deciding which fashion program to attend, it was important to me to attend a program accredited by **NASAD.**	Question 7	
Question 7	On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 representing no value and 10 representing high value), Please indicate how valuable you feel **AABI** accreditation is to you as a student. 1 - no value 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 - high value	On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 representing no value and 10 representing high value), Please indicate how valuable you feel **NASAD** accreditation is to you as a student. 1 - no value 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 - high value	Question 8	
Question 8	What is your gender? Male Female	No change	Question 9	These are important decision criteria related to their demographic characteristics.
Question 9	What year are you in school? Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Graduate Student	No change	Question 10	
Question 10	Please share any further thoughts you may have on the AABI and the role of AABI accreditation in your education and future career opportunities (use the back of sheet if necessary).	Question omitted		
	Question added	How old are you?	Question 11	

APPENDIX J

IRB Approval - Pepperdine

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Seaver College Institutional Review Board

November 22, 2017

Protocol #: 17-09-610

Project Title: *A STUDY OF THE PERCEIVED VALUE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF ART AND DESIGN (NASAD) ACCREDITATION BY FASHION STUDENTS IN FASHION PROGRAMS AT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COLLEGES*

Dear Cynthia:

Thank you for submitting your application, *A STUDY OF THE PERCEIVED VALUE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF ART AND DESIGN (NASAD) ACCREDITATION BY FASHION STUDENTS IN FASHION PROGRAMS AT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COLLEGES* for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials which was a study original submitted an approved by the **IRB**. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations (45 CFR 46 - http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html) that govern the protections of human subjects. It is Pepperdine University's IRB belief because there is little to no risk to the subjects and children are not being recruited to participate, therefore, this study qualifies under section **45 CFR 46.101(b)(2)** which states:

> (b) Unless otherwise required by Department or Agency heads, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories are exempt from this policy:
>
> **Category (2) of 45 CFR 46.101**, research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: a) Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

In addition, your application to waive documentation of informed consent has been **approved**.

Your research must be conducted protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit a **Request for Modification Form** to the IRB. Because your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from **45 CFR 46.101** and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the Institutional Review Board.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event

happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and the appropriate form to be used to report this information can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* (see link to "policy material" at http://www.pepperdine.edu/irb/graduate/).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all further communication or correspondence related to this approval.

On behalf of the IRB, we wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Pepperdine University

cc: Dr. Lee Kats, Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives
        Mr. Brett Leach, Regulatory Affairs Specialist
        Dr. Judy Ho, Graduate School of Education and Psychology IRB Chair

APPENDIX K

Pilot Survey with Reliability Questions #12 & #13

This pilot survey has been designed to assess your awareness of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) accreditation and the role, if any, your knowledge of NASAD accreditation may have played in your decision as to which fashion program to attend.

Although, you are not required to participate, and that neither participation nor non-participation will not negatively affect your grade in this class; your participation in this research effort is voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality is assured for those who choose to participate.

Do you wish to take this survey?   Yes   No

The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), is the recognized accrediting agency designated by the United States Department of Education (USDOE), to cover the whole field of art and design. NASAD is required to create a more detailed evaluation program for financial aid rules and degree requirements at many schools offering undergraduate and master degrees in fashion art and design. 307 NASAD accredited program, currently exists nationwide.

1) Please check all items that you considered when selecting which institution and fashion program to attend.

   A.   Cost

   B.   Family member's alma mater

   C.   Fashion studio facilities

   D.   Financial Aid /Scholarships

   E.   Friends attending

   F.   Interested in a 4-year fashion program

   G.   Institutional accreditation status

   H.   Institution reputation

   I.   Location of the school

   J.   NASAD accreditation status

   K.   Particular professor

   L.   Reputation of institution or fashion program

   M.   Specific academic program (fashion design, fashion marketing, fashion photography etc.

   N.   Will help me find a job

2) Do you currently attend an NASAD accredited fashion program?

Yes
No
Don't Know

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3) Prior to receiving this survey, I was aware of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design's (NASAD) accreditation standards for fashion programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) If you were unaware of NASAD, when deciding which fashion program to attend, choice was based on other factors such as status, ranking, and location of the program or school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) I feel that fashion industry employers prefer graduates from NASAD accredited fashion programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) It greatly benefits students to attend fashion programs that are accredited by NASAD	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) In deciding which fashion program to attend, it was important to me to attend a program accredited by NASAD	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8) On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 representing no value and 10 representing high value), please circle how valuable you feel NASAD accreditation is to you as a student.

1 - no value   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10 - high value

9) What is your gender?

Male

Female

10) What year are you in school?

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Graduate Student

11) How old are you? _____

12) Was this paper questionnaire a more convenient way to take the survey than a verbal/interview?   Yes   No

13) Were the questions easy to understand?   Yes   No

Thank You for your Participation

Your participation, time and effort in completing this questionnaire, will greatly contribute to the success of this research project