I. Degree: B.S. Apparel Design and Development

Program Director: Gindy Neidermyer

PRC Consultants: Dick Tyson

Purpose of the Review: To assess the quality of the B.S. Apparel Design and Development program as part of the seven-year cycle required of all degree programs at UW-Stout

Committee Findings: The committee recommends continuation of this program for the ongoing seven-year cycle and implementation of committee recommendations.

The program has done an exceptional job in addressing some of the concerns of the last report regarding communications, student expectations and satisfaction, and advisement. Since the 2001 review, the program has a new director and structure and has substantially higher enrollments. The PRC now sees challenges these enrollments present in staffing, the amount and configuration of facilities/lab, and the continuing need to update lab equipment. With this significant program growth since the 2001 review, attention should be paid to the question of the number of students in relation to the number of instructors.

II. Abstract
The Apparel Design and Development program prepares graduates for professional careers in the apparel industry as designers at various levels and types, as well as apparel engineers and managers. These positions are primarily associated with retailers having private labels, apparel manufacturers and design companies such as Lands’ End, Target, Kimberly Clark, Gander Mountain, J. Crew and Kohl’s. The Apparel Design and Development program includes 1) a base in general education, 2) a professional core of courses such as Textiles, Pattern Development, Functional Design, and Knit Design and Technology, 3) a business core including courses such as Merchandising, Marketing, and Organizational Leadership, and 4) additional courses in Apparel Design, Apparel Development, or Product Management as concentrations. Most of the courses in the professional core and the concentrations are lab-based and include a strong focus on problem-solving. These courses include the application of theory and experimentation to develop appropriate designs and products. A Field Experience or Coop Education Experience is required. A study-abroad and a national fashion tour opportunity are available. The program is one of only 13 schools in the western hemisphere endorsed for 2008-2013 by the American Apparel and Footwear Association (AAFA).

This program was reviewed by the PRC in 2001 which found that it could not recommend continuation as constituted. The CTEM dean was asked “should the (program) be continued”? He responded affirmatively and proposed program changes which were followed by status reports to the PRC in 2002 and 2003 and a complete review in 2004. The current review included a presentation by the program director,
review of the recommendations from the last review in 2004; placement, graduate and employer follow-up data; and program committee, current student and key instructor surveys. While the consultant found that the many concerns raised in the program review in 2001-2002 have been satisfactorily dealt with, two general concerns expressed in the 2004 review continue, namely lab space and equipment and faculty staffing.

III. Process Followed for Current Review
The PRC Chair met with the dean, program director and chair of the primary department to discuss the review process. In addition, a PRC consultant met with the program director to review the procedures and offer assistance and to survey current students. Data regarding the program were collected from PRC program committee, current student and key instructor surveys in addition to BPA placement, graduate, employer follow-up, and other data. This data was analyzed and provided to the program director and other PRC members. Out of 81 juniors and seniors surveyed, 51 participated in the in-class student survey. All 6 of the key instructors within the department responded to their survey while 16 members (of 32 surveyed) of the program advisory committee responded to theirs. Sixteen of 35 key instructors from outside the department responded to the key instructor survey. Nineteen of the 35 2006 ADD program graduates surveyed responded. Only two employers of 2006 graduates responded.

The Program Director presented the Apparel Design and Development Program self-study report to the full PRC at its January 23, 2009 meeting and responded to their questions. The consultant then wrote a draft program review document summarizing the consultant’s analysis of these surveys, and assessment in the major report and submitted the draft report for the program director’s review and comments. The report and comments were then discussed by the PRC which approved the findings contained herein.

IV. Previous Review (2004 review)

“Recommendations for the Program Director, Faculty, Department Chair, and Dean”

1) Since lab modernization in an ongoing need for courses using lab-based curriculum, continue renovating and improving classrooms and lab facilities and incorporate new equipment.

Response from the Program Director, Department Chair and Dean (2004):
“Lab modernization is ongoing. The Apparel Design and Development program, along with the other technical programs housed in the College, continually utilize the university's lab mod process. In addition to providing matching funds for lab upgrading, the College has provided funding for computer labs in the ADD program.

A CAD lab modernization request was granted during 2003-4 and will be taking place this summer. It should be fully operational by fall. This Lab Mod will include room remodeling with upgrades to ventilation and wiring, appropriate
furniture, additional software licenses, a flat screen monitor, keyboard and mouse for 20 stations and additional Assyst licenses to accommodate 20 stations. In addition, an inkjet plotter with apparel CAD software and a fabric printer have been purchased through Technology Department capital funds this year.

Concern has to be expressed about moving away from the desktop computers to laptops in the CAD lab. This coming year will serve as a pilot study to determine if laptop hardware can accommodate the CAD software required for the apparel courses.

Adequate CAD lab facilities and software are important to the program, since a CAD for Apparel class is offered each semester. Also Special Topics classes in KaratCAD are offered each year and CAD for Apparel Patterns is being taught during Pre-session this summer. Also, CAD is incorporated into a number of other classes, such as Apparel Product Development, Line Development, Portfolio Development and in the fall, Advanced Pattern Design. In addition, students usually use CAD in preparing assignments for other apparel design courses. Lab mod requests will be forthcoming for the Textiles and Apparel Design labs next year.

Consultant’s Summation: (2008)
In her 2008 self-study, the Program Director indicated that: “The CAD lab was renovated through a Lab Mod since the last PRC report; the remodel was completed in the summer of 2004. Additionally, Lab Mod requests have been written and submitted for the Textile Lab (room 377 HE) and for the Apparel Production Lab (room 321 FH). These lab mods requested funding for new tables and chairs for a more appropriate learning environments and new instructor stations with the appropriate instructional aides. The Textile Lab mod also requested ventilation to address safety issues pertaining to burning tests for textile evaluation and identification.”

In examining the various survey responses, it is clear to the consultant that needs for both lab space and equipment remain one of the top challenges for the success of the program. While in three labs, the consultant found them crowded. Contributing to this problem is the significant increase in enrollment in the program. While a good sign of program health, it presents problems for a) lab space size/configuration, b) the amount of equipment, and c) wear and tear/misusage-monitoring. Besides the growth factor, the Program Director notes that classrooms are outdated with “inappropriate tables, chairs, and laptop connections.” The PRC survey of key instructors shows that mean scores for Quality of Classroom (question #9) and lab (#10) Facilities and Adequacy of Equipment (#12) and Supplies (#13) are the lowest of all surveyed items for this program, and, in the opinion of the Consultant among the lowest for this survey of most UW-Stout programs. The problem of lab space and equipment surfaces in many of the Advisory committee surveys. Current students in the ADD program give the lowest marks for classrooms (#6) and labs (#7); these are among the most frequently cited weakness of the program. The split of labs between the Home Economics building and Fryklund
hall, as well as the perceived limited availability of labs is a source of current student consternation.

2) Encourage and support faculty and the program director in their efforts to develop and increase industry and other outside funding support for the major.

Response from the Program Director, Department Chair and Dean (2004):
Industry support is sought in various ways. The apparel industry is not one that typically has been or has the means to be generous to universities. Some examples of industry support include:
2. The GerberSuite of CAD software is being made available for little or no cost to the university, for use of Apparel Design and Development students.
3. The program meets the requirements for affiliation with the American Apparel and Footwear Association, and was recertified by the AAFA7s Professional Leadership Council (now the Human Resources Leadership Council) in 2003 until Feb 2008. The AAFA has provided $5000 of scholarships for 2003-2004 and for 2004-2005. In addition, $1500 is being provided that can be used by the Program Director to attend the Professional Leadership Council meetings, a requirement for AAFA affiliation. Attendance at these meetings is also instrumental in providing networking opportunities and providing updated knowledge of the apparel industry.
4. Approximately 10-15 students participate in apparel related co-ops and internships each academic year. In addition to these specific examples of donations and industry support, it's important to note that the College of Technology, Engineering & Management provided three-quarter time release for an Apparel faculty member during the spring semester of the 2001 -2 academic year. The primary purpose of this release was to foster and renew relationships with key stakeholders, including industry. During the semester, the faculty member who was provided release visited a number of apparel related industries, in an attempt to secure donations of equipment and materials, internship and employment sites for students.

Consultant’s Summation: (2008)
In her 2008 self-study, the Program Director indicated that:
“All apparel faculty and staff continually request support from industry. At recent industrial advisory board meetings, ‘Wish Lists’ of equipment and supply needs were supplied to participants. It was requested that they return to their organization and seek support for the program via these gifts in kind requests. As a result, many gifts have been received from organizations such as Target, DuPont, Lands’ End, Duluth Trading, Knit Illustrated, Junonia, and Gabrielle Rhode Royce."

In her report to the PRC, the program director detailed efforts of the faculty in attaining industry support, recognizing that this is a difficult time for the industry; besides the above, she noted the annual scholarship support to UW-Stout from the American Apparel and Footwear Association. Absent comparative data, it seems to the consultant that the Program Director and faculty continue to pursue this recommendation.
3) Provide additional qualified faculty and staff as needed to support the current enrollment levels in the major.

Response from the Program Director, Department Chair and Dean (2004):
“Adequate teaching resources to be able to serve the students well is a concern. The program has been revised and strengthened, and enrollment was increased, in response to the 2001 review by the PRC. However, this year the apparel area had to absorb a 0.4 allocation cut, at a time when increased enrollment and program revision created a need for additional allocations.

The current program requires 44 apparel credits in the Professional core, the Apparel Design Concentration requires 12 apparel credits and the Apparel Development Concentration requires 6 to 9 apparel credits. These two concentrations are selected by about 98 per cent of the students. These courses are currently being taught with 3.35 teaching allocations. Meanwhile, the program has grown to about 191 students. Fifty-four new freshmen enrolled in fall of 2002, and 56 in 2003. The program has also accepted transfer students and continuing students who wish to change majors. A backlog of students has been created in most classes, causing some students to find no available apparel courses for fall. This will severely limit their ability to complete a degree in 4 years, and some are not able to take a full load of credits.

Two additional courses have now been added for the fall 2004-2005 semester to provide for student access to classes needed for them to progress through the program. Also a 2 credit course in Costing and Sourcing of Apparel will be offered through Continuing Ed during the fall semester.”

Consultant’s Summation: (2008)
In her 2008 self-study, the Program Director indicated that:
“Since the last PRC report, the face of the apparel faculty and staff has drastically changed, only two staff members remain from the previous group. And one of these staff members has now been hired to a tenure-track faculty position. Additionally, we have secured two faculty members with industry experience and appropriate terminal degrees. Two academic staff members have also joined the team. One with that is a doctoral student that has completed course work and scheduled prelims. The other has 20 years industry experience and possesses an MS degree in the apparel field. Consistently, the faculty and staff to student ratio has been acceptable since the last report; however, an increase in enrollment could change this considerably in the future.”

The consultant’s examination of the student responses to the 2008 PRC survey does not indicate that class availability is now a primary concern of students. The program has made significant improvements in the number of staff. However, while there are currently 4 faculty positions and 2 academic staff which currently cover the enrollment, the staff positions are emergency hires, according to the Program Director. The Program Director asserts a need for additional faculty positions are needed to provide permanent and consistent offering of courses. Current faculty and staff have a large number of class preparations. Moreover, growth of other programs whose students are required to take
apparel courses (Retail Merchandising and Management, Interior Design, and Family and Consumer Sciences Education) is said to stretch the Department’s ability to offer courses to Apparel students in a timely manner. Examining the admissions for 2009-10, in the near term, the pressing need for staffing due to these other programs is lessened since new RMM admitted students as of 1/29/09 are 88 vs.98 in 2008, as is the case for Interior Design (62 vs.90) and FCSE (13 vs. 11). However, Apparel Design and Development continues to increase (92 vs. 72 as of 2/5/09). It would appear that the level of staffing is clearly needed, and one of the staff positions could be recruited as faculty to meet the growing and continuing needs of the program and service to the other, related programs on campus.

4) “Create and implement a succession plan for faculty and staff for the Apparel Design and Development program to ensure faculty continuity, facilitate future student satisfaction and strengthen student enrollment”

**Response from the Program Director, Department Chair and Dean (2004):**
“A succession plan will be developed to ensure continuity of qualified faculty/staff, ensure student satisfaction and continue to provide a strong program. Ultimately, more faculty are needed, particularly in view of the fact that the enrollment cap on the program has currently been removed by the Chancellor. It is also desirable to decrease the number of academic staff in the program in order to assure greater course continuity, program integrity and quality instruction.

The newly named interim Program Director (Gindy Neidermeyer) has strong endorsement from the apparel faculty and students. With the continued strong support from the college leadership, student satisfaction should be assured. It is important that program and department leadership continue to listen to students in assessing the curriculum and the teaching within the program. Student concerns have been expressed about excessive workloads in apparel courses. The Department Chair must assist the Program Director in ascertaining that faculty and staff expectations in courses within the program are realistic.”

**Consultant’s Summation: (2008)**
In her 2008 self-study, the Program Director indicated that:
“The succession plan was developed and was completed as previously outlined in item C.”

As indicated above, the ADD staffing has improved, and the Program Director and faculty would appear to be positioned to be able to continue to provide quality leadership and teaching for some time. Additional full-time, tenure-track position(s) would enhance the stability and regularity of offerings to better serve the expanding enrollments.

5) “Plan for any future enrollment caps that may be needed to right size the major once the personnel issues identified above have been addressed”
Response from the Program Director, Department Chair and Dean (2004):
“Enrollment caps will continue to be addressed to provide a balance between teaching resources and student needs. In the current absence of an enrollment cap on the Apparel Program and other programs served by apparel courses, adequate resources must be directed to the apparel area to assure student retention and progress through the program.”

In her 2008 self-study, the Program Director indicated that:
“The program enrollment has remained relatively steadily high over the last several years. Open enrollment at the university remains a concern as it is not possible at this time to cap the program.”

The 33% greater admissions into the Apparel Design and Development program for Fall 2009 vs. 2008 (as of 2/5/09) and a 67% show rate (vs. 49% university-wide) is a testament to the success and quality of the program. However, it also strongly suggests that the stresses on instructors, classrooms, and labs will increase.

V. Current Program Review

Program Strengths

1. The Apparel Design and Development program has had strong growth. Placement rates are 95-100%, among the highest at UW-Stout. Students graduate with high regards for their preparation for employment and higher than average salaries $42,557 for 2006 graduates).
   Source: BPA, PRC Student Survey
2. Apparel Design and Development students’ learning involves a significant amount of technical, “hands on,” lab-based learning which is reported by students to be stressful (frequently listed under “weaknesses of the program”). At the same time, the challenge and very hard work are also seen by students as program strengths in maintaining quality of the program, high levels of skill development of its graduates, and good preparation for the work load in the industry.
   Source: PRC Student Survey, Key Instructors’ surveys
3. Expertise and industry experience of faculty and staff who are enthusiastic, knowledgeable, available and challenge students to do their best.
   Source: Student survey, Advisory Committee survey, Key Instructors’ surveys.
4. Realistic curriculum reflecting current industry practice, tightly designed for mastering needed skills.
   Source: Student survey, Advisory Committee survey, Key Instructors’ surveys, Program Director’s Report.

Program Opportunities for Improvement

1. Concerns for labs and classrooms. The Apparel Design and Development program has a serious need for adequate lab space. The enrollment has nearly doubled (125 to
224) since the 2001 Review, and will likely grow even more in 2009-10. The textile lab is the most frequently mentioned, though others are in need of space for student stations, work flow/layout, and equipment and materials’ storage. Classroom sizes are reportedly not adequate to meet the needs of increased class sizes.

**Source:** Program Director’s report, Student survey, Advisory Committee survey, Key Instructors’ surveys, PRC consultant observation.

2. Concerns for lab equipment. The Apparel Design and Development program has a need for adequate lab equipment. The enrollment increase necessitates not only a need for more equipment unless additional sections are added; even so, additional use requires additional maintenance, and greater competition among more students for equipment during open lab times. Additionally, students particularly note that equipment and labs are in need of updating and upkeep (sewing, serger, knitting machines, software for grading, marker-making).

**Source:** Student survey, Advisory Committee survey, Program Director’s report, Key Instructors’ surveys.

3. Concerns about staffing. Key instructors, and Advisory committee members report that the ballooning enrollments without increased staffing is problematic for students to be able to get into courses as needed, and to schedule predictably (students do not generally report inability to get classes or overcrowding). There has been a doubling of enrollments in ADD, increasing class sizes. Instructors in the program have multiple preparations each semester which increases stress as well. More full-time tenure-track positions are seen as providing stability and consistency in curriculum and instruction.

4. Concerns about curriculum. Some students, instructors, and advisory committee members report that creativity and design aspects of the curriculum and instruction are shortchanged in favor of more technical aspects of ADD.

**Source:** Key Instructor, Advisory Committee, Student surveys

**Recommendations**

**Recommendations for the Department Chair**

1. Work with the program director and the dean to ensure effective enrollment management.

2. Work with the dean to address the need for more appropriate classrooms and updated and enhanced facilities/labs and equipment.

3. Carefully evaluate students’ significant concerns for homework burnout and lab availability.

**Recommendation for the Program Director**

1. Work with the department chair and the dean to manage enrollment consistent with staffing and facilities. If capping enrollments are not possible, consider sophomore admission to the program as suggested by some survey respondents and others.

2. Work with the dean to address the need for appropriate classrooms and updated and enhanced facilities/labs and equipment.

3. Work with the department chair to carefully evaluate students’ significant concerns for homework burnout and lab availability.
Recommendations for the Dean

1. Work with the program director and the Department Chair to ensure effective enrollment management and/or adequate staffing. Consider additional full-time tenure-track positions which could enable greater consistency and stability of curriculum and instruction.

2. Work with the chair to address the need for appropriate classrooms and updated and enhanced facilities/labs and equipment. Investigate possible space “swaps” within the college or between colleges.