**Minutes 2024: Palomar College Fashion Merchandising and Design, Advisory Meeting**

April 24, 2024 – 4pm in FD 4, in person and Zoom Meeting ID 981 317 5642

Meeting started at 4:15pm after everyone had a chance to take a few items for the desert table.

**Welcome and Introductions:** Everyone introduced themselves and gave a brief bio.

**Industry Members:** Mina Fox Helles Bells, Andrew Bisah Former owner of Fashion Careers, Mercedes Kuder Reem Inc, Marla Carow Marla Hope Designs, Charniece White Patterns, Emmilie Bonura Designer, Allison Canter independent founder of Fashion Week San Diego, Ashley Meek Designer, Elena Chirkova Dance Design and Carlsbad HS, Maria Bernardo Designer, Liza Clifford Brixton, Cristina Tonello Assistant Buyer Nieman Marcus.

**Faculty:** Rita Campo Griggs (host), Nancy Galli, Rachael Libolt, Yoon Bahar, Ashley Tipton, Frania Flores, Angela Fesi-Pouliot.

**Announcements:**

* MODA Fashion Show- invited everyone to the show on Friday, May 10, 2024.
* Move to Rancho Bernardo campus: a PowerPoint of the RB campus and classrooms was shown. Advisory members were supportive of the move.

**Discussion:**

To start the conversation, we sent the Advisory members the following questions before the meeting to review and so they would be ready for discussion. Our discussions went very well and were very robust. Everyone participated and had their thoughts on these matters. Sending the questions in advance was a good way to prepare everyone.

1. **What are the minimum skills you expect when you hire a student that has just graduated from a fashion school? This includes Design and Merchandising positions. (Soft skills, portfolio...)**

The answers from our members depended on the industry. Soft skills, especially communication, and time management were at the top of their list for both Design and Merchandising, as well as strong math skills. Other skills for both included, creating a Tech Pack, end use for Textiles, creating mood boards, and measuring. For the design field sewing, patternmaking, computer skills such as Photoshop and Illustrator are a must. Merchandisers need hands-on skills for setting up floors, and floor plans and strong skills in Excell. The discussion also included the desire that many merchandisers want to be entrepreneurs. This could be a good way to partner with the Business department.

1. **What entry level positions do you have at your company**?

Most companies start with internships. The Brixton representative praised the student interns she had from Palomar College.

Several other positions included CAD production, garment measurements for Tech Pack, assistant to a position, to name a few.

Advisory recommendation: The Fashion Program needs to focus on creating certification for entry level positions in order for students to gain the specific knowledge they need versus a global overview.

1. **What trends are current in your industry?**

Sustainability, recycle, organic cotton, understanding textiles.

Alterations are making a big comeback. DYI projects or reconstructing what you have in your closet. Alterations for a bridal dress begins at $800.00. Advisory suggested having an alteration class. The discussion then went to specialized certificates; Fine Dress Making, Alterations, and Sustainability.

1. **What technology/software is new?**

AI and 3D, both are so new there is a wait and see what will happen attitude. Several companies are using AI for designing prints, and apparel. Also, 3D to create one-of-a-kind pieces.

1. **If you were an instructor for a FASH 100 class, what information would you like to introduce to your students.**

Highlight the hundreds of different positions in the Fashion Industry. Introduce the different sectors of the industry, men’s, women, juniors, children. Include guest speakers, from the different industries. Give an overview of the History of Fashion. Field trips to LA and local industry locations.

Advisory recommendations: Several of the industry people are Palomar College graduates. They remember all the activities and classes we had. They believe we need to reestablish these activities back into program. Each year we traveled to New York during the winter session. Students that came with us found it to be a “life changing experience.” They also found it disappointing we do not offer specialty classes, for example Tailoring, Fine Dressmaking, or the CAD class. The advisors believe that these activities would bring back energy to the program and bring up the enrollment.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40pm.