Group Projects (135 points)

1) Mini Group Project (35 points)

Each group will work on a pre-assigned topic by the instructor. The topic and assignment are listed in the next page and the presentation time for each topic is available in the class schedule (Syllabus p.6). Each group may have to read the assigned chapter(s) and find relevant information BEFORE the material is covered in class. See the instructor if you need more guidelines. The project will be evaluated on the quality of the presentation.

- **Objective**: This project is intended to assist understanding of the materials and develop analytical skills for fashion forecasting.

- **Presentation**: Presentation dates depend on the topic of the project. Please check your presentation date from the class schedule. You will have 10 minutes to present your project. Not all group members need to present. The audience assessment will be reflected in your presentation grade. The evaluation form will be posted on the Blackboard for your reference and will be distributed in class. For the presentation requirement and due date, see p.6. **For any late submission, you will lose “2 points per hour.” No presentation will be accepted after your assigned presentation time.**

**Topics and assignments for the mini group project**

- **Topic 1**: Mapping the Zeitgeist of 1920s to 1950s (p.38)
  Assignment) Read Chapter 1 to understand what the Zeitgeist is. You will be able to find more information about this in other chapters (see Index). Map the Zeitgeist (the spirit of the times) using the categories of dominant events, ideals, social groups, attitude, and technology for the decades from the 1920s to the 1990s. How do these categories define what is remembered about each decade? In particular, discuss how the Zeitgeist influenced fashion. Provide visual examples in the presentation.

- **Topic 2**: Mapping the Zeitgeist of 1960s 1990s (p.38)
  Assignment) Read Chapter 1 to understand what the Zeitgeist is. You will be able to find more information about this in other chapters (see Index). Map the Zeitgeist (the spirit of the times) using the categories of dominant events, ideals, social groups, attitude, and technology for the decades from the 1920s to the 1990s. How do these categories define what is remembered about each decade? In particular, discuss how the Zeitgeist influenced fashion. Provide visual examples in the presentation.

- **Topic 3**: Activity 1.3 – Mapping the Zeitgeist of your own generational cohort groups (p.18)
  Assignment) Read Chapter 1 to understand what the Zeitgeist is. You will be able to find more information about this in other chapters (see Index). Answer the questions in Activity 1.3. In particular, discuss how the Zeitgeist (the spirit of the times) influences product development and marketing. Provide visual examples in the presentation.

- **Topic 4**: Activity 2.8 – Researching Government Issue, Silent, and Baby Boom Generations (p.73)
  Assignment): Read Chapter 2 to understand generational cohorts. Conduct research on the generations assigned to each group. What kinds of information are available on generational cohorts? There is some information about each generation in chapter 2. Find other information as well. In particular, discuss how each generation’s characteristics influenced product development and marketing. Provide visual examples in the presentation.

- **Topic 5**: Activity 2.8 – Researching X and Y generations (p.73)
  Assignment): Read Chapter 2 to understand generational cohorts. Conduct research on the generations assigned to each group. What kinds of information are available on generational cohorts? There is some information about each generation in chapter 2. Find other information as well. In particular, discuss how each generation’s characteristics influenced product development and marketing. Provide visual examples in the presentation.

- **Topic 6**: Activity 3.1 – Group Identity (p.91)
  Assignment) This activity is designed to cultivate skills in analyzing current fashion within a theoretical framework. Read Chapter 3 to understand directional theories of fashion change, in particular, Trickle-Down Theory. Then, identify a group that embodies the definition of a new visible elite or a fast-moving social group with a penchant for differentiation. Use visuals and descriptive words to describe the group’s current look. What consumer segments are more likely to imitate the group’s taste? Use the visualization of the trickle-down theory of fashion change to predict the next stage of fashion change.
• Topic 7: Activity 1.1 – Visual Directory (p.7)
Assignment) Read Chapter 1 and Chapter 3 to understand fashion curves and fashion cycles. Then, look for examples of fads, classics, and styles that are recycled from former eras in the current fashion season. Use fashion magazines and Web sites like www.Vogue.com or www.Firstview.com to locate the images. Provide diverse examples for each fashion curve.

• Topic 8: Activity 3.6 – Pendulum Swings (p. 113) – Magazine search
Assignment) Read Chapter 1 and 3 to understand fashion cycles and pendulum swings of fashion. Then, use five years of back issues of a fashion magazine to backcast the pendulum swings of fashion. To narrow the search, check only key issues for each year, the ones most likely to preview seasonal fashion. Look for examples of pendulum swings for the past five years. Use the pendulum visualization to explain your findings (see Figure 3.14, p.111). Also, discuss how a point of exaggeration moved toward the opposite direction. Indicate the periods of each style (or swing). Refer to Table 3.1 (p.114) to get ideas.

• Topic 9: Activity 3.6 – Pendulum Swings (p.113) – Work of a designer
Assignment) Read Chapter 1 and 3 to understand fashion cycles and pendulum swings of fashion. Then, select one or two fashion designers and analyze their work over the past five years. Look for examples of pendulum swings. Use the pendulum visualization to explain your findings (see Figure 3.14, p.111). Also, discuss how a point of exaggeration moved toward the opposite direction. Indicate the periods of each style (or swing). Refer to Table 3.1 (p.114) to get ideas.

• Topic 10: Activity 1.2 – Megatrends (p.13)
Assignment) Read Chapter 1 and Chapter 4 to understand megatrends and cultural indicators. Then locate forecasts for the megatrends that will affect the future. Such forecasts are usually available in book form from well-known forecasters or summarized in newspaper and magazine articles. You can also visit trend forecasting websites. American Demographics magazine is an excellent source for this kind of information (www.demographics.com). Discuss how the megatrends will affect the apparel industry. Provide future implications from production and marketing perspectives.

• Topic 11: Activity 4.3 – The New Economy (p.129)
Assignment) Read Chapter 4 to understand diverse cultural indicators. This activity intends to cultivate skills for long-term forecasting. Locate books, articles, and websites on the current situation and expected development of biotechnology and genomics. After reviewing these materials, discuss how these technologies will change consumers’ lifestyles, demand and preferences in apparel markets, fiber and fabric production.

• Topic 12: Activity 5.1 – Color Image (p.159)
Assignment) Read Chapter 5 to understand the role of color as a marketing tool. Answer all of the questions in Activity 5.1. Provide visuals examples in the presentation.

• Topic 13: Additional Forecasting Activities – Contrast and Compare Forecasts (pp.197-198)
Assignment) Read Chapter 5 to understand color forecasting as a coordinating factor in the apparel supply chain from fiber producer to retailer. Answer all of the questions in Activity 5.1. Provide visual examples.

• Topic 14: Fabrics in the news (p.211)
Assignment) Read Chapter 6 and work on Activity 6.2. Collect reports on runway shows for a particular
season from either trade publications or fashion magazines. Glean all the news about fabric and trim from each article and compile and profile of the important fabric news for that season. Repeating the process over several seasons will reveal directional trends for fibers, fabrics, and trims.

- **Topic 15: Activity 7.5 – Fashion Capitals (p.236)**  
  **Assignment** Read Chapter 7 and work on Activity 7.5. You can focus on any four countries. Provide visual examples.

- **Topic 16: Activity 8.3 – How people shop (p.277)**  
  **Assignment** Read Chapter 8 and work on Activity 8.3. Instead of shopping, become an observer in a store. Watch how consumers interact with their surroundings. Jot down a brief description of some of the consumers you are observing. Then note where they shop, what they shop (type of apparel, including size, color, style, and price), how long they spend, whether they try on clothing or not, their interaction with sales associates, and whether they make a purchase, or not. What did you learn from this? What can a forecaster learn from this kind of observation?

2) **Final Group Project (100 points) – Trend forecasting for apparel related company**

   **Scenario:** Assume that you are a professional forecasting company in the US. One client who owns an apparel related company contacts your company to get a help for their new product development for Fall/Winter 2010. The client asks you to forecast the trend for next year for their target market. If you are successful in this project, it could lead to a long-term contract with the client.

   **Assignment:** Each group will create a name of their company and make up their own company profile (e.g., experiences, past & current clients, size, reputation, location, etc.). Be unique but realistic. A client for each group will be randomly assigned by the instructor. Each group will conduct initial research to analyze current problems of the client’s company (e.g., lack of understanding of changing characteristics of the target market, wrong forecasting for the target market, a lack of differentiation, etc.), and the characteristics of the target market, company brand image, and positioning of the products. Based on your analysis, you will propose new trends and new colors, fabrics, and styles for this company. The audience and the instructor will represent the top executives of the client’s company and decide whether they will buy your idea or not.

   **Objective:** This project is intended to apply the class materials to a real case by hypothetically acting as a fashion forecaster. The ultimate goal is to enhance skills to analyze and integrate diverse information in order to forecast new trends for successful development of new products for the upcoming year and to provide actionable marketing insights that are best suitable for the company’s target market.

   **Paper:** The paper should be **no more than 10 pages**. Front page, appendix (tables, graphs, or pictures) and references are **not** included in the page limit. Meeting the page limit is also a very important capability required in the real world. The length does not mean quality. Therefore, if you exceed the page limit, you will lose **10 points from your project grade. You must** include items listed in the group project outline (see next page). The evaluation form will be posted on Blackboard for your reference. You do not need to print it out. The final paper is due no later than **November 13, 2009 (by 5:00 pm in class)**. **For any late project, you will lose “5 points per day”**.

   **Presentation:** Each group will have **15 minutes** to present your research and findings. The exact date for each group will be announced later in class. All members in a group should equally participate in presentation in class. At the end of the presentation, there will be a Q&A session with the audience.
The audience assessment will be included in the project evaluation. The evaluation form will be posted on the Blackboard and will be distributed in class. For the presentation format and due date, see page 3. For any late presentation file, you will lose “2 points per hour.” No presentation will be accepted after your assigned presentation time.

**Final Group Project Outline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Introduction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Provide a brief profile of your company (your name, brief history, current &amp; past clients, size of the company, reputation, and any strength of your company).</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Briefly explain why you are preparing for this proposal (the purpose of the project).</td>
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<tr>
<th>II. Body</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part A: Understanding of the market and the client company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Brief background information about the client company (sales, number of stores, locations, company philosophy, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Characteristics of target market (demographic and psychographic information)</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Brand positioning in terms of brand image, product and price</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Merchandise mix (i.e., product category/assortment) for a specific target group</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Marketing analysis (competitor analysis): Identify two strong direct or indirect competitors and justify why they are chosen as a competitor, and compare them with the client company on various aspects. Emphasize the strengths and weaknesses of a client company.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Part B: Identifying future consumer trends for the client company</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Forecast at least two megatrends that would affect product development trend forecasting for the client company for the upcoming season (e.g., ethnocentrism, environmentalism, or cocooning) based on in depth understanding of consumer needs and market. Each megatrend may reflect current changes around the world (including economy, politics, lifestyle, etc.). Name each megatrend creatively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide reliable source of information (at least 2 major forecasting sources)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Justify how the identified (mega) trends are suitable by considering the followings:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Characteristics of the target market (Identify their lifestyle, preferences, and/or social events, dominating social groups; Examine if there are any changing elements in the target market and discuss how these will affect new product development.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Fit with company philosophy, product category, brand positioning, and/or merchandising concept</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Competitive pressures (e.g., influence of the competitors)</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Develop two themes that reflect the (mega) trends above. (Label the theme names creatively)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Part C: Developing product development strategies under the two themes proposed above</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe a storyboard presenting basic elements of each theme (i.e., color, fabric, and style). All story boards must be included in the powerpoint presentation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Color forecasting <strong>(Photoshop is required.)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Identify key color themes (more than 8 colors for each theme) and label them</td>
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creatively. Provide the inspiration sources for each theme. Be sure to match with the company’s product category, brand positioning, target market, and the megatrend you are forecasting.

- **Fabric forecasting (Photoshop is required.)**
  - Identify key fabrics or prints (more than 4 fabrics) and label them creatively. Be sure to match with the company’s product category, brand positioning and target market. Provide the source of inspiration. You may use visual images of the sample fabrics.

- **Style forecasting (Photoshop is required.)**
  - Suggest silhouette, details and design features for at least four product groups (e.g., jackets, skirts, pants, and coats). You may draw them using a Photoshop Illustrator or use visual images to illustrate. Be sure to match with the company’s product category, brand positioning and target market. Provide the source of inspiration.

### III. Conclusion

Briefly summarize your work. Conclude with a strong statement why the client company should hire your forecasting company for Winter/Fall 2010 season. Make it succinct and powerful.

- **List of potential clients:**
  1. Adidas (men and women, no kids)
  2. Benetton (men and women, no kids)
  3. Zara (men and women, no kids)
  4. Dolce & Gabbana
  5. J. Jill
  6. Roxy
  7. Lacoste
  8. Lucky Brand Jeans
  9. Lane Bryant
  10. Puma (men and women, no kids)
  11. Van Heusen
  12. Anne Klein
  13. Chico’s
  14. Oscar de la Renta
  15. Gymboree
  16. Brook Brothers

### Requirement for All Group Projects

- **Group sign-up:** You will sign up for a group on August 19. A group should be **5-6 people**. In selecting group members, try to include people with diverse skills in such areas as writing, information search and analysis, public speaking, art work, and creativeness. Provide the instructor with your group leader’s name, member’s names, and contact information in class.

- **Evaluation:** Group projects will be evaluated in terms of the quality of the paper and presentation.
Evaluation criteria will be posted on Blackboard. In addition to the instructor’s evaluation, the audience’s evaluations will be reflected in your grade. If a student fails to participate in the group presentations on the date and time specified, the student will receive a zero for the presentation grade. If the student provides a University-approved excuse, the assignment reverts to a 5-page paper (including illustrations and bibliography) due not more than 1 week after the date of the presentation.

- **Writing format:** Every project should be typed and double-spaced with 12 point font. You must include citations in the main text and a bibliography at the end of the paper. There is no limitation to the reference format as long as it is consistent throughout the paper. If not consistent, it will be considered as a lack of efforts and lose significant points.

- **Presentation format:** Presentations should be in the PowerPoint format. Photoshop must be incorporated for color, fabric, and style forecasting. The visuals and contents should be professional and creative.

- **Presentation file due:** For all presentations, the PowerPoint slides should be sent electronically to the instructor by 10:00AM on the date of your presentation. Make sure that you receive a confirmation email from the instructor. Failure to do so may negatively affect your evaluation.

- **Peer evaluation:** Each student must write a section of the group projects in order to receive credit for the project. Upon completion, there will be a formal evaluation of each person’s contributions to the projects by group members. A form will be posted to Blackboard. The project will be evaluated as a single entity; thus, all group members will receive the same grade unless an individual group member is identified by the majority of the group members as not participating at the same level as everyone else. The instructor reserves the right to give a student who is negligent in the group project contribution a lower grade than the group, or no credit if he/she does not contribute to the overall project. The evaluation should be prepared individually, and turned in with your signed group log “all together” in one envelop on the date of your presentation. If you do not meet any of these, you will lose 1 point for each violation.

- **Group log:** Please keep a log of all your work (meetings, store visit, database search, etc.) and each person's participation/contribution. Include the summary of each member’s contribution and have each member sign the summary. Submit your group’s work log with peer evaluations on the date of your presentation. If you do not meet any of these, you will lose 1 point for each violation.

For all group projects, submit “2 copies” of the paper, one original copy of a group log, and peer evaluations of each member.