



Passion for Fashion

Emily Lynch

A style for every story



Madison, Wisconsin may not be the first city that comes to mind when asked about fashion hubs of the world but that is quickly changing.

Carolyn Kallenborn, an Associate Professor in the School of Human Ecology at UW-Madison is incorporating hands-on learning experiences in the classroom that correspond to work in careers. Professor Kallenborn's background is not your typical resume. She considers herself more of an artist than a trained trend analyst. Her focus pertains to how influential clothing can be in the way we view others and ourselves.

"It's more from a philosophy or curiosity, rather than necessarily what's fashionable and how to be trendy. What drives me is conceptually and sociologically thinking about fashion. I like to make things and I like to help people make things. And I love a big show," said Kallenborn.

Design Studies 270 is a class that creates an environment for Carolyn to share her ambitions with driven students of all majors. This practicum enrolls around 40 students and an additional 10 to be apart of the management teams. Students from textiles, design, retailing, journalism, engineering and

more majors, come together to implement all the elements of a fashion show production for UW-Threads that performs the last weekend in April.

"By the time it is done, they have this really tremendous confidence. I can say for sure that we get a really interesting group of people together and everybody feeds on each other's energy and I think it's a really good experience," said Kallenborn.

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The students are given strict budgets to perform the duties needed to put on the show. Committees are made based off of preference in participants skill sets. There is marketing which is focused on sales but also reaching all audiences. Then visual communications, which is the photography and graphics for the view books created. Organization and communication are emphasized in the course, no matter the specialized group a student is placed in.

Students learn to use excel sheets to organize information for a large group with varying details, this is one of the biggest learning objectives.

Design 270 students take on strenuous responsibilities, yet the reward is worth the long hours. Previous students have thrived in the job market, not solely because they took this class but the opportunity did give them an outlet to put build professional skills.

"Paige Giddings was working for a Paris fashion show production company right after graduation and she wound up as an intern with them and now as a production manager, which is like amazing," said Kallenborn.

Specialized classes at UW-Madison are broadening students skills through unique curriculum filled with experience. The students are running all the angles of production with the guidance of Carolyn Kallenborn to create an outstanding fashion program.



Carolyn Kallenborn, Assistant Professor in the School of Human Ecology.