

School of Fashion

MFA Fashion Merchandising and Management

MFA Fashion Marketing and Brand Management

Midpoint Review Guidelines (Master of Fine Arts)

All Master of Fine Arts students are required to conduct a Midpoint Review as of part of the Master's program to present their Final Thesis proposal. Your thesis proposal must be presented and approved before you begin your Directed Study coursework.

Important Contact Information

School of Fashion
Merchandising and Management
Marketing and Brand Management
(415) 618-3907

Midpoint Review Coordinator:
(415) 618-6390
Midpointreview@academyart.edu

Eligibility

The Midpoint Review is conducted at the end of FSH 635 class .

Individual Midpoint Review Presentation will be scheduled and made during module 12-13.

Scheduling

Please review the [Midpoint and Final Review Handbook](#).

Deliverables

Portfolio

Your portfolio will consist of samples of your work from each studio class completed and of a style you wish to pursue or other artistic influences.

Thesis Book

PART 1 THESIS PROPOSAL contains the following items.

- Current Resume** (included in the thesis proposal)
- Portfolio Works** – 3~5 best sample of class projects from various classes and each project must include course title, date/semester created, instructor and project contributors (if group projects).
- Thesis Proposal:** Complete Thesis Proposal (see THESIS PROPOSAL OUTLINE)
 - Digital copy:** PDF uploaded to [Thesis Proposal icon in LMS](#)
 - Physical copy:** One copy printed and professionally bound
- Timeline:** Anticipated graduation date and list of anticipated courses by semester

Oral Presentation

You will present your work to a panel, which typically includes the department director and two faculty members. Expect to spend approximately 30 minutes in this oral presentation including Q&As. You may use notes and flashcards as cues to help you remember the information during your oral presentation. Do not read your entire presentation

PART 2 VISUAL & ORAL PRESENTATION

Present the summary of thesis idea and proposal with a slide deck.

- Presentation Slide Deck:** A slide deck that summarizes and addresses key points of the thesis project proposed
- Verbal Presentation:** Present thesis idea with a slide deck - 15 minutes

Due Date for Deliverables

DUE DATES for ONSITE MFA Candidates:

- *PDF upload must be received by your department **one week in advance** of your Midpoint Review through LMS - Thesis Book (All of the PART 1 in one PDF)*
- *Professionally printed thesis proposal: on the presentation day*
- *Must bring a PDF format presentation slide deck to the Midpoint Review Presentation*

DUE DATES for ONLINE MFA Candidates:

- *PDF upload must be received by your department **one week in advance** of your Midpoint Review through LMS - Thesis Book (All of the PART 1 in one PDF)*
- *No printed thesis proposal required*
- *Must bring a PDF format presentation slide deck to the Midpoint Review Presentation*

Important note: if the thesis proposal is not uploaded before the due date (1 week prior to the scheduled Midpoint Review Presentation), it is considered that you don't intend to participate in the Midpoint Review and will be canceled.

Structure

Midpoint Reviews are one hour in duration. Your presentation should be 15 minutes long.

The Midpoint Review meeting will follow this structure:

Midpoint Review Panel/Student Introduction	5 minutes
Midpoint Review Presentation	15 minutes
Committee Question & Answer Session	10 minutes
Committee Discussion – closed door/offline	15 minutes
Committee Decision & Feedback	10 minutes

Midpoint Review Preparation Timeline

3 to 4 months prior	Watch the Midpoint Review Orientation Review department specific guidelines
2 to 3 months prior	Check graduate website for Midpoint Review sign-up schedule Solidify your Thesis Project Concept
6 Weeks Prior	Prepare your thesis book Work with an editor or a friend to make sure your thesis book is grammatically correct and typo-free.
1 month prior	Create your PowerPoint/PDF slide show Organize and create notes for your oral presentation Work with a friend, or colleague on your oral presentation
3 weeks prior	Review the online-specific requirements and test all of your equipment Practice your oral presentation out loud and with a timer Email your PowerPoint or PDF presentation to Online Graduate School
2 weeks prior	On-campus students verify your equipment works prior to your actual presentation date
1 week prior	Upload portfolio and thesis to your review page Meet online with your Online Graduate Department Learning Coordinator to review your presentation room setup and use Plan your attire, dress professionally Practice your presentation in front of a live audience
Tips for the day of	Get plenty of rest the night before Arrive early to prepare physically and vocally for the group performance Greet your committee members prior to beginning your presentation Listen to the committee's advice and take notes Maintain professionalism during the entire review
Following your review	View your Midpoint Review results here

Portfolio and Presentation Checklists

Portfolio Checklist

Please upload 3-5 best samples of class projects from various classes. Each project must include course title, date/semester created, instructor and project contributors (if group projects).

Thesis Book Checklist

Fashion Merchandising & Fashion Marketing and Brand Management Midpoint Thesis Proposal must meet the scope of one of the tracks below and include the following sections:

MFA Fashion Merchandising & Management Students: Follow thesis track [A]

[A] Launch a new fashion business and brand for fashion products or services.

MFA Fashion Marketing & Brand Management: Follow thesis track [A], [B], or [C]

[A] Launch a new fashion business and brand for fashion products or services.

[B] Research current and future consumer and industry trends, then market a new fashion business model.

[C] Research current and future consumer and industry trends, then design and launch a fully-realized integrated marketing campaign for an existing fashion brand.

Thesis Proposal Requirements

- Cover Page
- Table of Contents
- Student Introduction: About Me
- Course Project Examples
- Thesis Proposal

A. Business and Brand Proposal

- Overview
- Business Concept, Mission, Vision and Description
- Business Model
- Business Objectives
- Market Research: preliminary but sufficient to support the proposed business
 - Market overview and condition (macro-level market environments)
 - Industry overview
- Target Customer
- Proposed Product/Service Description, Strategy, and Preliminary Ideas
- Key Competitors: at least 3~4 key, direct competitors
- Competitive Advantages
- Proposal Summary
- Work Cited http://elmo.academyart.edu/reference-help/mla_citation_guide.htm & http://arc.academyart.edu/writing/mla_examples.html

B. Research-based New Business Model Proposal (MFA Fashion Marketing & Brand Management ONLY)

- Overview
- Research Topic (Contemporary Issues such as market trends, consumer trends or technology and innovations in the fashion supply chain) Introduction
 - Topic Overview
 - Research Plan: Research Objectives & Methods
 - Preliminary Research and Analysis : define topics to be researched, historical background and developments, and current trends and applications
- New Business/Brand Model Proposal
 - Business Concept, Business Model and Description
 - Business Objectives
 - Market Research: preliminary but sufficient to support the proposed business
 - Market overview and condition (macro-level market environments)
 - Industry overview
 - Market Size and Potential Target Customers with Supporting Research
 - Proposed Product/Service Description and Strategy
 - Competitive Analysis
 - Key Competitors: at least 3~4 key, direct competitors
 - SWOT and Competitive Advantages
 - Launch plan
- Proposal Summary
- Work Cited http://elmo.academyart.edu/reference-help/mla_citation_guide.htm & http://arc.academyart.edu/writing/mla_examples.html

C. Research-based Fully Realized Integrated Campaign Plan and Development Proposal (MFA Fashion Marketing & Brand Management ONLY)

- Overview
- Research Topic (Contemporary Issues such as market trends, consumer trends or technology and innovations in the fashion supply chain) Introduction
 - Topic Overview
 - Research Plan: Research Objectives & Methods
 - Preliminary Research and Analysis: define topics to be researched, historical background and developments, and current trends and applications
- Integrated Marketing Campaign Proposal
 - Market Research: preliminary but sufficient to support the proposed brand and campaign needs
 - Market overview and condition (macro-level market environments)
 - Industry overview
 - Marketing trends
 - Benchmark studies
 - Consumer research
 - Brand Overview: current business description, target customer, and marketing mix
 - Competitive Analysis
 - Campaign Creative Brief
 - Brand's Campaign Objectives
 - Campaign Target Audience
 - Competitive Analysis including but not limited to major competitors, competitive market environments, SWOT and competitive advantages etc.

- Campaign Theme
- Campaign message and Tone
- Campaign Mix
- Media Channels
- Timeline and budget
- Proposal Summary
- Work Cited http://elmo.academyart.edu/reference-help/mla_citation_guide.htm &
 - http://arc.academyart.edu/writing/mla_examples.html

Timeline

- The list of courses (course number and title) completed by semester
- List your anticipated courses by title and semester
- Identify your anticipated graduation date (semester/year)

Note: Be sure your total units add up to 63 units

Oral Presentation Checklist

Presentation slide deck must be prepared for the Midpoint Review.

- Presentation Slide Deck:** A slide deck that summarizes and addresses key points of the thesis project proposed
- Verbal Presentation:** Present thesis idea with a slide deck - 15 minutes

After your presentation, the committee will ask questions for clarification on your project. Be prepared to clarify your thesis project and/or defend, as needed. Afterwards, the committee will recess in private to discuss the success of your thesis.

The work you submit will be assessed using the Graduate School of Fashion program learning outcomes. The program learning outcomes are the same for both Midpoint and Final Review.

<https://www.academyart.edu/degree/fashion-merchandising-management/?degree=mfa>

THESIS PROPOSAL SAMPLE PRESENTATION SECTION CONTENTS & SLIDE DECK CONTENTS

<p>***Include all the following information on the cover page</p> <h3>Thesis Midpoint Proposal Project Title</h3> <p>Name, Student ID Major</p> <p>Date and Time of Presentation</p> <p>The Academy of Art University</p>	<h3>Contents</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number each page of the proposal • List each topic section and the page number 	<h3>About Me</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce yourself (150- 200 words, 1 page) • Include information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Your background and interests <input type="checkbox"/> Any relevant work experience <input type="checkbox"/> What were the most important things you learned during your education so far? <input type="checkbox"/> Career goals for the future
<h3>Course Project Examples</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include 3 to 5 samples of your best work from different courses that you completed. • This section should be 6 to 10 pages • Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do not include entire projects <input type="checkbox"/> Include the best pages that reflect your key learning and career goals <input type="checkbox"/> For each project example, include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Title of project ○ Course name and instructor 	<h3>Thesis Proposal Overview</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Business Concept <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -1 page, 300 to 400 words -Include the following information, written in brief paragraphs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Type of business (For example: product design and development, wholesale, direct-consumer, retail store, service provider) <input type="checkbox"/> Brief description of 4Ps <input type="checkbox"/> Brief description of target customer <input type="checkbox"/> Why is this concept interesting and relevant to you? <input type="checkbox"/> Include relevant imagery 	<h3>Business Objectives</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What market issues will you solve with your business? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In other words, why is your business concept relevant in the market and industry? - 1 page, 150 to 250 words. - Write in bullet points or brief paragraphs - Include relevant imagery
<h3>Market Research</h3> <h4>Macro-Environment Research (PESTEL)</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe PESTEL factors that support your business. These must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Demographic trends ○ Consumer behavior and preferences ○ Market trends and changes ○ Economic trends ○ Environmental factors (if relevant) • Describe each factor with supporting research. • Include relevant images, infographics, charts and graphs. • Make sure to use in-text citations. 	<h3>Market Research</h3> <h4>Micro-Environment Research</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the industry size and future prospects of your industry? • Are there any current trends in the industry that will impact your business? • Include relevant images, infographics, charts and graphs. • Make sure to use in-text citations. 	<h3>Target Customer</h3> <h4>Primary Target Customer</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Demographics ○ Psychographics ○ Behaviors • What is the size of this target segment? • Why does it make good business sense to target this segment? • Include relevant images, infographics, charts and graphs. • Make sure to use in-text citations. <h4>Include</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential Secondary and Tertiary Target Customer

<h3>Proposed Product/Service Description</h3> <p>Key Products/Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Product categories ○ Core price points ○ Sourcing plan* • Must include images • Why will your target customers respond positively to the planned products/services? <p>* If you have a service business, discuss with your thesis guide.</p>	<h3>Key Competitors</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List 3 to 4 of your closest direct competitors • For each competitor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Briefly describe the 4 Ps ○ List at least one strength that you can emulate ○ List at least one weakness that you can do better ○ Include images of key products, location, website etc. 	<h3>Competitive Advantages</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will you do better than your competitors to appeal to your target customers? • Describe your strengths by comparing your 4 Ps with your direct competitors in table format
<h3>Proposal Summary</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize your thesis proposal by answering the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Briefly review the 4Ps ○ What market opportunities will you capture with your new business? ○ Why will your business be successful? 	<h3>Citations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete citations in MLA format 	<h3>Timeline for Completion</h3> <p>List the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The courses you completed so far by semester. • Include Course number and name • The courses you anticipate taking in the future • Anticipated graduation date

Midpoint Review PDF Checklist

PDF Checklist: The PDF must include the following items.

Thesis Proposal (see full requirements under Thesis Book Checklist)

Visual/Oral Presentation

- **Presentation Slide Deck:** A slide deck that summarizes and addresses key points of the thesis project proposed

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When can I schedule my Midpoint Review?

A: Once you have completed your eligibility requirements, you can sign up online when the sign up is available. Check the Graduate School calendar for dates and the Graduate School's Midpoint Review Page for the sign-up link.

Q: How many pages should the thesis book be?

A: There is no specified length for the completed written proposal. There are some sections that have limitation of length, but the main part of your proposal does not have a limit. The written proposal should be thorough in describing all aspects of your project, but you also want to think about how you can be concise and avoid redundancy of information in the content.

Q: If I'm an online student, do I need to send in physical samples of my class work?

A: No.

Q: Can we include work we've done outside of the Academy?

A: Work not executed at the Academy of Art University should not constitute more than 10% of your portfolio presentation.

Q: Am I supposed to have a fully developed thesis or portfolio prepared for the Midpoint?

A: No. That will be developed through your group directed studies after you pass your Midpoint Review.

Q: Can I use fancy text, borders and custom backgrounds for my PowerPoint presentation?

A: We would recommend against it. Simple, easy to read and easy to see content is best.

Important Links

GUIDELINES PAGE FOR FASHION MERCHANDISING AND MANAGEMENT &	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/schools/fashion-merchandising.html
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FASHION MARKETING AND BRAND MANAGEMENT	
AAU LIBRARY	http://library.academyart.edu/
MLA CITATION	http://elmo.academyart.edu/reference-help/mla_citation_guide.html/ http://arc.academyart.edu/writing/mla_examples.html
AAU GRADUATE STUDENTS HOMEPAGE	http://gradstudents.academyart.edu/
ACADEMY RESOURCE CENTER (ARC)	http://arc.academyart.edu/ Your resource for proofreading, ESL assistance, Midpoint Review, Writing Lab.
GRADUATE SCHOOL CALENDAR	http://gradstudents.academyart.edu/grad_calendar.html
GRADUATE STUDENTS MIDPOINT REVIEW PAGE	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/ Here you will find a link to the Midpoint Review Orientation, and links to the Midpoint Review Guidelines and Handbooks.