School of Fashion: Product Development

M.F.A. FASHION PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT MIDPOINT REVIEW GUIDELINE
Effective Fall 2019

Midpoint Review Objectives

Evaluate development and progress through the previous course works
Demonstrate skills and knowledge on product development through their course works
Propose a thesis topic for review and departmental approval

This handbook contains the Fashion Product Development Midpoint Review requirements, planning guides, and resources. Please read through all of this information carefully before preparing your materials for Midpoint Review. If you have any questions or need clarification on any aspect of your upcoming Midpoint Review, you will find information about who to contact on page 17 of this handbook.

It is your responsibility to use the latest version of the Midpoint Review Handbook. If you are uncertain if this is the latest version, please refer to the Fashion Product Development page on the Graduate

Showcase:

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ONLINE ICON: The online icon will mark items that are specific to online students only. On campus students can skip these items.

1.   ELIGIBILITY FOR MIDPOINT REVIEW

A.   Eligibility

Prior to scheduling your Midpoint Review, you must have done the following:

•   Completed **at least 24 Credits** excluding EAP
•   Completed **FSH638 Product Line Development**, enrolled in **FSH 632**

2. SCHEDULING YOUR MIDPOINT REVIEW

A. Review Date

- Midpoint Reviews are conducted in the spring, summer and fall semesters. Presentations typically start in the third or fourth week of the fall or spring Semester and in the second week of the summer semester. You can find the signup dates in the Graduate School Calendar:
- http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources
- NOTE: Please communicate with your Graduate Advisor about when would be the most appropriate time to schedule your Midpoint Review. It is important to know the final cut-off date for scheduling your review.
- You should receive an email from the Midpoint Review Coordinator approximately one week prior to the start of the semester you will be presenting your Midpoint with details on how to sign-up. The email will direct you to the Graduate Midpoint and Final Review Showcase http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/.
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B. Review Orientation

- You are required to watch the online Midpoint Review Orientation prior to completing the Midpoint Review sign-up form online. In addition to watching the orientation, you are required to meet with your Thesis Mentor prior to scheduling your midpoint review.
- You have the option of presenting your Midpoint or Final Review online or on campus. If you will be doing your Midpoint Review online please review the online presentation specifications.
- Please contact the Midpoint Review Coordinator if you have any questions.

C. Attendance & Cancellations

- Midpoint Review is a required component of your Master's level program and must be completed before commencing the directed study or final portfolio portion of your program. Cancellations or postponements must be organized through the Midpoint Review Coordinator at least 5 working days prior to the scheduled review date. Late cancellations or postponements will be considered "No Show" and fail the Midpoint Review.

3. DELIVERABLE DETAILS & DUE DATES

Your Midpoint Review will consist of the following three components: portfolio, thesis proposal, and oral presentation.

IMPORTANT: If your Thesis Proposal and Portfolio are not received in time, your Midpoint Review will be cancelled and you will need to present the following semester.

Portfolio: You will need to include images of class project examples. These need to be the very best samples of your work from the major courses taken preciously.

Upload/Deliver To: Upload to the Portfolio Icon in LMS

Due Date: One (1) week prior to review date

Format: PDF

Thesis Proposal: Your Thesis proposal must have a clear concept. The concept should include what your project is about, why you have chosen the project, and how you plan on implementing your proposal. Describe your proposal in detail and ensure that it is not too narrow or overly broad in scope. Address what led you to the project, how you expect your project to evolve and what challenges you foresee. Your project must also allow room for growth through investigation, exploration and risk taking.

Professional Editing: The proposal must be professionally executed, grammatically correct and free of spelling errors and typos.

Upload/Deliver To: Upload to the Thesis Proposal Icon in LMS

Due Date: One (1) week prior to review date

Format: PDF

Oral Presentation: Oral presentation of your proposed thesis project. Your presentation is NOT a duplicate of your thesis proposal. It is a summary of your proposal addressing each area provided in the thesis checklist.

Upload/Deliver To: At the Midpoint Review

Due Date: At the scheduled day/time of your review if presenting on-campus; online students must submit a PowerPoint presentation one week prior to scheduled review.

Format: PDF (For Thesis Proposal Presentation)

Practice and Prepare: Practice your oral presentation in advance of your review to ensure your comfort level during the presentation. Be prepared to answer questions when you are finished.

Notes: You may use notes, flashcards, or prompts in your presentation deck as cues to help you remember the information during your oral presentation. Do not read your entire presentation.

4.   MIDPOINT REVIEW PROCESS

A.   Review Expectations and Structure

Midpoint Reviews are 45 minutes in duration. Your presentation should be 10 minutes long. The Midpoint Review meeting will follow this structure:

-   Midpoint Review Panel/Student Introduction
-   Midpoint Review Presentation: 10 minutes
-   Committee Question and Answer Sessions: 10 minutes
-   Committee Discussion – closed door/offline: 10 minutes
-   Committee Decision and Feedback: 10 minutes

Review Committee: The Midpoint Review Committee is comprised of faculty and/or industry professionals approved by the Graduate School and the Department Directors.

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Committee Question & Answer Session: After your presentation, questions will be asked by the Committee for clarification on your project.

Committee Discussion, Decision, & Feedback: After the question and answer session, the committee will recess in private to discuss the merits of your proposal.

B.   Results

Upon reconvening, the committee will present you with one of the following outcomes:

1.   **Approved**: You have passed, and can now proceed with Directed Study for the following semester. *All approved candidates* ***must be enrolled in FSH 860 Group Directed Study: Trends & Market Research upon approval***

Not Approved: You have NOT passed, and are NOT allowed to proceed with Directed Study until one of the following has been completed and the Midpoint Proposal is approved by the Midpoint Review Committee:

> **Resubmit**:   Following specific Midpoint Review Committee requirements, your project requires small changes that must be corrected and re-submitted within 3 weeks. If the re-submission meets the requirements, then the Midpoint Proposal is approved and you can proceed with Directed Study the following semester.
>
> OR
>
> **Represent**:   Following specific Midpoint Review Committee requirements, you must complete additional studio work, rethink Final Project, and/or sign up for a new Midpoint Review next semester.

Please follow directions outlined in the link below to view your results and written feedback after your Midpoint Review.

http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/ReviewResults.pdf

C.   EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The work you submit will be assessed using the Graduate School of Fashion program learning outcomes. At the Midpoint Review the review committee is looking at your progress towards achieving the stated outcomes.

http://www.academyart.edu/academics/fashion/graduate-degrees

5.   CHECKLISTS

THESIS PROPOSAL PDF CHECKLIST

Thesis Proposal Contents: In your thesis proposal book, you must include the following sections, in this order and with a separate heading for each:

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1. Cover Page
2. Table of Contents
3. About Me
4. Resume
5. Course Project Examples
6. Midpoint Thesis Proposal
7. Timeline

Cover Page: The Cover of your thesis book must include the following:

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1. Thesis Project Title
2. Project Subtitle (if needed)
3. Your Name
4. Student ID Number
5. Academy of Art University, Graduate School of Fashion Merchandising
6. Identify this is your "Midpoint Proposal"
7. Date of Presentation
8. Time of Presentation

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Student Introduction: you will briefly address the following in no more than one page in length:

- Introduce yourself
- Explain how you became interested in the program
- Discuss goals for the future

Resume: You will need to include a formal resume in your proposal. Typed in 10 to 12 point font.

Course Project Examples: You will need to include images of class project examples. These need to be the very best samples of your work from 3-5 different classes.

- Title of project
- Date(s) created
- Course name and instructor
- Project team and contributors (if applicable)
- Projects should be edited down to no more than two pages per project.

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Midpoint Thesis The Midpoint Thesis Proposal is the **focal point of the midpoint**. In this section of the document, you will relay the details of your proposed project to the Panel. There is no specified length for the Proposal. Avoid direct repetition of your sentences from your Abstract. You will want to address the following in an articulate and well thought-out manner:

- **Brand Concept and Description:** What is your business concept and why have you selected it? What does your brand stand for or what do you want to be known for?
  Include a summary as well as a brand concept story board.
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- **Type of Business:** What type of business will you develop – wholesale or retail, e-commerce or brick and mortar. Where are you proposing to start your business? What country, city and neighborhood? Explain why. What product categories do you plan to offer, what are your price ranges for each product category.

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- **Objectives:** Why is your business concept is important in the industry? What is new about your product, or what makes you different from those that already exist? Why would your target customer be attracted to your new brand and product line? Why are your products relevant now?
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- **Market Overview:** Explain what is happening in fashion and consumer behavior that makes your business a valid idea in today;s industry. Discuss market your brand is entering, ex luxury womenswear and explain why this is relevant.
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- **Location**: Location research and overview. What location characteristics allow your business to be successful?
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- **Target Customer:** Who is your target market? What are their demographics, psychographics, sociographics and behaviors? How many people fit the criteria for the target market that you are establishing? And explain why they are your ideal target market based on the research.
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- **Competitors:** Who are your direct competitors and why? What are they known for, what are their product features? How do their products compare with yours?
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- **Product Line Concept and Inspiration:** Present your product line concept and inspiration through trend research and analysis. Discuss product features and benefits. Include boards and sketches to translate your ideas. These should include:
  o Concept boards
  o Trend boards
  o Material boards or swatches of materials you plan to incorporate into your collection.
  o Sketches to display the core products and silhouettes of your brand (6-8)
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- **Point of Difference:** What makes your products different than those already existing in the marketplace.
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- **Sourcing and Manufacturing Plan:** Where will your brand source and manufacture products from and why?

Timeline: The timeline must include the following:

- List by semester the courses that you have taken to date, including the course number, title, and instructor.
- List your anticipated courses by title and semester.
- Identify your anticipated graduation date (semester/year).
- Be sure your total units add up to 63 units.

MIDPOINT REVIEW PRESENTATION CHECKLIST

General Oral Presentation Guidelines: The Midpoint Review is a formal presentation before a Review Committee, where the Graduate School evaluates your eligibility for Master's candidacy based on the following:

- Challenge and quality of proposed Final Thesis Project
- Level of critical thinking and problem solving
- Development of a body of work
- Adhere to 10min timeline

Presentation Deck Development Guidelines: Create your own presentation starting with an introduction/title slide and end with a final slide, which indicates the end of the presentation to the panel. *Presentation deck is a summary of your thesis proposal including each of the key topics reviewed above. Your presentation **MUST** be different from the proposal PDF you uploaded in the LMS or **it will result in a failing proposal.***

Though there is a degree of freedom in how you develop your presentation deck, there are some important development guidelines you must follow:

- Presentation should be approximately 16-20 pages.
- Presentation should address key concepts addressed above, including visual aids
- Font: Use the standard fonts that are easily readable: such as Arial, Times New Roman or Garamond (some fonts do not load correctly).
- Size: Use a font size that is large enough to read - recommended sizes are 18 pt. for text and 24 pt. or larger for titles.
- Content: Use bullet points instead of written paragraphs. References, copyright information, and technical notes may be included at the end of the presentation. (MLA Format)

DO NOT: Embed anything in your PDF presentation (Audio, Video, or Flash Content - transitions, etc.) If you want to present this type of material to the Midpoint Panel, you must submit these materials separately to the Online Graduate Department in advance of your Review.

6.   PREPARATION TIMELINE

3 to 4 months before your review	Read Fashion Product Development specific Midpoint Review Handbook Watch the Midpoint Review Orientation Meet with Thesis Mentor
2 to 3 months before your review	Check graduate website for Midpoint Review sign-up schedule Solidify your Thesis Project Concept Meet with Thesis Mentor
6 weeks before your review	Prepare your thesis proposal Meet with your Thesis Mentor Work with an editor or ARC – Thesis proposal to make sure your thesis proposal is grammatically correct, cited properly and typo-free

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1 month before your review	Create your PDF slide show
	Organize and create notes for your presentation
	Work with a friend, colleague or ARC on your oral presentation
3 weeks before your review	Print your written Thesis Proposal (Onsite only)
	Practice your oral presentation out loud and with a timer
	Review the online-specific requirements and test all of your equipment
1 week before your review	On-campus students verify our equipment works prior to your actual presentation date
	Upload your PDF and Portfolio to your Student Homepage
	Meet online with your Online Graduate Department Learning Coordinator to review your presentation room setup and use
	Send your PDF presentation to Online Graduate School via email
	Plan your attire to dress professionally
	Practice your presentation in front of a live audience with a timer

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Tips for the day of your review	Get plenty of rest the night before
	If you will be using a cellphone, make sure the battery is charged
	Have a glass of water available during your presentation
	Arrive at your Midpoint Review on time and ready to go
	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	Review your Midpoint Review results here

7. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When can I schedule my Midpoint Review?	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.
How many pages should the thesis book be?	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.
If I'm an online student, do I need to send in physical samples of my class work?	No.
Can we include work we've done outside of the Academy?	Work not executed at the Academy of Art University should not constitute more than 10% of your portfolio presentation.
Am I supposed to have a fully developed thesis or portfolio prepared for the Midpoint?	No. That will be developed through your group directed studies after you pass your Midpoint Review.
Can I use fancy text, borders and custom backgrounds for my PowerPoint presentation?	We would recommend against it. Simple, easy to read and easy to see content is best.
Can I use my thesis proposal document as a presentation?	No. PowerPoint Presentation is the summary of the proposal, not a duplicate of the proposal submitted.
When and where do I submit?	The proposal must be uploaded to the Midpoint Review Section on the Dashboard one (1) week prior to the review date. (note: 1week prior to the review date for summer Midpoint Review applicants)

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8. IMPORTANT LINKS

Graduate Student Homepage	http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources
Library Resources	http://library.academyart.edu/ Research tools and database to prepare for your Midpoint Review
Formatting Resources	http://elmo.academyart.edu/reference-help/mla_citation_guide.html / http://arc.academyart.edu/writing/mla_examples.html MLA Citation guidelines
Academy Resource Center (ARC)	http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academy-resource-center Your resource for proofreading, ESL assistance, Midpoint Review, Writing Lab.
Accessing Your Review Results	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/ReviewResults.pdf
Online Chat Schedules & Recordings	Chat Schedule: http://online.academyart.edu/innovative-learning/chats.html Graduate Chats: http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/graduate-chats.html Twitter: @aauchats
Department Specific Websites	https://www.academyart.edu/academics/fashion http://online.academyart.edu/schools/fashion
Graduate School Calendar	http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources
Graduate Review Showcase	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/ Here you will find a link to the Midpoint Review Orientation, and links to the Midpoint Review Guidelines and Handbooks.
Fashion Product Development Showcase Page	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/schools/fashion-product-development.html
Online Connection Through Mobile Devices	http://www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect/feature-details/adobe-connectmobile.html Application required for using the Adobe Connect Meetings from your mobile device.
Online Presentation Do's & Don'ts	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/ Look under Additional Presentation Tools
Online Technical Requirements	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/Look under Resources →Technical Resources → Online technical requirements

Technology Trouble Shooting	To participate in the web conference, you need to make sure that your computer has the latest versions of the Flash and Shockwave plugins and can run the web-casting software. To check this, please click on this link: http://arcps.adobeconnect.com/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm
Uploading Review Content	http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/Uploading_Review_Content_WI15.pdf
Photographing & Submitting Artwork	http://media.academyart.edu/howto/index.html http://howto.academyart.edu/submitting-artwork

9. ONLINE PRESENTATION DETAILS

A. Scheduling a Meeting with an Online Graduate Review Coordinator

Academy of Art University's Online Graduate Review process provides a means for Academy students to present their project proposals via the Academy's online meeting environment. An Online Graduate Review Coordinator will contact you after your review has been scheduled to test your computer, internet connection, web-camera, and telephone. The Online Graduate Review Coordinator will also show you how the online review process works and how to upload and use your slideshow during your oral presentation. Students presenting online are required to have their equipment and any required presentation materials ready to upload and test at least one week prior to the presentation date.

B. Online Presentation Guidelines

You are required to provide a PowerPoint or PDF presentation with visual and written information that will go along with your oral presentation. Be sure to follow your department guidelines, as some departments have different requirements. You can also find a checklist below with details on what to include in your presentation.

Font:	Use an easily readable font (some fonts do not load correctly in Adobe Connect for PPT files). Use a font size and color that is clear to read.
Images:	Images need to be in JPEG format and optimized for web viewing. Review your department requirements for labeling and titling your images.
Credit:	When including art made by other artists, credit the artist
Content:	It is best to keep the text in bullet point format or very short clear sentences instead of written paragraphs. References, copyright information, and technical notes may be included at the end of the presentation.

Please refer to the links below for technical requirements:
Online Technical Requirements
Adobe Connect Diagnostic Test

Online Graduate Review Contact Information
Email: **onlinegradreview@academyart.edu**
Phone: (415) 618-3614

10. CONTACT INFORMATION

Midpoint Review Coordinator:	midpointreview@academyart.edu
	(415) 618-6390
Contact for Online Students:	Onlinegradreview@academyart.edu
	(415) 618-3614
Department Contact(s)	Amelia Trujillo
	Fashion Merchandising
	Administrative Assistant
	Tel: (415) 618-3907
	Email: atrujillo@academyart.edu
Send Materials To:	Academy of Art University
	School of Fashion Merchandising
	Midpoint Review
	79 New Montgomery
	San Francisco, CA 94105
	NOTE: Please obtain a tracking number or return receipt of delivery for your shipments.