Dear Commission members:

Thank you for your consideration in the response below to your May 21, 2013 communication. As requested, the Fashion Institute of Technology is responding to the following concerns of the Commission:

1. The Commission notes that work is underway regarding the reformulation of policies regarding credentials for part-time faculty and those teaching in the institution’s graduate programs. The institution is asked to provide documentation demonstrating that revised policies remain in compliance with NASAD standards concerning faculty qualifications (see Response of February 8, 2013, Appendix 1.A.2.; Commission Action Report of November 8, 2013, page 1; Optional Response, page 7; NASAD Handbook 2012-13, item II.E.1.).

As articulated in Goal 2 of FIT’s Strategic Plan, “Our Legacy, Our Future: FIT Beyond 2020,” the college is committed to recruiting, developing and retaining outstanding faculty. As part of this effort, the college is intensifying its emphasis on faculty research, creative activity, and publication, with respect to its hiring policies and its criteria for promotion and tenure. In this regard, the School of Graduate Studies has accordingly established new criteria regarding faculty credentials, stipulating that full-time faculty hires must hold a Ph.D. or another terminal degree. This policy, which was recently approved by the President, is clearly articulated in the recently adopted hiring guidelines for the School of Graduate Studies and will be posted on the FIT website and added to the Faculty Handbook in the spring 2014 term. The policy will be monitored and enforced through the faculty search and hiring process at every level, from the initial review of candidates to final approval by the President. In addition to the appropriate terminal degree, full-time faculty in the School of Graduate Studies are expected to have credentials demonstrating scholarly achievement, professional activity and relevant teaching experience. All part-time hires appointed to the rank of associate professor in the School of Graduate Studies must have a terminal degree and provide evidence of scholarship, teaching experience and professional experience in a related field. All part-time hires appointed to the rank of assistant professor must have a terminal degree or Master’s degree as well as 30 additional and appropriate graduate credits, and/or a minimum of 10 years of professional and/or teaching experience in a related field. Part-time hires at the rank of instructor are also possible; the terminal degree, while preferred, is not required if the candidate shows exceptional relevant professional experience or accomplishment. These credentials are reviewed as part of the hiring process and are regularly monitored by department chairs and the dean of the School of Graduate Studies. These policies were designed to be compliant with NASAD standards and their implementation and monitoring will conform to NASAD guidelines.
2. The Commission notes that curricular revisions are scheduled to go through the institutional approval process in 2013-2014. The institution is asked to provide documentation demonstrating that the revisions result in continuing compliance with NASAD standards for awarding credit and provide sufficient time on task to produce the competencies required and expected. Information provided should demonstrate continuing compliance with NASAD standards (see Response of February 8, 2013, Appendix 1.A.4. and Appendix 2; Commission Action Report of November 2, 2013, page 2; NASAD Handbook 2012-13, items III.A.2. and B.).

Utilizing the Commission’s recommendations: reducing the large number of 1.5 and 2.0 credit courses, as outlined in the February 8, 2013 FIT communication, all 17 programs reviewed their inventory of 1.5 credit courses. Many courses in each major have been revised as 2 credits/4 studio hours and/or 3 credits/6 studio hour courses. This revision reduces the number of courses in the major and retains the integrity of time on task and faculty guidance in the studio setting.

In an effort to integrate courses in the major and maintain continued compliance with NASAD standards for time on task essentials, department faculty have examined individual course learning outcomes, reduced redundancies and integrated tools or technique driven courses into the development of new courses driven primarily by theory, critical thinking and problem solving. Tools will be used as vehicles of expression, and will no longer represent the primary focus of a course.

At this time, revisions in all 17 programs are moving through FIT’s curricular review process. Curricular revisions to the Jewelry Design program have already been approved at the FIT level and will be cited as an example of continued compliance to NASAD standards for time on task. There is an overall reduction in the minimum credits required for the AAS Jewelry Design degree (from 70.5 to 61.5), but the studio hours and time on task components are robust. For example, many 1.5 credit courses (tool and technique based 3 hour, individual studio experiences) have been united and reimagined into two groups of courses: Fabrication, and Design and Ideation. Courses in each group, created from a logical blend of learning outcomes, will offer students and faculty a period of 5 hours in class per course, and 2.5 hours outside of class per course to learn, practice and develop desired competencies. In addition, courses belonging to each group will be programmed to offer a Design and Ideation course before a Fabrication course each day. An overall reduction in projects and an increase in shared course work in project creation and execution across the curriculum provide students and faculty with focused time on task. Each course syllabus will clearly outline required learning outcomes together with how the outcomes will be evaluated. As per School process, the department chair reviews syllabi and end-of-term projects to ensure outcomes are achieved and continued compliance with NASAD standards. Each week (for 15 weeks), Jewelry Design students will spend a minimum of 24 hours working on major area projects and approximately 23–27 hours working on supportive, general education and liberal arts projects.
Please see response of February 8, 2013, Appendix 2 specifying each department’s credit reduction proposal. All departments will follow Jewelry Design’s structure and will complete the departmental curriculum process in Fall 2014.

Please see the February 8, 2013 response as it includes the NASAD questionnaire regarding time on task.

3. The Commission notes that the institution is in the process of assessing all Bachelor of Fine Arts concentrations to provide students greater choice of courses across various majors by combining program learning outcomes and reducing the number of required courses in the majors. The Response should provide additional information concerning the changes and the information should demonstrate continuing compliance with NASAD standards (see Response of February 8, 2013, Appendix 2, #5; Commission Action Report of November 8, 2013, page 2; NASAD Handbook 2012-13, items III.L. and M. and VIII.B.).

Fashion Design is the only BFA program at FIT that offers concentrations. All courses within the concentrations have been assessed to identify where learning outcomes can be combined. Design development and skill-based classes have been integrated to provide a seamless learning environment. The assessment involved the full participation of the faculty, industry advisory boards specific to the concentrations, and student input. Assessments of capstone courses in the concentration are conducted each spring and faculty review assessment findings and make adjustments if necessary. The concentrations take place over three semesters (semesters six, seven and eight) with a semester in common in semester five. As indicated below, the credits and hours specific to the major and related areas over the four semesters provide robust time on task and studio hours. The concentration coursework culminates in a semester eight final collection that demonstrates student success in achievement of program learning outcomes. The final collections are evaluated by the faculty, a panel of industry judges and critics, as well as being part of the yearly capstone assessment. Students receive immediate feedback regarding the evaluation of their work from the faculty and industry.

All concentrations in Fashion Design will provide students with the ability to choose 4 major area course selectives from a choice of 11 courses within the Fashion Design program, and 4 related area course selectives from a choice of 18 courses across the college over the 4 semester concentration. For example, some of the major area selectives are Eco Lab-Upcycling and Sustainability in fashion, Outerwear Design or Corsetry. In the area of related area selectives, students choose from courses such as Decorative Leather Techniques, Experimental Screen Printing or Multimedia Presentation. As defined by NASAD standards for Fashion Design, the curricular structure of the concentrations continues and further supports students with the ability to develop a range of knowledge, skills and competencies expected
of the major. The curricular structure in the concentrations over the four semesters is as follows:

Major area: 36.5 credits, 56 hours  
Related area: 6 credits, 9 hours

The curricular table below reflects the total number of credits and hours in the BFA Fashion Design program, inclusive of major area, related area selectives, art history, general studies and electives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major and Supportive Courses</th>
<th>Studies in Art History</th>
<th>General Studies</th>
<th>General Elective</th>
<th>Internship</th>
<th>Total Minimum # of Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*77.5 credits</td>
<td>14 credits</td>
<td>30.5 credits</td>
<td>2 credits</td>
<td>2 credits</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please note this is inclusive of the concentration’s 36.5 major area credits and the 6 related area credits.

4. As detailed in the Optional Response, the Commission notes that space planning for the institution is ongoing and the work is a priority for the College Planning Council. The Response should provide additional information concerning the redesign and repurposing of spaces, including a comprehensive timeline and budget for this project (see Response of February 8, 2013, Appendix 2, #6; Commission Action Report of November 8, 2013, page 2; Visitors’ Report, page 39; NASAD Handbook 2012-13, items II.F.1.a. through c.).

The improvement of academic and student service space at FIT continues to be a major campus priority. As a result, the college has devoted significant resources to projects over recent years and has budgeted for continued investments in its physical plant, and in particular, classroom facilities, over the next five years. In addition, in FY2013 the college submitted a 10 year capital budget request to the State University of New York that proposed significant facility improvements. Projects currently underway, completed, and planned are discussed below.

**Projects completed (2013)**

**Specialized (Computer) Classrooms** ($1.6 million): In the fall of 2013, FIT completed the renovation of eight specialized classrooms that allow for computer-based instruction. The need for additional computer classrooms had been documented by the space inventory completed in 2011 by Rickes Associates.
Dubinsky 8th floor ($1.2 million): In the fall of 2013, FIT completed the renovation of the 8th floor of the Dubinsky building. This space includes two large open areas that can be subdivided into three smaller areas, as well as two adjacent seminar rooms. This renovation included the installation of smart podiums, projectors, and screens or monitors throughout the space. In addition to serving as the faculty/staff dining area, the 8th floor space is used regularly for seminars, conferences, and other meetings of schools and departments. Art & Design program chairs utilize this space for end-of-the-year industry critiques of student portfolios. The flexibility of the space provides the opportunity to customize the environment to best support the individual needs of the Art and Design programs.

Improvements in Fine Arts classrooms ($90,000): Over the 2014 winter break, FIT converted an unused bathroom in a Fine Arts classroom to a screen printing space for the department. As with many projects in FIT’s older buildings, HVAC and other infrastructure issues are being addressed with this retrofit.

Projects underway (2014)

Donegar Design Studio ($200,000): Thanks to a generous donor and member of the FIT Foundation, the college received funds to design and renovate a state-of-the-art design classroom and studio. This space will be renovated for the Fashion Design and Accessories Design majors based on the needs articulated by the faculty. The architectural firm of Smotrich & Partners is currently completing the drawings and specifications for this studio, which will be constructed in a former accessories design classroom in Feldman, C615. The project will be bid in March. Construction will begin in May with a completion date of January 2015.

Computer Animation Classrooms/Production Studio ($600,000): Adjacent to the Donegar Design Studio on the 6th floor of Feldman, the college will renovate three existing classrooms to produce classroom and production space for the Computer Animation program. This project is proceeding in tandem with the Donegar project and construction will begin in the summer of 2014. A completion date is scheduled for January 2015. (In addition to the renovations to these classrooms, there will be hallway and restroom renovations, as well as upgrades to fire alarm and HVAC systems in these spaces.)

Film and Media Studies Classrooms and Studio ($1.0 million): FIT is currently working with WRL architects (recently designated by Architect magazine as the number three firm in the US) to design a viewing room, classroom, production studio, and equipment cage for the recently approved (by NASAD for Plan Approval) Film & Media Studies program. This project will be bid in the spring of 2014 and construction will begin in May 2014.

Communication Design Classroom Upgrade ($50,000): This work will be completed in the summer of 2014.
**Acquisition of Additional Rental Space:** The College is currently finalizing a lease for 22,000 additional square feet at 333 Seventh Avenue. This additional space supports the College’s plans to add additional studios, classrooms and exhibition space by relocating administrative offices to this new site.

**Other:** There are a variety of other smaller renovation projects that directly or indirectly impact the effort to improve academic and student support service space on the FIT campus. These will not be described in detail, but all are currently underway. They include:

- Build-out of a data center back-up site ($1.4 million, spring 2014)
- Museum storage upgrades ($4 million, spring – winter 2014)
- Library special collections ($TBD; Design options have been presented with very different cost estimates. Determination of strategy/path needs to be determined)
- New sampling loom installation (Costs are modest, spring of 2014)
- Skylight replacements for fine arts studios ($50,000, spring 2014)

**Master plan (2014)**

At a budgeted cost of $125,000, FIT has engaged the architectural firm Fletcher Thompson to update the College's 2005 Master Plan. The Master Plan scope statement is as follows:

- The overarching goal is to improve the physical campus.
- The Master Plan Update document will represent a definitive summary of FIT needs and will be used as a working document to fulfill those needs.
- Communication of the Master Plan Update progress and process will be open to the community.
- The Instructional and Office Space Utilization Analysis (2011) and current Strategic Plan developed by FIT are very specific about increasing space use and efficiencies to meet program goals.
- More space is required for studio, meeting, assembly, and gathering. Verification is required for use and schedule.

The projected timeline is as follows:

- November – December, 2013: Discovery, gather information, review previous studies and walk through facilities.
- January – February, 2014: Meet with President; define campus community engagement process. Announce to the community the process and activities. Commence steering committee and user group meetings.
- February – March, 2014: Begin development of program and space requirements.
March – May, 2014: Finalize program, including revisions to the new addition to the Feldman Center. Develop strategy for space revisions, phasing, and scheduling.

June – August, 2014: Prepare drafts and final Master Plan Update Report.

September 2014: Present findings to community and incorporate comments into final report.

Projects planned (2015 – 2020)

Projects that will be implemented over the coming five to ten years will be shaped by the Master Plan report. In the meantime, the college continues to make progress toward achieving the following two objectives in relation to space:

**Expanding the FIT footprint:** This objective will be achieved through a combination of additional rental space and through new construction. Additional square footage is necessary if the college is to provide additional classroom and studio space.

**Rental Space:** As noted, the College is planning to lease space at 333 Seventh Avenue to be used by administrative offices. This space should free-up additional square footage in the five academic buildings for additional classrooms and studios. Beginning in June 2014, the College will occupy 22,000 square feet in 333 Seventh Avenue. The College plans to add another 22,000 square feet in November 2014 and up to 33,000 square feet by 2016.

In addition, the College is in negotiations with the owner of 236 W. 27th Street to improve the quality of existing leased space in this building. If these negotiations are successful, the College will be able to use current leased space more creatively for academic and student support services. Under these circumstances, the college would increase the amount of space leased in that building to almost fully occupy it (100,000 sq. ft.).

**New Construction:** The other critical step in expanding the FIT footprint is to build the new academic building, (formally Csq), the Feldman Center addition. Part of the Master Plan process will include a re-look at the plans for this building to ensure that the 20 new classrooms to be housed within that space will meet the college’s most critical needs. The college is working to secure the additional $50,000,000 in committed funding from the City of New York from the new city administration. If successful, ground breaking for the new academic building could occur in 2015, with completion of the project in 2018. This would add 100,000 square feet to the FIT footprint.

The two actions of additional leased space and building the new academic building will add 200,000 square feet to the FIT footprint, allowing the College to meet its highest priority classroom and studio space needs.
Renovating existing space, especially classrooms: The College is committed to renovating existing space on campus to create state-of-the-art classrooms and studios with appropriate lighting and improved HVAC. These renovated spaces will be comfortable and attractive, thus enhancing and supporting the learning experience.

As noted above, the college has made progress in this area over the past two years and is scheduled to continue renovations in 2014. The estimated cost of each classroom renovation is $200,000. In addition to renovating classrooms, the college is also renovating hallways and restrooms adjacent to each renovated classroom. The following schedule provides a list of classrooms/studios to be renovated over the next 10 years. These priorities were established by the Office of Academic Affairs with input from the academic deans.

Spaces specific to Art and Design are highlighted below in yellow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Rooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer, 2014</td>
<td>Feldman</td>
<td>C609 – C615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer, 2014</td>
<td>Pomerantz</td>
<td>D203 – D210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer, 2015</td>
<td>Goodman</td>
<td>Five adjacent spaces in SW corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer, 2016</td>
<td>Pomerantz</td>
<td>D502, D504, D510, D514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer, 2017</td>
<td>Business &amp; Liberal Arts</td>
<td>B303, B304, B306, B307, B309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer, 2018</td>
<td>Pomerantz</td>
<td>D203, D204, D211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Pomerantz</td>
<td>D513, D505, D446, D447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer, 2020</td>
<td>Feldman</td>
<td>CC26, CC24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer, 2020</td>
<td>Dubinsky</td>
<td>A321A, A321B</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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