

REFLECTIVE TEACHING PORTFOLIO
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BACKGROUND:

My background is in both luxury and off-price retail merchandising, at Saks Fifth Avenue and Daffy's Inc. My expertise is in buying across multiple product categories in both the domestic and European markets. I began teaching at FIT in 2009 in the FMM Department. I am currently pending approval to be CCE'd for FM225 Fashion Merchandising. I also teach the following courses depending on the semester (Fall or Spring):

- FM268 Team Development Workshop
- FM224 Merchandising Math Applications
- FM325 Financial Assortment and Planning
- FM 424 Global Fashion Merchandising

I began my career at FIT teaching FM362 Dynamics of Store Operations and FM117 Intro to Fashion Marketing. In addition, I taught the Summer Live students in 2014, HFM060 Fashion Forecasting: Seeing into the Future.

My educational background is a BS in accounting from Fordham University. Currently, I am enrolled in the MPS program, Global Fashion Merchandising, at FIT with an expected graduation date of January 2016.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:

My teaching philosophy stems from a practical business point-of-view: succession building. I believe that I am gifted in training and development; I take responsibility for imparting my know-how to the generations to come, those who will lead our global business community.

In my years at FIT, I have spent countless hours with the CET from the get-go. I have learned (and it is on going) about teaching from an academic perspective. I immediately embraced the Angel system, as it seemed very efficient for grading and for organizing the content for my students.

I once observed a master teacher on video at FIT. My takeaway was that he spoke effortlessly, going from topic to topic, a master in the flow of content. Interestingly, he did not use any technology ...

I have had both successful lessons and unsuccessful lessons. Oddly, the unsuccessful ones are more memorable. My most recent success has been with the development of weekly assignments using technology for Fashion Merchandising, which I will explain in detail further on. Always, when I have had an unsuccessful lesson, I do my best to get through it, as I am live in front of my class. Then, I deeply reflect on it and ALWAYS discuss it with another professor or two for their opinion. Asking such questions as:

- What could I have done better?
- What are your suggestions?
- How do you teach this?
- Anything else?

USE OF TECHNOLOGY:

I began using technology quite slowly, as the CET has introduced the different platforms. For years, I have used Power Points and photos (my own, from the factories and retail stores in Italy). I used some video content, not always successfully; students often seemed bored. Then, early in 2014, I experimented with Voice Thread and a Google Doc survey for an assignment in Fashion Merchandising.

Here are the details: During New York Fashion Week, Pantone releases their top ten color choices for the upcoming season; ten colors for women, ten colors for men. It is a big sensation. All the media writes about these colors, the Pantone website gives a full video, including a write up from various designers, and an opportunity to vote on your FAVORITE color; the percentage results by color are available to view. From here, my idea for teaching with technology evolved.

Students in my course must learn the importance of fashion trends in the selection of product; color is always an important trend to study. I developed a Voice Thread Power Point detailing three fall seasons of Pantone color, including the recent release. I give the students the background of Pantone as I discuss the colors. At the end of the VT, I ask the students to tell me their top three color choices and why. The students have one week to complete this assignment. Well done! There were some technology issues with the VT opening in Angel; I extended the assignment to accommodate this. All students participated with great insight into their choices.

I followed with a Pantone color survey in Google Docs. They were asked to identify the best color choice for specific product categories, such as:

- Women's boots
- Handbags
- Women's sportswear apparel
- Holiday dresses

There are many technology companies that now use surveys such as this to guide the apparel industry. Again, I had some issues with the Google Doc opening in Angel. I worked through the results as best as possible; not all students' surveys were captured. We studied the results as best as we could ...

Inspired by the Teaching With Technology Program and in spite of the misses, I tried my Pantone assignment in the Spring 2015 semester. I added an additional assignment this time: Create a Pinboard in Pinterest with your top 1 -2 colors, take a screen shot and upload to the Angel drop box. Well, indeed, this time all three parts of the assignment went smoothly!

This is my proudest teaching moment ... on Tuesday, March 10th, my class and I reviewed the survey and the Pinboards. I told them that their color choices by product category were so accurate that we could market the results to the retail industry. Their Pinboards told beautiful Pantone color stories for the upcoming fall season. They can use this assignment experience for creating color storyboards in either the production side or retail side of the industry, as boards are still used to pitch the trend story. Fifty percent of the students completed their Pinboards within two days of the assignment release. I asked their opinion and they said that they enjoyed doing all three parts of this assignment, especially, the Pinboards. They fully understand the importance of color trends for use in buying or manufacturing product.

