UNIVERSITY OF BORÅS

Fashion: culture, consumption and communication
Mode: kultur, konsumtion och kommunikation
7.5 credits

Ladok Code: AE1KK1
Version: 3.1
Established by: Committee for Education in Business and Working Life 2025-09-24
Valid from: Spring 2026

Education Cycle: Second cycle
Main Field of Study (Progressive Specialisation): Textile Management (A1N)
Disciplinary Domain: Social sciences
Prerequisites: At least 60 credits and English 6 or English level 2
Subject Area: Sociology
Grading Scale: Seven-degree grading scale (A-F)

Content
The course treats fashion as a cultural phenomenon in a globalised world, characterised by consumption and communication. The aim of the course is to give an in-depth understanding of fashion's involvement in cultural and communicative processes, which shape individuals and consumer groups, but also, by extension, fashion systems. The course has a holistic approach and highlights fashion and consumption through different examples, in both virtual and physical realities. The emergence of a fashion-driven consumer culture in a historical Western context, under modernity, is highlighted. as well as fashion's global, political, and identity-shaping dimensions. Emphasis is placed on the importance of the interrelations between clothes, body, identity and culture, and the role of communication and fashion in these relationships. By clarifying the deeper mechanics of these phenomena and their shifting cultural contexts, a more complete and nuanced understanding of the contemporary fashion and consumption landscape is also provided. The course is multidisciplinary and offers a review of both theoretical classics and recent contributions from different disciplines, such as social anthropology, fashion studies, sociology, and cultural studies, with an emphasis on sociology and social anthropology. Sustainability and ethics are included as key perspectives.

Learning Outcomes
After completing the course, the student will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding
1.1 Explain basic scientific perspectives on fashion as a consumer cultural phenomenon,
1.2 present key scientific perspectives on fashion, consumption and communication as included in digitized processes,
1.3 demonstrate fundamental scientific perspectives on the role and importance of fashion as a globalised consumption phenomenon;

Competence and skills
2.1 use adequate theory to analyse fashion as a consumer cultural phenomenon;
2.2 identify how fashion as a consumption and communication phenomenon shapes and is shaped by digital processes and phenomena;
2.3 reflect on how consumption and communication are connected in fashion in a late modern, globalised world;

Judgement and approach
3.1 critically reflect on the driving forces and effects of fashion consumption, both in a local and global context;
3.2 demonstrate the ability to identify their own need for additional knowledge and to take responsibility for their own knowledge development.
3.3 with the support of the course literature, problematise dominant perspectives in the subject matter,

Forms of Teaching

Teaching in the course consists of lectures and seminars.

The language of instruction is English.

Forms of Examination

The course will be examined through the following examination elements:

Exam: Individual exam
Learning outcomes: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3
Credits: 6.5
Gradingscale: Seven-degree grading scale (A-F)

Participation in seminars
Learning outcomes: 2.3, 3.1, 3.3
Credits: 1
Gradingscale: Fail (U) or Pass (G)

In case of failure or absence, the student will receive a supplementary written assignment.

Grades on the entire course are determined by grades on the individual exam. For grades (A-E) on the whole course, a passing grade is also required on the seminar.

If the student has received a decision/recommendation regarding special pedagogical support from the University of Borås due to disability or special needs, the examiner has the right to make accommodations when it comes to examination. The examiner must, based on the objectives of the course syllabus, determine whether the examination can be adapted in accordance with the decision/recommendation.

Student rights and obligations at examination are in accordance with guidelines and rules for the University of Borås.

Literature and Other Teaching Materials

Appadurai, A. (1988). *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gondola C.D. (1999). Dream and Drama: The Search for Elegance among Congolese Youth. *African Studies Review,* 42(1):23-48. doi:10.2307/525527.

Lipovetsky, G. (2002). *The Empire of Fashion: Dressing Modern Democracy,* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Turunen, L.L.M., & Pöyry, E. (2019). “Shopping with the Resale Value in Mind: A Study on Second-Hand Luxury Consumers,” *International Journal of Consumer* Studies,43 (6), 549-556.

Wilson, E. (2020). *Adorned in Dreams.* London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts.

Wilson, E. (2004). Magic Fashion: Fashion and Modernity. *Fashion theory* 8 (4), 375-385.

Additional course literature and other teaching materials are provided/informed about via the learning platform (max 200 pages).

Student Influence and Evaluation

The course is evaluated in accordance with current guidelines for course evaluations at the University of Borås in which students' views are to be gathered. The course evaluation report is published and returned to participating and prospective students in accordance with the above-mentioned guidelines, and will be taken into consideration in the future development of courses and education programmes. Course coordinators are responsible for ensuring that the evaluations are conducted as described above.

Miscellaneous

The course is a freestanding distance course.

This syllabus is a translation from the Swedish original.