Winter Program 2014

TRENDS INVESTIGATION: FROM COOLHUNTING TO FASHION FORECASTING

Introduction

Technology... Society... Consumer behavior... Ecological change... The road ahead of us looks vastly different than anything we've experienced before. No matter what our craft or area of business may be, our knowledge about what’s worked in the past is increasingly irrelevant to what will thrive in the uncharted territories ahead. By studying emerging change and new directions on the near term horizon, trends investigations help you – the innovator and decision maker – create tomorrow’s winners,
-Libby Garrett, Studio Bellwether 2013

Trends Investigation from Coolhunting to Fashion Forecasting is a one-month intensive course that leads students through the fascinating and dynamic field of trends investigation. Instructors with a variety of backgrounds in trends related industries introduce students to their captivating line of work and the tools needed to investigate, analyze and predict the trends of the future. Focusing on fashion trends, students explore Barcelona practicing the tools of street investigation in BCN's eclectic neighborhoods and cultural hubs. Trend theory is related via lectures and dynamic workshops and investigation tools are practiced both on and offline, enabling students to gain a broad knowledge of how trends work and how designers and brands use trends to innovate.

Objectives

In this course we will begin with Coolhunting on the streets of Barcelona, learning the offline methods and tools of spotting the early signs of change. Special focus will be given on detecting the people who lead the way in the propagation of trends and teaching students how to conduct interviews with these innovators, trendsetters and early adopters. Online research practices add the global perspective to student’s research and allow them to build evidence of their findings. A client brief will be given and this initial evidence search will be analyzed then further focus and exploration will lead to a final visual and written trendboard and report. This final work will identify emerging local and global trends that will affect the season to come. Via this process students will learn about trend prediction, future thinking and have the skills to create and present inspiring and informative trend reports.
Student profile
This course is directed towards people who want to confront and investigate the field of new trends. A background in fashion or other areas of design, journalism or marketing is recommended. The course is also oriented to those, who for professional reasons, need to focus and specialize in order to confront a rapidly competitive and changing market sector.

High-level English language skills are necessary and basic Spanish is helpful.
Study Program

CULTURAL AREA

Coolhunting tours
A variety of Barcelona’s neighborhoods are explored with different focuses in mind. We will witness transformations and trend manifestations; discover who the influencers are and the hidden secrets behind what makes Barcelona tick. This includes visiting trend hotspots, fashion retail shops, museums, contemporary art and fashion exhibitions and tradeshows, street markets, vintage shops, etc... Basic street photography tips will be covered.

20th century icons of cool
A 2-part class that looks at the lasting influence of trends throughout the 20th century brought to us via celluloid. Students will be expected to document sightings of historic trends and note their influence on current social, cultural and design trends in this module.

Eco Fashion Trends
This module is composed of a brief introduction into the world of ecologically responsible fashion and the current trends affecting it.

New models of fashion production & commerce
An exploration of how fashion consumers are no longer just purchasers and wearers of end products, they are increasingly part of the creation process. This hands-on workshop will explore how trends including crowdsourcing, social media, 3D printing and customization are evolving consumers' desires and driving the future of fashion and marketing.

Digital Natives/Youth Trends
How to apply the knowledge and experience of the trends investigation module in real life, sharing the story of wabi-sabi lab, some case studies and projects covering work for major brands, the future of youth marketing and the value of experiments.

Guest lectures
Tastemakers and influencers will be invited to the class to give brief talks and discuss with them their work, the various possibilities of investigation and trend based careers and answer students questions.

THEORY and PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Introduction to Trends Investigation
Overview of what trends investigation represents in today’s society and market. We discuss the terminologies and methodologies of trends and the tools needed to be a successful investigator. A general overview of the micro, macro and megatrends that currently surround the area of communication, culture, design and society are explained in this module.

Evidence Walls, Cartograms and Trendboards
These classes form the basis of the core student project. A client brief will be given; a wall of evidence will be gathered leading to a cartogram, a tool for outlining the most interesting emerging weak signals leading to a triangulation of findings. A final trendboard will be created highlighting the key colors, silhouettes, materials, related products and people.

Fast fashion
This fast paced two-part class puts into context the world of fast fashion and its place in the market and its methods of extracting and applying trends to its products. A runway overview will be formed using student’s research as a basis for analysis of the global trends that affect fast fashion
Branding
Basic concepts of intellectual property law and their application in the world of trends are covered in this module.

Presentation Skills
Skills for dynamic and confident verbal and visual presentations are learned and practiced.

INVESTIGATION TECHNIQUES

**Diffusion theory & tastemaker research**
How do trends spread, who are the people responsible for creating, manipulating and spreading trends? This workshop is part theory and part practice, students will learn methods of off and on-line interviewing and evidence gathering. Tastemaker research, paired with on and off-line detection methods, creates a holistic picture allowing us to predict what is next on the horizon.

**Trade show reporting**
How do trend investigators tackle tradeshows, what do they need to report on, who do they need to talk to and what kind of questions should they ask? Formats for reports are covered. Students will create their own tradeshow report for 080 Barcelona Fashion Week.

**Desk Based research methods I&II**
In these workshops, students will be lead through desk-based research methods key to conducting robust trends investigations. In-class exercises will teach new skills, as well as generate research that can be used in the students’ final projects.

**Asking the experts/Deep dive interviewing**
Expert interviews are used in trend investigations to reveal and verify key trend insights. Interview strategies and best practices will be addressed through a series of in-class activities that will contribute to and strengthen the students’ final project.

ANALYSIS

**Forecasting Agencies**
A brief overview will be given of the key agencies working in (fashion) forecasting, how they present their findings, the profiles of their employees, target audience and how they differentiate themselves.

**Pattern Recognition and Forming Robust Trend Insight**
Clients of trends specialists expect their statements on current and future trends to hold true. How do trends specialists stand behind their recommendations? Through a series of hands-on activities, key methodologies will be examined that will add validity and confidence to work done in-class, as well as in the professional environment.

**Anatomy of a trend report and academic referencing**
An analysis of the key components of any trend report, including content, presentation strategy, images and/or video, and referencing. A variety of presentation strategies will be examined, emphasising both the expectations for the course project and expectations of the professional trends specialist.

**Introduction to future thinking and innovation**
Theory and methods are delved into deeper in order to detect future trends. Ways of stimulating creativity in order to spark innovation are explored. Students learn how to apply the terminologies used in the world of trends via dynamic workshops.
The Innovation Mixer
A game situation that gives you hands on experience on how to mix weak signals & microtrends with research insights and megatrends in order to release new ideas of products and services for the future. Trends become innovation impulses.

PROJECT WORK
All lectures have practical applications and will be incorporated into the final project or an in-module investigation or mini-project/presentation.

Briefing of the project
The course includes both “indoor” and “outdoor” work. The Outdoor portion consists of the students observing and gathering information on specific trends and how they affect society as seen around Barcelona, in stores, cafes, clubs and more.
Indoor work consists of media investigation, analyzing information gathered, brainstorming and presenting the trends in visual and written form.
Students will keep a visual and written diary individually.
For the final project students will receive a briefing and work in groups to complete it. Each group will be expected to filter and present information in multi-media formats at the end of the course. During the course student’s work will be discussed and analyzed continually, tutoring and workshops will assist students in learning the tools and methods needed to complete the briefing.
Course coordinator
The appointed course coordinator, a specialist in the subject, together with the Master area Academic Department, has designed each course program content and syllabus. The Course Coordinator also plays an active role in assisting to incorporate professors and developing relationships between companies and institutions in order to create links to the course program.

Christina Bifano
about.me/christinabifano/


Faculty

Christina Bifano
Introduction to Trends Investigation
080 Barcelona Fashion Week
Coolhunting Tours: El Raval, El Born
Abstracting, Core Concepts and Labeling

Libby Garrett
Diffusion theory & tastemaker research
Research Methods
Asking the Experts/Deep Dive Interviewing
New Models of Fashion Commerce
Pattern Recognition and Forming Robust Trend Insights
Anatomy of a Trend Report
Presentation Workshop

Inspired by all things new and next, Libby Garrett is a Barcelona-based freelance trends investigator who works with multiple innovation and trends agencies in New York and London, including PSFK, The Future Laboratory and Canvas8. End clients she provides trends-based insight to include BMW, Samsung, InterContinental Hotels, Target, American Express, Jameson, Guinness and Havana Club, as well as the readers of PSFK.com and subscribers to Canvas8. She has a Bachelor of Science with Honors and Distinction from UC Berkeley and a MSc from the London School of Economics. www.libbygarrett.com

Laura Cleries
Trade show reporting
Evidence Walls
Cartograms
Trendboards

After completing a PhD in Physics of Materials, she followed a degree in industrial design. Her scientific parcours has been awarded with a prize from the University of London and she has published in various specialist scientific journals. Her career developed in different European countries, as well as in USA and Asia.
Her main professional positions have been as materials consultant for the architects bureau of Jean Paul Gaultier's headquarters; as trends researcher for various international forecasting publications; as curator for the material textiles innovation of the materials library MATER; and finally for 5 years she has worked as home textile designer for Zara Home, international fashion home textiles company from the Inditex group. In 2011, she established as freelance consultant on trends and innovation, university lecturer and e-commerce entrepreneur.

www.auracleeries.com/

Cris Piera

Coolhunting Tour: L'Eixample

Graduated from Advertising and PR at Universidad de Navarra in Spain, Cris Piera is an entrepreneur who bases her projects and ideas on coolhunting. As an innovation-addict she's always launching experiments: from her own personal projects to helping local talents reach their goals through creative marketing. She's a shopping bible -you don't want to bring your wallets to her classes!

When she's not thinking of the next best thing, she loves sharing her savoir faire in IED and Escola Superior de Protocol i Relacions Institucionals de Catalunya.

es.linkedin.com/in/cristinapieratuneu

Maya McCarthy

20th century icons of cool

Maya McCarthy completed her artistic studies between Rome and Madrid before building up experience as an interior decorator for publisher Maeva and Feria del Libro del Retiro, as well as stylist for Spanish newspaper El Pais. She eventually specialised as a fashion designer for such brands as Chitton, Carolina Herrera, Purificacion Garcia, Zara, Sfera and Don Algodon. In 2004 she began her collaboration with Bershka upon relocating in Catalunya. In the past few years, she has regularly collaborated at workshops and exhibitions between Italy and Brazil, as well as a cool hunter and fabric trendsetter in Spain. Currently she is settled in Barcelona where she is Module Responsible of Fashion Culture in the BA Honours for 'Fashion Design' and 'Fashion Marketing & Communication' in IED. Her passion lies in discovering the emerging visual influences of the 20th century in our present times. She also shares this passion at IED in the Fashion Costume master and Fashion Marketing Communication Master.

Julia Weems

Eco-fashion trends

Julia Weems began her career studying such disciplines as Art History, Costume, Fashion and Textile Design between New York and Barcelona. Soon afterwards, she started to work as a freelance stylist in New York, collaborating with such magazines as Glamour, Elemental, FHM, Paper Magazine, Podivm and Style.com as well as major international celebrities and numerous video-publicity productions. Julia has additionally worked as costume designer for experimental arts events, namely for the J Mandle Performance Company as well as in the production of fashion shows, events and parties. Upon moving to Barcelona, she has continued her career in such fields as theater costume design (for Teatre Lliure and Teatre Tantarantana), fashion show production (Jose Castro's shows in Paris and Barcelona), fashion designer – as such, she has collaborated with Debora Francis for her capsule line of high-end jackets for celebrities, Jose Castro's creative team and her own labels. Currently she is the Fashion School Director at IED Barcelona Escola Superior de Disseny.

www.juliaweems.com/

Delia Dumitrescu

Introduction to future thinking and innovation

The Innovation Mixer

Proudly hailing from Bucharest, Romania, Delia Dumitrescu draws from a communication and public relations background. Allured by semiotics since the early days of university, she tailored her favourite study to trend research and analysis. While living in Italy and Spain she became deeply involved in visual communication and coolhunting and published several texts and works of photography related to consumer investigation. In the spring of 2010, while sharing and building knowledge at TrendONE Germany, she set-off on a road trip to find out what innovation is truly made of and hasn't stopped since. Delia is the author of "Road Trip to Innovation-How I came to
understand Future Thinking” and “Secondhand and Vintage Berlin”. She is currently working as a trend researcher and analyst with PCH Innovations in Berlin. www.deliadumitrescu.net/

Edoardo Fano  
Branding  
Presentation Skills  
Graduated with a degree in Law, Edoardo Fano is Lecturer in Italian Law, Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law, Public Speaking and Communication and IP Legal Adviser. WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization) Panelist for disputes between trademarks and Internet domain names, within the frame of “I.C.A.N.N. Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy”, and Legal Adviser in Intellectual Property for European Union projects in developing countries (Kazakhstan, Chile, India, Croatia, Moldova). es.linkedin.com/pub/edoardo-fano/5/592/8a3

Victoria Williams  
Forecasting Agencies  
Fast Fashion  
Victoria is a trend focused Head of Design with over twelve years industry experience in Fashion Retail. Having worked for some of the largest Fashion Retailers around the globe including Inditex, Marks & Spencer, C&A, and LC Waikiki. Originally from the UK, she is now settled in sunny Barcelona where currently, among other projects, she consults for retailers and suppliers on Seasonal Trends and Quick response Collections. Victoria graduated from the University of Brighton with BA Hons in Fashion Textiles with Business Studies. es.linkedin.com/in/victoriajanewilliams

Andres Colmenares  
Digital Natives/Youth Trends  
Digital strategist and trend analyst, born in Bogota, Colombia in 1982. Colmenares has been involved for over 10 years in various consulting, design and marketing projects for clients in Europe, Latin America and the United States, including global brands, governments and academic institutions. Co-founder of the trend research company wabi-sabi lab. www.wabisabilab.com