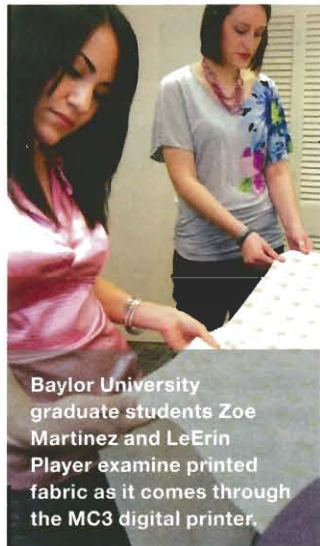


EDUCATION

Baylor University Takes a Lead in Textile/Apparel Technology. **By Kathlyn Swantko**

Investing in the Future of Function



Baylor University graduate students Zoe Martinez and LeErin Player examine printed fabric as it comes through the MC3 digital printer.

The commitment of the Baylor University's Technology Laboratory to add cutting edge technologies and equipment has moved the college into a leadership position in textile/apparel education and training. Because of its extensive textile/apparel design technology programs, Baylor has been selected as one of the top 20 fashion design schools in the nation by an influential online fashion blog. Many Baylor graduates are obtaining sought after industry positions, because of the competitive education provided by the University.

"The newest additions to our product development facilities are the TC2 NX-16 body scanner lab and textile product testing labs, which were completed in 2011," explains Mary Simpson, program coordinator for apparel design/merchandising and product development. "Our textile testing labs also include an environmental wear-testing chamber, a standard conditions research laboratory, a well-equipped teaching laboratory, and a refurbishment and appearance evaluation laboratory."

At the junior and senior level in product development, students learn pattern development, using the Gerber pattern design, grading, and marking software. They also work with Nedgraphics Fashion Studio modules and Gerber's WebPDM software, Adobe Illustrator, and Photoshop. Additional product development enhances the students' knowledge in creating storyboards, along with designing, coloring, and printing fabrics. Students receive instruction in woven, knit, and print fabric designs; and create construction detail drawings in multiple languages, merchandising materials, a digital portfolio, and product data management specifications.

Jaynie Fador, coordinator for all Baylor software technology courses, notes, "Through lectures, demonstrations, and hands-on applications, students learn to use apparel software and technology to design and develop a collection of garments. They also have the opportunity to work on independent research projects with faculty members."

Digital Printing Brings Fabric Designs to Life: In 2009, Baylor became one of two colleges in the United States to have the Yuhan-Kimberly UJet MC3 digital fabric printer. Any type of average weight fabric can be used in the printer, which produces a variety of bright, vivid colors. The printer provides students with a cost-saving way to create their textile designs for class projects. The MC3 printer gives students the opportunity to bring their fabric designs to life, and allows students to gain practical knowledge by taking the theory learned in the classroom and applying it to a real life situation.

LeErin Player, a 2010 Baylor graduate, said, "The classroom learning experience involving the digital printer has opened up a whole new world for us, in that we're not just designing something for an assignment. We can actually design a fabric for a garment we make. In the past, we would try to find a fabric that would fit with our apparel design. Now, we can make the fabrics that fit with the garments we design." The addition of the printer also provides students with an appreciation of the shortened time frame and the fast pace of today's product development cycle in a

real life industry situation.

"In the past, it would take about six weeks to get a new fabric design from the textile mill before a pattern-maker could make a sample garment," Fader said. "But, in the industry today, they can design the fabric, print it, and sew up their sample, all in the same day. Today's technology allows companies to get their products to market faster, and now our students can experience that pace as well."

Going forward, Baylor is in the process of expanding its technology even further by purchasing equipment for the textile-testing laboratory, with the goal being to evaluate a wide range of functional clothing.

Simpson explains, "We are in the process of conducting initial studies using our body scanner, and will be incorporating this into our classes this coming spring. Our long term goal is to be a major center for the development, testing and fit of functional apparel." ●

For more information on Baylor University's textile/apparel technology laboratories, contact Dr. Mary Simpson, Mary_Simpson@baylor.edu, or 512-797-0470. -556-4801.

Kathlyn Swantko, president of the FabricLink Network, created [The TechnicalCenter.com](http://TheTechnicalCenter.com) for Industry networking and marketing of specialty textiles, and FabricLink.com for consumer education about everything fabric.

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