

Master of Science in Sustainability Management

(ELECTIVE) FASHION POLICY AND THE POLITICS OF GOVERNMENT ACTION

6:15 pm – 8:00 pm, Thursdays, Schermerhorn 963 EXT

3 Credits

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Response Policy: Please contact me by email, and I am usually able to respond within 24 hours.

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Office Hours: Fridays on Zoom from 11AM to 4PM EST unless otherwise noted. 30-minute blocks. Sign up by emailing me.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

The fashion industry is an ideal case study on how governments, citizens, and international institutions attempt to limit the environmental and social impacts of complex consumer industries with global supply chains. Historically, apparel and textiles have been at the center of some of the most consequential government actions under liberal Western democracy, including the abolition of slavery and the passage of the first workplace safety and labor laws in the United States. In recent years, fashion has returned to the center of dynamic policy debates within the sustainability and social impact space.

The \$2.5 trillion global fashion industry's social and environmental impacts often evade regulation. Major brands leverage long and opaque supply chains for raw materials and cheap manufacturing costs with very little accountability. Private regulation and voluntary commitments have policed fashion for the better part of four decades, an approach that arguably has ended in failures to protect human and environmental rights. The industry's lack of accountability has cost lives, including the notorious Rana Plaza building collapse in 2013 where 1,132 garment makers died, and now contributes to a sizable percentage of annual climate change. Profits have been pushed to the top of the supply chain, while garment makers consistently toil for poverty wages, and the pollution and environmental degradation of fashion is a burden almost exclusively carried by low-and-middle income nations and communities of color that manufacture clothing and produce raw materials.

But the tide is turning. Governments are being asked to step in and regulate the fashion industry. Can effective fashion policies police international supply chains and achieve their intended aims? Might they unleash unintended consequences and in what ways? This course is an introduction to the fast-evolving space of modern environmental and labor policy as it intersects with fashion, and which seeks to incentivize more responsible business behavior in the realm of social, environmental and governance impacts. The class will use recently passed and proposed fashion social and sustainability policies as our case studies, including the New York State Fashion Sustainability and Social Accountability Act; mandatory human rights due diligence in Europe; California's Garment Worker Protection Act and Congress's FABRIC Act; the FTC Green Guides and the UK CMA's Green Claims Code; and Europe's Waste Framework Directive, to name a few.

In this course, we critically explore the history, practicalities, limitations, and power dynamics of policy-making as a tool for problem-solving social and environmental problems in fashion with an emphasis on U.S. policy, looking at (1) the history and modern evolution of fashion policy in the environmental, civil rights, labor and human rights space using both historic and current case studies, (2) the contested role of government in society, and the class, race, and gender politics of government engagement, and efforts to democratize the policy-making process, (3) the shift from private to public regulation and the varied approaches to regulating fashion, from soft to hard, and (4) the industry opportunities and responses to and impacts from policy, including preparing for compliance and lobbying government.

This class will focus on developing the skills to critically understand and react to the fashion policy landscape and to analyze the government's power and limitations and the industry's role in shaping social change in fashion through the lens of social, environmental, racial and economic justice for the full fashion supply chain.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- L1: Students will demonstrate an understanding of **the history of government efforts in developing labor and environmental standards** as they relate to fashion and **the key stakeholders** within government, civil society, consumers, and the fashion industry that shape policy and are affected by it.
- L2: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the **various constituencies, power dynamics and incentive mechanisms** that influence how fashion policy is made and what outcomes it produces, and how power, money, inequality, and organizing shape this process.
- L3: Students will demonstrate an understanding of and learn to **critically analyze and take positions on the efficacy and appropriateness of current policies** being developed in fashion, including New York's Fashion Act, proposed mHRDD in the EU, the Garment Worker Protection Act, and France's textile waste ban. Students will apply **social science methods** to current policy case studies.
- L4: Students will develop an understanding of **how ethics, equity and bias** influence the development of fashion supply chains and policy's potential and limitations for influencing these dynamics.
- L5: Students will **demonstrate an understanding** of how the fashion industry can engage with policymakers. They will develop the capacity to predict outcomes, influence the process, and shape alternate policy approaches from the business perspective.
- L6: Students will develop an **authoritative and informed position on policy matters**, which they will demonstrate through writing a final policy analysis that makes a recommendation to either industry or civil society on either for or against one of our fashion policy case studies.

READINGS:

Required books.

None. All readings and texts are supplied via the below links or uploaded to Canvas.

Other Required Readings. These materials will be made available directly in electronic or hard copy form, or made available on Canvas through an Internet link or a posted item.

Segran, L. (2020, January). It's time to regulate fashion the way we regulate the oil industry. *Fast Company*.
<https://medium.com/fast-company/its-time-to-regulate-fashion-the-way-we-regulate-the-oil-industry-ca046bc8c37e>

Segran, L. (2021, February). President Biden, Appoint a Fashion Czar! *Fast Company*.
<https://www.fastcompany.com/90595661/president-biden-appoint-a-fashion-czar>

Helfenbein, R. (2022, June 5). Have the Proposed Fabric And Fashion Acts Poked the USA Retail Bear? *Forbes*. Available on Canvas.

Hengeveld, M. (2020, April 23). The Factory Oversight Industry Protects Profits, Not People. *The Nation*.
<https://www.thenation.com/article/world/factory-audit-investigation/>

Cline, E. (2020, Oct. 19). The Twilight of the Ethical Consumer. *Atmos*. <https://atmos.earth/ethical-consumerism/>

Rodrik, D. (2010). *The Globalization Paradox: Democracy and the Future of the World Economy*. W.W. Norton. Chapters uploaded to Canvas.

MSI Integrity. (2020). *Not Fit-for-Purpose The Grand Experiment of Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives in Corporate Accountability*. Click to download: <https://www.msi-integrity.org/not-fit-for-purpose/>

Beckert, S. (2014). *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. Chapters available on Canvas.

Barber, A. (2021). *Consumed: The need for collective change; colonialism, climate change & consumerism*. Brazen. Chapters available on Canvas.

Pastorello, K. (2018, April 10). *A Vital Force: Immigrant Garment Workers and Suffrage*. The Gotham Center for New York City History. GothamCenter.org.
<https://www.gothamcenter.org/blog/a-vital-force-immigrant-garment-workers-and-suffrage>

Minchin, T. J. (1999). Black Activism, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the Racial Integration of the Southern Textile Industry. *The Journal of Southern History*, 65(4), 809–844. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2587588>

Dreier, P., & Cohen, D. (2011). The Fire Last Time: Worker Safety Laws after the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire. *Race, Poverty & the Environment*, 18(1), 30–33. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41555308>

Carson, R. (1962, June 16). *Silent Spring-I*. The New Yorker.
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1962/06/16/silent-spring-part-1>

Patagonia. (2022, June 1). The Monster in Our Closet [Video]. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tIojX94vPE8>

Apparel Impact Institute and Fashion for Good. (2021, November). *Unlocking the Trillion-Dollar Decarbonization Opportunity: Existing and Innovative Solutions*.
<https://apparelimpact.org/reports/unlocking-the-trillion-dollar-fashion-decarbonisation-opportunity-report/>

Textile Exchange. (2021, November 8). Fashion Industry Trade Policy Request Cop 26.
<https://textileexchange.org/trade-policy-request-cop26/#:~:text=The%20request%20supports%20Textile%20Exchange's,line%20with%20the%20Paris%20Agreement.>

Bill: New York Senate Bill S7428 (New York Fashion Act).
<https://legislation.nysenate.gov/pdf/bills/2021/S7428>

Donald, R. (2022, June 3). *Industry-Linked Sustainability Standard Allows Industry to Ramp Up Emissions*. *The Intercept*. <https://theintercept.com/2022/06/03/sustainable-fashion-greenwashing-higg/>

Fashion Revolution. (2021). Fashion Transparency Index 2021.

Roshitsch, K. (2021, July 16). FTC's Updated 'Green Guides' Could Clamp Down on Greenwashing. <https://wwd.com/sustainability/business/ftcs-updated-green-guides-could-clamp-down-on-greenwashing-1234884054/>

Friedman, V. (2022, January 7). NY Could Make History With a Fashion Sustainability Act, Vanessa Friedman. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/07/style/new-york-fashion-sustainability-act.html>

S.7428. 2021-2022 Leg. Session. (New York 2022). The Fashion Sustainability and Social Accountability Act. <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/s7428>

Pucker, K. P. (2021, May). Overselling Sustainability Reporting. *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2021/05/overselling-sustainability-reporting>

Corporate Accountability Lab. (February 1, 2021). *Nothing More Than a Consumer Awareness Bill*. <https://corpaccountabilitylab.org/calblog/2022/2/1/the-fashion-sustainability-amp-social-accountability-act-nothing-more-than-a-consumer-awareness-bill>

S.B. No. 62. Cal. 2021 Leg. Session. Garment Worker Protection Act. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB62

Fact Sheet. 2022. Fashion Accountability and Building Real Institutional Change Act. TheFabricAct.org. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/6269a0251862e66ba01fc4b1/t/627e5e4946e16646c86c6984/1652448842251/FABRIC+ACT+-+FACT+SHEET.pdf>

Weil, D. (2014). *The Fissured Workplace: Why Work Became So Bad for So Many and What Can Be Done to Improve It*. Harvard University Press.

Anner, M., Bair, J. & Blasi, J. (2013, January). Towards Joint Liability in Global Supply Chains: Addressing the Root Causes of Labor Violations in International Subcontracting Networks. *Comparative Labor Law and Policy Journal*(35), 1, p. 1-43. Available on Canvas.

Human Rights Watch. (2019, April 23). Paying for a Bus Ticket and Expecting to Fly. How Apparel Brand Purchasing Practices Drive Labor Abuses. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2019/04/23/paying-bus-ticket-and-expecting-fly/how-apparel-brand-purchasing-practices-drive>

Federal Trade Commission. (2021, February 11). *Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims*. https://www.ftc.gov/sites/default/files/documents/federal_register_notices/guides-use-environmental-marketing-claims-green-guides/greenguidesfrn.pdf

UK Parliament. (2021, September 20). CMA guidance on environmental claims on goods and services. Competition and Markets Authority. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1018820/Guidance_for_businesses_on_making_environmental_claims_.pdf

Roulet, T.J. & Touboul, S. (2015). The Intentions with Which the Road is Paved: Attitudes to Liberalism as Determinants of Greenwashing. *J Bus Ethics* (128), p. 305–320). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2097-8>

The Fashion Law. (2021, August 12). *Allbirds is One of the Latest Brands Facing a Lawsuit Over its Sustainability-Centric Advertising*. <https://www.thefashionlaw.com/allbirds-is-the-latest-brand-facing-a-lawsuit-over-its-sustainability-centric-advertising/>

CBS Mornings. (2021, September 16). U.S. Exports of Used Clothing Creating a Waste Nightmare [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCPEwv3sZbs>

Ricketts, L. (2021, January 30). *This is not your gold mine. This is our mess.* Atmos.
<https://atmos.earth/fashion-clothing-waste-letter-ghana>

European Commission. (2022, March 30). EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles.
https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/textiles-strategy_en

Environmental Audit Committee.(2019, February 19). Fixing Fashion: Clothing consumption and sustainability. UK Parliament. <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmenvaud/1952/report-summary.html>

Wilson. A. (2021, September 28). *Learnings from France on Textile Waste and EPR.* Innovation Textiles.
<https://www.innovationintextiles.com/learnings-from-france-on-textile-waste-and-epr/>

Favotto, A. and Kollman, K. (2021), Mixing business with politics: Does corporate social responsibility end where lobbying transparency begins?. *Regulation & Governance*, 15: 262-279. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rego.12275>

Remake. (Unpublished). *Sweatshops Silent Supporters: Understanding Political Influence in Fashion.* Available on Canvas.

Peterson, K. & Pfitzer, M. (2009). Lobbying for Good. Stanford Social Innovation Review.
https://ssir.org/articles/entry/lobbying_for_good

Abnett, K. (2015, October 27. Money Well Spent? Why Fashion Companies Spend Big on Lobbying Governments, *Business of Fashion.*
<https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/luxury/money-well-spent-why-fashion-companies-spend-big-on-lobbying-governments/>

JD Supra. (2022, January 19). Companies Prepare for the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA).
<https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/companies-prepare-for-the-uyghur-forced-7127061/>

The United Nations. (2011). *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.*
https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/guidingprinciplesbusinesshr_en.pdf

European Parliament. (2022, February 2). *DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence and amending Directive.*
https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/1_1_183885_prop_dir_susta_en.pdf

ECCJ and CORE. (2020, November 12). *Debating Corporate Due Diligence: A Reality Check.*
<http://corporatejustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/debating-mhrdd-legislation-a-reality-check.pdf>

Jessop, S. and Strupczewski, J. (2022, February 21). *EU draft law would require firms to check suppliers for human rights, environmental ethics.* Reuters.
<https://www.reuters.com/markets/rates-bonds/eu-draft-law-would-require-firms-check-suppliers-human-rights-environmental-2022-02-21/>

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<https://www.lw.com/thoughtLeadership/french-parliament-publishes-evaluation-report-on-corporate-duty-of-vigilance-law>

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<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/65/text>

Goodman, J. (2021, August 30). Moving Toward a New Era of Labor Rights in Trade Policy? Regulatory Review.
<https://www.theregreview.org/2021/08/31/goodman-moving-toward-new-era-labor-rights-trade-policy/>

Corvaglia, M. (2021). Labour Rights Protection and Its Enforcement under the USMCA: Insights from a Comparative Legal Analysis. *World Trade Review*, 20(5), 648-667. doi:10.1017/S1474745621000239

Human Rights Watch. (2021, April 19). Break Their Lineage, Break Their Roots. https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media_2021/04/china0421_web_2.pdf

The New York Times. (2014, April 15). Rana Plaza Collapse Documentary [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Fkhzdc4ybw>

Worker Rights Consortium. (2018, May 14). The Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUOAXL8ksUQ&t=1s>

Judd, J., Kuruvilla, S., & Jackson, J.L. (2022 April). Security for Apparel Workers, Alternative Models, Cornell University ILR New Conversations Project. <https://d8-edit.ilr.cornell.edu/sites/default/files-d8/2022-05/NCP%20IndustriALL%20Severance%20042222.pdf>

Worker Rights Consortium. (n.d). What is WSR vs CSR? Accessed on June 21, 2022. <https://www.workersrights.org/our-work/structural-reform/worker-driven-social-responsibility/>

Jaakko Salminen, The Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh: A New Paradigm for Limiting Buyers' Liability in Global Supply Chains?, *The American Journal of Comparative Law*, Volume 66, Issue 2, June 2018, Pages 411–451, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ajcl/avy030>

COURSE POLICIES:

Participation and Attendance

I expect you to attend all classes as we will be covering a lot of material. Students can miss up to two classes per semester with prior notification from the instructor without their Participation and Attendance being impacted. Participation is graded based on in-class work. Your attendance and participation will be assessed via a letter grade in week 7 and week 13.

Late work

Work that is not submitted on the due date noted in the course syllabus without advance notice and permission from the instructor will be graded down 1/3 of a letter grade for every week day (not weekends) it is late (e.g., from a B+ to a B).

Citation & Submission

All written assignments must use APA format, cite sources, and be submitted to the course website (not via email).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS (ASSIGNMENTS):

1. Attendance and Active Participation - 20% (L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L6)

A significant portion of each class will consist of a discussion and debate format as a platform for us to engage in a critical discourse on the readings. Students should come to class well prepared to proactively participate in

these conversations and show a deep understanding and an ability to critique and challenge the assigned texts and to argue their position on policy case studies.

2. Critical writing responses on readings - 20% (L1, L2, L3)

- Case Study 1: Regulating Climate Change (Session 4) 5%
- Case Study 2: Regulating Transparency (Session 5) 5%
- Case Study 6: Regulating Living Wages (Session 10) 5%
- Case Study 7: Regulating Human Rights (Session 11) 5%

Written reflections and presentations on our readings are pivotal for forming a strong foundation to make a critically informed policy recommendation and to prepare to take a stance on one of our case studies by the end of the course. You will be expected to submit an informed response to our readings on the course Canvas Discussion Board. Please use APA citations in your post. More detailed instructions will be made available during these weeks on Canvas.

You will be evaluated (through a letter grade) on your writing skills and correct usage of APA citation and formatting, overall comprehensiveness of the subject through referencing our readings and class discussion notes, as well as demonstrating original thinking and critical analysis. This is the space to both demonstrate what scholars, advocates and thought leaders have determined about policy, as well as to start reflecting your opinion on matters of policy backed by sound evidence.

3. Mid-Point Historical Policy Critique Essay - 25% (L3, L4, L5, L6)

- 12-15 pages double-spaced essay analyzing a fashion policy from the past, including its impetus, aims, key stakeholders, effectiveness and outcomes.

Active participation in our first 6 sessions should prepare you to think critically about how fashion policy is connected to broader trends in culture and society, and how policy is developed, functions, and to begin to analyze if it achieves its benefits and what stakeholders it serves or undermines. Students will draw on course readings, guest lectures, and outside sources to write an essay analyzing a historical fashion policy case study. You can choose from abolition in the United States (13th amendment), women's suffrage (19th amendment), the New Deal, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Congress's decision to create the EPA, or the Clean Water Act. If you would like to propose *your own* Historic Fashion Policy case study, please email me by Thursday, October 6, 2022 for approval of your topic. In this paper, you will analyze the ways this policy is connected to the fashion industry via multiple dimensions, whether economic, social, or cultural, how different actors within the fashion industry interacted with the development and passage of this law, including stakeholders involved, analyze whether or not the policy was effective and advise lawmakers today on lessons learned. This essay will prepare you to write your final policy critique and recommendation paper.

4. Class Presentation and Debate - 15% (L3, L4, L5, L6)

During our final class, students will present a short, 10-15 slide presentation summarizing their main findings and arguments from their forthcoming policy recommendation paper to persuade the class on your recommendation to support or oppose your chosen policy case study. Each presenter will receive constructive feedback from the class, as well as challenges to your argument, which they should incorporate back into their final policy paper.

The presentations will be evaluated on your critical thinking and depth of supporting research, the degree of preparation and the professionalism of your presentation, as well as development of a strong, persuasive argument. I am looking for students to not only draw on your understanding of how and why policies fail or succeed, but what stakeholders win and lose in each situation. Please use both historical, academic, and political analysis to make your recommendation. Policy is ultimately political, so be prepared to defend your position and explain what various stakeholders stand to lose or gain from the policy change to the class.

5. Policy Recommendation and Critique Paper - 20% (L3, L4, L5, L6)

- 12-15 pages double-spaced policy critique and recommendation paper

Your second and final paper will analyze a recent fashion policy case study. You will choose your topic from one of the following: Greenwashing laws: The FTC Green Guides or the UK CMA Green Claims Code, mHRDD: EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Draft Directive; Climate: The New York State Fashion Act (A8352/S7428); Wages: The Federal Fashioning Accountability and Building Real Institutional Change Act (FABRIC Act) (S.4213) and California's SB62; Forced labor: The Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act; or Waste / overproduction. If you would like to choose your own topic, please let me know by November 3, 2022. In the paper, students will advise either a fashion brand CEO or an NGO / gov leadership on whether to support or oppose or amend a particular policy. You analyze the background, aim, and approach of the proposed law, argue its potential (or realized) impact and effectiveness, the pros and cons of the legislation and potential impacts if passed on different stakeholders (business, workers, civil society), and from there draw a well-reasoned recommendation *and justification* on whether to support, oppose or amend said policy. The paper should draw on course readings, outside sources (including academic journals, news sources, books, and / or interviews with experts), and our guest lectures.

FINAL GRADING SCALE

Grade	Percentage
A+	98–100 %
A	93–97.9 %
A-	90–92.9 %
B+	87–89.9 %
B	83–86.9 %
B-	80–82.9 %
C+	77–79.9 %
C	73–76.9 %
C-	70–72.9 %
D	60–69.9 %
F	59.9% and below
ASSIGNMENT	% Weight
Attendance / Participation – Class Discussions	20%
Reading Response - Session 3	5%
Reading Response - Session 4	5%
Mid-Point Historical Policy Critique Essay	25%
Reading Response - Session 9	5%

Reading Response - Session 10	5%
Final Slideshows and Policy	15%
Final Policy Critique and Recommendation Paper	20%

School and University Policies and Resources

Copyright Policy

Please note—Due to copyright restrictions, online access to this material is limited to instructors and students currently registered for this course. Please be advised that by clicking the link to the electronic materials in this course, you have read and accept the following:

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

Academic Integrity

Columbia University expects its students to act with honesty and propriety at all times and to respect the rights of others. It is fundamental University policy that academic dishonesty in any guise or personal conduct of any sort that disrupts the life of the University or denigrates or endangers members of the University community is unacceptable and will be dealt with severely. It is essential to the academic integrity and vitality of this community that individuals do their own work and properly acknowledge the circumstances, ideas, sources, and assistance upon which that work is based. Academic honesty in class assignments and exams is expected of all students at all times.

SPS holds each member of its community responsible for understanding and abiding by the SPS Academic Integrity and Community Standards posted at <https://sps.columbia.edu/students/student-support/academic-integrity-community-standards>. You are required to read these standards within the first few days of class. Ignorance of the School's policy concerning academic dishonesty shall not be a defense in any disciplinary proceedings.

Diversity Statement

It is our intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is our intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture.

Accessibility

Columbia is committed to providing equal access to qualified students with documented disabilities. A student's disability status and reasonable accommodations are individually determined based upon disability documentation

and related information gathered through the intake process. For more information regarding this service, please visit the University's Health Services website: <https://health.columbia.edu/content/disability-services>.

Class Recordings

All or portions of the class may be recorded at the discretion of the Instructor to support your learning. At any point, the Instructor has the right to discontinue the recording if it is deemed to be obstructive to the learning process.

If the recording is posted, it is confidential and it is prohibited to share the recording outside of the class.

SPS Academic Resources

The Division of Student Affairs provides students with academic counseling and support services such as online tutoring and career coaching: <https://sps.columbia.edu/students/student-support/student-support-resources>.

Columbia University Information Technology

[Columbia University Information Technology](#) (CUIT) provides Columbia University students, faculty and staff with central computing and communications services. Students, faculty and staff may access [University-provided and discounted software downloads](#).

Columbia University Library

[Columbia's extensive library system](#) ranks in the top five academic libraries in the nation, with many of its services and resources available online.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center provides writing support to undergraduate and graduate students through one-on-one consultations and workshops. They provide support at every stage of your writing, from brainstorming to final drafts. If you would like writing support, please visit the following site to learn about services offered and steps for scheduling an appointment. This resource is open to Columbia graduate students at no additional charge. Visit <http://www.college.columbia.edu/core/uwp/writing-center>.

Career Design Lab

The Career Design Lab supports current students and alumni with individualized career coaching including career assessment, resume & cover letter writing, agile internship job search strategy, personal branding, interview skills, career transitions, salary negotiations, and much more. Wherever you are in your career journey, the Career Design Lab team is here to support you. Link to <https://careerdesignlab.sps.columbia.edu/>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Lectures, presentations, and guest lectures will help students develop an understanding of fashion policy's role in environmental and human rights outcomes, industry trajectories, and the potential and limitations of using policy as a tool to address environmental and social impacts in fashion. Our weekly structure will entail a reading schedule that informs an engaged discourse for the first few weeks of the course, followed by case studies in fashion policy and the development of a policy white paper. Our final project will be a policy proposal or response written from your choice of either the business or civil society perspective as well as a presentation of your findings.

Date	Topics and Activities	Readings :	Assignments (due on this date)
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<p>Sept. 8</p>	<p>Session 1: Introductions and Overview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Timeline, Assignments, Expectations, Assessment. ● Brief overview of the case for new fashion policy. ● Student Introductions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Article: “It’s time to regulate fashion the way we regulate the oil industry,” Liz Segran, Fast Company (5 pages) ● Article: “President Biden, Appoint a Fashion Czar!,” Liz Segran, Fast Company (5 pages) ● Podcast: Rick Helfenbein on Point of Sale Podcast, "Tariffs, Trade Policy & Legislation w/ Rick Helfenbein" (2021), 35 minutes ● Article: Rick Helfenbein. Have the Proposed Fabric and Fashion Acts Poked the USA Retail Bear? Forbes 	<p>Complete assigned readings before first class.</p> <p>Find 2 or 3 news stories of recent social and environmental problems or scandals in fashion (last 4 years) to share with the class in person.</p> <p>Respond to the intro Discussion thread in Canvas before first class.</p> <p>Attend class.</p>
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<p>Sept. 15</p>	<p>Session 2: The Case for Government Intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rise and fall of Big Government and regulation in global capitalism. • Inequality, racism, sexism, and the new Global South. • Failures of private regulation: Transparency, codes of conduct, MSIs, auditing. • Free-market approaches to governance. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book: <i>The Globalization Paradox</i> by Dani Rodrik, Intro & Chs. 11 & 12, pp. 233-280 (49 pages) • Op-Ed: A Better Kind of Capitalism Is Possible, The Editorial Board of The Financial Times (3 pages) • Postcast: Money Talks: The New Logic of Trade (35 minutes) • Video: What is happening to modern capitalism? Channel 4 [YouTube], (15 minutes) • Article: “The Factory Oversight Industry Protects Profits, Not People” by Maria Hengeveld, <i>The Nation</i> (5 pages) • Read the executive summary and summary of key insights: “Not Fit-for-Purpose The Grand Experiment of Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives in Corporate Accountability,” Human Rights and Global Governance, MSI Integrity (p. 4-9) <p>Recommended:</p> <p>Article: The Twilight of the Ethical Consumer. <i>Atmos</i>. Elizabeth L. Cline https://atmos.earth/ethical-consumerism/</p>	<p>Complete required readings, podcasts, videos.</p> <p>Attend class</p>
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<p>Sept. 22</p>	<p>Session 3: Fashion Policy and American History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How fashion policy intersects with landmark environment, labor, civil rights, and trade policy historically. • Triangle Shirtwaist Fire and early U.S. labor and workplace safety laws. • Post-colonialism, abolition, suffrage, and civil rights. • <i>Silent Spring</i>, cotton, DDT and the birth of U.S. environmental law. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book: <i>Empire of Cotton</i>, Sven Beckert, Chs. 10, 13 and Epilogue, p. 279-311, 379-426 (107 pages) • Book: <i>Consumed</i>, Ch. 2, “Colonization,” by Aja Barber, p. 41 to 74 (32 pages) • Blog Post: Immigrant Garment Workers and Suffrage, GothamCenter.org (9 pages) • Scholarly journal: Minchin, T.J. Black Activism, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the Racial Integration of the Southern Textile Industry. <i>The Journal of Southern History</i>. (36 pages) • Article from <i>Race, Poverty, & Environment Journal</i>, The Fire Last Time: Worker Safety Laws after the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, P. Drier and D. Cohen (4 pgs) • Article: Silent Spring-1, Rachel Carson in the <i>The New Yorker</i> (25 pages) <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book: Black Reconstruction in America, W.E.B. DuBois, Ch. 12. • Book: Intro, Ch. 6 from <i>The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together</i>, “Never a Real Democracy, by Heather McGee. • Article: <i>Trust and Distrust in America</i>, Pew Research Center • EPA. (1975). <i>DDT Regulatory History: A Brief Survey to 1975</i>. EPA.Gov. https://archive.epa.gov/epa/aboutepa/ddt-regulatory-history-brief-survey-1975.html 	<p>Complete required readings, podcasts, videos.</p> <p>Attend class.</p> <p>Prepare Historic Fashion Policy Slide Show. Due: In class on Thursday, Sept. 22</p> <p>Post an Individual Reflection on the Discuss board by Sunday 11:59 EST.</p>
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<p>Sept. 29</p> <p>(Holidays: Yom Kippur, Oct. 4 and 5)</p>	<p>Session 4: Case Study 1: Regulating Climate Change in Fashion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and critiques of New York Fashion Sustainability and Social Accountability Act’s climate elements. • Climate impacts and action from a Global South and Global North perspective • The paradox of responsibility and the challenge of reducing supply chain emissions. 	<p>Required Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View: Sept 20. Climate Forward panel on fashion policy, YouTube • Read: UN Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action Playbook (63 pages) • Article: Op-Ed, “Developing economies need a fairer way to help them decarbonise, Kenneth Rogoff, The Guardian,” (Source: online) • Article: "FAQ on a Just Transition," International Labour Organization • Bill: New York Senate Bill S7428 (New York Fashion Act). Scan this for the climate change / emissions language (5 pages) - Link • Article: New York State Could Make History With a Fashion Sustainability Act, Vanessa Friedman, NY Times (3 pages) • Blog post: Human and Labor Rights Propose to Strengthen the New York Fashion Act, Remake.World (link) • Read: Op-Ed, Developing economies need a fairer way to help them decarbonise, Kenneth Rogoff, The Guardian (link) <p>Recommended:</p>	<p>Complete required readings and viewings.</p> <p>Attend class.</p>
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Oct. 6	<p>Session 5: Case Study 2: Regulating Transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ny Fashion Act and evaluating other disclosure / transparency bills. The pros and cons of using policy to achieve supply chain visibility into where and how clothing is made. Data / ESG - debate over what to measure and how. 	<p>Required Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bill: Supply Chain Transparency Assistance Program, NYSenate.gov (5 pages) Journal Article: <i>The Failure of Mandated Disclosure</i>, U. Of Chicago Law School by Omri Ben-Shahar and Carl E. Schneider, intro and conclusion (25 pages) Report: Paper Promises? Report on Australia’s Modern Slavery Act, Human Rights Law Center (45 pages) Article: “Overselling Sustainability Reporting,” Harvard Business Review, Kenneth P. Pucker (19 pgs) Read the open letter in response to the Fashion Act from the data quality coalition (5 pages) Articles: <i>The Economist</i> 2022 Special Report on ESG reporting (6 pages) <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report: Fashion Revolution 2021 Fashion Transparency Index, read the intro and <u>skim the rest</u> (109 pages) Blog post: <i>Nothing More Than a Consumer Awareness Bill</i>, Corporate Accountability Lab (3 pages) 	<p>Complete required readings.</p> <p>Due:</p> <p>Graded Discussion assignment due on Canvas by Sunday 11:59 EST.</p>
Oct. 13	<p>Session 6: Case Study 3: Regulating Textile</p>	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video: “U.S. Exports of Used Clothing Creating a Waste 	<p>Complete required readings.</p>

<p>(holidays: Diwali begins on 10/24)</p>	<p>Waste and Overproduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Policy solutions to textile waste, pre and post-consumer. ● France’s Extended Producer Law; EU Circular Economy Action Plan, UK fast fashion plan, New York’s Fashion Act waste data. ● Equity and circularity. Depoliticization of waste. Who benefits in the Global North and South. 	<p>Nightmare,” CBS Mornings (5 mins 25 seconds)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gov. document: <i>EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles</i>, European Parliament (21 pages). ● Report: Fixing Fashion: Report Summary, UK Parliament Environmental Audit Committee (15 pages) ● Article: <i>Learnings from France on Textile Waste and EPR</i>, Innovation Textiles (4 pages) ● Article: <i>This is not your gold mine. This is our mess</i>, Atmos magazine (12 pages) <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Article: Coach Accused of Deliberately Slashing Unsold Bags and Throwing Them in Trash, <i>Newsweek</i> ● Report: <i>A New Textiles Economy</i>, Ellen MacArthur Foundation (33 pages) ● Article: Fashion Is Overselling Circularity And Recycling—But There Is Hope, <i>Forbes</i> 	<p>Attend class.</p>
<p>Oct. 20</p>	<p>Session 7: Case Study 4: Regulating Greenwashing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FTC Green Guides and UK Green Codes; Europe versus US approaches. ● H&M, AllBrids, and recent legal cases against greenwashing. ● The gap between 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gov. document: <i>U.S. FTC Green Guides</i>, Federal Trade Commission (12 pages) ● Gov. document: <i>UK CMA Green Claims Code</i>, Competition and Markets Authority (30 pages) ● Journal article: The Intentions with Which the Road is Paved: Attitudes to Liberalism as Determinants of Greenwashing. <i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>, pp. 305–320 (15 pages) ● Journal article: Exploring the Gap Between Consumers’ Green Rhetoric and Purchasing Behavior, <i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>, pp. 311–328 (17 pages) ● Article: Allbirds is One of the Latest Brands Facing a Lawsuit Over its Sustainability-Centric Advertising, <i>The Fashion Law</i> (5 pages) <p>Recommended:</p>	<p>Complete required readings.</p> <p>Due:</p> <p>Turn in historical fashion policy paper by Sunday October 23 11:59pm EST.</p> <p>Attend class.</p>

	<p>consumer behavior and intentions. Will regulating greenwashing help?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Guest Lecturer: Cecilia Parker Aranha, UK Consumer Protection Authority</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article: The Big Global Crackdown on Greenwashing, <i>Vogue Business</i> • Article: <i>H&M called out on “illegal” sustainability marketing</i>, EcoTextile • Article: <i>FTC’s Updated ‘Green Guides’ Could Clamp Down on Greenwashing</i>, Kaley Roshitsh, WWD (3 pages) 	
Oct. 27	<p>Session 8: The Industry Perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fashion industry positions and responses on the new wave of regulation. • When is policy good or bad for business? • How brands, retailers, suppliers prepare for and comply w/ regulation, like the Uyghur Act, SB62, greenwashing. • The role of corporate lobbying in fashion and American society. <p><u>Guest speaker: Stephen Lamar, head of the American Apparel and Footwear Association</u></p>	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal article: “Mixing business with politics: Does corporate social responsibility end where lobbying transparency begins?” <i>Regulation & Governance</i>, pp. 262-279 (17 pages) • Report: <i>Sweatshops Silent Supporters: Understanding Political Influence in Fashion</i> by Remake / E. Cline (20 pages) • Article: “Lobbying for Good,” in <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i> (7 pgs) • Article: Money Well Spent? Why Fashion Companies Spend Big on Lobbying Governments, <i>Business of Fashion</i> (4 pages) • Article: Companies Prepare for the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA), JD Supra (5 pages) <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article: Why Fashion Is More Political Than Ever Before, <i>Vogue</i> • Article: These Brand-Activists, Nonprofits Are Tackling Fashion Policy Head-on, R. Roshitsh in <i>WWD</i> (2 pages) 	<p>Complete required readings.</p> <p>Attend class.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web post: “Brands that Support California’s Garment Worker Protection Act,” <i>Remake.world</i> • Article: <i>Asos calls for mandatory human rights due diligence legislation</i>, <i>JustStyle</i> 	
Nov. 3	<p>Session 9: Case Study 5: Living Wages: The California Garment Worker Protection Act and U.S. FABRIC Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweatshop conditions and fissured workplaces. • Joint and several liability as a policy solution. • Grassroots, worker-driven policy. • Competition and the job killer elements of a state-level bill <p><u><i>Guest Lecturer: Marissa Nuncio, Garment Worker Center and a worker member of GWC</i></u></p>	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill text: California Senate Bill 62, <i>Ca.Gov</i> (10 pages) • Bill text: FABRIC Act one-pager, U.S. Congress (2 pages) • Book: Introduction, Ch. 1 & 2, from <i>The Fissured Workplace</i>, David Weil, pp. 1-42 (42 pages) • Anner, Mark, Jennifer Bair and Jeremy Blasi. “Towards Joint Liability in Global Supply Chains: Addressing the Root Causes of Labor Violations in International Subcontracting Networks.” pp. 1-43 (42 pages). • Report: “How Apparel Brand Purchasing Practices Drive Labor Abuses,” <i>Human Rights Watch - Skim</i> (68 pages) <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article: 25 years later: the legacy of the El Monte sweatshop raid, National Museum of American History (8 pages) Article: <i>California’s garment labor law: The global implications</i>, <i>Vogue Business</i> (5 pages) • Article: Behind a \$13 T-shirt, a \$6-an-hour worker, <i>L.A. Times</i> 	<p>Complete required readings.</p> <p>Due:</p> <p>Discussion Board post due on Canvas by Monday at 11:59 pm EST.</p>
Nov. 10	<p>Session 10: Case Study 6: Mandating Human Rights via Due Diligence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are human rights and due diligence? How and why did they develop? • mHRDD laws from country to country in Europe, from soft to hard. ECI for Living Wages 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report: <i>The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights</i>, UN, pp. 1-30 (30 pages) • Skim draft directive: <i>Corporate due diligence and corporate accountability directive</i>, European Parliament (70 pgs) • Report: <i>Debating Corporate Due Diligence: A Reality Check</i>, by ECCJ and CORE, pp. 1-31 (33 pages). • Article: <i>EU draft law would require firms to check suppliers for</i> 	<p>Complete required readings.</p> <p>Due:</p> <p>Graded Discussion post due on following Tuesday 11:59 EST.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Process versus outcomes-based laws. ● Criticisms of corporate due diligence. What it can, can't do and what we still don't know. <p><u>Guest Lecturer: John F. Sherman III, General Counsel and Senior Adviser to Shift</u></p>	<p><i>human rights, environmental ethics</i>, Reuters (3 pages)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report: <i>French Parliament Publishes Evaluation Report on Corporate Duty of Vigilance Law</i>, Latham & Watkins (5 pages). <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Video: Lara Walters and IRL New Conversation project panel debate on mHRDD (2022) ● Blog: mHRRD on BHRRC website ● Blog post: Workers must be the foundation of any human rights due diligence approach, BHRRC ● Article: The Carrots and Sticks of Due Diligence, <i>Fair Observer</i> 	
Nov. 17	<p>Session 11: Case Study 7: Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA) and Trade Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● US MCA, Tariff Act, and U.S. trade law in fashion. ● China's reaction to the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act. ● Transparency and challenges of enforcement. ● Impact on business. ● Political ramifications and motivations of US policy towards China. <p><u>Guest Lecturer: TBA</u></p>	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report: Break Their Lineage, Break Their Roots, Human Rights Watch (59 pages) ● Bill: H.R.1155 - Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, Congress.gov (12 pages) ● Trade law Chapter 13: US MCA - Rapid Response Labor Mechanism, USTR.gov, (2 pages) ● <i>Article: China ratifies international labour treaties as scrutiny of treatment of ethnic minorities mounts</i>, France24.com (5 pages) ● Journal Article: Corvaglia, M. Labour Rights Protection and Its Enforcement under the USMCA, World Trade Review, 648-667 (19 pages). <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Article: Nike and Coca-Cola Lobby Against Xinjiang Forced Labor Bill, <i>The New York Times</i> (2 pages) ● Article: Cotton complications in Xinjiang: William Overholt on the case of Esquel, Kaiser Kuo, SupChina, (25 pages) ● <i>Article: How your favorite jeans might be fueling a human rights crisis</i>, Vox.com (10 pages) 	<p>Complete required readings.</p> <p>Due:</p> <p>Graded Discussion Board post due on Canvas by Tuesday at 11:59pm EST and respond to one other student by Sunday 11:59 pm EST.</p>

Nov. 24			
** Thanksgiving Break; No Class **			
Dec. 1	<p>Session 12: The Bangladesh Accord, Binding Agreements and Alternative Approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rana Plaza and its legacy. • Pros and cons of the Accord on Fire & Building Safety and the Alliance. • Alternatives to policy: Transnational organizing and binding agreements. Worker-driven social responsibility. Community-driven regulation. <p><u>Guest Lecturer: TBA</u></p>	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short documentary: “Rana Plaza Collapse Documentary,” The New York Times (5 mins) • Short documentary: “The Accord on Fire and Building Safety,” Worker Rights Consortium (10 minutes) • Report: Security for Apparel Workers, Alternative Models, Cornell IRL School - Skim (49 pages) • Article: Worker-driven social responsibility, Worker Rights Consortium (3 pages) • Journal article: <i>The Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh: A New Paradigm for Limiting Buyers’ Liability in Global Supply Chains?</i> pp. 411-451(41 pgs) <p>Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article: “Major High Street Players Are Committing To Protect Garment Workers In A Vital New Agreement,” <i>Vogue</i> (3 pages) • Journal article: Labour Networks under Supply Chain Capitalism: The Politics of the Bangladesh Accord, <i>Development and Change</i>, pp. 1069-1088 (20 pgs) 	Complete required readings.
Dec. 8	<p>Session 13: Final Presentations and Class Debate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final presentations to the class. • Class will provide feedback to incorporate into your final papers. 	Class presentation of policy case study findings through well-curated 5-minute PowerPoint or slideshow; followed by class debate and discussion on the findings to incorporate into your final paper.	Due: Final Class Presentation and Debate
Dec. 10	NO CLASS ** Final Papers Due **		Policy recommendation paper is due

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