



Labor Market Analysis: 1303.10 – Fashion Design

Fundamentals of Fashion Design – Certificate requiring 16 to fewer than 30 semester units

Advanced Fashion Design – Associate of Arts; Certificate requiring 30 to <60 semester units

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, March 2025

Program Endorsement:	Endorsed: All Criteria Met <input type="checkbox"/>	Endorsed: Some Criteria Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not Endorsed <input type="checkbox"/>
Program Endorsement Criteria			
Supply Gap:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (See below)	
Living Wage: (Entry-Level, 25th)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Education:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Emerging Occupation(s)			
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

SUMMARY

This report analyzes whether local labor market demand is being met by community college programs aligned with the identified middle-skill occupations¹ or whether a shortage of workers exists. Labor market demand is measured by annual job openings while education supply is measured by the number of awards (degrees and certificates) conferred on average each year.

Based on the available data, there does not appear to be a supply gap for the occupations of interest. However, the talent oversupply is within the COE’s acceptable margin (the number of awards issued is 25% over or under the number of annual openings) and is therefore considered “supply met” rather than a “supply gap.” While this program does not meet the traditional supply/demand endorsement criteria, there may be demand for these workers from local employers that is not reflected in traditional labor market data. For this reason, real-time labor market data is included in this report as well – to provide a more nuanced view of the regional job market for these fashion design occupations. Furthermore, the majority of annual openings have entry-level wages that exceed the self-sufficiency standard wage in both Los Angeles and Orange counties, and more than one-third of current workers in the field have completed an associate degree or less educational attainment.

Recommendation: Due to two program endorsement criteria being met, the Los Angeles Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (LA COE) endorses this proposed program.

¹ Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor’s degree. The COE classifies middle-skill jobs as the following:

- All occupations that require an educational requirement of some college, associate degree or apprenticeship;
- All occupations that require a bachelor’s degree, but also have more than one-third of their existing labor force with an educational attainment of some college or associate degree; or
- All occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent or no formal education, but also require short- to long-term on-the-job training where multiple community colleges have existing programs.

Key Findings

Supply Gap

- 762 annual job openings are projected in the region through 2028. This number is less than the three-year average of 847 awards conferred by educational institutions in the region.
 - Although there are more awards conferred than job openings, the data suggests that the **demand has been met for these occupations within the LA/OC region** since the three-year average number of awards (supply) is within the COE's 25% margin of annual job openings (demand).
 - Over the past 12 months, there were **1,407 online job postings related to fashion design occupations**. The highest number of job postings were for fashion designers, seamstresses/tailors, technical designers, associate design managers, and footwear designers.

Living Wage

- 55% of annual job openings for these fashion design occupations have entry-level wages **above** Los Angeles County's self-sufficiency standard hourly wage (\$24.03/hour).²

Educational Attainment

- 55% of the annual job openings typically require a bachelor's degree for middle-skill occupations related to fashion design in the LA/OC region.
- 33%-83% of workers in the field have completed an associate degree or less education, according to national educational attainment data.

Community college supply

- 10 community colleges issued awards related to fashion in the greater LA/OC region.
- 312 awards (degrees and certificates) were conferred on average each year between 2021 and 2023.

Other postsecondary supply

- 4 educational institutions in the LA/OC region have conferred awards in programs related to fashion over the past three years.
- 535 awards were conferred on average each year by other postsecondary institutions throughout the greater LA/OC region between 2020 and 2022.

² Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington. (2024). *The self-sufficiency standard for California 2024*. <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/California>.

TARGET OCCUPATIONS

LA COE prepared this report to provide regional labor market and postsecondary supply data related to three middle-skill occupations. Although one of the occupations in this report typically requires a bachelor’s degree, it is considered middle-skill because approximately one-third of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree. [For full occupation descriptions, please see Appendix.](#)

- **Fashion Designers (27-1022)**³
- **Tailors, Dressmakers, and Custom Sewers (51-6052)**⁴
- **Fabric and Apparel Patternmakers (51-6092)**⁵

OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for these fashion occupations. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to decrease by 8% through 2028. However, there will be more than 700 job openings per year through 2028 due to retirements and workers leaving the field. The majority of jobs in 2023 for these fashion occupations (80%) were located in Los Angeles County.

Exhibit 1: Current employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles and Orange counties⁶

Geography	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023-2028 Change	2023-2028 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	5,961	5,465	(497)	(8%)	605
Orange	1,510	1,433	(77)	(5%)	157
Total	7,472	6,898	(574)	(8%)	762

Detailed Occupation Data

Exhibit 2 displays the current employment and projected occupational demand for each of the target occupations in Los Angeles County. Positive scores for automation resilience⁷ reflect a lower-than-average threat of the occupation(s) being replaced by automation, while negative scores reflect a greater-than-average risk of automation. The average percentage of workers aged 55+ across all occupations in the Los Angeles/Orange County region is 26%; occupations with a larger share of workers aged 55 and older typically have greater replacement needs to offset the amount of impending retirements. On average, 81% of workers across all occupations in California are employed full-time. Occupations with a lower-than-average percentage of full-time workers may have less employment security but may see increased activity in the gig economy.

³ [Fashion Designers \(bls.gov\)](#)

⁴ [Tailors, Dressmakers, and Custom Sewers \(bls.gov\)](#)

⁵ [Fabric and Apparel Patternmakers \(bls.gov\)](#)

⁶ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

⁷ Automation risk is calculated based on the percentage of time spent on high-risk compared to low-risk work, the number of high-risk jobs in compatible occupations, and the overall industry automation risk.

Exhibit 2: Detailed employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles County⁸

Occupation	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Automation Resilience	% Aged 55 and older	% Full Time Workers
Fashion Designers	3,710	3,572	(4%)	333	17.4	21%	100%
Tailors, Dressmakers, and Custom Sewers	1,667	1,468	(12%)	214	(13.1)	56%	77%
Fabric and Apparel Patternmakers	585	424	(28%)	57	(13.3)	39%	Data unavail.
Total	5,961	5,465	(8%)	605	-	-	-

WAGES

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for these fashion occupations in Los Angeles County as they relate to the county's self-sufficiency standard wage. Orange County wages are included below in order to provide a complete analysis of the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region.

Los Angeles County

The majority, 55%, of annual openings for fashion design occupations have entry-level wages above the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$24.03 in Los Angeles County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$12.95 and \$27.69. (Exhibit 3).

One occupation has entry-level wages above the self-sufficiency standard wage:

- *Fashion designers, \$27.69*

Experienced workers can expect to earn wages between \$28.27 and \$47.84, which are higher than the self-sufficiency standard.

⁸ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

Exhibit 3: Earnings for occupations in Los Angeles County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Fashion Designers	\$27.69	\$35.47	\$47.84	\$73,800
Tailors, Dressmakers, and Custom Sewers	\$12.95	\$21.07	\$28.27	\$43,800
Fabric and Apparel Patternmakers	\$20.81	\$35.05	\$40.59	\$72,900

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Orange County

The majority, 56%, of annual openings for fashion occupations have entry-level wages above the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$27.13 in Orange County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$11.74 and \$27.32 (Exhibit 4).

One occupation has entry-level wages above the self-sufficiency standard wage:

- *Fashion designers*, \$27.32

Experienced workers can expect to earn wages between \$27.09 and \$47.39, which are higher than the self-sufficiency standard.

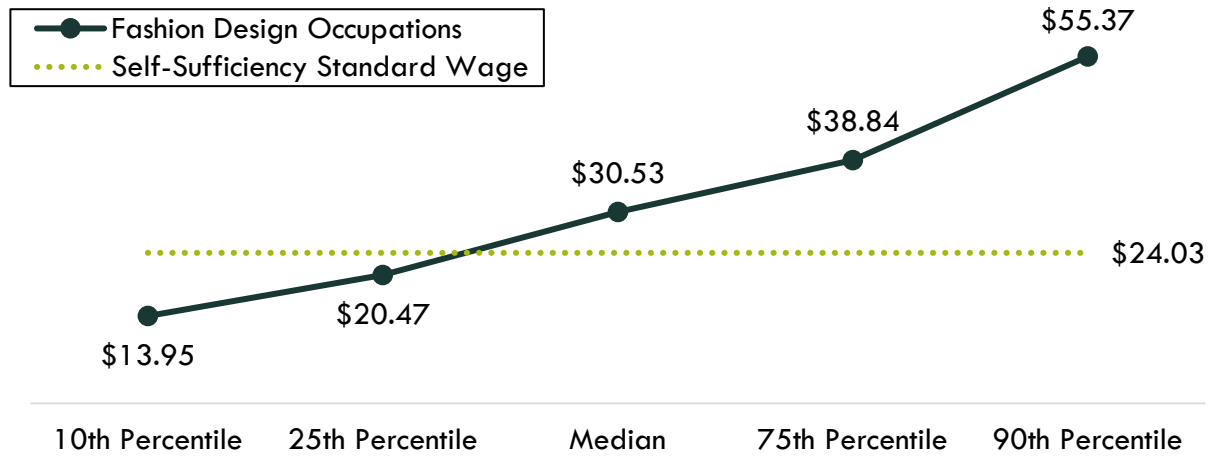
Exhibit 4: Earnings for occupations in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Fashion Designers	\$27.32	\$35.21	\$47.39	\$73,200
Tailors, Dressmakers, and Custom Sewers	\$11.74	\$20.04	\$27.09	\$41,700
Fabric and Apparel Patternmakers	\$21.58	\$36.32	\$42.07	\$75,600

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Across the greater Los Angeles and Orange County region, the average entry-level hourly earnings for the occupations in this report are \$20.47; this is below the living wage for one single adult in Los Angeles County (\$24.03). Exhibit 5 shows the average hourly wage for the occupations in this report, for entry-level to experienced workers.

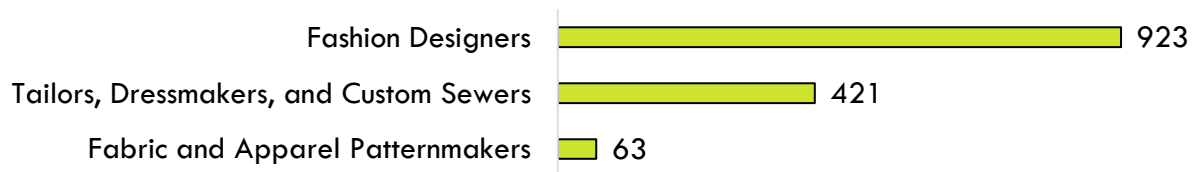
Exhibit 5: Average hourly earnings for fashion occupations, Los Angeles and Orange counties



JOB POSTINGS

There were 1,407 online job postings related to fashion design occupations listed in the past 12 months in Los Angeles and Orange counties. Exhibit 6 displays the number of job postings by occupation. The majority of job postings (66%) were for *fashion designers*, followed by *tailors, dressmakers, and custom sewers* (30%) and *fabric and apparel patternmakers* (4%).

Exhibit 6: Job postings by occupation (last 12 months), Los Angeles and Orange counties



Job postings were analyzed for the most common job titles, skills, and employers associated with the target occupations in this report (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7: Most commonly requested job titles, skills and employers in job postings, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Top Job Titles	Top Skills	Top Employers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fashion designers • Seamstresses/tailors • Technical designers • Associate design managers • Footwear designers • Apparel designers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adobe Illustrator • Textiles • Adobe Photoshop • Fashion design • Garment construction • Sewing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nordstrom • 24 Seven* • Nike • Kellwood Company • Neiman Marcus • Alo Yoga

*Staffing company

In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, 36% of the fashion design job postings listed a minimum educational requirement. Exhibit 8 details the number and percentage of job postings by educational level.

Exhibit 8: Education levels requested in job postings for occupations related to fashion design, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
Bachelor's degree	324	65%
Associate degree	70	14%
High school diploma or vocational training	106	21%

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the majority of annual job openings (55%) typically require a bachelor’s degree (Exhibit 9). However, the national-level data indicates between 33% and 83% of workers in the field have completed an associate degree or less education as their highest level of educational attainment. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists the following typical entry-level education levels for the occupations in this report:

Exhibit 9: Entry-level education preferred by employers nationally, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Occupation	Education Level
Fashion Designers	Bachelor’s degree
Tailors, Dressmakers, and Custom Sewers	No formal educational credential
Fabric and Apparel Patternmakers	High school diploma or equivalent

EDUCATIONAL SUPPLY

Community College Supply

Exhibit 10 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in programs that have historically trained for the occupations of interest. The colleges with the most completions in the region are LA Trade-Tech, Santa Monica, Mt. San Antonio, and Orange Coast.

Exhibit 10: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2021-2023

TOP Code	Program	College	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	2022-23 Awards	3-Year Average
1303.00	Fashion	El Camino	6	6	7	6
		Pasadena	18	27	11	19
		LA Subtotal	24	33	18	25

TOP Code	Program	College	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	2022-23 Awards	3-Year Average
		Fullerton	5	-	6	4
		Orange Coast	13	3	-	5
		Saddleback	-	-	1	0
		Santa Ana	6	13	6	8
		OC Subtotal	24	16	13	18
Supply Subtotal/Average			48	49	31	43
1303.10	Fashion Design	El Camino	1	1	-	1
		LA Trade-Tech	63	53	32	49
		Long Beach	4	8	1	4
		Mt San Antonio	8	8	53	23
		Santa Monica	26	33	13	24
		LA Subtotal	102	103	99	101
		Fullerton	5	5	5	5
		Orange Coast	8	15	15	13
		Saddleback	7	10	9	9
		Santa Ana	2	6	12	7
		OC Subtotal	22	36	41	33
Supply Subtotal/Average			124	139	140	134
1303.20	Fashion Merchandising	El Camino	5	-	6	4
		LA Trade-Tech	21	11	15	16
		Long Beach	15	4	8	9
		Mt San Antonio	19	26	17	21
		Santa Monica	27	24	26	26
		LA Subtotal	87	65	72	75
		Fullerton	12	7	6	8
		Orange Coast	13	16	13	14
		Saddleback	17	19	9	15
		Santa Ana	4	7	3	5
		OC Subtotal	46	49	31	42
Supply Subtotal/Average			133	114	103	117
1303.30	Fashion Production	LA Trade-Tech	1	4	5	3
		Long Beach	-	-	1	0
		LA Subtotal	1	4	6	4
		Fullerton	1	1	-	1
		Orange Coast	4	17	13	11

TOP Code	Program	College	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	2022-23 Awards	3-Year Average
		Santa Ana	3	4	1	3
		OC Subtotal	8	22	14	15
		Supply Subtotal/Average	9	26	20	18
		Supply Total/Average	314	328	294	312

Other Postsecondary Supply

For a comprehensive regional supply analysis, it is important to consider the supply from other institutions in the region that provide training programs for middle-skill fashion design occupations. Exhibit 11 shows the number of awards conferred by these institutions in relevant programs. Due to different data collection periods, the most recent data is from 2020 to 2022. Between 2020 and 2022, other postsecondary college institutions in the region conferred an average of 535 bachelor's and sub-baccalaureate awards. Sub-baccalaureate awards include associate degrees, postsecondary awards, and other academic awards that typically take fewer than four years to complete. Of the awards in Exhibit 11, the majority (88%) are sub-baccalaureate awards (469 awards).

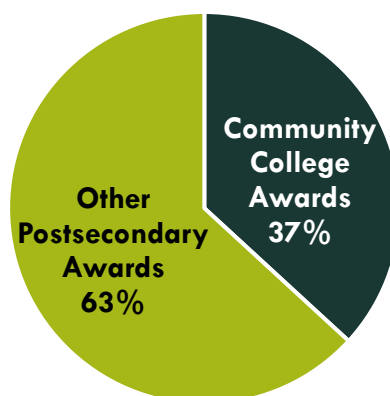
Exhibit 11: Other regional postsecondary awards, 2020-2022

CIP Code	Program	Postsecondary Institution	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	3-Year Average
19.0902	Apparel and Textile Manufacture	Beverly Hills Design Institute	2	1	2	2
		Fashion Institute of Design & Merch.	19	11	13	14
19.0905	Apparel and Textile Marketing Management	Fashion Institute of Design & Merch.	66	43	29	46
50.0407	Fashion/Apparel Design	Beverly Hills Design Institute	1	-	1	1
		Fashion Institute of Design & Merch.	164	143	166	158
		Otis College of Art and Design	21	25	33	26
		Woodbury Univ.	10	10	13	11
50.0510	Costume Design	Fashion Institute of Design & Merch.	19	21	11	17
52.1902	Fashion Merchandising	Fashion Institute of Design & Merch.	314	262	180	252
52.1904	Apparel and Accessories	Woodbury Univ.	10	10	4	8

CIP Code	Program	Postsecondary Institution	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	3-Year Average
	Marketing Operations					
Supply Total/Average			626	526	452	535

Exhibit 12 shows the proportion of community college awards conferred in the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region compared to the number of other postsecondary awards for the programs in this report. The majority of awards conferred in these programs are awarded by other institutions in the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region.

Exhibit 12: Percentage of community college awards compared to other postsecondary institution awards in the Los Angeles/Orange County region



APPENDIX: OCCUPATION DESCRIPTIONS

LA COE prepared this report to provide regional labor market supply and demand data related to these target occupations:

- **Fashion Designers (27-1022)** Design clothing and accessories. Create original designs or adapt fashion trends.⁹
- **Tailors, Dressmakers, and Custom Sewers (51-6052)** Design, make, alter, repair, or fit garments.¹⁰
- **Fabric and Apparel Patternmakers (51-6092)** Draw and construct sets of precision master fabric patterns or layouts. May also mark and cut fabrics and apparel.¹¹

⁹ [Fashion Designers \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov)

¹⁰ [Tailors, Dressmakers, and Custom Sewers \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov)

¹¹ [Fabric and Apparel Patternmakers \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov)

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DATA SOURCES

- O*NET Online
- Lightcast (formerly Emsi)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Self-Sufficiency Standard at the Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington
- Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

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