

Alter Attire: A Business Thrift Store

Lena Nguyen

February 11, 2020

Submitted to:

Rebecca Collins, the Director of Sustainability
Corinne Snell, Assistant Dean for Student Professional
Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for Student Professional Development (CSPD) and Office of Sustainability at Temple University should create a business attire thrift store for students. Business suits and professional clothes are often too expensive for the average student to afford, so this thrift store will provide access to the following items through community donations:

- Professional suits for men and women
- Business casual shirts, pants, skirts, dresses, etc.
- Business appropriate shoes
- Other accessories (ties, necklaces, etc.)

This store can be implemented within three months at an initial cost of \$385 for set-up. This proposed thrift store will benefit both the CSPD and Office of Sustainability through:

- Higher Job Placement
- Better Impression Management
- Reduced Carbon Footprint
- Increased Student Morale

PROBLEM: Lack of Business Attire

Students need professional clothing for job interviews and networking events in order to be successful, however, it is simply not affordable. CSPD's Spring Connection is a professional networking event that requires students to wear business professional to enter ("2020 Fox Spring Connection," n.d.; see Exhibit 1). The purpose of this event is to provide a networking opportunity for students to get internships or full-time jobs, but they elect not to go because they do not have the necessary clothing.

Within universities, there is a need for more student services that "go beyond financial aid to ensure that no student is food insecure or cannot afford winter clothing or business attire for job interviews" (Glassner & Schapiro, 2019). A Georgetown report found that about 70% of college students are working and that their "income levels are simply not enough to pay tuition and fees at most colleges, let alone cover housing, food, transportation, and other living expenses" ("Balancing Work and Learning," 2019). Then, consider that business suits cost upwards of \$200, which is not an amount easily spared.

In a survey conducted at Temple University, 60% of students said that they do not own business professional attire and 73.3% said they have had to borrow business clothing from family or friends in the past (Nguyen, 2020; see Exhibit 2). When students do not have the proper clothing, they miss out on professional opportunities that support future success. Many other universities have programs that give students access to business attire at little or no cost. The Fox School of Business is hindering student success by failing to help students acquire the proper clothing at an affordable price.

PROPOSAL: A Business Clothing Thrift Store

The CSPD and Office of Sustainability should open a volunteer and donation-based thrift store called Alter Attire to provide business clothing for students. This will allow more students to attend professional events and set them up for future success. Many other universities have programs that target the same issue. The University of Michigan has a program called the Clothes Closet that allows students to browse a selection of business attire donated by the community ("Clothes Closet", n.d.). The CSPD and Office of Sustainability can implement a program that operates similarly.

The Office of Sustainability should serve as the main marketing team for this initiative. They will advertise green living through 'recycling' gently used business clothing. This can be from donating to the thrift store or shopping there. Their staff will run the clothing drives and screen the clothing for usability before giving it to the CSPD office. Any donation that is not considered business attire can be saved for the Office of Sustainability's Pop-up Thrift that occurs during Campus Sustainability week (see Exhibit 3). The drives should be conducted on a monthly basis to keep the store stocked. The initial goal is 100 items to open the store.

The CSPD should oversee the daily operations. They will have to clear out a room within their offices to serve as the 'store'. Students will be asked to volunteer to work there and those in the

Fox School of Business will be rewarded FLDP points through Sutable for their time. They will scan QR codes within their Sutable app to get FLDP points and be awarded points as follows:

- Impression Management Seminar: 20 points in Professional Development
- Each one-hour shift: 20 points in Community Engagement
- Each item donated: 10 points in Ethics

As part of training, student volunteers will be taught about proper business attire through an Impression Management seminar given by CSPD faculty. CSPD faculty will be asked to give this seminar, which will help student volunteers give advice and recommendations to peers who come to the store.

Students will use their OwlCard to make 'purchases' or to 'rent' outfits. Each student will be allowed to take home three items from the store per semester, which will allow for new donations to be made available. They will also be able to borrow clothing as many times as needed throughout the semester, but at a maximum of five articles of clothing for a one-week period.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (see Exhibit 5)

There is still plenty of time throughout the rest of the Spring 2020 semester to implement Alter Attire. The implementation is organized into three main steps- Build, Market, Open. The plan is as follows:

February 2020- Build

- Recruit faculty supervisors
- Set- up store with racks, hangers, a desk, monitor, and ID scanner

March 2020- Market

- Advertise thrift store and opportunity for volunteers (see Exhibit 4)
- Collect donations in boxes throughout Main Campus
- Conduct volunteer training

April 2020- Open

- Complete store set-up with clothing
- Grand Opening of Alter Attire

BUDGET (See Exhibit 6)

The initial cost of this proposal is \$385 which consists of the following items:

- 5 double-hanging racks (each able to hold 20 items)- \$250
- 100 hangers- \$50
- Monitor- \$15
- ID scanner- \$20

- Flyers (100 color-printed)- \$50

Temple Surplus is a program that recycles furniture and electronics that is no longer used by offices. A desk can be found at Temple Surplus for free and the Computer Recycling Center sells old monitors for \$15 or less (“Temple Surplus”, n.d.). For the purposes of this thrift store, only a very basic monitor is needed. Costs of the racks, hangers, and ID scanner are estimated from Amazon. The cost to print flyers is estimated from Temple printing rates.

BENEFITS

Alter Attire aligns with the mission and goals of both Temple University’s CSPD and Office of Sustainability.

- **Higher Job Placement Rate:** The strict dress code will no longer prevent students from attending Spring/Fall Connection, which will increase overall job placement. Students will make connections at this networking event that will help them be successful.
- **Better Impression Management:** CSPD will be providing an avenue for growth in the visual aspect of Impression Management- “Development of written, oral, visual, and non-verbal communications that persuade and inspire others” (“Center for Student Professional Development”, n.d.). This aligns with their mission as an organization.
- **Carbon Footprint Reduction:** Recycling is this simplest way to lighten carbon footprints. This applies to recycling waste materials as well as clothing through thrifting. The trend of “fast fashion [causes clothing that is] produced quickly, cheaply and unsustainably” (Albeck-Ripka, n.d.). Creating an avenue for people to recycle clothing proves Temple’s commitment to sustainability.
- **Increased Student Morale:** Students will have a higher confidence-level. A study says that “it’s not only your body that can shape your behavior... , but the shirt on your back as well” (van Beeren, 2016). Students who can dress better will do better.

CONCLUSION

The Center for Student Professional Development and Office of Sustainability should open Alter Attire- a thrift store for business clothing. Students have difficulties affording the proper business clothing causing them to forfeit opportunities for professional development. Alter Attire is the solution to this issue as students will have access to the clothing they need. The total cost of this proposal is \$385 to set up the store.

A business thrift store will increase overall student success in professional settings. It will relieve stress from having to look for the proper clothing or trying to afford it for business events. Not only will it help students, it will promote green living through ‘recycling’ clothes. If Alter Attire is approved, CSPD should begin by clearing a room for the ‘Build’ step.

APPENDIX

Exhibit 1- Description of Fox Spring Connection

Career Fair Description

2020 Fox Spring Connection

The Center for Student Professional Development (CSPD) will be hosting our signature spring semester career fair and networking event on February 10th at the Howard Gittis Student Center. Network with 100+ employers that are recruiting business students for full-time jobs and internships. Business professional attire is required.

To attend, it is required that all students complete the entire CSPD process by Wednesday, February 5th at 5pm and be enrolled (major or minor) in the Fox School of Business. All class years are welcome to attend; most opportunities will be for students graduating between May 2020 and May 2022. Fox School Alumni that graduated in December 2019 and have been CSPD'd are also eligible to attend.

Need more information about the CSPD process?

- Undergraduate students: Visit the [CSPD-Undergraduate Canvas page](#) for more information, or stop by our office at 134 Alter Hall.
- MS & MBA students: Go to the [Graduate Professional Development Canvas page](#) or contact your program's CSPD professional developer.

New Location!

WHERE: Main Campus, Howard Gittis Student Center South, 2nd Floor

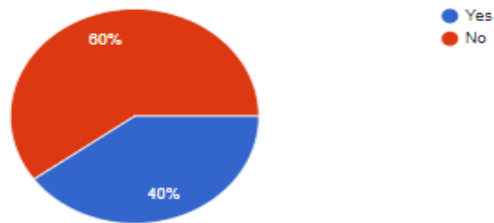
WHEN: Monday, February 10th from 10am-1:30pm

Business professional attire is required.

Exhibit 2- Responses to Business Attire Survey

Do you own business professional attire?

30 responses



Have you ever had to borrow business attire from someone (family, friend, etc) for an interview or professional event?

30 responses

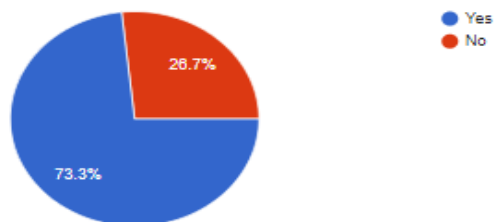


Exhibit 3- Description of Temple Thrift

TEMPLE THRIFT

[Home](#) [About Us](#) [Get Involved](#) Temple Thrift

**OCT
25**

Sponsor(s): Temple Office of Sustainability

Location: Bell Tower

Do you want to spice up your wardrobe without the sticker shock of center city stores? Stop by the Office of Sustainability's Pop-up Thrift, where we will be selling gently used clothing donated during last year's residence hall move-out. All of the pieces are under \$10, and most of the jeans, sweaters, shirts are under \$3. All of the proceeds raised will go directly to addressing student food insecurity on Temple's campus.

Interested in helping out with the sale? [Register to volunteer here.](#)

*This is a Campus Sustainability Week event!

Exhibit 4- Example Flyers



ALTER ATTIRE

A NEW Business Clothing
Thrift Store

LIVE GREEN

Donate your gently used
Business Clothes TODAY!

Reduce YOUR Carbon
Footprint by shopping used



Exhibit 5- Implementation Outline



Exhibit 6- Budget Table

Projected Costs	
Item	Cost (USD \$)
5 Racks (each holding 20 items)	\$250
100 Hangers	\$50
Monitor	\$15
ID Scanner	\$20
Flyers (100 color-printed)	\$50
TOTAL COST	\$385

REFERENCES

- Albeck-Ripka, L. (n.d.). How to Reduce Your Carbon Footprint. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/guides/year-of-living-better/how-to-reduce-your-carbon-footprint>
- Balancing Work and Learning. (2019, January 24). Retrieved from <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/learnandearn/#>
- Center for Student Professional Development: Fox School of Business: Temple University: Philadelphia, PA. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.fox.temple.edu/institutes-and-centers/center_for_student_professional_development/
- Clothes Closet. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://careercenter.umich.edu/content/clothes-closet>
- Glassner, B., & Schapiro, M. (2019, August 21). Students on both ends of the economic spectrum face challenges in college. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/colleges-must-do-more-to-properly-serve-both-advantaged-and-disadvantaged-students/2019/08/21/fa475d2c-c416-11e9-9986-1fb3e4397be4_story.html
- Nguyen, Lena. (2020, January 30). Business Attire Survey.
- Temple Surplus. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://campusoperations.temple.edu/surplus>
- van Beeren, M. (2016, June 9). Outside In: Dress to Impress Yourself. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/articles/201207/outside-in-dress-impress-yourself>
- 2020 Fox Spring Connection. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://temple.joinhandshake.com/career_fairs/14072