



## Survey of Historic Costume Course Redesign Using Bloom's Taxonomy

Arienne McCracken, April Elisha Stanley, Huanjiao Dong, Sara Marckett  
Iowa State University, USA

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Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, & Krathwohl, 1956) delineated a hierarchy of cognitive learning from the knowledge of specific facts to the more advanced levels of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The Taxonomy has frequently been used as a framework to create course learning objectives and to align teaching strategies to those objectives. It has found application in apparel, merchandising, and design and related disciplines including art/visual interpretation and history. The purpose of this teaching presentation is to demonstrate the ways in which a Survey of Historic Costume class was transformed from an active learning, yet lecture-style environment to a hybrid course in which developed learning assignments were guided by the five categories of Bloom's Taxonomy.

To foster critical thinking in art interpretation classes, Hamblen (1984) explicitly used the tiers of Bloom's Taxonomy to develop an "art criticism questioning strategy" (p. 47), which moved the learner from simple questions related to memorization of facts to questions that demanded a more comprehensive evaluation of the artistic artifact under review. Similarly, Padurano (2011) advocated creating prompts based on Bloom's Taxonomy to help students become more fluent in interpreting the variety of visual imagery that was utilized in a history course. Ellison and Matthews (2010) developed the learning goals for an experimental class on the history and literature of 18<sup>th</sup> century London by employing Bloom's Taxonomy along with other frameworks. Bloom's Taxonomy has also been used in apparel, merchandising, and design classes. To encourage critical thinking and problem-based learning, Frey and Eckman (1999) drew upon the Taxonomy's categories for case studies about NAFTA's impact upon the apparel industry. Recently, researchers discussed fashion design students' creation of online podcasts in a course that included learning objectives drawn from the Taxonomy's creative tier (Winge & Embry, 2013). Kozar and Hiller Connell (2015) analyzed the levels of student development resulting from completion of a fashion intern program by drawing upon Bloom's Taxonomy. These examples suggest that employing Bloom's Taxonomy for a fashion history course, which combines elements of visual culture, history, and apparel, may be fruitful in developing higher-level thinking skills in students.

The content in the Survey of European and American Dress History course includes a chronological view of cultures from ancient Mesopotamia to the American Civil War period. It fulfills the university's U.S. Diversity course requirement and routinely enrolls from 70 to 115 students drawn from the apparel major, as well as the related majors of journalism and design. The three-credit course was traditionally taught twice a week for one and a half hours each session. Due to graduate student demand for additional teaching opportunities, the course was redesigned into a hybrid format in which the professor taught a one hour face-to-face session meeting on Monday, and two doctoral candidates were responsible for their own sessions,

meeting Wednesday and Friday respectively. Prior to their face-to-face class session, students were required to read the textbook and respond to a 10-question quiz available on the learning management system. Class time was spent reviewing concepts with PowerPoint slides and supporting individual and group activities. Following the one-hour class meeting, students were provided with 72 hours to complete an application exercise that drew from their knowledge and exposure to that week's content. These weekly learning activities were developed in accordance with the action verbs associated with Bloom's Taxonomy and included student referencing of both the textbook for background information and a source outside of the textbook. For example, the learning activity associated with the Northern Renaissance included three images scanned from *The first book of fashion: The books of clothes of Matthaus & Veit Konrad Schwarz of Ausburg* (2015). For each of the images, students were instructed to state five elements of dress that placed this image into the date provided (Bloom's category of Knowledge, specifically Identify and Recognize). Because the manner in which Schwarz recorded his fashion choices is reminiscent of today's use of social media, students were asked to state five advantages and five disadvantages future historians will have when they use social media as a primary source (Bloom's category of Evaluation, specifically Predict). The presenters will share each of the learning activities developed, as well as student examples, such that other instructors will be able to adapt and refine these to their specific dress history course.

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