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Fashion merchandising and design professor Barbara Frazier recently published an article in Clothing and Textiles Research Journal. The article “An Industry View of Competencies for Entry-Level Merchandising Jobs: Application of the ITAA Meta-Goals” reports results of a survey to identify critical competencies for new college graduates seeking careers in the retail industry.

The study found employers favored ‘soft skills’ such as teamwork, leadership and communication over discipline-specific knowledge. The results suggest that educators need to emphasize experiential and collaborative learning in college curricula, and to find ways to invigorate core content knowledge in clothing and textiles. The project was funded in part by the Eulalia Toms Research Fund in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences.