



Member  
Spotlight



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## **Dr. Vanessa Brantley - Cheyney**

A faculty member at Cheyney University since July, 2005, Dr. Vanessa Brantley chairs the Consumer and Applied Sciences Department. A member of the State APSCUF Investment Committee, Dr. Brantley has served on Cheyney APSCUF's Executive Council for the past two years and is currently the Cheyney University APSCUF CAP/Legislative Chair.

"Our tenure committee at Cheyney values service to the union. Therefore, my role on the Cheyney APSCUF Executive Council aids in the attainment of tenure," Brantley said.

However, Brantley's reason for involvement in APSCUF goes much deeper than a simple service checkmark for her tenure review.

"Unions provide a voice and structure for faculty. Larger organizations tend to make it very difficult for an individual to be heard or supported. However when several voices speak, it is harder for the organization to ignore their concerns," Brantley noted.

Since her arrival at Cheyney, Brantley has been instrumental in restructuring the university's Fashion Merchandising and Management (FMM) degree program.

“Prior to my arrival, the program had a design focus,” Brantley explained. “Since apparel production is primarily done off-shore, I restructured the program to align it with the fields of fashion merchandising and management so that our majors will have greater opportunities to become apparel buyers and apparel managers.”

The FMM program, which features approximately 45 majors, is designed as a student-centered, industry-focused program that incorporates academic theory, industry-related best practices and applied learning.

Dr. Brantley noted that student progress is assessed mainly by completion of semester projects which are often judged by industry representatives who have offered advice and support throughout each course.

At the end of the sophomore year, each FMM major is required to take Professional Development, which is a prep course for the required apparel industry internship. Due to the required internship, most FMM majors are offered full-time employment prior to graduation.

As far as corporate backing is concerned, Wal-Mart has been a big supporter of Cheyney’s FMM program.

“Wal-Mart not only offers two \$5,000 scholarships, it also supports the program by providing in-class mentors who offer information on best practices, serve as project judges, and provide opportunities for field trips,” Brantley said.



Cheyney University’s Dr. Vanessa Brantley and FMM majors at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.