AVT 611 GRADUATE DESIGN SEMINAR

Description
A laboratory for the exploration of contemporary design theory and practice through writing and design making, this class will have rotating topical content. Students will work together or separately to explore the boundaries between design, art and culture and their emerging place in the world of design. This class may be repeated and will have different emphasis and different content every semester.

Objectives
Continuing development of professional visual sensitivity and competency in graphic communication through the creation of written and designed work. Students will become more aware of their priorities and goals as a working designer, and develop broader awareness of design's place in the culture. Some semesters may explore the design leader's responsibilities to the professional field and community.

Content
This course will have no technical content—students are expected to possess or develop the digital and writing skills outside the class. Students will produce a series of designed and/or written solutions to theoretical problems posed throughout the semester. Class sessions will be devoted to presentation, discussion, critique, and review.

Attendance
Seminars include substantial critique and discussion components. By their nature, they are dynamic educational environments—during critique periods and in the interaction of students on ongoing projects, the seminar provides resources and learning opportunities that cannot be “made up” by other means. In short, your attendance is just as important as mine. Therefore:
• Students are required to attend all class meetings, to arrive on time, and to stay for the duration of the class.
• Students arriving seven minutes or more late to class will be marked tardy. Students arriving 15 minutes or more late will be marked absent. Three tardy marks equals one absence. Students who leave before the class is dismissed will be marked absent.
• Students who are having difficulty with the attendance requirement may be asked to drop the class.
• For each absence beyond three absences your final course grade will be reduced one full letter grade from the earned level of all work for the course. For example: “B” quality design work for the semester with four absences results in a final course grade of “C.” There are no excused absences.
• Absence, tardiness, and early departure is regarded as de facto evidence of non-participation.
• It is not possible to earn an incomplete in this class.
• Failure to turn in any project and assignment will automatically result in a fail grade.
• There will be no makeup for a project.

Evaluation
Participation, defined as attendance, meeting deadlines, participating in class discussions, effectively meeting class leadership requirement: 40%
Project 1: 30%
Project 2: 30%

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Textbook
There is no required text for this class. However students are expected to do any necessary research to be successful in design projects.

References: Visual Storytelling: Inspiring a New Visual Language
Author: R. Klanten; S. Ehmann; and F. Schulze; Gestalten Verlag, publisher.
http://usshop.gestalten.com/visual-storytelling.html

Maps of the Imagination: the Writer as Cartographer
Author: Peter Turchi; Trinity University Press, publisher.

A Map of the World: According to Illustrators & Storytellers
Editor: Antonis Antoniou; Robert Klanten; Sven Ehmann; Hendrik Hellige; Gestalten Verlag, publisher.
http://usshop.gestalten.com/a-map-of-the-world.html

You Are Here: Personal Geographies and Other Maps of the Imagination
Author: Katharine A. Harmon; Princeton Architectural Press, publisher.

Additionally: All graduate students are expected to keep up to date with the design press and blogs. Suggested publications include Print, Communication Arts, Eye and Baseline. These are all available in Fenwick. Suggested websites include Print, Eye, Design Observer and AIGA Voice.

Materials and Supplies
There is no set list of supplies. However, access to analog drawing supplies will likely be useful, as well as traditional graphic design equipment: a computer with the Adobe Creative Suite, and a color printer.

Course Policies
All projects are due at the beginning of class on the date assigned. Late projects will be reduced one letter grade for each week late or portion thereof. After two weeks, projects will not be accepted. The final project is due on the last day of class. No extensions will be given.

Students must be completely prepared for class to be considered present, i.e. they must have all necessary supplies and computer files and all ongoing (ungraded) projects with them.

The instructor evaluates your work in line with the course syllabus, university catalog and guidelines, and documented prepared course participation and performance throughout the course. The course grade is determined by a careful assessment of your overall performance in the course that includes attendance, prepared participation, project evaluations, project revisions, and final project(s) presentation all of which is described in detail in the course syllabus, handouts, and lecture presentations.

All work created in this class must be specifically for this class and this class only. It is not permitted to use class projects as a platform for producing professional work or projects intended to be submitted to other teachers.
Semester Emphasis-Visual Storytelling

Project 1  Narrative-based illustration requires an understanding of how graphic images are used to communicate a message or simply to tell a story. By applying imagination and developing an interesting layout within your own personal style and skill set, illustrate a personal narrative.

—Joel Millerchip

Project 1: Visual Journal
A four-week long visual journal to tell the story about you and your surroundings. It doesn’t need to be every day dairy. It can be the weekly highlights. You may also select or plan an activity over these four weeks and illustrate the activity from start to finish.

We will review your draft each week. You will refine your design into a cohesive and uniformed visual display. You may use type along with your imagery. The final design can be either print or screen.
Project due on March 24.

Project 2  Maps help us understand and navigate the world. For centuries, maps have become better, more refined, and more precise--there are no blind spots anymore. While Google Maps and GPS systems have become our tools of choice for navigation, contemporary maps have evolved into platforms for cutting-edge illustration, experimental data visualization, and personal visual storytelling.

—A Map of the World: According to Illustrators & Storytellers; publisher’s description.

Project 2: Map of Graphic Design Now (Not historically)
1. Conduct your research on what constitutes the current field and practice of graphic design at this current moment and where it is going.
2. Analyze your finding and make connections. Draft your narrative/content before work on visual design.
3. Consider an appropriate metaphor for your map.
The final design can be either print or screen.
Project due on April 28.

Course Outline (Subject to change)  http://studio323.com/avt611

In addition to producing design and participating in critiques, each student will make one presentations and lead two discussions. The presentation will be of a successful visual storytelling. The presentation must include visuals, either printed or in digital form for overhead display. The discussions will be on the topic of a design article(s) or provocative blog post(s) distributed by the student one week ahead of time, either via printouts/photocopies or links. (All students are expected to have read the distributed article by the discussion date.) All articles and posts must be published within the last 6 months, preferably related to visual storytelling. The discussion may include visuals. Expect to lead the class for a minimum of 15 minutes each time, discussions may go longer if the extra time is warranted. Students will sign up for their dates on the first day of class.
1. Jan. 21 Introduction to class and major project, sign up for presentations and discussion dates.
3. Feb. 4 Visual journal 1 rough due. Presentation 1, discussion 2
4. Feb. 11 Visual journal 2 rough due. Presentation 1, discussion 2
5. Feb. 18 Visual journal 3 rough due. Discuss project 1 refinement. Presentation 1, discussion 2
7. March 3 Project 1 progress critique and Project 2 research and concept due.
8. March 10 Spring Break. No class.
9. March 17 Project 1 final critique. Project 2 narrative due and progress review. Presentation 1, discussion 2
10. March 24 Project 1 final design due. Project 2 rough sketches of 4 alternative approaches to the design/content (not the style) due. Presentation 1, discussion 2
11. March 31 Project 2 second round of sketches or rough draft due. Presentation 1, discussion 2
12. April 7 Project 2 draft due. Presentation 1, discussion 2
13. April 14 Progress critique. Presentation 1, discussion 2
14. April 21 Progress critique.
15. April 28 Project 2 due and final critique. Submit a CD-Rom with all your project files. Have a great summer!

University and School of Art Policies
In accordance with George Mason University policy, turn off all beepers, cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

Commitment to Diversity
This class will be conducted as an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Statement on Ethics in Teaching and Practicing Art and Design
As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).
Open Studio Hours
SOA teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time mornings, evenings and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures and schedules for studio use are established by the SOA studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

School of Art Print Studio
School of Art Print Studio (SOAP) is located in the School of Art Building on the Fairfax Campus. As a non-profit studio, SOAP offers a variety of services including printing and production services to students, faculty and staff. All jobs are processed with high quality materials on state-of-the-art equipment, specifically for graphic design portfolios, mixed-media paintings and reproductions, posters, handmade books, student assignments and proof sheets. More information can be found at soaprint.gmu.edu or 703-993-7203.

ArtsBus - Dates for Spring 2016
February 20
March 19
April 9

ArtsBus Credit
* Each student must have up to 5 AVT 300/Artsbus credits before graduation. For credit to appear on your transcript you must enroll in AVT 300. This also applies to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment.
* If you plan/need to go on multiple ArtsBus trips during a semester and need them towards your total requirement, you must enroll in multiple sections of AVT 300. Please go to the ArtsBus website: http://artsbus.gmu.edu "Student Information" for additional, very important information regarding ArtsBus policy.
* Non-AVT majors taking art classes do not need Artsbus credit BUT may need to go on the Artsbus for a class assignment. You can either sign up for AVT 300 or buy a ticket for the bus trip at the Center of the Arts. Alternate trips must be approved by the instructor of the course that is requiring an ArtsBus trip.

Visual Voices Lecture Series Spring 2016
Visual Voices is a year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:20- 9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater: http://soa.gmu.edu/visualvoices/

Important Deadlines
Last Day to Add Tuesday, Jan. 26
Last Day to Drop (No Tuition Penalty) Tuesday, Jan. 26
Final Drop (67% Tuition Penalty) Fri. Feb. 19
Selective Withdrawal Period Feb 22 - Mar 25
Incomplete work from Spring/Summer 2015 due to instructor Mar 25

Once the add and drop deadlines have passed, instructors do not have the authority to approve requests from students to add or drop/withdraw late. Requests for late adds (up until the last day of classes) must be made by the student in the SOA office (or the office of the department offering the course), and generally are only approved in the case of a documented university error (such as a problem with financial aid being processed),

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LATE ADD fee will apply. Requests for non-selective withdrawals and retroactive adds (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs, Performing Arts Building A407.

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences
If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need academic accommodations, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Disabilities Resource Center (SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through the DRC.

Official Communications via GMU E-Mail
Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Attendance Policies
Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

Honor Code
Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, as stated in the George Mason University Catalog. The honor code requires that the work you do as an individual be the product of your own individual synthesis or integration of ideas. (This does not prohibit collaborative work when it is approved by your instructor.) As a faculty member, I have an obligation to refer the names of students who may have violated the Honor Code to the Student Honor Council, which treats such cases very seriously. No grade is important enough to justify cheating, for which there are serious consequences that will follow you for the rest of your life. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or to a member of the GMU Counseling Center staff.

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism, a very serious Honor Code offense. It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words and punctuation just as the passage appears in the original and must use quotation marks and page numbers in your citation. If you want to paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you must put the ideas into your own words, and you must cite the source, using the APA or MLA format. (For assistance with documentation, I recommend Diana Hacker, A Writer's Reference.) The exception to this rule is information termed general knowledge—information that is widely known and stated in a number of sources. Determining what is general knowledge can be complicated, so the wise course is, “When in doubt, cite.”
Be especially careful when using the Internet for research. Not all Internet sources are equally reliable; some are just plain wrong. Also, since you can download text, it becomes very easy to inadvertently plagiarize. If you use an Internet source, you must cite the exact URL in your paper and include with it the last date that you successfully accessed the site.

Writing Center
Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.

The Collaborative Learning Hub Located in Johnson Center 311 (703-993-3141), the lab offers in-person one-on-one support for the Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, and a variety of other software. Dual monitor PCs make the lab ideal for collaborating on group projects, Macs are also available; as well as a digital recording space, collaborative tables, and a SMART Board. Free workshops are also available (Adobe and Microsoft) through Training and Certification; visit ittraining.gmu.edu to see the schedule of workshops and to sign up.