

Sculpture I

Course: Sculpture I, AVT 262-002

Time: Monday/Wednesday from 1:30 PM to 4:10 PM

Location: Art and Design Building L005

Spring Semester: January 23 - May 17

Instructor: Andy Yoder

E-mail: ayoder@gmu.edu

Sculpture I Syllabus:

"I always work with whatever medium is at hand. I don't believe in sticking to one medium. I'm afraid of its dominating me and becoming my trademark. If I'm in a place where there's clay but no wood, I work with clay. I have no personal technical method or set of tools without which I cannot work; but of course, I am influenced by the material to the extent that when I work in heavy granite, I become heavy in thought and emotion; I don't think of flying." Isamu Noguchi

"Failure isn't a necessary evil. In fact, it isn't evil at all. It is a necessary component of doing something new." Ed Catmull, co-founder of Pixar Studio

Course description

The focus here is on developing ideas, working out techniques and bringing critical thinking to bear on three-dimensional work. This class is about coming up with new ideas, problem solving and having fun while working hard. Our activity in the studio will explore form, composition and the expressive possibilities of materials. We will also look at past and contemporary artists' work to provide context, inspire, and suggest new approaches. (Prerequisite(s): AVT 104 or permission of instructor.)

Course content and Projects

Attendance/Participation

This is an extremely important aspect of the class. Arrive on time, as I will take attendance, and only two excused absences are allowed during the semester. During critiques, active participation is a requirement, but here again you will discover that these are enormously helpful in sharpening our thinking and leading to insights that might otherwise get missed. You also need to be attentive during demonstrations, and not waste time during class.

Field Trips

Visits to DC museums and art galleries, along with attending Art Department special events and openings, are a requirement of the course that you will get huge benefits from. Studio art majors are required to make at least one of the Saturday bus trips to NYC, but non-art majors should try as well; seeing current shows in New York's galleries and museums is enormously energizing!

Grading

Your grade will be based on the instructor's evaluation of the following:

- the effort and imagination you apply to your work
- your individual progress gaining skills and developing work
- active participation in class and during crits
- attendance
- meeting deadlines

Letter grading is especially hard to apply to visual art, but here is the framework:

A: over the top, far exceeding the requirements, with extraordinary, sustained effort & imagination

B: above average, and exceeding the requirements C: average effort while meeting the requirements

D: below average effort, reflected in the work, i.e. "mailing it in." F: did not meet requirements, and work is clearly unsatisfactory.

Studio Maintenance and Civility Rules

- If you don't know, ask.
- Wear proper safety gear.
- No food or drink on machinery.
- No cell phones, headphones in wood or metal studio.
- PLEASE! Report broken machinery to faculty or technician immediately.
- Never use a tool before receiving proper instruction.
- Clean and return studio tools to proper storage area after each use.
- Put your work in storage areas and clearly label at end of every class.
- ID required for all non-class time tool use.
- Clean up after yourself.
- Treat people with respect.

During the Semester:

- Wear old clothes & closed toe shoes to class. Getting dirty is part of the fun.
- Sketch your ideas
- Expect to spend at least 6 hours working outside of class

During Critiques:

- These will start promptly at the beginning of class
- Work should be set up beforehand, with all surfaces clear except for artwork
- Use the entire studio and SoA building to present your work
- Each student will have 5-12 minutes for discussion and crit
- Articulate your process and idea development honestly
- Make notes of your thoughts, ways to improve, or questions
- Most importantly, SPEAK UP! There is no such thing as stupid questions or bad ideas. This is not a competition, and the more everyone contributes the more we'll get out of the discussion.

Materials and Supplies:

One of the great skills sculptors develop is scrounging materials. Besides saving you money, these may give you new ideas and lead to unexpected results. This includes approaching businesses for donations; you will be amazed how often they are glad to help when asked in the right way. Your studio fee covers some basic materials, but beyond a modest amount you will need to purchase your own. Make sure you have whatever materials you choose to work with before class, rather than taking class time to gather them. We will discuss materials before each project to help you with this.

Please purchase the following basic supplies and have them with you at class:

- Pack of pencils or pens
- Safety gear: eye protection, ear protection, and dust mask, work gloves optional
- Tape measure
- Hot glue gun + glue sticks
- Exacto and / or utility knife and blades
- Assorted drill bit set 1/16" – 1/4"
- Masking + Duct tape
- Glue (yellow wood glue)
- Sandpaper (assorted pack of medium, fine & coarse)

Semester Calendar

Day One: intro to the class and studio, and ice-breaker project

Project 1: Opposites Attract

Create a work using two materials that are as opposite to each other as possible. This could include physical characteristics such as texture, color and function, as well as intangible qualities such as personality, status, and beauty. For example, polished vs. rusty, soft vs. hard, cheap vs. expensive, brand new vs. antique, safe vs. dangerous, attractive vs. repulsive. In the finished work, is one of the two materials dominant, or do they balance each other? Do the materials end up working together to create something new, or do they maintain their separate identities?

Project 2: Remembered Objects

Re-create a childhood object from memory, or one that has significance from your past. There are no limits to the materials you can use, except that they can't be the same as in the original object. Try to choose ones that extend the idea, or support the emotional content of the piece.

Project 3: Putting Wood to Work

Create a piece out of wood that is not only cool to look at, but also serves a useful purpose. You can use branches, plywood, chunks of lumber or tree trunks, toothpicks, or any other form of wood. The thing you choose to make may dictate what kind to use, or you might find the wood first and have it spark an idea of what to make.

Project 4: Escalation

This project is about expanding your sense of scale, as well as the all-important ability to work collaboratively. In teams of two or more, create pieces whose only requirement is that they are at least nine feet in height, width or length. These could incorporate hanging elements, two-dimensional parts, or existing furniture, but there needs to be a physical connection between the pieces to create a unified whole. Feel free to go beyond nine feet if needed.

Project 5 : A Whole of Many Parts

Gather a LOT of some material (leaves, sugar cubes, bottle caps, shoe laces, gravel, you name it) and create a piece that is much larger than the objects it's made out of.

This class fulfills a Mason Core requirement for Arts.

Mason courses in the film making, visual and performing arts stress generative, inquiry based learning through direct aesthetic and creative experience in the studio environment. Art history courses address the intrinsic relationship of personal and cultural creativity, and the manifestation of aesthetics, visual culture and visual narrative within historical contexts.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete a course in the Arts category must meet the first learning outcome and a minimum of two of the remaining four learning outcomes:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between artistic process, and a work's underlying concept, and where appropriate, contexts associated with the work.
2. Identify and analyze the formal elements of a particular art form using vocabulary and critique appropriate to that form.
3. Analyze cultural productions using standards appropriate to the form, as well as the works cultural significance and context.
4. Analyze and interpret the content of material or performance culture through its social, historical, and personal contexts.
5. Engage in generative artistic processes, including conception, creation, and ongoing critical analysis.

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.

ArtsBus

Dates for Spring 2017:

February 18

March 25

April 18

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

Dates for Spring 2017:

January 26

February 9

March 9

March 23

March 30

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

<i>January 1 Day of Week</i>	<i>Sunday</i>
Martin Luther King Day (no classes)	Mon Jan 16
First day of classes ; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date; full semester waitlists removed	Mon Jan 23
Last day to add classes —all individualized section forms due Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	Mon Jan 30
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	Mon Feb 13
Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)	Fri Feb 24
Immunization Record Deadline	Wed Mar 1
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	Mon Feb 20 – Fri Mar 24
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	Mon Feb 27 – Fri Mar 31
Spring Break	Mon Mar 13 – Sun Mar 19
Incomplete work from Fall 2016 due to Instructor	Fri March 31
Incomplete grade changes from Fall 2016 due to Registrar	Fri April 7
Dissertation/Thesis Deadline	Fri May 5
Last day of classes	Sat May 6
Reading Days Reading days provide students with additional study time for final examinations. Faculty may schedule optional study sessions, but regular classes or exams may not be held.	Mon May 8 – Tue May 9

Exam Period (beginning at 7:30 a.m.)	Wed May 10 – Wed May 17
Commencement and Degree Conferral Date	May 20

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), 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.