
AVT 497 SENIOR PROJECT – Fall 2016

**George Mason University
School of Art
AVT 497:001
001: AB 2044/002: L011
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:30pm - 7:10pm
This Syllabus is Subject to Change**

AVT 497: Senior Project (3 credits)
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Section 002:
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Prerequisites:

Senior art and visual technology major, completion of 12 concentration credits, and completion of or concurrent enrollment in all required general education courses.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Overview:

Senior Project is a capstone course for graduating AVT majors concentrating in any studio or new media discipline except graphic design (who take AVT 498, Senior Design Project).

This course satisfies the General Education/Mason Core Synthesis Requirement. As a synthesis course, Senior Project draws on skills and knowledge attained through the foundation and core elements of the General Education Program, applying the power of liberal learning to a specific field or fields. AVT 497 links particular issues in the field of visual art to wider intellectual and community concerns and requires students to demonstrate advanced skills in oral and written presentations. The course allows students to draw together their learning and their critical thinking into a defining experience, through the exhibition of their senior project and preparation of a web presence that is a professional platform for their work.

Content:

Over the course of the semester, students will produce a new body of work that will include evidence of significant conceptual and technical development, an exhibition and professional outreach, including the following:

- a. an exhibition proposal
- b. peer and faculty evaluation of work in progress through regular critiques
- c. a written artist's statement that addresses the concerns and contemporary context of your work.
- e. preparation of publicity through invitation cards and internet communication
- f. installation of the exhibition to professional standards
- f. a web presence documenting the process of creating your work, including full installation photos of the completed exhibition.

During the semester, the professor as well as other professionals in the field will give lectures and demonstrations about portfolio preparation, presentation of work to galleries and prospective employers, applying for grants, project proposals, and graduate school.

Requirements:

Each student is required to:

- Produce a body of new work for the capstone exhibition, within the specifications of time and space agreed to with the instructor. The body of work must be within the student's area of concentration, unless the instructors have expressly approved something outside that area of study.
- Write a proposal for their exhibition that follows the specifications provided later in this syllabus.
- Actively participate in regular critiques of their work and their peers' work; appropriately describe and defend his/her work orally in critique
- Write an artist's statement that situates their work in the context of its own development and in relation to historical and contemporary aesthetics and practice.
- Produce and distribute announcements and publicity for their exhibition. This may be done through cards, posters, and/or through the Internet.
- Attend all lectures and presentations for professional development.
- Plan and install her/his work in a public exhibit that meets professional standards (including compliance with standard gallery practices).
- Prepare and provide for an opening reception.
- Create a web presence that documents the developmental progress and final work for your senior exhibition,

Criteria for Evaluation:

- Attendance at all classes, including the opening reception for the senior project exhibitions during class time, is expected and required. The university's policy states: "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."

- Final grades will be assigned on the level of success in completing the above course requirements. Evidence of personal initiative, original creative work, thoughtful preparation and skillful execution, timeliness, attendance and participation will be measures of successful work; the greater the body of evidence, the higher the grade. You must work consistently and collaboratively throughout the term with your fellow students, your instructors, the faculty in your concentration, and gallery staff. Following appropriate schedules and procedures is an essential part of the process.

The final letter grade for the course is based on the following major components, *each of which has equal importance in averaging the final grade.*

(a) Your demonstration of understanding and comprehension of the topic undertaken for exhibition, the creativity and scope of the solution and appropriate craftsmanship and technical skill.

Senior Project requires significant independent work. You will choose the topic of your project and demonstrate an understanding of the context in which your work and thought operate.

(b) Meeting deadlines and participating in class discussions and critiques.

Projects must reflect the student's best effort, show continual progress and be turned in on due dates. You must complete all components of your project as defined in your final approved proposal.

(c) Attendance (both physical and mental), attitude and work habits.

Attendance in this course is mandatory. Absence from class may result in a lowering of your final grade. Please note that if absent, the student must find out from a classmate what he/she has missed and what to prepare for the following meeting. The professors cannot take time away from regular class instruction to repeat lectures and assignment requirements for each absent student.

Except for a serious emergency and/or a letter from a doctor, no excuses for late work or absence will be accepted. If you wish to be excused from class to observe a religious holiday, or for any other serious matter of a personal nature, you must bring it to the attention of the professor prior to the absence so that arrangements can be made for you to keep up with the progress of the class. Class starts and ends at its designated time. Habitual tardiness or leaving early on a habitual basis will affect your grade.

(d) The professor's observation and evaluation of individual progress (in terms of improvement, skill building, creativity, productivity, etc).

You are required to come to class prepared for critiques as well as written and web-based requirements, and to participate in all class discussions and critiques. Habitually coming to class unprepared will result in a lower grade for this course.

(e) Exhibition All work must be at the highest level possible. This includes successfully completing the details: labels, advertisement (announcements, postcard, web page) signs and written presentations. You are also responsible for timely installation and striking of your exhibition, including cleanup and correction of wall surfaces, so that you do not interfere with the students exhibiting before or after your show.

(f) Development of a web presence documenting your work. This will include weekly documentation in visual and written form that demonstrates conceptual and physical progress of your project. Additionally, you will be required to include examples from historical and contemporary art and culture that inform your work.

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 welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect 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 15

<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 <i>Patriot Web</i>	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.

What Your Senior Project Preliminary Description and Project Proposal Must Contain

There is no standard format for your senior project proposal. It should be 1-2 pages in length, and should answer as clearly as possible the following questions (you can ignore any that are clearly irrelevant to your project).

Your preliminary description should contain at least the following:

- Concept: A clear, brief explanation of the concept for your senior project.
Why: Why this project? How does it relate to your past work, your concerns as an artist, the issues that interest you in life?
Media: The media you will use (be as general as you need to at the early stages, but as specific as you can!)

The full proposal must include all of the above, plus the following considerations (include this information in the preliminary description if you know it):

- Timeline: Briefly describe your plan for getting the project done in the time available.
Space issues: Approximate amount of space you will need and/or any other issues that should be considered for the display of the work (e.g., do you want to be part of the video/animation screening? Does your installation that need floor space as well as wall space?) If your work will be hung on the wall, how many pieces do you anticipate, and how large each will be?

- Equipment or Technology: Will you need any special equipment or technology for your work?

- Special Challenges: Will your exhibition require you to hang anything unusual from walls or ceilings? Will it involve large amounts of flammable materials? Will large percentages of the walls be covered? Will any part of your exhibition require electric power delivered by cords? Will there be any hazardous aspects to the installation (tripping hazards, for example)? Are there techniques you need to learn, or particularly time-consuming processes involved?

You will be asked to turn in a preliminary description prior to an individual meeting with your instructor; then, after you meet with the instructor, you will proceed to a complete proposal. The more information you provide about your idea at the preliminary description stage, the more productive the initial one-on-one meeting will be. If you haven't chosen your idea at the time you turn in your preliminary description, just give a concise description of the multiple ideas you are considering (and don't worry about details yet).

SOME RESOURCES FOR ARTISTS

<http://www.roch.edu/dept/digiart/Careers/cad/cad2.html>
<http://rhizome.org/announce/opportunity>
<http://www.collegeart.org/opportunities>
http://art.nmu.edu/department/AD_Career-Jobs.html
<http://www.khake.com/page27.html>
<http://www.artistresource.org/jobhunt.htm>
<http://www.artisthelpnetwork.com>
<http://www.deannawood.com/>
<http://www.artcalendar.com/ppv/>
<http://myrejectionletters.blogspot.com/>
<http://www.nyfa.org/>
<http://www.artdeadlineslist.com/>

Culture, Art and Theory Sites:

<http://infosthetics.com/>
<http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/mediaartnet/>

www.furtherfield.org
www.metamute.org
<http://www.we-make-money-not-art.com/>
<http://www.selectparks.net/>
<http://www.kultureflash.net/>
<http://liftlab.com/think/nova/> (pasta and vinegar)
<http://www.isea-web.org/> (International Society for Electronic Arts)
<http://www.bombsite.com/>
<http://www.aec.at/> (ARS Electronica)
<http://www.illegal-art.org/>
www.ctheory.net
<http://firstmonday.org/>
<http://www.leonardo.info/> (Leonardo Electronic Almanac)
<http://www.todayandtomorrow.net/category/art/>
<http://journal.fibreculture.org>
<http://www.ibiblio.org/nmediac/> (NMediac | The Journal of New Media and Culture)
<http://www.idmaa.org/journal/> (The International Digital Media and Arts Journal)
<http://www.culturemachine.net>
<http://www.lynndunham.blogspot.com/>
<http://makezine.com/>
<http://www.wwar.com/>
<http://www.hyperrhiz.net> and more...

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Note: Schedule subject to modification. All schedule updates will be presented in class.

All joint classes will meet in SOA AB L011 or AB2044. ALL students are expected to attend the Senior Project installations, reception and final cleanup. Attendance will be taken. No exceptions! This is part of your course requirement (see dates below).

Week 1:	1/24	Introduction to course requirements. (<u>everyone meets in AB 2044</u>)
and	1/26	Presentation 1 (Group Viewing of your work, ideas for your exhibition how you develop your artistic practice. <u>Everyone meets in AB 2044</u>)
Week 2:	1/30	Presentation 2 (Group Viewing of your work, ideas for your exhibition how you develop your artistic practice. <u>Everyone meets in AB 2044</u>)
and	2/2	Individual meetings (only for those students who have been scheduled): First Proposals due/ work samples due
Week 3:	2/7	Individual meetings (only for those students who have been scheduled): Proposals due/ work samples due
First	2/9	Studio Day
Week 4:	2/14	Web Presence discussion/exhibition requirements discussion
	2/16	Studio day

ARTSBUS TRIP Studio tour focuses on installation styles and technique

Week 5: (semester 1/3 finished)

- 2/21 Committee Assignments: **Preparing Spaces, Promotional Elements, Exhibition Materials and Activities, Installation, Reception** (everyone attends)
- 2/23 Final project proposals due by email/Studio day
- Week 6:** 2/28 Individual Critiques, as scheduled
- 3/2 Individual Critiques, as scheduled
- Week 7:** 3/7 Studio Day
- 3/9 Presentation by guest (everyone attends)
- Week 8: SPRING BREAK, but not from your projects**
- Week 9:** (Semester 2/3 finished, 35 days left)
- 3/21 Studio Day – One-on-One Meetings, as needed
- 3/23 Studio Day – One-on-One Meetings, as needed
- Week 10:** 3/30 Committee reports/meetings, exhibition run-down
- 4/4 Presentation by Sheryl Fiegel
- Week 11:** 4/11 Individual critiques
- 4/13 Individual critiques; resume due
- ARTSBUS TRIP 4/15 Studio tour focuses on installation styles and technique**
- Week 12:** 4/18 Final Work Presentations (everyone)
- 4/21 Final Work Presentations (everyone)
- Week 13:** 4/25 Studio Day
- 4/27 Final presentations (individual)
Labels due/ images of work due
Web Presence due
- Week 14:** 5/2 Final presentations (individual)
Labels due/ images of work due
Web Presence due
- 5/4 (NO MORE TIME, all work completed and exhibition ready)
Final committee reports/ marching orders
- Week 15 and 16:**
Exhibition Schedule:
- 5/5 Exhibition Installation . All hands!!**

- 5/12 Exhibition Celebration/Vernisage**
- 5/13 Exhibition Take-down. All hands!**