

**College of Visual and Performing Arts
Department of Art and Visual Technology
Photography I - AVT 252**

Instructor: Sue Wrbican

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Office Hours 9:30-10:30 AM MTW or by appointment

This syllabus is subject to change.

This class fulfills a General Education Core requirement for Arts. Core requirements help ensure that students become acquainted with the broad range of intellectual domains that contribute to a liberal education. By experiencing the subject matter and ways of knowing in a variety of fields, students will be better able to synthesize new knowledge, respond to fresh challenges, and meet the demands of a complex world.

Arts goal: 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. Courses aim to achieve a majority of the following learning outcomes: students will be able to identify and analyze the formal elements of a particular art form using vocabulary appropriate to that form; demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between artistic technique and the expression of a work's underlying concept; analyze cultural productions using standards appropriate to the form and cultural context; analyze and interpret material or performance culture in its social, historical, and personal contexts; and engage in the artistic process, including conception, creation, and ongoing critical analysis.

Photography I: This course will explore black and white photography as an art medium. No previous experience in photography is necessary, however Studio Fundamentals I and II are prerequisites and serve as strong foundation courses. For the purpose of this course, it is assumed that you know nothing about photography. Although it is very likely that you do know something, it is better that I make this assumption on the grounds that it will give everyone a common background to work from.

This class will be examining photography via assignments based in contemporary thought using examples from current practices specifically in photography as it exists in contemporary art.

This class will not emphasize traditional problems and routine or formalized solutions. Specific unique seeing is our goal and success is incumbent upon the ability to explore, with an open mind, a number of visual possibilities. Personal taste is an issue in this course, not as something to be satisfied and not as a

criterion for judgment, but instead as something to be made more intelligent and more sophisticated, through a process of continual challenge.

ATTENDANCE is mandatory! This is an experience class and growth comes only through continued active participation. **In case of an unavoidable absence, please contact your Instructor immediately. You are responsible for all missed information. Excessive absences will result in a lowering of the final course grade by one letter for each absence beyond 2 excused absences during the semester. (e.g. If you earn a B and you have 3 absences your final grade is a C. Open lab periods serve to provide additional work time. They do not serve as a replacement for scheduled class time.**

GRADING is based on several factors:

1- Satisfactory completion of visual assignments. These assignments are due periodically throughout the semester and represent a cross-section of the principles of photographic seeing. Solutions to these problems will be discussed and evaluated in class critiques and grades will be based on aesthetic merit and technical competence.

2- Your personal contribution to the class. Each student is partially responsible for the success of the class. Contributions include:

A-Regular attendance.

B-Completion of assignments on time. (Late assignments will be graded accordingly – **no assignment(s) will be accepted after the due date without prior permission of the instructor.**

C-Willingness to participate in class discussions, this includes preparation both in terms of completion of projects and coming to class with ideas and opinions that will promote discussion.

D- Participation in the orderly functioning of the lab...clean up, care of equipment, proper return of borrowed equipment, etc. are responsibilities everyone must share.

3- Presentation of a final series at the end of the semester. This body of work is given utmost consideration in determining your final grade.

4- Grade breakdown:

A. All assignments (except your final) count for 50% of your final grade.

B. Your final series counts for 20% of your final grade.

C. Class participation counts for 10% of your final grade.

D. Your written criticism counts for 10% of your final grade.

E. Your semester test counts for 10% of your final grade.

5- Resubmissions:

You will have the option of resubmitting an assignment. **All resubmissions are due no later than one week after the assignment is due.** Resubmissions are defined as a **completed** assignment that does not meet your personal approval. (You must have actual prints in hand for the critique, however they do not need to be mounted). **In**

addition, you must have my prior approval before taking the option to resubmit.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

- 1-An acknowledged understanding of the assignment and the seeking of unique solutions.
- 2- Demonstration of sensitivity to the camera as an image-making tool.
- 3- Individual initiative and an effort to carry assignments as far as possible.
- 4- Willingness to discuss openly all solutions to the visual problems you face with the class as well as the ability to respond to **constructive** criticism from the class.
- 5- Technical proficiency - skills in processing, printing, and final presentation are judged by fine art standards...technique should be appropriate to the image and idea.

OTHER POLICIES AND DISCLAIMERS

1- University Policy - Assumption of Risk

There are inherent risks that you assume as a student participating in a laboratory course. You are responsible for observing both safety precautions and specific guidance when working in a GMU photo lab. Laboratory hazards to which you may be exposed may include, but are not limited to the following: toxic and chemical substances, mounting presses and cutters, and the operation of electrical equipment in an environment containing water (shock potential).

Individuals who suffer allergic reactions, are pregnant, have sensitive skin, or have other medical issues, must make these concerns known to the course instructor before being exposed to the laboratory environment. Course descriptive materials and the course instructor will address specific hazards to which you will be exposed. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for hazardous materials used in the laboratory are available for review through the course instructor or the laboratory manager.

2- Darkroom use is a privilege. Misuse of chemistry or equipment may result in suspension from the darkroom area.

3- All late penalties for loaned equipment and fees for damaged equipment will apply.

4- Be polite and courteous to your instructor, other members of the photography department and EACH OTHER. Disrespectful or disruptive students will be asked to leave.

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 Fall 2017:

September 23

October 21

November 18

ArtsBus Credit

ArtsBus Credit and Policies: You are responsible for knowing and following Artsbus policies and rules. Please go to the ArtsBus website: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu> "Student Information" for important information regarding ArtsBus policy. 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* 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 Fall 2017 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/>

August 31...Simon Schwartz

Sept 14... Andy Birnbaum

Oct 5...Patricia Bello-Gillen

Oct 19...Sadie Barnette

Nov 11... Walter Kravitz

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| Consortium Registration Deadline | TBD |
| First day of classes; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date | August 28 |
| Labor Day, university closed | September 4 |
| Last day to add classes—all individualized section forms due Last day to drop with no tuition penalty | September 5 |
| Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty | September 19 |
| Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty) | September 29 |
| Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web | September 25 – October 20 |
| Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only) | October 2 – October 27 |
| Columbus Day recess (Monday classes/labs meet Tuesday, Tuesday classes do not meet this week) | October 9 |
| Incomplete work from spring/summer 2017 due to instructor | October 27 |
| Incomplete grade changes from spring/summer 2017 due to Registrar | November 3 |
| Thanksgiving recess | November 22 – 26 |
| Last day of classes | December 9 |
| 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. | December 11 – 12 |
| Exam Period | Wed December 13 – Wed December 20 |
| Winter Graduation Ceremony | Thu December 21 |
| Degree Conferral Date | Sat December 23 |

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 your instructor 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.

Cell Phones:

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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, and are responsible knowing the rules, as stated on the George Mason University website's Academic Integrity page (<http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/>). "To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, trust, and fairness among all members of the Mason community, and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

Mason's Commitment: To create an environment that is innovative, diverse, entrepreneurial, and accessible-helping you avoid accidental or intentional violations of the Honor Code."

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.