SCULPTURE I

Course: Sculpture I - AVT 262 001
Time: Tuesday/Thursday from 10:30AM - 1:10PM
Location: Art and Design Building, Room L005
Fall Semester:
Instructor: Rachel Debuque
Email: rdebuque@gmu.edu
Office: Third Floor, 2029
Hours: Wednesday 5 PM -7PM or Appointment
Phone: 703.993.8564

*Note: This syllabus is subject to change upon Instructor’s discretion

“Ordinarily we do not make full use of our faculty for seeing. An expeditious, computer-like response to visual stimuli is the normal mode; we react automatically, selecting from numerous signs that crowd and demand our attention only those which provided information pertinent to our momentary needs, and very little else. Not to exceed this mean level is, in effect, to suffer from visual poverty.” Edward Hill

Course Description: Projects in sculpture emphasizes contemporary theory and issues, the development of individual concepts, and creative solutions. Explores the application of materials, tools, and imaginative processes. Faculty demonstrations, lectures, gallery and museum visits, and regular student work critiques.

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.

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).

Important Deadlines
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 non participation. 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.

AVT 262 Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. If there are circumstances where you will have to a class, it is the students’ responsibility to make up work outside of class. Remember that attendance is essential to the understanding of Sculpture and missed classes will greatly compromise your development as an artist. On other words: ATTEND EVERY CLASS. There
are no unexcused absences. 3 missed classes results in automatic drop of one letter grade. Every subsequent absences lowers another letter grade. Six missed classes results is an automatic failure. Every missed and late class effects your midterm and final participation grades.

**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.

**Grading:** F: Unsatisfactory work/ Did not meet criteria D: Below Average but passing/ Work is lacking C: Average/ Met requirements B: Above average/ exceeded requirements A: Superior/ greatly exceeded requirements

**Participation:** Full engagement is imperative. Students are expected to actively participate in critiques. Active participation means: offering peers constructive criticism, utilizing a continually progressive art vocabulary, being attentive during demonstrations and maximizing class time.
Also, we will maintain a blog that students are expected to contribute to on a weekly basis. All in class presentation material will be made available for your research. Students are encouraged to share any relevant research with the class via blog.

**Art Events:** You may be required to make gallery and museum visits in DC and attend the Art Department special events such as guest artists lectures and exhibit openings.

**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.

January 25, 2018 – Brian Noyes “Recipe for Change: If you can’t stand the heat, get into the kitchen”  
February 1, 2018 – Teresa Jaynes “Talking to the Fingers in the Language of the Eyes: Haptic Interpretations of the Archive”  
February 22, 2018 – Dr. Sharif Bey “Artist, Researcher, Teacher: Problems, Paradigms, and Processes”  
March 1, 2018 – Juliet Bellow “Performing Stillness: Rodin’s Nijinsky”  
March 8, 2018 – John R. Henry “The Quest for unintended consequences”

**Art Bus Dates:** Take advantage of our monthly Bus trips to New York!  
February 24  
March 24  
April 14

*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.

**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.

**Sketchbook:** Students are expected to regularly document their ideas in a sketchbook. These will act as references for individual meetings and be taken into consideration with final grading. Drawing is an important component to the creative process of an artist and designer. It is the most rapid response to visual phenomenon and will aid in your development as an artist. A student who is actively sketching and writing their ideas, is fully engaging in the assignments, it is in your best interest to make this part of your artistic practice. Hint: Creating small goals for your sketchbook can help. If you tell yourself that you will sketch everyday, no matter the circumstances, it will improve the articulation of your work.

**Supplies:** Your studio fee will cover materials to an extent. However, there will be additional expenses to create desired effects of works. I also strongly recommend that you have a camera.
Keep in mind that there are many free/cheap resources for supplies on campus and in surrounding areas. Approaching businesses about materials they would throw away is one of many ways to get free material. Recycled material options are good for your pocketbook and the earth!

**Where to look for supplies:**

- Second hand stores
- Specialty Art stuff: Artist and Craftsman, Plaza
- Craigslist free section
- The earth: twigs, seeds, stones
- Hardware store: wood, paints, glues, etc

**Required Supplies:**

- Pack of Pencils
- Safety gear: eye protection, ear protection, and dust mask, work gloves optional
- Tape measure
- Hot glue gun + glue sticks (Large Glue Gun)
- Exacto and / or utility knife and blades
- Masking + Duct tape
- Sandpaper (assorted pack of, med., fine, course)
- Basic Ceramic Tools (See Below)
- (1) 5 Gallon Bucket and (1) 2 Gallon bucket with lid

**Studio Maintenance: 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.

What to expect this semester:

• Expect to spend a **minimum** of 6 hours of work outside of class per class
• Expect to get dirty: Wear old clothing and closed toed shoes to class
• Expect to vocalize: Critique requires you to speak about your work
• Expect to sketch your ideas

Our Semester at a Glance:

**Introduction Project: Pecha Kucha** (20 Points)

You will have 6 mins and 40 seconds to create a presentation that exemplifies where your interests and curiosities lie. There should be a visual component to your presentation but it can be combined with performative aspects...i.e.; Karaoke, dance, group meditation, etc.

**Project 2: Wearable Art** (50 Points)

You will create a work of wearable art, you will research and plan your design. Once completed you will style and photograph your art.

**Project 3: Alien Landscape** (35 Points)

You will create an alien landscape out of clay. You will investigate and experiment with different types of finishes and textures

**Project 4: Design Inspired Altar** (50 Points)

Looking at the Memphis Design movement and it’s reinvigoration, we will discuss what and who decides what is good taste. We will learn basic woodworking techniques and create a plan for a wood based altar. The items in your altar should hold symbolic meaning and can be invented or found.

**Project 5: 10 welds** (15 Points)

You must complete 15 welds. These welds can make it into a structural support of another project or be a stand alone work...you decide!

**Project 5: Installation Multiples** (50 Points) Collaboration

Our present ability to replicate imagery for mass production is both seductive and problematic. Thinking about the relationship to the reproduced image, create a project using repetitious imagery. There will be a presentation of images that relate to this idea. This project is designed to develop mold-making skills and to begin to develop a conceptual vocabulary. Find an object that defines your perspective on mass production and develop a clear sketch. Then, we will create molds to execute your idea. You