

SENIOR PROJECT

Course: Senior Project: AVT 497 Section 1

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

Location: Art and Design Building

Spring Semester 2018

Instructor: Rachel Debuque/ Mary Del Popolo

Email: rdebuque@gmu.edu

Office: 2029

Phone: 703.993.8564



"If you're a baker, making bread, you're a baker. If you make the best bread in the world, you're not an artist, but if you bake the bread in the gallery, you're an artist. So the context makes the difference." Marina Abramovic

"Art is inspiring. Walking into a gallery, or when the lights go up on a stage; that thrill of getting something that has nothing to do with acquisition." Sadie Jones

"Works of art often last forever, or nearly so. But exhibitions themselves, especially gallery exhibitions, are like flowers; they bloom and then they die, then exist only as memories, or pressed in magazines and books." Jerry Saltz

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: 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.

Course 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 all opening receptions 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 *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.

Please be very clear: this is not an “independent” project. You will be able to choose the topic of your project (with the instructor’s approval and guidance), but it is EXPECTED and REQUIRED that you show progress to the instructor and to faculty in your concentration who are familiar with your work and who can assist you in producing work of the highest quality. Of particular importance will be a demonstration of 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 with the necessary materials as assigned for the day, 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 exhibitions must be installed professionally and demonstrate YOUR BEST EFFORT. This includes paying close attention to all the details: labels, advertisement (announcements, postcard, web page) signs and written presentations, as well as the thoughtful

consideration of the exhibition space. For video installation: Cables (extension, speakers cables, RCA, etc...) must be properly fixed to the floor and wall with gaffer's tape. Projector and equipment must be secured. If projected on the wall, the surface has to be clean and even. You are responsible for following all fire codes, which will be explained to you at the start of the semester. 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.

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).

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 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.

ArtsBus - Dates for Spring 2018:

February 24

March 24

April 14

Visual Voices Lecture Series Spring 2018: 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"

Important Dates

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.

Martin Luther King Day (no classes)	Mon Jan 15
First day of classes ; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date; full semester waitlists removed	Mon Jan 22
Last day to add classes —all individualized section forms due Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	Mon Jan 29
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	Mon Feb 12
Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)	Fri Feb 23
Immunization Record Deadline	Thu Mar 1
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	Mon Feb 19 – Fri Mar 23
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	Mon Feb 26 – Fri Mar 30
Spring Break	Mon Mar 12 – Sun Mar 18
Incomplete work from Fall 2017 due to Instructor	Fri Mar 23
Incomplete grade changes from Fall 2017 due to Registrar	Fri Mar 30
Dissertation/Thesis Deadline	Fri May 4
Last day of classes	Sat May 5
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 7 – Tue May 8
Exam Period (beginning at 7:30 a.m.)	Wed May 9 – Wed May 16
Commencement	Fri May 18
Degree Conferral Date	Sat May 19

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.

497 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 progress of your senior project 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.

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.

Web Collaboration: We will be using the project management application, Trello to stay on top of our exhibition tasks and share our individual progress. You will be required at certain dates to attach images and writings that mark your progress on your senior project

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

Where to look for supplies:

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

Our Semester at a Glance:

Pecha Cucha (20 points)

You will get 7 minutes to create a 20 slide (minimum) presentation of where your reproach interests lie and how they will culminate into your senior project. This presentation should include photos of past work, images of influences, and your plan for your senior project.

Progress Reports: You will provide all info on Trello. Once info progress reports are up, give feedback to fellow students about their progress.

Round 1 Progress Report (20 points)

You will provide writings, sketches, and images of senior project progress. This is round 1 of documenting your final exhibition work.

Round 2 Progress Report (20 Points)

Building on Round 1 you will provide writings, sketches, and images of senior project progress. This is round 2 of documenting your final exhibition work....you are more than half way there by now

Round 3 Progress Report (20 Points)

Building on Round 2 you will provide writings, sketches, and images of senior project progress. Provide a clear installation plan. You are close to or just putting on the finishing touches to your work. You are finished with room for minor changes.

Maquette (15 Points)

You will create a Maquette that portrays how you see your work in the exhibition space.

Artist Statement: (20 Points)

You will go through several workshops in order to provide a clear and thoughtful artist statement. This statement will give further insight into the content of the work and be free of spelling or grammar errors before it's final display with your name tag at the exhibition.

Committee Participation (20 Points)

You will participate as an active member or leader of one committee of your choice. Your grade for this assignment will be collectively decided by your fellow group members, so stay communicative and engaged with your peers.

Class Participation (20 Points)

Your class participation is evaluated on your participation in group discussions, the quality of your web presence, and overall engagement in the class.

Senior Project Artwork (100 Points)

The most important part of this class is the artwork that you create. You will be graded on your craft, professionalism, work ethic, and overall presentation. Make sure that every detail of your display is considered, your grade depends on it.

Show Documentation (10 Points)

Finally, after all the hard work you must document the work in the space. Be sure to use extra lights, etc if necessary. Do all things necessary to create the best shots possible. You will email me a minimum of three images. Be sure to capture a variety of angles.