

WRITING FOR ARTISTS

AVT 395:001

TR 10:30-11:45 a.m., AB 1005

3 credits, Fall 2016

Prerequisite: ENGL 302/ENGH 302 or permission of instructor.

Prerequisite enforced by registration system.

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2017 Art & Design Building
Office Hours: By appointment
MW 11:45 a.m. -12:45 p.m.
TR 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Becoming a writer is about becoming conscious.

*-Anne Lamott, Bird by Bird: Some
Instructions on Writing and Life*

*Writing can teach us the dignity of speaking the truth, and it
spreads out from the page into all of our lives, and it should.*

*-Natalie Goldberg, Writing Down the Bones:
Freeing the Writer Within*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Writing for Artists is the required *writing-intensive course* for students in the School of Art. In Writing for Artists, you learn to apply the lessons learned in ENGH 302 to the specific writing challenges you will face in your professional life. This section accommodates any art or design major; there is a separate section that is specially tailored for design majors.

Artists use writing in multiple ways—more and more today, with the web and social media a primary way for artists to let the world know about their work. Even artists represented by galleries find themselves called upon to write about themselves, their work, and their perspectives on the work of others; the most successful artists today typically are skilled written communicators. During your work in this course, you will have the opportunity to explore several modes of writing commonly practiced by artists, with helpful feedback from your instructor and your peers. Furthermore, writing is a skill that is needed in any kind of career—so if your path draws you away from artmaking as the center of your livelihood, you will still have a solid foundation for your future path.

WHAT HAPPENS IN A WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE?

A writing intensive course has four primary characteristics: 1) whatever the specific content of the course, the instructor spends significant class time teaching students about writing and gives feedback on the quality of student writing (not just on the content); 2) course assignments include at least two writing assignments and total at least 3500 words of graded writing; 3) at least one of the writing assignments must require the student to rewrite the paper based on the

instructor's comments; and 4) grades on writing assignments must make up a substantial portion of the student's grade for the course.

Our course takes writing as its primary subject, and as such it will meet and exceed these minimum requirements. You will write regularly throughout the term, and all assignments of 500 words or more will be completed through a draft/feedback/revision process. All written work is expected to get substantively and noticeably better with each draft.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT REVISION AND THE VALUE OF "CRITICAL FRIENDS"

Revision is the most important part of the writing process. More words are rewritten than are ever written in the first place. Revision not only allows you to hone the communicative point of your writing, but it allows you to get clearer for yourself about what that point is. Writing is a thinking process, not just a mechanical intermediary between brain and paper. As the novelist John Updike once wrote, "Writing and rewriting are a constant search for what one is saying."

When you receive comments on your drafts, it won't be enough to "fix" what isn't working or what is specifically pointed out; you will need to bring thought and attention to each step in the revision process. I recall many times during my professional career as a consultant and writer-for-hire when a client would say something vague, like, "This part just doesn't flow." As irritating as I often found such comments, and as uninformative as they were about what I needed to fix, I learned to be grateful. The client was, in fact, always right—if not about the problem's cause, then at least about its location. Often the lack of "flow" was caused by a different problem entirely than that the words sounded clunky. Perhaps I was trying to slide past an uncomfortable fact or a hole in my research, or perhaps I hadn't worked through the logic of the paragraph or page.

To help you build a strong revision practice during this course, you will have more than just me to help you. Each student will be assigned one or more "critical friends," with whom you will be sharing your first draft of each assignment throughout the term. A critical friend is a peer who will offer you two much-needed writing aids: support and feedback. Why support? Because writing is hard. It's hard for everyone. Writing is hard because thinking is hard, because creativity takes work, and because telling what you know takes grit and persistence. And why feedback? Because you have to get outside your own head, your own perspective, to see whether what you write communicates what you intend. Sometimes your critical friend will have very specific suggestions for you, and that will be nice. (You aren't required to take them word for word, but you are required to consider them.) Sometimes your critical friend will be like my client—he or she won't know what's wrong, but will know only that something isn't quite right; nonetheless, that less-than-specific feedback will give you an important clue about where you need to work harder. Your critical friend doesn't have to be a better writer than you are—all she or he needs to do is to give your writing serious attention and take pains to give you useful and helpful feedback. Full instructions for your critical friend work are included on Blackboard.

If you know that you have significant issues with writing, you may need help beyond what your critical friends, your instructor, and your own resources can provide. In such cases, I encourage you to contact the Writing Center early in the semester. The Writing Center can provide you

with any help you may need related to the assignments in this course, or with the ongoing challenges of writing in English that some students have when English is not their first language. Contact the Writing Center early in the term, and use them often. Their website explains their services: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who actively participate in this course will:

- Improve their written communications skills
- Continue their development of critical thinking skills
- Strengthen their critical reading and editing skills
- Build needed skills for accomplishing day-to-day writing tasks in the art world, all of which are translatable into skills for other types of jobs beyond the art world

COURSE TEXTS

REQUIRED TEXTS

No textbooks are required for this course. I will make all required readings available to you via files or links on our Blackboard site. Any PDF files distributed in this way may be password protected—I will provide you with the password in class, and it is also provided in a PDF file at the top of the Course Content page on our Blackboard site.

From time to time, I may substitute or supplement the assignments on the schedule with other materials (articles, websites, etc.), as the need arises or materials become available. If and when I do so, you will receive instructions for accessing the material by e-mail and on Blackboard.

RECOMMENDED SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS ON WRITING

Books on writing abound. If you have a good book on writing that has helped you, keep it and use it often. If you haven't found any favorites, I highly recommend the ones listed here, available in the Mason library and from online booksellers. Many are available as e-books. They will help you improve your writing and (in several cases) may make you a better person as well.

Andrew Abbott, *Digital Paper: A Guide for Research and Writing With Library and Internet Materials*. University of Chicago Press, 2014. Abbott provides help and guidance for writing with what he calls “found materials” (books, articles, Internet materials) rather than “gathered data,” such as interview data, polls, or scientific experimental data). If you find the art of working with others’ words difficult or mysterious, Abbott demystifies it and helps you understand how to use it creatively.

Natalie Goldberg, *Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within*. Expanded edition, Shambhala, 2005. Goldberg inspires writers to find an authentic voice and to view all writing—even the most mundane business task—as an opportunity for self-transformation.

Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers, *A Pocket Style Manual*. Seventh Edition, 2016 MLA Update. Bedford/St. Martins, 2016. MLA, APA, Chicago, AP—you name it, this little guide can

- help you with proper citations and the important distinguishing characteristics of these major style guides, including concise help with punctuation and writing issues. Despite its compact size, the book covers most of the situations that writers will want help with.
- Nancy Hendrickson, *The Visual Writer: How to Use Images to Spark Creativity*. Green Pony Press, 2014. A short book of practical ideas for how images (photographs you take or find, digital versions of artworks, or just about anything that's not verbally constructed) can be used as a way to steer around the many obstacles to completing a writing project.
- Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*. Anchor, 1994. Although written for aspiring creative writers, the advice in this guide can help anyone become more confident and resourceful when faced with a writing task.
- Andrea Marks, *Writing for Visual Thinkers: A Guide for Artists and Designers*, 2nd edition. New Riders, 2011. Marks offers writing strategies for people who don't usually think of the written word as their natural communicative medium. Some helpful ideas, especially for starting a piece or dealing with obstacles.
- Patricia T. O'Connor, *The Grammarphobe's Guide to Better English in Plain English*, 3rd edition. Riverhead Trade, 2010. If you don't know your participles from your prepositions, this book will help you. Very user-friendly.
- Steven Pinker, *The Sense of Style: The Thinking Person's Guide to Writing in the 21st Century*. Penguin, 2015. A psycholinguist and cognitive scientist, Pinker suggests new ways to think about the old rules that make up the bulk of traditional writing guides. He presents a sane and balanced approach to developing a "classic style" that communicates well while avoiding overly fussy, unnecessary "correctness."
- William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White, *The Elements of Style*. Illustrated by Maira Kalman. Penguin, 2005. This is an elegant little handbook that has gone through many editions. I recommend this edition in particular because of the delightful, clever and helpful illustrations by the wondrous Maira Kalman.
- Lynne Truss, *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*. Gotham, 2006. A book on punctuation that will simultaneously make you laugh and set you straight on the mysteries of commas, semi-colons and their friends. Very readable and helpful.
- William Zinsser, *On Writing Well*. 30th Anniversary Edition. Harper Perennial 2006. A companion to Strunk and White, this book addresses the mundane daily writing tasks we all face and gives helpful advice for making them better.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ATTENDANCE

DON'T MISS CLASS, DON'T BE LATE, DON'T LEAVE EARLY.

Much of the learning in this course takes place in the classroom and cannot be gleaned merely from reading texts or completing assignments. **Therefore, each absence beyond THREE over the course of the term will lower your final grade by 5 points; hence, significantly more than three absences may cause you to fail the course regardless of your grades on particular assignments. Each late arrival or early departure will count as ½ absence.** *Late arrival* means arriving after I have taken the initial roll. *Early departure* means leaving before the scheduled end time of the

class. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to sign the “late arrival” sheet that I will set out in the classroom when I have completed the initial taking of the roll.

In case of absence, you are responsible for finding out what happened in class by consulting a classmate. If we have in-class assignments or presentations when you are late or absent, this work cannot be made up.

If you are absent on the day that we do our “critical friend” work in class (i.e., the day on which draft 1 of each assignment is due), your final grade for the project will be reduced by 5 points. The only exception to the critical friend deduction is in the event of illness documented by presentation of a doctor’s note.

Please understand: there are no “excused” absences. I permit three absences that will not count against you, so be sure that you preserve them for use during illness, unavoidable personal issues, or other situations that require you not to be present. If a serious issue arises that may affect your presence or participation for a longer period of time (serious personal illness, family illness, etc.), consult with me immediately and we will determine what you should do.

SPECIAL NOTE: MASON CLOSURES AND UNFORESEEN INSTRUCTOR ABSENCES

MASON CLOSURES

Please be sure you are signed up for Mason Alerts to receive notification of unanticipated university closures or delays caused by campus emergencies, weather issues or other unforeseeable problems. In the event of such an alert, we will follow the university’s decisions for whether our class will meet. I will also send an announcement as soon as possible via Blackboard to confirm, and will follow that as soon as possible with a second announcement to let you know how we will adjust our schedule and assignments.

UNFORESEEN INSTRUCTOR ABSENCES

If I ever have to cancel class because of illness or a personal emergency, I will send an announcement via Blackboard as soon as I am aware of the issue. If you miss the announcement, you will see a note on the classroom door when you arrive. I will follow my announcement as soon as possible with a second announcement to let you know how we will adjust our schedule and assignments.

PREPARED PARTICIPATION

Consistent class participation is expected of all students. I expect you to read and/or view carefully all assignments and come to class prepared to discuss the day’s materials. On draft review days I will also expect courteous behavior in discussions; that is, respectful exchanges (even in heated disagreements) and enough self-awareness to keep yourself from monopolizing the discussion.

Your participation will be considered “adequate” (C-level) if you are paying attention, adding a comment now and then, and following my instructions for in-class activities. “Good” (B-level) participation includes all of the C-level expectations plus active interaction with teacher and students on a regular basis about the works we read or the projects we’ve done. “Excellent” (A-level) participation includes all of the B-level expectations plus out-of-class enrichment activities, such as bringing to class the URL for a website that is relevant to the class discussion. D-level participation grades result from disruptive behavior, texting or using social media during class, discourtesy, inattention or sleeping in class, or lack of involvement in group work. F-level participation grades result from excessive absence and/or egregious D-level behaviors.

REQUIRED COMMUNICATION VIA MASON EMAIL AND BLACKBOARD

Please note that because of university policies, I can only communicate with you via your Mason e-mail address. You will be expected to check your George Mason University e-mail and the Blackboard site for this course frequently during the term. Updates to the syllabus and other vital course information will be sent to you at your George Mason University e-mail address and via the Blackboard site. You will be responsible for having read whatever I send you via these means.

ABSOLUTE BAN ON ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND NON-CLASS-RELATED COMPUTING DURING CLASS

It is extremely rude to be engaged outside the classroom while class is in session—especially in a small room where we are all packed together and can see each others’ actions. Phones and social media distract other students, and they distract me too. **PUT YOUR PHONE AWAY** and deactivate social media apps on your tablet or computer during class time.

Computers and tablets may **ONLY** be used during class time if the work is **DIRECTLY** related to what we are doing at the moment. **NEVER** work on assignments for other classes during our class time. One violation will result in a warning; more than one violation will affect your grade, because I will mark you absent for that class.

ASSIGNMENTS

Students will demonstrate their mastery of the course learning objectives by completing the assignments listed below. *Detailed instructions for each project, including the multiple due dates associated with the project, will be posted on a project assignment sheet on Blackboard and explained thoroughly in class.* Due dates are also incorporated into the schedule in this syllabus.

- **Project #1: Ekphrasis:** rich description of an art object (approx. 500 words)
- **Project #2: Immersive Process Description:** rich description of the material process undertaken to bring about an artwork (approx. 500 words)
- **Project #3: Artist Statement:** Insight into the reasons a particular work of art you created came into being (approx. 500 words)
- **Project #4: Artist Profile:** A brief introduction to you, the artist (approx. 500 words)
- **Project #5: Curatorial Proposal:** If you could commandeer a gallery, what would you show the world? 1000-1500 words.

- **Project #6: Epistolary Art Conversation** (3 exchanges over the course of the term, starting in Week 4, plus a culminating essay/blog post) – 500 graded words in the essay/blog post, plus the exchanges (counted but not individually graded).

TURNING IN YOUR WORK

All work for my review will be turned in via Blackboard. Due dates for every draft and stage in the process for each project are specified in the individual project's assignment sheet and in the schedule appended to the end of this syllabus.

- On the due date for the *first draft* of any project, post the file to the appropriate assignment drop box on Blackboard and bring TWO printed copies to class.
- On the due date for the *second draft* of any project, post the file to the appropriate assignment drop box on Blackboard and bring ONE printed copy to class.
- On the due date for the *final draft* of the assignment, post the file to the appropriate assignment drop box on Blackboard. No printed copy is required.

NOTE: If your deadline is approaching and Blackboard is experiencing problems, send your submission to me via e-mail so that you can meet the deadline, and then post it to Blackboard at your first opportunity.

DRAFT FEEDBACK: WHAT TO EXPECT

All assignments for this course (except your 3 interactions in the epistolary art conversation) are built on a 3-draft process. On each of these drafts, you will receive a somewhat different form of feedback:

For Draft One, you will respond primarily to *reader-perspective* feedback from your Critical Friend(s) and to the general comments that emerge during my open review of selected drafts during class. Your Critical Friend(s) will provide feedback during the first part of class during the Draft 1 workshop. If your Critical Friend(s) is/are absent from class on that day, I will temporarily place you in a different Critical Friend pairing so that you will have immediate feedback.

I will review all first drafts on the day they are posted, check them in to make sure they meet the overall requirement, and give you brief comments via Blackboard (particularly if you are going in a direction that I think will be problematic).

For Draft Two, I will provide you with significant, formal *formative feedback* via Blackboard, along with additional general comments that emerge during my open review of selected drafts during class. The time frame for receiving my comments is specified in the assignment sheet and in the schedule of assignments in this syllabus.

Draft Three will receive my relatively brief *summative response and a letter grade* via Blackboard, taking into account both the quality of the final product and the quality of your

participation in the development process. Typically, I will post my summative response and your grade within a week.

If for an unforeseen reason (if I am ill, for example) I need to deviate from this process and schedule for feedback, I will inform you and will give you a revised schedule with ample time to complete the assignments.

ASSIGNMENT LATENESS PENALTIES

Late final drafts: Any final version of an assignment that is turned in after the *announced due date and time* will be **marked down one letter grade as a lateness penalty, with an additional one letter grade deducted for each subsequent class period until the assignment is turned in.** Work that is more than two weeks late will not be graded, but it is to your advantage to turn it in anyway: a paper or project that is accepted but ungraded counts into your term grade as an F, while a paper or project not received at all counts into your term grade as a zero.

Late process drafts: Late submission of your first or second drafts or of any other preliminary assignment will result in a 5-point penalty against your final grade for each instance of lateness.

Please note: no work will be accepted for a grade after 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, 12/8. NO EXCEPTIONS.

WEIGHTING OF ASSIGNMENTS

Course assignments and requirements will be weighted as follows in determining your final grade:

- Project 1: Ekphrasis 15%
- Project 2: Immersive Process Description 15%
- Project 3: Artist Statement 15%
- Project 4: Artist Profile 15%
- Project 5: Curatorial Proposal 15%
- Project 6: Epistolary Art Conversation/Blog Post 15%
- Attendance & Participation 10%

Note that excessive absence or failure to turn in any of the major assignments may result in failure of the course regardless of these weightings. For further explanation, please see the sections above on “Attendance” and “Assignment Lateness Penalties.”

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS

Project grades will be determined upon presentation of the final draft, using the following criteria:

- **CONCEPT AND CONTENT:** Evidence of engagement with the topic and an attempt to find personal solutions; clear engagement with ideas about voice, audience, and communicative effectiveness; an effort to carry the assignment as far as possible; evidence of drawing upon

the materials studied in class, additional research and other resources to expand understanding and enrich content; overall quality of thinking and writing. (50%)

- **PROCESS:** Evidence of a clear understanding of the assignment; timeliness at each stage of the process; fulfillment of stated requirements; responsiveness to the expectations for each stage of the process; openness in responding to constructive criticism from your instructor and from your fellow class members; evidence of improvement from draft to draft; engagement with critical friend work (35%)
- **TECHNICAL:** A concern for craft and for mastering technical challenges of the assignment; attention to grammar, spelling and mechanics; general care in manuscript preparation; appropriate use of citations. (15%)

For some assignments, I may issue a rubric that further specifies these criteria.

In general, a paper in the A range shows SUPERIOR mastery of these criteria (exploring the possibilities of the assignment well beyond what's required, with significant success); a paper in the B range is STRONG (showing ambition and effort beyond the bare requirements, with some success); a C or C+ paper is COMPETENT (meets all criteria adequately); a C- or D paper is FLAWED (missing the mark on several important criteria); an F paper is SEVERELY FLAWED, INCOMPLETE, or MORE THAN TWO WEEKS LATE. A paper that is not submitted receives a zero.

COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

Final grades reflect how well you accomplish the objectives of the course. Possible grades for this class are A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F.

In calculating your final grade, I will apply the following equivalencies:

A+: 98 and above	B+: 88-89	C+: 78-79	D: 60-69
A: 95-97	B: 85-87	C: 75-77	F: 59 and below
A-: 90-94	B-: 80-84	C-: 70-74	

Note: Scores are rounded one decimal place to the nearest whole number. Thus 93.5=94; 88.467=88.

Academic Policies

As a courtesy to others in the class, and in accordance with George Mason University policy, please turn off all cellphones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor will keep her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion.

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 and expression, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Resource for University Policies

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

Important Deadlines

Last Day to Add/Last Day to Drop with no tuition penalty	September 6
Last Day to Drop	September 30
Selective Withdrawal Period	October 3-28
Incomplete work from Spring or Summer 2016 due to instructor	October 28

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 School of Art office (or in 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). 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/School of Art majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs, College Hall C211.

Official Communications via Mason E-Mail

To comply with University, Virginia and federal student privacy requirements, I am only permitted to exchange e-mail communications with you via your MasonLive e-mail account. You are responsible for the content of all university communication sent to your MasonLive e-mail account, so be sure to activate and check it regularly.

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).

Academic Integrity

Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously, and violations are handled as grave matters.

What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind), please ask for guidance and clarification.

No grade is important enough to justify Honor Code violations, 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 Mason Counseling and Psychological Services staff.

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 Office of Disability Services (703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from ODS outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through ODS (<http://ods.gmu.edu>).

The Collaborative Learning Hub (CLUB)

Located in Johnson Center 311 (703-993-3141), the lab offers in-person one-on-one support for Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, and 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.

Other Useful Campus Resources

- *For help with writing:* The Writing Center, A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200 or <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>
- *For help with research:* University Libraries "Ask a Librarian" service; send a text message to 703-291-1468 or go to <http://library.gmu.edu/ask>
- *For help with academic problems or with personal problems affecting academic performance:* Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS); (703) 993-2380 or <http://caps.gmu.edu>

School of Art Enrichment Opportunities

ArtsBus

The dates for Fall 2016 ArtsBus trips are September 24, October 22, and November 19.

The ArtsBus is an all-day trip to New York City's art districts via chartered buses. School of Art faculty members accompany the trip and offer 2-hour guided tours of various museums and galleries when you arrive. If you choose to join one of the tours, you will have several hours of free time on your own afterwards (typically starting at about 1 p.m.) to have lunch, to visit additional art venues or to explore the city.

- AVT 300 is a 0-credit course open to students in any major; the course has no tuition charge but does have a course fee. The course fee covers the cost of your seat on the bus, plus the administrative costs of running the ArtsBus program. The fee is less than the cost of a ticket purchased at the general box office rate.
- Each SOA major must have up to five AVT 300/ArtsBus credits before graduation. For credit to appear on your transcript, you must enroll in AVT 300, complete the required trip and work, and receive an "S" (satisfactory). These credit requirements also apply to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment. Alternate trips must be approved by the instructor of the course that is requiring an ArtsBus trip.
- 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 for graduation **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 for the Arts.

Please go to the ArtsBus website: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu> "Student Information" for additional, very important information regarding ArtsBus policy.

Visual Voices Lecture Series

Visual Voices is a yearlong 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. The Fall 2016 schedule includes five lectures:

September 1	Richard Raiselis, "Time for Reflection"
September 8	Judith Harris, "Renaming Things: The Power of Metaphorical Thinking in Poetry and the Visual Arts"
September 22	Jonathan Linton, "The Human Touch in the Digital Age: Portraits, Figures, and Thoughts"
October 6	Siebren Versteeg, "Siebren Versteeg"
October 20	Studio 424 – Chicago, "We Give a S*** – and We Do It for a Living"

Publishing Work Completed for This Class in *The George Mason Review*

The George Mason Review, Mason's journal of undergraduate student scholarship, publishes excellent undergraduate scholarship and creative research from across the disciplines. Every year *The George Mason Review* recognizes outstanding student work with a total of \$900 in awards. For more information, talk to me or visit the GMR website at <http://gmreview.gmu.edu/>

AVT 395:001
Topic and Assignment Schedule
 Fall 2016

This schedule is subject to change. Updates will be announced in class and/or by e-mail and will be made available on Blackboard.

Please note: when the schedule says “review the contents of” a folder on Blackboard, this phrase means “read the included files, follow the included links, think about what you have read and seen, and come to class ready to discuss.”

Date	Topic	Assignments due on this date
	<p>Ekphrasis draft 1 workshop: Critical friends (for today only) work together on draft 1; general remarks on drafts as a whole</p> <p>How to improve your writing (part 1—Ideation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recognize the three stages of writing (Ideation, Reconstruction, Refinement) -Understand focused attention vs. diffuse attention -For ideation: diffused-focus thinking, free writing, mindmapping 	<p>9/8: Draft 1 of Project 1, Ekphrasis, due by 8:30 a.m. today, with link to image.</p> <p>Read the contents of the “Improving Your Writing 1” folder on Blackboard</p>
<p>Week 3 9/13-9/15</p>	<p>Ekphrasis draft 2 workshop—group review of selected drafts, group review of selected drafts, then in-class work and consultation time</p> <p>How to improve your writing, part 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Harness the power of focused attention (the Pomodoro technique) -Reverse-engineer your structure 	<p>9/13: Draft 2 of Project 1, Ekphrasis, due by 8:30 a.m. today</p> <p><i>Expect instructor feedback via Blackboard by end of day on Thursday 9/15</i></p> <p>Review the contents of “Improving Your Writing 2” folder on Blackboard</p>
	<p>Introduce project 2, Immersive Process Description</p> <p>Discuss readings and examples (Immersive Process Description)</p> <p>How to improve your writing, part 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Edit away the most common issues -Read it aloud 	<p>9/15: Read the assignment sheet for Project #2, Immersive Process Description, and review the contents of the Project 2 folder on Blackboard.</p> <p>Review the contents of “Improving Your Writing 3” folder on Blackboard</p>

AVT 395:001

Topic and Assignment Schedule

Fall 2016

This schedule is subject to change. Updates will be announced in class and/or by e-mail and will be made available on Blackboard.

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Date	Topic	Assignments due on this date
Week 4 9/20-9/22	Introduce Project 6, Epistolary Exchanges (term-long project) How to improve your writing, part 4: the writing rules that matter, and the ones you can ignore Project 2, Immersive Process Description, draft 1 workshop: Critical friends work together on draft 1; general remarks In-class opportunity for critical friends to discuss Epistolary Art Conversation project Wrap-up of the “Improving Your Writing” series	9/20: <i>Final draft of Project 1, Ekphrasis, due by 8:30 a.m. today, via Blackboard.</i> Read the assignment sheet for Project 6, Epistolary Art Conversation (term-long project) and review the contents of the Project 6 folder on Blackboard. Review the contents of “Improving Your Writing 4” folder on Blackboard 9/22: <i>Draft 1 of Project 2, Immersive Process Description, due by 8:30 a.m. today</i> Be prepared to discuss your interests and ideas for the Epistolary Art Conversation with your Critical Friend(s). Bring your questions about writing, revision, and how to improve for a lifetime of writing.
Week 5 9/27-9/29	Project 2, Immersive Process Description, draft 2 workshop—group review of selected drafts, then in-class work and consultation time Explore additional ways that artists use writing	9/27: <i>Draft 2 of Project 2, Immersive Process Description, due by 8:30 a.m. today</i> <i>Expect instructor feedback by end of day on Friday 9/30.</i> 9/29: Review the contents of “Artists and Writing 1”

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Week 6 10/4-10-6	Introduce Project 3, Artist Statement Review information on writing the artist statement and sample artist statements	10/4: <i>Final draft of Project 2, Immersive Process Description, due by 8:30 a.m. today</i> Read the assignment sheet for Project 3, Artist Statement, and review the contents of the Project 3 folder on Blackboard
	Project 3, Artist Statement, draft 1 workshop: Critical friends work together on draft 1; general remarks	10/6: <i>First draft of Project 3, Artist Statement, due by 8:30 a.m. today</i> <i>First epistolary exchange (for Project 6) should be completed by 5 p.m. on Friday, 10/7 and posted to Blackboard.</i>
Week 7 10/11-10/13	10/11: CLASS DOES NOT MEET—COLUMBUS DAY SWITCH (Monday classes meet instead)	
	Project 3, Artist Statement, draft 2 workshop— group review of selected drafts, then in-class work and consultation time	10/13: <i>Second draft of Project 3, Artist Statement, due by 8:30 a.m. today</i> <i>Expect instructor feedback by end of day on Monday 10/17</i>
Week 8 10/18-10/20	Discuss artists’ autobiographical writing; explore writing as a tool to unlock memory for creative use.	10/18: Review the contents of “Artists Writing About Their Lives” folder on Blackboard
	Introduce Project 4, Artist Bio Review information on writing the artist bio and the sample artist bios	10/20: <i>Final draft of Project 3, Artist Statement, due by 8:30 a.m. today, via Blackboard</i> Read the assignment sheet for Project 4, Artist Bio, and review the contents of the Project 4 folder on Blackboard

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Week 9 10/25- 10/27	Project 4, Artist Profile, draft 1 workshop: Critical friends work together on draft 1; general remarks	10/25: First draft of Project 4, Artist Profile, due by 8:30 a.m. today
	Project 4, Artist Profile, draft 2 workshop— group review of selected drafts, then in-class work and consultation time	10/27: Second draft of Project 4, Artist Profile, due by 8:30 a.m. today Expect instructor feedback by end of the day on Monday 10/31 Second epistolary exchange (for Project 6) should be completed by 5 p.m. on Friday, 10/28 and posted to Blackboard.
Week 10 11/1-11/3	Explore additional ways that artists have used writing	11/1: Review the contents of “Artists and Writing 2”
	Discuss how artists work as curators and how curating is itself a creative act. Introduce Project 5, Curatorial Proposal. Review examples and Issues.	11/3: Review the contents of the folder “Artists as Curators” Read assignment sheet for Project 5, Curatorial Proposal, on Blackboard and review the contents of the Project 5 folder on Blackboard. Final draft of Project 4, Artist Profile, due via Blackboard by 8:30 a.m. today.
Week 11 11/8-11/10	Presentation of curatorial project ideas; further discussion of how to create a successful curatorial proposal to sell an idea.	11/8: Post a paragraph describing the topic of your curatorial proposal to Blackboard by 8:30 a.m. today. Proposal idea will be presented in class today (required).

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	Explore additional ways that artists have used writing Additional discussion of proposal elements	11/10: Review the contents of “Artists and Writing 3” <i>Third epistolary exchange (for Project 6) should be completed by Friday, 11/11 and posted to Blackboard.</i> <i>Instructor feedback on the exchange series will be available via Blackboard by the end of the day on Friday 11/18</i>
Week 12 11/15- 11/17	Project 5, Curatorial Proposal, draft 1 workshop: Critical friends work together on draft 1; general remarks Project 5, Curatorial Proposal, draft 2 workshop— group review of selected drafts, then in-class work and consultation time	11/15: First draft of Project 5, Curatorial Proposal, due by 8:30 a.m. today. 11/17: Second draft of Project 5, Curatorial Proposal, due by 8:30 a.m. today Instructor feedback will be available via Blackboard by the end of the day on Monday 11/21
Week 13 11/22- 11/24	Review assignment for Project 6, Culminating Blog Post (based on epistolary exchanges)	11/22: Read assignment sheet for Project 6, Culminating Blog Post (based on epistolary exchanges), on Blackboard and review the contents of the “Writing Blog Posts” folder on Blackboard. <i>Final draft of Project 5, Curatorial Proposal, due by 8:30 a.m. Monday 11/28, via Blackboard.</i>
11/24: THANKSGIVING RECESS—CLASS DOES NOT MEET		

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Date	Topic	Assignments due on this date
Week 14 11/29-12/1	Project 6, Culminating Blog Post, draft 1 workshop: Critical friends work together on draft 1; general remarks	11/29: Draft 1, Project 6, Culminating Blog Post (based on epistolary exchanges) due by 8:30 a.m. today
	Project 6, Culminating Blog Post, draft 2 workshop— group review of selected drafts, then in-class work and consultation time	12/1: Draft 2 of Project 6, Culminating Blog Post (based on epistolary exchanges) due by 8:30 a.m. via Blackboard Instructor feedback will be available via Blackboard by the end of the day on Monday 12/5
Week 15 12/6-12/8	Consultation and in-class writing	12/6: No new assignment.
	Consultation and in-class writing	12/8: No new assignment. <i>Final draft of Project 6, Culminating Blog Post (based on epistolary exchanges) due on Blackboard by 11:59 p.m. today.</i> <i>No work will be accepted for credit toward your grade (including ungraded work) after 11:59 p.m. today. NO EXCEPTIONS.</i>