



# AVT 395 • Spring 2017

## Writing for Designers: Syllabus

### SPRING 2017

Tuesday/Thursday  
Room AB 1005

James Quigley  
jqquigle2@gmu.edu

Blackboard  
mymasonportal.gmu.edu

### OFFICE HOURS

by appointment  
Tuesday/Thursday  
AB 2007

9:00-10:15 am  
Section 004

10:30-11:45 am  
Section 005

### GRADING SCALE

#### A

superior work, all criteria  
have been surpassed  
in a distinguished manner

#### B

very good work, all criteria  
have been surpassed

#### C

adequate, average work  
meeting all required criteria

#### D

barely meeting the  
above criteria

#### F

failure to meet all of  
the above criteria

*If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please notify me immediately, then contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.*

### PREREQUISITES

**ENGL 302/ENGH 302 or permission of instructor.**  
**Prerequisite enforced by registration system**

"A basic structural design underlies every type of writing."

–Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*

"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 specific writing challenges you will face in your professional life. This section was created to tailor the content of the course to the needs of designers.

Designers use writing in multiple ways: as a tool for finding and retaining business; as a key aspect of design work itself; as a tool for communicating with clients; and as a way of letting the public and members of the design profession know about your work, your commitments, and your perspective on design. During your work in this course, you will have the opportunity to explore several modes of writing with helpful feedback from your instructor and your peers. Our time this semester will be spent focused on communicating informally as a designer (blog assignments); evaluating design (the design critique); interviewing to communicate about a designer's identity (designer profile); asking for work as a designer (design brief); and reflecting on design as a force in culture (design review).

### 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.

This course takes writing as its primary subject, and as such it will meet and exceed these 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. There have been many times in my career when I’ve had to write something and the client would say something vague, like, “This part just doesn’t flow.” While I often found such comments annoying and uninformative, 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. **It’s always best to take your ego out of the equation.**

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 and design thinking skills
- Strengthen their critical reading and editing skills
- Build needed skills for accomplishing day-to-day writing tasks in the business of design, all of which are translatable into skills for other types of jobs outside the design field
- Explore writing as a vehicle for response to and dialogue about design as a force in culture and about design artifacts, practice and theory.

**COURSE 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.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

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**

**A STELLAR RESOURCE**

If you are serious about pursuing graphic design for print publications, or becoming a person to reckon with in the field of design, or perhaps in pursuing an MFA in graphic design to teach, research, or write about the profession, I urge you to purchase and study the following book by one of the true practitioner/scholars of the field, Steven Heller: *Writing and Research for Graphic Designers: A Designer's Manual to Strategic Communication and Presentation* (Rockport Publishers, 2015). You can also find it online at many booksellers.

**OTHER BOOKS 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 these. They are available in the Mason library and from online booksellers. They will help you improve your writing, and (in several cases) 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. Despite its compact size, the book covers most of the situations that the average writer 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 out. Very user-friendly.

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.

### **DESIGN WRITING AND DESIGN THEORY RESOURCES**

This is an exciting time for design writing. In the last two decades, graphic design has emerged as a field worthy of critical thought and historical exploration, and design criticism has become a staple of the web. While not every design practitioner need be a scholar, a life-long examination of design through reading and writing can enrich a designer's work. In addition, clear written and spoken communication wins clients, leads to promotions, and enhances a designer's profile in the broader professional community. Read the following to learn from the best.

Michael Bierut, *Seventy-nine Short Essays on Design*. Princeton Architectural Press, 2007. Robert Bringhurst, *The Elements of Typographic Style*. Hartley & Marks, 1992

*Fresh Dialogs*. Volumes 1-6. AIGA and Princeton Architectural Press.

Jessica Helfand, *Screen: Essays on Graphic Design, New Media and Visual Culture*. Princeton

*Architectural Press*, 2001

Steve Heller and Elinor Pettit, *Design Dialogues*. Allworth, 1998.

Steve Heller and Véronique Vienne, *Citizen Designer: Perspectives on Design Responsibility*. Allworth Press, 2003.

D.K. Holland, *Design Issues*. Allworth Press and Communication Arts, 2001.

Ellen Lupton and Abbott Miller, *Design, Writing, Research*. Phaidon, 1996.

Rick Poynor, *No More Rules: Graphic Design and Post Modernism*. Yale University Press, 2003

### **WRITING-RELATED DESIGN BUSINESS PRACTICES**

Writing is an integral part of a successful design business. Look at the following books for help integrating clear and persuasive writing into common tasks—proposals, bids, job costing, client communication, and many others.

Ruth Cash-Smith and Barbara Janoff, *The Graphic Designer's Guide to Better Business Writing*. Allworth Press, 2007.

Tad Crawford, *The Graphic Design Business Book*. Allworth Press, 2005.

Graphic Artist's Guild, *Business Practice Essentials for Graphic Artists*. Graphic Artist's Guild, 2016. (digital edition)

Graphic Artist's Guild, *Professional Issues and Legal Rights for Graphic Artists*. Graphic Artist's Guild, 2016. (digital edition)

Graphic Artist's Guild, *Trade Customs and Pricing*. *Graphic Artist's Guild*, 2016. (digital edition) Peter L. Phillips, *Creating the Perfect Design Brief*. Allworth Press and Design Management Institute, 2004.

Ellen Shapiro, *The Graphic Designer's Guide to Clients*. Allworth Press and Graphic Artist's Guild, 2003.

Theo Stephen Williams, *The Graphic Designer's Guide to Pricing, Estimating and Budgeting*. 3rd edition. Allworth Press, 2010.

### **IMPORTANT DESIGN PERIODICALS**

There are many design periodicals, but only a few that make the list of "indispensable." Find them in the Fenwick Library reading room; they may have websites and digital newsstand versions, but there's nothing like thumbing their pages (especially if you are a print-oriented designer).

*Print* and *Communication Arts* are U.S.-based publications that provide the latest in design and design writing—*Print* does theory and history a bit better, *CA* is more business- and advertising-oriented.

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.

*Eye* and *Baseline* are the best of the British graphic design magazines. Both are available in Mason's periodical room. *Eye* is similar to *Print* but has a more international outlook, and both UK magazines take more of an interest in vernacular design than their American counterparts. *Baseline's* focus is typography.

*Idea* is a high-concept Japanese-based publication filled with international news and features on design.

### ***A SELECTION OF EXCELLENT DESIGN WEBSITES AND BLOGS***

The web is awash in design blogs. Here are 15 of the best. You may know many of them already. If you don't, take a look.

Business Tips for Graphic Designers	<a href="http://graphicdesignblender.com">http://graphicdesignblender.com</a>
Communication Arts	<a href="http://www.commart.com">http://www.commart.com</a>
Cool Hunting	<a href="http://coolhunting.com">http://coolhunting.com</a>
Creative Bloq	<a href="http://www.creativebloq.com">http://www.creativebloq.com</a>
David Airey, Graphic Designer	<a href="http://www.davidairey.com">http://www.davidairey.com</a>
Designing Magazines	<a href="http://www.designingmagazines.com">http://www.designingmagazines.com</a>
Designmodo	<a href="http://designmodo.com">http://designmodo.com</a>
Design Observer	<a href="http://www.designobserver.com">http://www.designobserver.com</a>
Eye Magazine	<a href="http://eyemagazine.com">http://eyemagazine.com</a>
FastCompany: Design	<a href="http://www.fastcodesign.com">http://www.fastcodesign.com</a>
The LogoSmith	<a href="http://imjustcreative.com/blog">http://imjustcreative.com/blog</a>
Paste Magazine: Design	<a href="http://www.pastemagazine.com/design">http://www.pastemagazine.com/design</a>
Print Magazine	<a href="http://www.printmag.com">http://www.printmag.com</a>
Voice: AIGA Journal of Design	<a href="http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/voice">http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/voice</a>
You The Designer	<a href="http://www.youthedesigner.com">http://www.youthedesigner.com</a>

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS** ***DON'T MISS CLASS, DON'T BE LATE, DON'T LEAVE EARLY.***

### **ATTENDANCE**

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; 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 1/2 absence.** Late arrival means arriving after I have closed the door. Early departure means leaving before the scheduled end time of the class. It will be your responsibility to sign in upon arrival. If you arrive late, it will be noted on the sign-in sheet that you will still be required to sign.

*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.

### **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.

**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.

**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: Communicating Informally as a Designer: Initial blog post (approx. 250 words)
- Project #2: Evaluating Design: The Design Critique (approx. 500 words)
- Project #3: Building Rapport and Gathering/Reporting Information: The Designer Profile (approx. 750 words)
- Project #4: Selling Your Creative Advantage: The Design Brief (approx. 1250 words)
- Project #5: Communicating with the Public About Design in Context: The Design Review (approx. 750 words)
- Project #6: The Writingfordesigners.com Blog (term-long activity–10 posts total, 20 comments)

**TURNING IN YOUR WORK** All work for my review will be turned in via Blackboard (except blog posts 2–10, which are posted directly to writingfordesigners.com) . 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 for posts 2-10 on the writingfordesigners.com blog) 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 Wednesday, 12/7. NO EXCEPTIONS.

**WEIGHTING OF  
ASSIGNMENTS**

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

■ Project #1: Blog Post	10%
■ Project #2: Design Critique	10%
■ Project #3: Designer Profile	15%
■ Project #4: Design Brief	25%
■ Project #5: Design Review	15%
■ Writingfordesigners.com	10%
■ Attendance and Participation	15%

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.

<b>IMPORTANT DEADLINES</b>	Last Day to Add/Last Day to Drop with no tuition penalty	February 1
	Selective Withdrawal Period	February 22–March 25
	Incomplete work from Fall 2016 due to instructor	March 25

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](http://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 Spring 2016 ArtsBus trips are **February 18, March 25, and April 15.**  
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 Spring 2016 schedule includes five lectures:

- January 26** Walter Kravitz , "Art Is What Isn't—Studio Pursuits"
- February 9** J. J. McCracken , "The Dirt Eater and the Scold: Reflections on a Research-led Art Practice"
- March 9** John Jacob, "Photography at the Smithsonian American Art Museum"
- March 23** Carmen Ramos, "Rufino Tamayo: The New York Years"
- March 30** Helen Frederick, "Absorbing Traditions: The Labor of Art"

**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/>