

AVT 611 GRADUATE DESIGN SEMINAR

- Description** A laboratory for the exploration of contemporary design theory and practice through writing and design making, this class will have rotating topical content. Students will work together or separately to explore the boundaries between design, art and culture and their emerging place in the world of design. This class may be repeated and will have different emphasis and different content every semester.
- Objectives** Continuing development of professional visual sensitivity and competency in graphic communication through the creation of written and designed work. Students will become more aware of their priorities and goals as a working designer, and develop broader awareness of design's place in the culture. Some semesters may explore the design leader's responsibilities to the professional field and community.
- Content** This course will have no technical content—students are expected to possess or develop the digital and writing skills outside the class. Students will produce a series of designed and/or written solutions to theoretical problems posed throughout the semester. Class sessions will be devoted to presentation, discussion, critique, and review.
- Attendance** Seminars include substantial critique and discussion components. By their nature, they are dynamic educational environments—during critique periods and in the interaction of students on ongoing projects, the seminar provides resources and learning opportunities that cannot be “made up” by other means. In short, your attendance is just as important as mine. Therefore:
- Students are required to attend all class meetings, to arrive on time, and to stay for the duration of the class.
 - Students arriving seven minutes or more late to class will be marked tardy. Students arriving 15 minutes or more late will be marked absent. Three tardy marks equals one absence. Students who leave before the class is dismissed will be marked absent.
 - Students who are having difficulty with the attendance requirement may be asked to drop the class.
 - For each absence beyond three absences your final course grade will be reduced one full letter grade from the earned level of all work for the course. For example: “B” quality design work for the semester with four absences results in a final course grade of “C.” There are no excused absences.
 - Absence, tardiness, and early departure is regarded as de facto evidence of non-participation.
 - It is not possible to earn an incomplete in this class.
 - Failure to turn in any project and assignment will automatically result in a fail grade.
 - There will be no makeup for a project.
- Evaluation** Participation, defined as attendance, meeting deadlines, participating in class discussions, effectively meeting class leadership requirement: 40%
Project 1: 15%
Project 2: 15%
Final Project: 30%

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Textbook There is no required text for this class. However students are expected to do any necessary research to be successful in design projects.

References: *Visual Storytelling: Inspiring a New Visual Language*
by R. Klanten, S. Ehmann and F. Schulze, Gestalten

The Where, the Why, and the How: 75 Artists Illustrate Wondrous Mysteries of Science, By Jenny Volvovski, Julia Rothman, and Matt Lamothe

Additionally: All graduate students are expected to keep up to date with the design press and blogs. Suggested publications include Print, Communication Arts, Eye and Baseline. These are all available in Fenwick. Suggested websites include Print, Eye, Design Observer and AIGA Voice.

Materials and Supplies

There is no set list of supplies. However, access to analog drawing supplies will likely be useful, as well as traditional graphic design equipment: a computer with the Adobe Creative Suite, and a color printer.

Course Policies

All projects are due at the beginning of class on the date assigned. Late projects will be reduced one letter grade for each week late or portion thereof. After two weeks, projects will not be accepted. The final project is due on the last day of class. No extensions will be given.

Students must be completely prepared for class to be considered present, ie. they must have all necessary supplies and computer files and all ongoing (ungraded) projects with them.

The instructor evaluates your work in line with the course syllabus, university catalog and guidelines, and documented prepared course participation and performance throughout the course. The course grade is determined by a careful assessment of your overall performance in the course that includes attendance, prepared participation, project evaluations, project revisions, and final project(s) presentation all of which is described in detail in the course syllabus, handouts, and lecture presentations.

All work created in this class must be specifically for this class and this class only. It is not permitted to use class projects as a platform for producing professional work or projects intended to be submitted to other teachers.

Semester Emphasis-Visual Storytelling

Project 1: Using data to tell a story

1. Select a subject matter—for example, rice, jean, pet, war, basketball, etc.—and search for statistic data—then verify the quality and truth of the collected data.
2. Restructure the data and try to establish a clear narrative from within it. A clear narrative is central to the communication form.
3. Come up with an appropriate, succinct and visually engaging method of presentation.

The final form of your project can be in print, on television, online, etc.

Project due on Feb. 21.

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Project 2: Literature-short story

Select a short story—fact or fiction, poem or any form of literature—and conceptualize a visual narrative.

Explore the possibilities to visualize the narrative through different media, visual dialects, cultural and historical context.

Select the best way to tell the intended story. For example: a series of illustrations, or a type as image approach, interactive collages, etc.

Project due on March 28.

Final Project: Branding with a story

Select a company and its products or services—real or fictional

Build and/or promote the brand through storytelling.

Project due on May 2.

Course Outline (Subject to change)

In addition to producing design and participating in critiques, each student will make one presentation and lead two discussions. The presentation will be of a successful visual storytelling. The presentation must include visuals, either printed or in digital form for overhead display. The discussions will be on the topic of a design article(s) or provocative blog post(s) distributed by the student one week ahead of time, either via printouts/ photocopies or links. (All students are expected to have read the distributed article by the discussion date.) All articles and posts must be published within the last 6 months, preferably related to visual storytelling. The discussion may include visuals. Expect to lead the class for a minimum of 15 minutes each time, discussions may go longer if the extra time is warranted. Students will sign up for their dates on the first day of class.

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

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of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Open Studio Hours

SOA teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time mornings, evenings and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures and schedules for studio use are established by the SOA studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

ArtsBus - Dates for Spring 2017:

February 18 March 25 April 18

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.

Visual Voices Lecture Series - Dates for Spring 2017:

January 26 February 9 March 9
March 23 March 30

Visual Voices is a year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:20- 9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater: <http://soa.gmu.edu/visualvoices/>

Important Deadlines

Last Day to Add	Jan 30
Last Day to Drop (No Tuition Penalty)	Jan 30
Last Day to Drop (33% Tuition Penalty)	Feb 13
Final Drop (67% Tuition Penalty)	Feb 24
Selective Withdrawal Period	Feb 27 - March 31
Spring Break	March 13-19
Incomplete work from Spring/Summer 2015 due to instructor	March 31

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) ,

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LATE ADD fee will apply. Requests for non-selective withdrawals and retroactive adds (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs, Performing Arts Building A407.

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences

If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need academic accommodations, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Disabilities Resource Center (SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through the DRC.

Official Communications via GMU E-Mail

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Attendance Policies

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

Honor Code

Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, 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."

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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.