**AVT 498: Senior Design Project**

**Fall 2008**
Section 001
Mondays/Wednesdays
4:30 PM–7:10 PM
IN 129

Don Starr
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Office hours
by appointment
Mondays/Wednesdays

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**Prerequisites**
Senior standing in AVT with completion of twelve concentration credits in graphic information design; completion of, or concurrent enrollment in, all other required general education courses (Criterion #1).

**Course Description**
This is an advanced design course that will focus on the basics of publication design and production. Students will learn the techniques, concepts and processes essential to understanding how to design for publishing pamphlets and books. Students will participate in all aspects of the development and presentation of a cohesive and mature body of work. This will include concept development, research, writing, production and presentation. Thesis exhibition work will be formally presented to a faculty committee for critique of both the work itself and the designer’s oral presentation (Criterion #2).

**Objectives**
- To create a body of work which synthesizes the student’s general education experience within the context of book design (Criterion #3)
- To gain greater understanding of publication design
- To become familiar with the history of publication design and the printing process
- To collaborate with writers, photographers, illustrators and editors
- To learn and demonstrate proper professional pre-press practices
- To demonstrate advanced proficiency in QuarkXPress® and/or Adobe® InDesign

**Content**
Students will design and produce a 16-page (total pages) booklet or brochure, and a 32- to 48-page (plus cover) book using QuarkXPress or Adobe InDesign. Students will write (1) a detailed design objective proposal (the Creative Brief) and (2) a process statement/journal, both personal and philosophical, which express the student’s ideas about the work being created. The written process statement/journal should provide a context within relevant contemporary practices, academic exploration, and credible research. This will provide the student with a link to the larger discourse within the chosen topic area. The student's statement should also embody the synthesis of practice within a specific discipline with broader theories and ideas taken from the student’s general education experience (Criterion #3). Students will learn, demonstrate understanding of, and articulate the design lexicon in explaining, critiquing, and defending their work.

In developing a manuscript, editorial collaboration is not only permitted but also strongly encouraged, in order to enable the student to understand more fully how the designer interacts with the author, editor, illustrator and/or photographer in a professional environment. The manuscript idea and written design statement must be approved before proceeding with the concept and design of the works.

Frequent editorial and design review/critiques will be mandatory. Editorial proofreading, by an outside source, will be required before final printing. There will be weekly discussion on various current and historical topics, including: creativity, paper, color and inks, software, printing processes, budget considerations, typography, intellectual property rights, professional practices, and more.

**Performance Requirements**
Due to the dynamics of the course your attendance, participation and punctuality are critical to your successful completion of the class. You must be on time and prepared— with no exceptions. Not being properly prepared with required assignments is considered an absence from the class. Some of the class periods will be spent on writing and research as well as production. Students are expected to be fully engaged, prepared and reactive, especially during critiques & demonstrations.

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If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please notify me then contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.
It is required that the student obtain a portable digital storage device to carry their documents to and from class and to store back-up copies. Project files will get very large and the necessity for easy portability will become obvious. >1GB is recommended; format FAT32 for cross-platform compatibility. It is highly recommended to “backup” your backup via recordable CD or online data backup resources. Files that are lost or corrupted will not be an acceptable excuse for missing project deadlines.

High quality images and appropriate typefaces are necessary for publication design. Students may need to incur such expenses. Typeface/image theft or copyright infringement will not be tolerated. Students are cautioned when using free fonts from the internet as most are not well-designed, and layouts will suffer. Suggestions will be made by the instructor as to inexpensive sources for images and type. But students are encouraged to engage in their own image-making.

Students will turn in materials with their brochures and books in a 9x12 envelope (or thereabouts), consisting of printed reports and collected files on CD. Students will need to have these materials on hand.

Students should also be prepared to provide their own printer paper for laser proofing their work in IN 129.

Evaluation

There will be an in-class review of projects at mid-term where students will present their project statements and “book-in-progress” in a formal environment. Students will receive a critique and progress report.

Final grade will be determined by the on-time completion of all required assignments, as well as the creativity, presentation and quality of the assignments and by your final printed pamphlet and bound book, which will be formally presented to a selected faculty committee (Criterion #2).

Maintaining a journal throughout the semester is required. The journal will include all assignments, notes, sketches and exercises that will, at the end of the semester, be an outline of the process in your book development. It will also serve as the philosophical statement of intent in synthesizing your educational experience in your topical area. Your journal will be available at the final faculty presentation, along with your formal topic statement (Criteria #2 & 3).

Materials

The required textbooks for this course are:

- The Official Adobe Print Publishing Guide by Brian P. Lawler. ISBN 0321304667

There will be additional special readings throughout the semester, followed by in-class discussion. Quizzes on lecture materials also may be given throughout the semester; however, there is no written final exam.

Materials necessary for the course will be determined by the student’s own requirements and preferences for his/her book. The instructor will give brief demonstrations with examples of available materials for use in printing and binding both the required pamphlet and the final book. Some students may opt to have their books professionally printed and/or bound. All of these variables should be considered in determining the expense of the materials for this course.

It is required that the student obtain a portable digital storage device to carry their documents to and from class and to store back-up copies. Project files will get very large and the necessity for easy portability will become obvious. >1GB is recommended; format FAT32 for cross-platform compatibility. It is highly recommended to “backup” your backup via recordable CD or online data backup resources. Files that are lost or corrupted will not be an acceptable excuse for missing project deadlines.

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Grading

While grading creative works is often a subjective matter, design work for this class will be measured on the basis of how well the student followed instructions, met deadlines, showed creative initiative, grasped industry standards, understood and applied appropriate design principles, attended to English composition, participated in class discussions, and explored (topics in) the field. Participation, punctuality, and professionalism will also be a part of the student’s final grade.

Students should be advised that in the professional design world, one’s ideas, one’s portfolio, design and production knowledge, interpersonal skills, positive attitude, and well-roundedness are more important than a college GPA. However, in order to calculate grades, the following percentages will be used for each student’s final grade:

- Attendance & Participation 10%
- Assignments & Quizzes 10%
- Project One: Brochure 20%
- Project Two: Book 40%
- Oral Presentation 10%
- Exhibit Participation 10%

Computers and Software

The AVT Department holds open computer lab time in the Fine Arts Building; see posted hours. Each student is required to observe the classroom computer rules and procedures. Illegally downloading copyrighted material is prohibited.

When arriving in class each day, students should make sure the login screen is up, and do a fresh login. At the end of each class, logout from the workstation.

Every AVT computer is equipped with the software students should need. If there are any problems with the computer or software, it needs to be put in writing, with a description of the issue and machine identification, and emailed to Sean Watkins, AVT Technical Director (swatkins@gmu.edu).
UNIVERSITY AND AVT DEPARTMENT POLICIES
As a courtesy to others in the class, and in accordance with George Mason University policy, please turn off all beepers, cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY
This class will be conducted as an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

STATEMENT ON ETHICS IN TEACHING AND PRACTICING ART AND DESIGN
As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the Department of Art and Visual Technology 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
AVT 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 AVT studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

ARTSBUS
The dates for this fall’s ArtsBus trips are September 27, October 18 and November 15, 2008.

If you need ArtsBus credit for this semester, you MUST enroll in AVT 300 before September 9. This also applies to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment. There will be NO exceptions. If you plan to go on multiple ArtsBus trips this term and wish to count 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.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES
Last Day to Add (Full-Semester Course) September 9, 2008
Last Day to Drop (Full-Semester Course) September 26, 2008
Elective Withdrawal Period September 27–October 24, 2008

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 AVT 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). Requests for non-elective 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.

HONOR CODE
Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, as stated in the George Mason University Catalog. The honor code requires that the work you do as an individual be the product of your own individual synthesis or integration of ideas. (This does not prohibit collaborative work when it is approved by your instructor.) As a faculty member, I have an obligation to refer the names of students who may have violated the Honor Code to the Student Honor Council, which treats such cases very seriously.

No grade is important enough to justify cheating, for which there are serious consequences that will follow you for the rest of your life. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or to a member of the GMU Counseling Center staff.

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism, a very serious Honor Code offense. It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words and punctuation just as the passage appears in the original and must use quotation marks and page numbers in your citation. If you want to paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you must put the ideas into your own words, and you must cite the source, using the APA or MLA format. (For assistance with documentation, I recommend Diana Hacker, A Writer’s Reference.)

The exception to this rule is information termed general knowledge—information that is widely known and stated in a number of sources. Determining what is general knowledge can be complicated, so the wise course is, “When in doubt, cite.” Be especially careful when using the Internet for research. Not all Internet sources are equally reliable; some are just plain wrong. Also, since you can download text, it becomes very easy to inadvertently plagiarize. If you use an Internet source, you must cite the exact URL in your paper and include with it the last date that you successfully accessed the site.

WRITING CENTER
Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.