

AMGT 610: Visual Arts Management | Spring 2017

Professor Karyn Miller

Wednesdays: 4:30-7:10 pm

3 credits

3301 Fairfax Dr, Arlington, VA 22201

Founders Hall Room **466**

Please note that at least three sessions will take place off site.

Office Hours: 30 minutes after class or by appointment.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course covers the many facets of visual arts management, from practical considerations of daily operations to the broader examination of visual art's role in art education, criticism, and the art market. Topics such as exhibition coordination and installation, contracts, artist representation, fine art insurance, exhibition policies, budgets, and marketing are covered, along with the responsibility of educating a diverse public.

Visual Arts Management students will develop an understanding of a wide range of internal practices, including exhibition coordination and installation. We will also discuss audience, community outreach, and related programming. It includes field trips, and active, experiential learning.

After addressing these practical concerns, we will explore the role of contemporary galleries in the understanding of culture, the relationship between galleries and the art market, and the importance of criticism and art history among other issues.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Students will visit area galleries, produce a variety of written documents, and create and conceptualize a "virtual" exhibition with images, exhibition materials, and documentation. By the end of this class, students will possess an understanding of the diversity of the visual arts world and have a series of documents and models which may be adapted to professional purposes.

COURSE TEXTS & MATERIALS:

Crawford, Tad and Mellon, Susan, *The Artist-Gallery Partnership*. Third ed., New York, NY: Allworth Press, 2008.

Winkleman, Ed, *How to Start and Run a Commercial Gallery*. New York, NY: Allworth Press, 2009.

Thornton, Sarah, *Seven Days in the Art World*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009.

Additional assigned readings will be distributed via Blackboard.

OPTIONAL:

Barnet, Sylvan, *A Short Guide to Writing about Art*. Tenth ed., Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2010.

OTHER COURSE READINGS:

Each week, students are required to read about exhibitions, the art market, and contemporary art trends. On three occasions students will be asked to prepare one-page responses on an article or review of their choice. Be prepared to share your article with the class, explaining why you found it of interest, and how it

fits within the context of this course or Arts Management more generally. Please use this as an opportunity to explore your own interests or subjects about which you wish to learn more.

Here is a list of excellent sources for additional information related to galleries, museums and the art world. Each week, students will review feature stories in the following:

New York Times: <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/arts/design/index.html>.

Arts Beat blog: <http://artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/>

Arts Journal: <http://www.artsjournal.com/visual.shtml>

The Washington Post: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/goingoutguide/museums>

City Paper's Arts Desk Blog: <http://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/blogs/artsdesk/visual-arts/>

The Guardian: <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign>

Los Angeles Times: <http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/>

Other readings will be distributed as the class progresses and will include readings on the art market, the role of art fairs and biennials, museums, gallery ethics, and management challenges in visual art galleries.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:

Strong writing skills are extremely important. Gallerists and arts managers must often take abstract concepts and theories and transform them into concise and compelling language for grant applications, statements, press releases, and other texts. Contracts and correspondence are a vital part of dealing with artists, partners, and collectors. Students in this class will be required to do a substantial amount of writing. Three one-page summaries articles selected from the weekly media reading will be required. These writings will not be graded, but will count towards class participation.

Assignment drafts can be submitted for review two weeks prior to final due date. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this option. Deadlines are non-negotiable and points will be deducted for late papers.

Students are expected to articulate concepts related to artworks and exhibitions in a cogent way. Readings and gallery visits in this class will serve as a basis for dialogue and students are expected to actively participate.

An incomplete grade (IN) is used only if you request it in writing. An IN counts as a failing grade until completed, and it automatically turns into an F if a grade is not turned in by the deadline in the Schedule of Classes.

PARTICIPATION: 30%

Included in participation are class discussions (15%) and two one-page responses to articles (10%). Students will also be asked to lead two short discussions on assigned readings (5%).

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: 30%

2-3 page Artwork Comparison (based on gallery visit): 10%

3-5 page Exhibition Review (based on a different gallery visit): 10%

2-3 page Programming Review (of arts-related programming like a lecture, performance, etc): 10%

FINAL PROJECT & PRESENTATION: 40% (Written materials: 30%; Presentation: 10%)

Students will be asked to put together an exhibition using one of the gallery models we will cover in class. Exhibitions **must** include at least one studio visit, statements describing the work of the artist(s), a 1-2

page essay, press materials (images and press release), gallery checklists, contracts, and a planning calendar, with other options possible. Presentation will include a virtual “walk through” of the exhibition as well as an explanation of the planning process.

GRADUATE GRADING SCALE:

A+/4.0 100-97	B+/3.33 89-87	C/2.0 79-70
A/4.0 96-94	B/3.0 86-84	F/0.0 69-
A-/3.67 93-90	B-/2.67 83-80	

IMPORTANT DATES/DEADLINES:

Artwork Comparison: Feb 8
One-page Responses: Feb 15, Mar 22
Exhibitions Review: Mar 8
Programming Review: Mar 29
Final Project Materials: May 3 (presentation dates vary)

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Please note that this schedule is subject to change.

1) Wednesday, January 25. Introduction

Looking exercise, goals, gallery experiences, and definitions.

Assignment due Feb 8: Artwork comparisons based on a gallery visit.

2) Wednesday, February 1. What is a Gallery?

Types of galleries; different functions and models to explore.

Assignment due Feb 8: Prepare for upcoming gallery visits by looking at gallery websites and thinking of questions to ask.

Reading: Winkleman, Chapter 1-2; Thornton, Introduction and chapters 1-2.

3) Wednesday, February 8. Gallery Visit

Note: Class held off-site. Meet at Hamiltonian Gallery at 5:30pm (1353 U Street, NW, Washington, DC)

Assignment due Feb 15: One-page response to articles/reviews.

Due: Artwork comparisons.

Reading: Winkleman, Chapter 3

4) Wednesday, February 15. Outreach and Promotion

Reading: Winkleman, Chapter 11

5) Wednesday, February 22. Studio Visits & Working with Artists

Note: Class held off-site. Meet at Arlington Arts Center (3550 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA)

Discussion and review of final project (due May 3).

Reading: Winkleman, Chapter 14; Thornton, Chapter 6; Lerman, *Critical Response*, pgs 18-23

6) Wednesday, March 1: Exhibition Essentials

Assignment for next week: Exhibition Reviews are due.

Readings: Thornton, Chapter 3 & 4; Winkleman, Chapter 4, 13 & 15

<http://badatsports.com/2012/hyperjunk-observations-on-the-proliferation-of-online-galleries/>

7) Wednesday, March 8: The Market

The strength and weaknesses of galleries, curators, and collectors, as well as ethical and legal concerns.

Reading: Thornton, Chapter 3 & 4; Winkleman, Chapter 4, 13 & 15; O'Brien, Nicholas. "Hyperjunk: Observations on the Proliferation of Online Galleries," *Bad at Sports*, February 14, 2012.

Due: Exhibition Reviews

Assignment due March 22: One-page response to articles/reviews.

Assignment due March 29: Arts-related programming review.

March 15: Spring Break (March 13-19)

8) Wednesday, March 22: Criticism and Art Writing

Reading: Thornton, Chapter 5

Elkins, James, ed. *The State of Art Criticism*, Routledge, London, 2008, pgs vii-17 & 261-264.

Due: One-page response & Prelim Info on Final Project

9) Wednesday, March 29: A Broader View: Audience and Community.

Thinking outside the box to find new audiences and interdisciplinary collaborations.

Reading: Stockton Rush Bartol Foundation, *Culture Builds Community*, April 1, 2002

Due: Review of arts-related programming.

10) Wednesday, April 5: Nuts and Bolts

Note: Class will meet at Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Boulevard

Reading: Winkleman, Chapter 12; Fowle, Kate. "Who Cares? Understanding the Role of Curator Today," pg 26-35.

<http://www.theguardian.com/culture-professionals-network/culture-professionals-blog/2013/apr/15/writing-artist-statement-tips-language>

11) Wednesday, April 12: Alternative Spaces and Adaptive Reuse of Space.

Note: Class held offsite at Wild Hand Workspace (Arts Walk at Monroe Street Market, 716 Monroe St NE, Studio 8, W, DC 20017)

Reading: *The Art Newspaper*, "Do It Yourself: Pop Up Galleries," October 17, 2009.

Williams, Alex, *The New York Times*, "You Never Know Where Her Gallery Will Pop-Up Next," May 12, 2010.

12) Wednesday, April 19: Wrap up and Presentations

13) Wednesday, April 26: Presentations

14) Wednesday, May 3: Presentations

Due: All written materials for final project.

CLASS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory; you are asked to complete all readings, taking careful notes, before the class for which they are scheduled. The quality of your participation in class discussions will depend upon your having done the reading assignments as scheduled. To foster a focused learning environment, students are asked to arrive for class on time, not to leave early, and to turn off all electronic devices during class time. Regarding electronic devices (such as laptops, cell phones, etc.), please be respectful

of your peers and your instructor and do not engage in activities that are unrelated to 6 class. Such disruptions show a lack of professionalism and will affect your participation grade.

Students who arrive late or leave early without a valid excuse (granted by the instructor in advance) will be marked absent for the day, as will students seen using electronic devices without the explicit permission of the instructor. Students with two unexcused absences will have their final grade lowered by a half letter grade (A to A-, etc); students who have three unexcused absences will have their final grade lowered by a full letter grade (A to B); more than 3 unexcused absences may result in an F for the course.

Grading

Please carefully read the grading rubric presented at the beginning of this syllabus. If any part of the rubric is unclear, it is the student's responsibility to ask for clarification at the beginning of the semester. A grade may be contested in only the most extreme cases, and students must be aware that any grade review may result in a lower grade. An incomplete grade (IN) is used only if you request it in writing. An IN counts as a failing grade until completed, and it automatically turns into an F if a grade is not turned in by the deadline in the Schedule of Classes. To request an IN, students must have a passing grade in the class at the time of the request and must have attended (and actively participated) in most classes.

Proper Format & Due Dates

All papers and written assignments must be submitted in hard-copy at the start of class on the day they are due. I will not accept written assignments by email, or late papers without prior approval and a legitimate excuse. Out of fairness to all those students who get their work in on time, late papers (if/and when accepted) will be downgraded accordingly (one grade per day overdue). All written work must be submitted in typed hard-copy, double-spaced with one inch margins in a standard typeface (11 or 12 characters per inch) Students are urged to plan ahead and to create back-up copies of their work at every stage of their research and writing with the clear understanding that computer errors (viruses, power-interrupts, and/or lost or corrupted data) will not be accepted as a legitimate excuse for late assignments.

Academic Integrity & Conduct

In this course, as with all others, you should conduct yourself and your research with the highest level of integrity and ethics. The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me. To review the Honor Code of George Mason University, please visit: <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>

Diversity

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth. An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to

achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

Privacy

Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; <http://ods.gmu.edu>) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs. The DRC staff will work collaboratively with you to choose the most appropriate and effective accommodations and resources.

You are encouraged to sign up for the Mason Alert System by visiting the website <https://alert.gmu.edu>.