AMGT 620: Visual Arts Management Spring 2019
Professor Tiffany Williams
Wednesday: 4:30-7:10 pm

3 credits
Founders Hall Room AAA
Please note that at least two sessions will take place off site.
Office Hours: Wednesday, 4:00-4:20pm, after class, and by appointment
Email: AAA@gmu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course covers the many facets of visual art management, from the practical considerations of business operations to a broader examination of visual art’s role in art education, criticism, and the art market.

Topics such as exhibition and project coordination, contracts, representation, art insurance, policies, budgets, and marketing are covered. We will discuss mission identification, audience, and community engagement. In addition to examining practical concerns, we will explore the relationships between artists, managers, and the market; the role of contemporary art in the understanding of culture and identity; and the how the visual arts can reflect societal changes and trends.

This class includes field trips and experiential learning—students should be prepared to visit spaces with the class and on their own time and to challenge themselves and their definitions of “visual art”.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Students will visit area galleries and visual arts events, produce a variety of written documents, and conceptualize and create a “virtual” visual art project with images, exhibition materials and documentation. By the end of this class, students should possess an understanding of the diversity of the visual art world and have an understanding of the many models that they make encounter in their professional lives.
COURSE TEXTS:


OTHER TEXTS YOU MAY FIND USEFUL (NOT REQUIRED):


OTHER COURSE READINGS:

Each week students are required to read about exhibitions, events, the art market, and contemporary art trends. 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. **Three times during the semester students must prepare a one-two page written response on an article or review of their choice.** Please use this as an opportunity to explore your own interests or subjects about which you wish to learn more. **You may choose when you wish to hand these in, however at least one must turned in before Spring Break. Please do not save the remainder until the last day of the semester.**

Following is a list of excellent sources for additional information related to galleries, museums and the art world from which students may find feature stories for review:


*ArtDaily.org:* [www.artdaily.org](http://www.artdaily.org)


Other readings may be distributed as the class progresses.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:

Strong writing skills are extremely important. Visual 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 other arts professionals, artists, and collectors.

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.

PARTICIPATION: 30%
Class discussion, participation, and engagement (20%) Responses to articles (10%)

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: 30%
2-3 page Artwork Reflection (based on gallery visit): 10% DUE February 6
3-5 page Exhibition Review (based on gallery visit): 10% DUE February 27
2-3 page Related Programming Review (lectures, etc.): 10% DUE March 20

FINAL PROJECT: 40% (Written materials – 30%; presentation 10%)
Students will be asked to present a virtual exhibition or event using one of the models we will cover in class. Written materials must include:

- Written summary of a studio visit or email interview transcript (5%)
- Statements describing the work of the artist(s) (5%)
- A 2-3 page exhibition essay (10%)
- Press materials (images and press release) (5%)
- A planning calendar (5%)
Presentation will include a virtual “walk through” of the exhibition/project as well as an explanation of the planning process.

CLASS SCHEDULE: Please note that this schedule is subject to change.

1) Wednesday, January 23: Why “Visual Arts Management”?  
Goals, visual arts experiences, and definitions for the class.

**DUE January 30, Reading:** Sarah Thornton, *Seven Days in the Art World* and Winkleman, Introduction and Chapter 1

**DUE February 6, Assignment:** 2-3 page artwork reflection.

2) Thursday, January 30: The Art World and its Audiences.  
Discussion of the contemporary art world.

**Reading:** Sarah Thornton, *Seven Days in the Art World* and Winkleman, Chapter 1
**Assignment due next week:** 2-3 page artwork reflection.

3) Thursday, February 6: Gallery Visit

Class will be held off-site at the Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, VA 22201  

We will meet at the Arlington Arts Center to view the current exhibitions. We will then visit nearby Flashpoint Gallery and speak with Visual Art Coordinator Violet Mantel.

**Due Today:** Artwork reflections (digital and hard copies)

**Reading:** Prepare for visit by visiting visiting the gallery website and reading about the exhibitions:

[https://arlingtonartscenter.org/exhibitions/current/](https://arlingtonartscenter.org/exhibitions/current/)
4) Wednesday, February 13: “Bricks and Mortar” Visual Art Spaces

Defining a “gallery”, typical structures, and mission.

Discussion of practical considerations for exhibitions: installation, storage, contracts, schedules, budgets, etc.

**Reading:** Winkleman, chapters 2, 3, 6, and 8

**DUE February 27, Assignment:** 3-5 page Exhibition Review

Discussion of final project

5) Wednesday, February 20. Pop-ups, temporary spaces, and art fairs

As visual arts managers move away from fixed structures, alternative models are being revived and created. Discussion of definitions and practical considerations for such exhibitions: permits, applications, installation, packing and shipping, contracts, schedules, budgets, etc.

**DUE March 20, Assignment:** 2-3 page Related Programming Review

**Reading:** Winkleman, chapter 12; Thornton, chapter 3 and 7

**Pop-ups**


**Apartment Galleries**

Online Galleries


*http://www.thejealouscurator.com/blog/about/

Temporary Public Art

Kara Walker’s Creative Time Commission, A Subtlety, or the Marvelous Sugar Baby; http://creativetime.org/projects/karawalker/

6) Wednesday, February 27: Performance art and Social Practice Art

**Due Today: Exhibition Review

Reading:


7) Wednesday, March 6: Studio Visits

Reading: Winkleman, chapter 13; Thornton 6
March 13: Spring Break

8) Wednesday, March 20: Outreach, Promotion, and Partnerships
Press, marketing, strategic partnerships, after-hours events, and other means to raise visibility and increase attendance.

**Guest Speaker:** Haleluya Demeke, Sales Manager, Pelonkey

**Due Today:** Related Programming Review.
**Reading:** Winkleman, chapters 10, 11, 15, 16

9) Wednesday, March 27: Other Essentials, from Insurance to Ethics
Contracts, insurance, budgets, collectors, ethics, among other topics.

**Reading:** Winkleman 5, 7, 8, 14, Appendix A

10) Wednesday, April 3: Criticism, Art Writing, and Academia

**Reading:** Thornton, chapter 2; Additional readings to be assigned.


11) Wednesday, April 10: Looking ahead: What does the future hold?

Readings to be assigned.
12) Wednesday, April 17: Presentations 1-5
13) Wednesday, April 24: Presentations 6-10
14) Wednesday, May 1: Presentations 11-17
Due: All written materials for final presentation – these will be accepted earlier.

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 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](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](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](https://alert.gmu.edu).