

## **AVT 324 – Figure Drawing**

### **Syllabus**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

A studio course designed to study the human form with an emphasis on working primarily from observation. Through a series of class projects and weekly home assignments, working directly from the figure, the students are encouraged to experiment with a variety of approaches to explore formal, conceptual and expressive issues in dealing with the figure. Students will review issues such as linear and tonal drawing, figure/ground relationship, scale and proportion, analytic and structural approaches, quick sketches and extended studies, etc.

#### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- To develop an investigative approach and a personal direction to one's vision and intent.
- To understand the relationship between working from observation and the process of abstraction and selection by learning the formal and expressive issues in drawing.
- To establish a self-motivated, self-critical working process.
- To explore visual means of both traditional and contemporary approaches in figure drawing.
- To increase communication skills, both visual and verbal, and achieve more confidence and mastery in experimenting with various concepts and materials.

#### **EXPECTATIONS:**

The course is comprised of studio assignments, homework assignments, research, written assignments and the keeping of a sketchbook. Active participation is expected in the studio. This will be demonstrated by meeting assignments with curiosity and interest, by asking good questions, by working hard and being prepared to discuss your results and experiences as well as evaluating finished work. Students are expected to come to class on time and prepared for class. You are expected to research and prepare for studio work as asked. You are expected to demonstrate curiosity and appreciation of Art History. Every student is expected to display originality and the ability to respond confidently to challenging drawing assignments.

#### **COURSE FORMAT:**

##### **Studio Assignments**

A variety of assignments and exercises will be undertaken each week in class. It is the student's responsibility to come to class prepared to work on the day's activities. Students are required to take necessary care of all studio work throughout the semester. You will be required to formally present your work for portfolio review in good condition. Quality of presentation reflects student respect for the treatment and functions of materials and will be considered an important part of your review.

##### **Homework Drawings**

Homework drawings will be assigned. Plan to give as much or even more attention to the homework drawings than you give in class assignments. This course may require a minimum of 4 hours per week outside of class. Class time will be devoted to reviewing,

discussing and developing your drawing. Late drawings will receive lowered grades, except as negotiated before the deadline.

### Sketchbook

A personal sketchbook is a requirement for this course and will be graded accordingly. Maintaining a sketchbook is good practice for developing drawing ideas and provides a less constrained format for visual note taking. Your sketchbook is to be dedicated to AVT 324. As a drawing student, your sketchbook should be used to take notes in class and should show continued evidence of visual idea development. Every student is expected to completely fill at least one 100 page sketchbook during the semester. (6 pages per week are assigned)

-- It is recommended that you use the sketchbook to repeat classroom work to expand and reinforce your understanding of the material covered.

-- Class notes, Reflections, Observations (saw, heard, did, thought), Ephemera, Poems, Current Events, Critique, and Unexplained Phenomenon

### Portfolio Review

There are two reviews scheduled. (7<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> weeks) These are opportunities to present an overview of your progress for diagnostic evaluation. All relevant coursework, sketchbook and assignments will be submitted for review. Any missing work warrants appropriate alteration of your grade. Non-submission or late portfolios will receive a grade of F, unless prior arrangements have been made. More specific information will be delivered prior to portfolio submission dates. Store all the work you do flat and dry throughout the semester. Do not fold your drawings.

### Preparation

Students are expected to bring materials to every class meeting and arrive prepared to draw. Students who attend without materials and are unable to work, will be counted as absent for that day.

### Clean-up

Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves so that the room is ready for the next class. At the end of the semester, please thoroughly clean out your locker/file. Do not leave anything behind.

### Critiques

We will hold periodic informal critiques after projects. The critiques are designed to help students improve their work and develop a vocabulary to discuss their own work as well as the work of their classmates. Participating in the critiques is mandatory.

### Due Dates

Assignments are expected to be complete and prepared for presentation at the start of class on the date due. Late assignments will receive lowered grades, except as negotiated before the deadline.

### Attendance: Participation

AVT 324 is a studio course. Evaluation is strongly based on work done in the studio. Experience has proven students who do not attend class do poorly. All students are expected to attend and actively participate in classroom discussions and critiques. Your ability to articulate key ideas and critically evaluate work is an important part of your development in this course. It is imperative that you participate in every class meeting.

Students are allowed 3 absences without penalty. Excused and unexcused absences are treated the same. Every absence or part exceeding that limit lowers the final grade. A fourth absence lowers the grade by one full letter. Every additional absence lowers the final grade by half a letter grade.

If you can't be on time, attend as much of the class as you can. It is much easier to make up work when you know what we did. Lateness counts as 1/2 absence. Early departures count as half an absence. Students arriving 30 minutes or later for class will be counted as absent for the day. Students leaving 30 minutes or more before class ends will be counted as absent for the day.

Class will be dismissed with time provided for packing materials and cleaning up. Please do not prepare to depart before class is dismissed. It is disruptive and unfair to your classmates.

\_\_If you are going to miss class for any reason, it is important that you contact me by email.

\_\_If you are late or miss a class, you will miss important work. It is your responsibility to find out what you missed from one of your classmates. You must make up the work outside of class whether your absence was excused or unexcused. Drawing missing from the portfolio is graded zero and averaged into the grade.

\_\_Make up work is due one week after the absence. It is your responsibility to contact me and show me the completed work.

\_\_Any student who is absent a total of 7 classes is expected to withdraw from the class. And should not expect a passing grade.

### **DON'T BE LATE, DON'T LEAVE EARLY, DON'T MISS CLASS!**

**E-MAIL:** All students enrolled in this class are required to have an operative e-mail account set up through the registration process with George Mason University.

### **GRADING POLICY:**

All students are graded on an equal basis for the work completed. Students who attend class regularly and satisfy the requirements of each assignment should expect a C in this class. The grade of A is reserved to recognize exceptional effort, intensity and involvement. Grades in this course will be evaluated based on the following criteria and system:

#### Factors considered in assessing final grade:

- Attendance, punctuality, preparedness for and active participation in class
- Understanding and use of the formal elements of art (use of line, color, texture, shape and value) to explore emotional, social or cultural content
- Use of media and an understanding of the transformation of visual ideas through use of a variety of materials
- Technical skill with a variety of materials
- Respect for peer ideas, Responsive attitude to critique and tutorial input
- Demonstrates understanding of formal language
- Verbal demonstration of analytic and critical skills
- Awareness of the role of aesthetic judgment, intuition and critical analysis in making creative decisions
- Visual research (accumulation of written and/or visual resources)

#### Letter grades that will be assigned:

- "A" work is considered outstanding within the context of the course. This includes actively participating in every class day, thoughtful writing, and executing assignments on time with special attention to learned formal skills, content,

- craftsmanship, and presentation. The letter grade “A” will not be given if you have more than three absences from class. (A = takes your breath away)
- “B” work exceeds the basic requirements of the course, above average participation. The letter grade “B” will not be given if you have more than five absences from class. (B = good, You get it.)
  - “C” work meets the basic requirements of each assignment. Completes work with uneven results. The letter grade “C” will not be given if you have more than seven absences from class. (C = Average, You did the drawing)
  - “D” minimal effort. (D = didn’t quite do it)
  - “F” no effort.
  - + or - will be assigned to letter grades.

60% Drawing, including in-class work and homework, portfolio reviews

30% Participation (includes: attendance, active listening, active response, effort and the appearance of effort)

10% Sketchbook

### **Art Supply Stores:**

- Blick: 1250 I St., NW, WDC, 202-898-0555
- Plaza: 3045 Nutley St., Fairfax: 703-288-4500
- AC Moore: 9650 Main St., Fairfax: 703-764-2004

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

This is a tentative schedule of the topics that will be covered. It is subject to change as deemed necessary. Works are due at the beginning of class on due/critique dates. An explanation of my expectations for each project will accompany each assignment.

Tuesday Class:                    Slide talk, introduction of new materials, demonstration  
     Class projects due from previous week  
     Critique of completed work  
     Drawing

Thursday Class:                    Technical instruction  
     Project discussion  
     Discuss individual research  
     Drawing

### **Week 1**

Discussion of class procedures, Materials List, Syllabus, etc.

PP: Introduction

Material Try-out, Benchmark Drawing, Blind Contour, Modified Blind Contour, Looking Contour

Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages with Blind Contour.

Prompt: Record your thoughts as we commence. Reflect on drawing without looking.

### **Week 2**

PP: Line

Contour Line, Cross Contour, Continuous Line

Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages with different kinds of contour lines

Prompt: Write a reflection on the nature of lines.

### **Week 3**

PP: Gesture

Gesture, stress gesture, mass gesture, Palimpsest

Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages with gesture from moving images

Prompt: Write a reflection of drawing action as opposed to things.

**Week 4**

Quick Contour, Gesture with Quick Contour, Quick Contour with Value  
Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages with quick contour.  
Prompt: Reflect on quick observations.

**Week 5**

PP: Light  
Parts of a Shadow, Limited Value, Full Value, Value Reversal  
Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages with Value studies.  
Prompt: Write about value and seeing, and drawing backwards.

**Week 6**

Modeling  
Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages with modeling studies  
Prompt: Write about drawing “into” the space of the paper.  
Prepare Midterm Portfolio. Submit portfolio at end of Thursday.

**Week 7**

Tuesday classes do not meet. (Monday is a holiday. Attend Monday classes on Tuesday.)  
Interconnectedness Exercise  
Midterm Portfolio Reviews  
Sketchbook Challenge: Fill 6 pages exploring Interconnectedness.

**Week 8**

PP: Measuring and Proportion  
Analytical Drawing; Sighting Stick, Blocking In, Measuring, Organizational Line  
Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages with measured studies.  
Prompt: Reflect on the difficulties of accurate observation.

**Week 9**

Continue Analytical Drawing; Sighting Stick, Blocking In, Measuring, Organizational Line  
Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages measured studies.  
Prompt: Reflect on this week’s drawing experiments.

**Week 10**

Figure/Ground, Edge Contrast, Dynamic Drawing  
Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages. Positive shapes and negative space  
Prompt: Reflect on how seeing or being seen requires opposites.

**Week 11**

PP: Composition  
Viewfinder, Eccentric Formats, Arrangement, Rhythm, Balance  
Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages. Figure fitting format  
Prompt: Write about composition.

**Week 12**

Portrait, Proportions of the Face  
Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages. Portrait studies  
Prompt: What is the experience of creating a portrait?

**Week 13**

PP: Texture  
Stipple  
Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages. Texture studies  
Prompt: Reflect on how much texture you want in your drawing.  
No Class on Thursday.

**Week 14**

Self Portrait, Taking Reference Photographs,  
Draw a pair of expressive self-portraits that show two contrasting sides of your personality.  
Sketchbook Assignment: Fill 6 pages. Self Portrait thumbnails + studies. Total filled = 100 pages

Prompt: Write about finding yourself the subject.  
 Prepare Final Portfolio

**Week 15**

Continue Self Portrait  
**Final Exam – Benchmark Drawing**  
 Final Portfolio Review  
 Sketchbook due.

Course Schedule is tentative and may be revised. You will be informed of changes as early as possible.

Consortium Registration Deadline	TBD
<b>First day of classes</b> ; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date	August 28
Labor Day, university closed	September 4
<b>Last day to add classes</b> —all individualized section forms due <b>Last day to drop with no tuition penalty</b>	September 5
<b>Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty</b>	September 19
<b>Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)</b>	September 29
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via <a href="#">Patriot Web</a>	September 25 – October 20
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	October 2 – October 27
Columbus Day recess (Monday classes/labs meet Tuesday. Tuesday classes do not meet this week)	October 9
Incomplete work from spring/summer 2017 due to instructor	October 27
Incomplete grade changes from spring/summer 2017 due to Registrar	November 3
Thanksgiving recess	November 22 – 26
Last day of classes	December 9
<b>Reading Days</b> Reading days provide students with additional study time for final examinations. Faculty may schedule optional study sessions, but regular classes or exams may not be held.	December 11 – 12
<b>Exam Period</b>	Wed December 13 – Wed December 20
<b>Degree Conferral Date</b> The Winter Graduation Ceremony will be held on Thu December 21.	Sat December 23

ArtsBus - Dates for Fall 2017:

- September 23
- October 21
- November 18

ArtsBus Credit and Policies: You are responsible for knowing and following Artsbus policies and rules. Please go to the ArtsBus website: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu> "Student Information" for important information regarding ArtsBus policy. 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\* 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 Fall 2017 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/>  
 August 31...Simon Schwartz  
 Sept 14... Andy Birnbaum  
 Oct 5...Patricia Bello-Gillen

Oct 19...Sadie Barnette  
Nov 11... Walter Kravitz

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 your instructor 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.

Cell Phones: 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 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.

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, and are responsible knowing the rules, as stated on the George Mason University website' Academic Integrity page (<http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/>). "To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, trust, and fairness among all members of the Mason community, and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code:

*Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.*

Mason's Commitment: To create an environment that is innovative, diverse, entrepreneurial, and accessible—helping you avoid accidental or intentional violations of the Honor Code."

### 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](http://ittraining.gmu.edu) to see the schedule of workshops and to sign up.

**University Libraries “Ask a Librarian”**

<http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):** (703) 993-2380;

<http://caps.gmu.edu>

**University Catalog:** <http://catalog.gmu.edu/>

**University Policies:** <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>



# AVT 324 – Figure Drawing

## Materials List

### PAPER

- 1 pad of 18" x 24" sketch paper 100 sheets (smooth surface) (tape bound preferred)
- 1 pad of 18" x 24" drawing paper 24 sheets, 80 lbs. (tape bound preferred)
- 2 sheets 19" x 25" Strathmore 500 Series Charcoal Paper, toned paper, select a medium value (You may want more.)
- 1 sketchbook or journal, 9" x 12", 100 sheets (spiral bound preferred) (100-page composition notebook, 9-3/4" x 7-1/2" is acceptable)

### CHARCOAL

- Vine charcoal sticks; 2 packages of 12 sticks, soft and medium (not hard)
  - Compressed charcoal stick assortment; two soft, one medium and one hard
  - Charcoal pencils; Soft, Medium
  - White charcoal pencil, or stick
  - Colored chalk pastel set, 12 count, get intense colors, avoid cheap, pale sidewalk chalk,
- Note: Purchase inexpensive chalk, soft pastels, or chalk pastels. Do not purchase hard pastels or oil pastels.**

### PENCILS

- Drawing pencil assortment; 6B, 4B, HB, 2H
- Kneaded rubber eraser, white vinyl eraser

### INK

- 1 Tombo ABT N15 BrushPen, black
- 1 Super Twin Tip Sharpie, black (or 1 Super Sharpie and a Chisel Tip)
- Higgins Student Grade Waterproof Ink with wide mouth bottle,
- Minimum; 1 Japanese Quill Brush, 1 Bamboo Reed Pen (purchase assorted sizes per budget)

### TOOLS

- 5" x 7" natural chamois cloth (It is more cost effective to buy a larger size and share it.)
- Drawing Board, 23-1/2" x 26", masonite (special considerations)
- 2 binder clips, large enough to hold pad to board (special considerations)
- water resistant Portfolio, 19" x 26" or larger
- Roll of 3/4" drafting tape
- 1/8" diameter dowel stick, 10" long or suitable alternative (shish-kebab skewer)
- Viewfinder, (Can be purchased) 2 each 10" x 10" L-shape about 1-1/2" wide sides, Bring chipboard, matboard or illustration board to make in class. 2 paper clips (Can be made from a cereal or similar box.)
- Small hand mirror
- Spray fixative (Krylon Crystal Clear)

### EXTRA

- *pad of 18" x 24" multimedia paper (substitute for drawing paper)*
- *Strathmore 400 Series Drawing Roll 42in x 10yd, (300 series is less expensive)*
- *Lecturer's Chalk; White, Gray, Black (available at Eternity Arts)*
- *Graphite sticks; soft and medium*
- *Pink Pearl eraser*
- *glue stick*
- *plastic cups*

You may run out of materials and/or find that we do not get a chance to use all the materials you purchase. Additional materials and individual sheets of drawing paper may be purchased as needed. Italicized items need not be purchased. You will be informed ahead of time if these items are needed for a specific classroom or homework assignment.