



George Mason University · School of Art

THREE- DIMENSIONAL DESIGN AND BEYOND

AVT-105-004

Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR**Brian Davis**

bdavis26@gmu.edu

MEETING**Wednesday · 1:30–4:10 PM**

SOA L003

CREDITS**3**

Office hours by appointment

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WHAT WE'RE DOING

A foundation studio exploring form, space, material, structure, context, and embodied experience through three-dimensional design and expanded creative practices.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify and analyze formal elements of three-dimensional art.
- Connect material and technical decisions to underlying concepts.
- Develop work through conception, making, critique, and revision.
- Interpret material culture in personal, social, and historical contexts.
- Use studio tools and materials safely and responsibly.

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WORK & MATERIALS

TEXTS, MATERIALS & TECHNOLOGY

A course supply list will be provided. Students must use approved materials, tools, ventilation, and personal protective equipment as demonstrated.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Studio projects
- Sketches, models, and material tests
- Research and process documentation
- Critiques
- Safety orientations and demonstrations

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HOW THE COURSE WORKS

EXPECTATIONS & ATTENDANCE

Studio demonstrations, safety instruction, work sessions, and critiques cannot be fully recreated outside class. Course-specific absence and tardiness consequences will be added here.

EVALUATION

Projects: 65%

Process and research: 20%

Critique and participation: 15%

Detailed assignment rubrics will be provided when each assignment is introduced.

GENERATIVE AI · STRICT USE

Generative AI tools are not permitted for coursework unless explicitly authorized. Unauthorized use will be treated as a violation of academic standards.

Assignment instructions take precedence. Students must follow Mason Academic Standards and explain how permitted AI use contributed to submitted work. See Mason's AI guidance.

MASON CORE · ARTS

MAKING IS A WAY OF THINKING.

This class fulfills a Mason Core requirement for Arts. Mason courses in the visual and performing arts stress generative, inquiry-based learning through direct aesthetic and creative experience in the studio environment.

ARTS GOAL

Students will identify and analyze formal elements using appropriate vocabulary; understand relationships between technique and concept; analyze cultural productions in context; interpret material culture in social, historical, and personal contexts; and engage in conception, creation, and ongoing critical analysis.

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SAFETY & SUPPORT

REQUIRED RESOURCE

SCHOOL OF ART SAFETY MANUAL

This studio course involves material and process-specific safety instruction. Review the manual and follow all demonstrations, posted procedures, ventilation requirements, and PPE rules.

Open the 47-page manual



CAPS

Free crisis, counseling, and psychiatric services are available to enrolled students. Call 703-993-2380; after hours, select option 1.

COUNSELING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES ↗

STUDENT SUPPORT

The Student Support and Advocacy Center helps students facing life crises or barriers to academic and personal success.

STUDENT SUPPORT & ADVOCACY CENTER ↗

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UNIVERSITY POLICIES

▼ OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS VIA MASON EMAIL

Students are responsible for university communications sent to their Mason email account and must activate and check it regularly. University, college, school, and program communications will be sent through that account.

▼ STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND LEARNING DIFFERENCES

Students seeking accommodations must first contact the George Mason University Office of Disability Services at <https://ds.gmu.edu/> and then provide the Memorandum of Accommodations to the instructor in writing.

▼ UNIVERSITY ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend registered class periods. Participation matters to the individual and the class. Absence, tardiness, or early departure may be used as evidence of non-participation according to the instructor's stated grading policy.

▼ ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work. See <https://academicstandards.gmu.edu/>.

▼ RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYEE DISCLOSURE

Faculty are Responsible Employees and must report disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator. Confidential support is available through <https://ssac.gmu.edu/> and <https://caps.gmu.edu/>. Title IX information is available at <https://titleix.gmu.edu/>.

▼ INCLEMENT WEATHER & CAMPUS STATUS

For current operating status, closures, delays, and emergency information, visit <https://www.gmu.edu/campus-status>.

COMMUNITY & BELONGING

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

At the place George Mason University occupies, we give greetings and thanksgivings to the recognized Virginia tribes who have lovingly stewarded these lands for millennia including the Rappahannock, Pamunkey, Upper Mattaponi, Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Nansemond, Monacan, Mattaponi, Patowomeck, and Nottaway, past, present, and future; and to the Piscataway tribes, who have lived on both sides of the river from time immemorial. The education offered here is a credit to the land that has received our students. The good they will do in this world is the harvest of the soil upon which they stand, sit, and live.

CULTURAL INCLUSION & BELONGING

The School of Art plays an integral role in building an educational environment that is committed to creating inclusion for all of our members in both our classrooms and communities. An inclusive approach to higher education acknowledges the ways that individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural manifestations of oppression contribute to inequality and injustice in our classrooms, on our campuses, and in our communities. It strives to provide our community members with resources to cultivate a more inclusive, and just environment for all of our students, staff, faculty, alumni, and friends, regardless of racial background. This approach is an active and ongoing, long-term process. In all our efforts, we uphold a commitment to creating honest, respectful, supportive, and healing spaces where members of our community can meaningfully dialogue and learn from each other's lived experiences for the betterment of our entire community.

SUPPORTING AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

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.

The School of Art is committed to fostering and supporting our diverse community of students, staff, and faculty. We are a community of diverse perspectives and experiences, which contribute to varied approaches to artistic and creative expression. We know that excellence in art education and creative practices is strengthened by the inclusion of varied cultural traditions, identities, and ways of knowing. As

such, students are encouraged to connect with university resources as they develop and deepen in their studies within our supportive and inclusive community.

DISABILITY SERVICES ↗

ACADEMIC ADVISING SERVICES ↗

SCHOOL OF ART · AVT@GMU.EDU

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ART SCHOOL RESOURCES

WRITING CENTER

The University Writing Center supports writers at George Mason University through one-to-one consultations at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to the final phases of polishing. Writers can meet a tutor online in real time or upload a draft for written feedback.

Writing Center ↗
wcenter@gmu.edu

PROVISIONS RESEARCH CENTER FOR ART & SOCIAL CHANGE

Located in Room LO01 of the Art & Design Building, Provisions assists students in exploring and engaging new models for artmaking that lead to a more inclusive and connected society. It is also a hub for developing art projects through Mason Exhibitions, the Mural Brigade, and art partners throughout the metropolitan area and beyond.

Contact Don Russell ↗

ART AND ART HISTORY LIBRARIAN

Stephanie Grimm is available for appointments and virtual office hours.

sgrimm@gmu.edu

SCHOOL OF ART SOCIAL MEDIA

Instagram · @gmusoa ↗

Facebook · gmu.soa ↗

FALL 2026

DATES TO KNOW

First day of classes	Mon. Aug 24
Last day to add	Mon. Aug 31
Labor Day — university closed	Mon. Sept 7
100% tuition refund deadline	Tue. Sept 8
50% tuition refund deadline	Tue. Sept 15
Unrestricted withdrawal	Sept 16–29
Midterm evaluation period (100–200 level)	Sept 21–Oct 16
Selective withdrawal	Sept 30–Oct 26
Fall Break — no classes	Mon. Oct 12
Election Day — no classes	Tue. Nov 3
Thanksgiving recess	Nov. 25–29
Last day of class	Mon. Dec 7
Reading Day	Tue. Dec 8
Examination period	Dec. 9–16

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COURSE SCHEDULE

Wed, Aug 26 Week 1 · First class	Syllabus review; materials overview; cube exercise
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Wed, Sep 2 Week 2	Intro to Implied Form project; form: measuring, cutting, gluing Due: Have all supplies from supplies list
Wed, Sep 9 Week 3	Project 1 workday
Wed, Sep 16 Week 4	Project 1 workday
Wed, Sep 23 Week 5	Project 1 Implied Form critique
Wed, Sep 30 Week 6	Intro to project 2- Prosthetic
Wed, Oct 7 Week 7	Project 2 Workday Start to build "skin" on forms, Detail and Surface!
Wed, Oct 14 Week 8	Project 2 Workday
Wed, Oct 21 Week 9	Project 2 Workday
Wed, Oct 28 Week 10	Project 2 Critique
Wed, Nov 4 Week 11	Intro to project 3, lecture and demo
Wed, Nov 11 Week 12	Project 3 Workday
Wed, Nov 18 Week 13	Project 3 Workday
Wed, Nov 25 Week 14	Thanksgiving Recess · No class

Wed, Dec 2 Week 15 · Last class	Project 3 Workday
Wednesday, December 9, 2026 Final exam / culminating session	Topic to be announced 1:30–4:15 PM

Schedule subject to change. Updates will be announced through the course’s official communication channels.

