

Arts of the United States

ARTH 370 sec 001 and 002 • Spring 2021

Dr. Vanessa M. Schulman • Office Hours: by appointment • Email vschulma@gmu.edu

Hybrid online/face-to-face course

In-person meetings: Monday (sec 001) OR Wednesday (sec 002), 10:30-11:45
Innovation 105

Course Information: 3 credit hours. Art and architecture of North America from the pre-contact period through the end of the Second World War. Mason Core: Arts.

Description: This class covers the history of art in the United States, told through 100 objects. Inspired by the British Museum's *A History of the World in 100 Objects*, we will discuss artworks made in the lands that became the United States, from around 1000 AD to the present. This course does not move chronologically. Instead, thematic weekly modules focus closely on a small selection of featured objects and allow us to explore resonances in American art across time. Some themes include: Nation, Food, Climate/Landscape, Storytelling, and Dissent. To reflect the diverse experiences and backgrounds of people across the United States, the chosen objects will prominently feature artists who are Black, Indigenous, people of color, Queer, women, and/or members of religious minorities.

Course Format: This class is taught in a hybrid online/face-to-face format. The class is divided into two sections, one that meets on Mondays (sec 001) and one that meets on Wednesdays (sec 002). To maintain social distancing requirements, you may only attend the section you are registered for. Students in both sections will complete weekly asynchronous online activities by Wednesday night.

Safe Return to Campus: All students taking courses with a face-to-face component are required to take Safe Return to Campus Training prior to visiting campus. Students are required to follow the university's public health and safety precautions and procedures. All students in face-to-face and hybrid courses must also complete the Mason COVID Health Check daily.
<https://www2.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus/faqs-for-safe-return>

Device Policy: Do not bring laptops or devices to class. The classroom will be socially distanced, so in order to create a classroom community, we need to be mentally and emotionally present without the barrier of screens. Most of our in-person class time will be spent in discussion.

Required Materials: There are no materials to purchase. All materials will be on Blackboard (BB).

Mason Core: This course satisfies the Arts requirement in Mason Core. Students who successfully complete a course in the Arts category will meet the learning outcomes listed on the Mason Core homepage at <https://masoncore.gmu.edu/arts-2/>

Class Learning Goals: By participating in this course, students should meet the following goals:

- synthesize information to articulate critical responses to objects and texts
- analyze and evaluate visual images and material culture objects
- develop skills of academic communication, both written and oral
- identify major movements and stylistic forms in the history of American art

Course Policies / Considerations for Blended Online Learning

Class Communication

I will send communications to your GMU email. It is the student's responsibility to read and follow up on all emails. Course emails will also be posted on the BB page as Announcements. I try to respond to all communications within 36-48 hours, but if you do not hear back from me after that time, please send a follow-up email to vschulma@gmu.edu. All office hours will be by request only.

Netiquette

You agree to abide by standards of professionalism and courtesy in all communications with me and your fellow students. If the course is required to move online, this also applies to Zoom meetings. Students engaging in repeated inappropriate conduct or communications may be reported.

Do not download (except for personal studying use), distribute, or repost any course material created by me or by other members of the class. This violates standards of intellectual property.

Technology Requirements

Most of this hardware and software comes pre-installed on computers and some mobile devices. At a minimum, you will need an internet connection and a computer or mobile device with:

- a recent version of Chrome, Edge, Safari, or Firefox
- Adobe Reader or Preview
- speakers/headphone jack
- some functions may require 2FA enrollment (now required for all GMU users)

Recommended additional technology needs:

- MS Office: <https://its.gmu.edu/service/microsoft-365-apps-for-enterprise/>
- smartphone with camera (some short posts will ask you to take your own photos)
- webcam (may be needed if the university pivots to online instruction)

Technical Support

I can help with some minor BB functionality issues. For other common concerns:

BB troubleshooting: https://help.blackboard.com/Filter/Student/College_or_University

Mason IT Support: support@gmu.edu or call 703-993-8870

Policies for Submitting Written Work

All written work should be submitted to BB and is date-stamped in Eastern Time. It is the student's responsibility to ensure submissions are properly uploaded. I will not accept work that is emailed or sent as a link to Sharepoint or Google docs. I will only read work in .doc, .docx, or .pdf file formats or that has been submitted using BB's internal submission function.

Because of the flexible nature of the assignments, no late work is accepted. Special considerations about late/missing work may pertain to students affected by the Covid pandemic. Please contact me if such a situation will make it difficult to submit coursework. Be prepared with documentation.

Academic Honesty

I have a **zero tolerance** policy for academic dishonesty, whether intentional or not. Students who violate standards of academic honesty will earn a zero for the assignment and may risk failing the course or being subject to disciplinary action. More information, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found at <https://oai.gmu.edu> (Office of Academic Integrity).

Support Resources for Students

Accommodations

Disability Services (DS) at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Students can begin the registration process with DS at any time during their enrollment at George Mason. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit <https://ds.gmu.edu>, email ods@gmu.edu or call 703-993-2474

I am committed to providing all accommodations approved by DS. Please note that faculty do not automatically receive notice of accommodations from DS, so please email me a copy of your letter to discuss how we will implement your approved accommodations.

LGBTQ+ Resources

This course is a Queer safe space. This course includes material that informs us about issues of gender, gender identity, and sexuality, while recognizing the historic marginalization and frequent invisibility of Queer, transgender, and gender nonconforming people. If you are looking for additional support, LGBTQ+ Resources “works to promote the academic success, health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students and their allies.” <https://lgbtq.gmu.edu>

Diversity

This course is an anti-racist space. We will discuss research about artworks created by African American, Indigenous, Asian American, and LatinX artists. I believe that by fostering willingness to hear and learn from a variety of sources, we gain competence in communication, critical thinking, and global understanding, and become aware of our biases. The Center for Culture, Equity, and Empowerment provides support for an inclusive campus. <https://ccee.gmu.edu>

Help with Writing

If you have struggled with writing in the past, or if English is not your first language, you can seek help from the Writing Center, currently offering online help at <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

Emotional and Mental Support

College life and our current reality are complicated. Particularly in the current global climate, students may find it helpful to talk with a professional. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help address both personal and academic concerns. Services are free and confidential. <https://caps.gmu.edu>

Bereavement

Students dealing with loss are encouraged to speak with the Dean of Student Academic Life for their College. The Dean’s office can help you contact your professors and deal with the academic challenges of bereavement. CHSS students contact chssdean@gmu.edu.

Sexual Harassment and Misconduct

GMU is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment free from discrimination and a campus free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence to promote community well-being and student success. As a designated “Responsible Employee,” I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator. <https://diversity.gmu.edu/sexual-misconduct>

Evaluation and Assignments

There are 650 possible points to earn. These points equate to the following grades:

A+ (631-650 pts)	A (605-630 pts)	A- (585-604 pts)
B+ (566-584 pts)	B (540-565 pts)	B- (520-539 pts)
C+ (500-519 pts)	C (475-499 pts)	C- (455-474 pts)
D (390-454 pts)	F (0-389 pts)	

Your grade will be calculated as a running total and all grades will be posted on BB My Grades.

Breakdown of points

Course mechanics quiz = 9 pts

Attend at least 11 in-person meetings at 15 pts each = 165 pts

Final paper = 100 pts

Weekly asynchronous activities:

Discussion questions, must do 13 at 2 pts each = 26 pts

Short posts, must do 10 at 15 pts each = 150 pts

Comparison essays, must do 4 at 50 pts each = 200 pts

Total = 650 pts

Explanation of assignments

Course mechanics quiz: This is a one-time online quiz to test your understanding of the syllabus and course policies. You must take this quiz before you can access the remaining course materials.

Attendance and participation: You must attend at least 11 of the 13 scheduled class meetings, not counting the week 1 welcome meeting. I will award each student up to 10 weekly points (total: 110 points). If your participation shows that you have not prepared for class, the maximum number of points I will award you is 5/10. You will also award yourself up to 5 weekly points (total: 55 points) using a written exit ticket submitted to BB each Wednesday by 11:59 PM.

If the university pivots to online instruction, Zoom sessions will replicate in-class discussion. The same expectations for participation will be maintained, and you will submit a weekly exit ticket. Please contact me with documentation if an exceptional situation, such as a Covid diagnosis or caring for an ill family member, will require you to miss more than two classes.

Asynchronous Activities: There are three types of asynchronous graded activities:

- Post one substantive about the materials to BB (2 pts each). These questions are **due every week before class** (each Sunday by 11:59 PM).
- Each week there will be a prompt for a short blog post (about 150 words). You must write **ten** short posts (15 pts each) over the course of the semester; these are due on Wednesdays by 11:59 PM.
- Each week there will be a prompt for a longer comparison essay (about 400 words). You must write **four** comparison essays (50 pts each) over the course of the semester; these are also due on Wednesdays by 11:59 PM.

Final Paper: A 5 page essay (about 1200-1300 words) on one object of your choice. You should discuss its visual elements and connection with the theme, then explain why it is interesting or important to you. You can submit it at any time, but it is due no later than Wed. May 5. Full instructions are on BB.

Course Calendar

All times are in Eastern Time Zone

Please keep in mind these Mason administrative deadlines and other FYI material:

Mon. 2/1: Last day to add classes

Fri. 2/12: Last day to drop classes with 100% refund

Thurs. 2/25: Unrestricted withdrawal period ends

Sun. 3/14: Daylight Saving Time: change clocks between Saturday and Sunday

Thurs. 4/1: Selective withdrawal period ends

To maintain social distancing requirements, you may only attend the section you are registered for.

Theme and Dates	Discussion Question	Face-To-Face Class Meetings	Asynchronous Materials
Welcome Meetings 1/25 – 1/27	none	Mon. 1/25 (sec 001) Wed. 1/27 (sec 002)	Course mechanics quiz (must complete to access the course materials)
“Nation” 1/28 – 2/3	due Sun. 1/31 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 2/1 (sec 001) Wed. 2/3 (sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 2/3 by 11:59 PM
“Portrait” 2/4 – 2/10	due Sun. 2/7 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 2/8 (sec 001) Wed. 2/10(sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 2/10 by 11:59 PM
“Movement and Migration” 2/11 – 2/17	due Sun. 2/14 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 2/15 (sec 001) Wed. 2/17 (sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 2/17 by 11:59 PM
“Climate/ Landscape” 2/18 – 2/24	due Sun. 2/21 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 2/22 (sec 001) Wed. 2/24 (sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 2/24 by 11:59 PM
“Community/ Spaces” 2/25 – 3/3	due Sun. 2/28 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 3/1 (sec 001) Wed. 3/3 (sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 3/3 by 11:59 PM
“Storytelling” 3/4 – 3/10	due Sun. 3/7 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 3/8 (sec 001) Wed. 3/10 (sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 3/10 by 11:59 PM
“Food” 3/11 – 3/17	due Sun. 3/14 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 3/15 (sec 001) Wed. 3/17 (sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 3/17 by 11:59 PM

Theme and Dates	Discussion Question	Face-To-Face Class Meetings	Asynchronous Materials
“Religion and Ritual” 3/18 – 3/24	due Sun. 3/21 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 3/22 (sec 001) Wed. 3/24 (sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 3/24 by 11:59 PM
“Craftsmanship” 3/25 – 3/31	due Sun. 3/28 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 3/29 (sec 001) Wed. 3/31 (sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 3/31 by 11:59 PM
“Trade” 4/1 – 4/7	due Sun. 4/4 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 4/5 (sec 001) Wed. 4/7 (sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 4/7 by 11:59 PM
“Dissent” 4/8 – 4/14	due Sun. 4/11 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 4/12 (sec 001) Wed. 4/14 (sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 4/14 by 11:59 PM
“Abstraction” 4/15 – 4/21	due Sun. 4/18 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 4/19 (sec 001) Wed. 4/21 (sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 4/21 by 11:59 PM
“Death and Mourning” 4/22 – 4/28	due Sun. 4/25 by 11:59 PM	Mon. 4/26 (sec 001) Wed. 4/28 (sec 002)	Short post (must write 10) Comparison (must write 4) Exit ticket All due Wed. 4/28 by 11:59 PM
Finals Week 5/3 – 5/7	None	None	Final paper due by Wed. 5/5 at 11:59 PM