

senior project



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delivery and timing

We will meet in person once a week on Wednesdays from 4:30 to 7:10 in AB 1021. The classes are required and during our sessions we will discuss work, complete workshops, and further our design knowledge. The class is scheduled to run for 15 weeks and you can expect to work for 6 hours outside of class each week.

prerequisites

AVT 311: Graphic Design Principles and Methods, AVT 313: Editorial Design, and AVT 414: Corporate Design and Branding

course description

Motion Design introduces the theories, techniques and practices of motion design and the integration of design, image, sound, video, and animation.

overview

This is an advanced design course that will focus on design concept and production. Students will learn the techniques, concepts, and processes essential to understanding how to create and execute a design project, from ideation to final product.

Students will participate in all aspects of the development and presentation of a cohesive and mature body of work. This will include concept development, research, writing, production, and presentation. Thesis exhibition work will be formally presented to a faculty committee for critique of the project itself and the designer's presentation.

This course satisfies a Mason Core Integration Requirement for Synthesis and Capstone by providing students with the opportunity to synthesize the knowledge, skills and values gained from the general education curriculum. Synthesis courses strive to expand students' ability to master new content, think critically, and develop life-long learning skills across the disciplines.

objectives

- To create a body of work which synthesizes the student's general education experience
- To gain greater understanding of developing a design project
- To participate in a collaborative environment and learn from multiple disciplines
- To learn and demonstrate proper professional language and design skills
- To demonstrate advanced proficiency in visual narrative through the use of tools at our disposition as designers
- To develop a project based on exploration, process, and iteration
- To eloquently share findings after a meaningful and insightful journey
- To exercise good time management skills

materials

- Pens & pencils
- Notebook/sketchbook
- Access to Adobe Creative Suite, primarily Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign.
- Cloud storage (box.com, sync.com, dropbox.com are recommended)
- External hard drive AND flash drive
- Access to the Internet
- Camera (can be your phone's camera)
- Headphones

textbook

No books are required for this course. The following are suggested readings:

- Change by Design* by Tim Brown
- Wired to Care: How Companies Prosper When They Create Widespread Empathy* by Dev Patnaik
- Creative Confidence* by Tom & David Kelley
- The Politics of Design: A (Not So) Global Design Manual for Visual Communication* by Ruben Pater
- Extra Bold: A Feminist, Inclusive, Anti-racist, Nonbinary Field Guide for Graphic Designers* by Ellen Lupton, Jennifer Tobias, Valentina Vergara, Farah Kafei, Kaleena Sales, Josh Halstead, Leslie Xia
- Make Space: How to Set the Stage for Creative Collaboration* by Scott Witthoft and Scott Doorley

course requirements

During this course each of you will develop a design project. You will conceptualize, plan, research, and execute the project with the guidance of your instructor. Your project is not restricted to a specific form or medium and we will review examples of previous projects. Each project will be accompanied by a 12-page booklet to document the process and insights from the project. We will rely on research, critical observation, exploration, and iteration to study and create design solutions. Students are required to follow the steps listed, while maintaining constant documentation (through visuals and prose) of their process and findings. At the end of the semester, after the culmination of the design project, you will present your project along with the findings made to a panel of faculty members. Aspects that influence your grade are listed in the rubrics shared along with the syllabus.

1. PROPOSAL

Students will write a detailed design objective proposal. This proposal must include a solid argument for why you would like to work on this project as you culminate your education as a designer, what this project will entail, how it is intended to be done, and the timing for it (a simple outline will do, if/once approved we'll work on a more detailed schedule). In your argumentation, demonstrating wholesome understanding of the context around the chosen topic is essential—what are the implications of this project? Why is the particular approach significant (to you and others)? How will it enrich your education? Thinking of these questions may lead to the best way to propose a project that may satisfy the requirements of the assignment and more importantly, help you make the most out of subjects you might be interested in exploring further previous to graduation.

2. TIMELINE

Once the project proposal is approved, students will work on a timeline that may outline, as best as possible, all considerations for the project.

3. RESEARCH & EXPLORATION

Students will research extensively their subject of interest and work consistently on explorations that suit their projects. Keeping an open mind, retaining a curious spirit, and being thorough in searches will lay the necessary groundwork for the project.

4. EXECUTION

Once the research phase underway, students will start developing design solutions. Sketches and descriptions of the envisioned solutions will be shared with the group at large.

5. ITERATION

As solutions start to be presented, students will offer feedback that may be integrated into the projects. This phase is indispensable to ensure the efficacy of the design created. Students are expected to offer useful feedback to their peers as much as they will be expected to gracefully accept and incorporate input shared with them. Design is a collaborative practice. Participation in critique will be fundamental for successful outcomes.

6. DOCUMENTATION

Throughout the semester, students are required to maintain active documentation. Using prose/voice over, diagrams, sketches, and photographs, students will reflect and share their findings every other week. These findings will be later distilled and integrated into the project, booklet, and final presentation. In order to have a tangible way of perceiving the progress made throughout the course in a format that includes not just final product but the journey taken (celebrating insights and failures alike) to achieve it.

7. FINAL CRITIQUE

As the project is coming to a culmination, we will start working on a presentation that effectively compiles the initial seed question/interest that drove the project, the journey taken, and ultimately, the findings/design solution. Use of design language and reliance on tools for effective communication (oral & visual) will be expected. The final critiques will be attended by fellow students and multiple faculty members.

attendance

This is an in-person course. As such, you are expected to attend class. Because of the nature of this course, we will arrange meetings at a given pace that suits your project. Please arrive on time to our meetings and critiques. Delays and poor attendance may result in failure of this course. Arriving late or leaving early (this includes breaks, too) will affect your grade.

Do not come to class if you are feeling sick. I do, however, expect you to communicate with me in order to make any accommodations needed as soon as they arise.

deadlines

Work is expected to be turned in on time. Please post assignments and progress on their due dates, using the nomenclature described in the corresponding assignment sheets.

Back-up your work. Technology can and will, quite unfortunately, fail. You are expected to keep your files secured, despite any computer/software issues. These failures (computer crashes, printer out of toner, InDesign glitches, etc) will not excuse you from presenting work in a timely manner.

revisions

We learn through repetition, revision, and iteration. Therefore, you are strongly encouraged to revise, improve, and finesse all projects worked on. While projects ought to be turned in on their due dates, you can continue to improve your projects throughout the semester, to present revised versions during Final Critique. Working on these revisions will only influence your final grade positively.

evaluation

Critique is the process we will use to identify and evaluate the work created during class. Take notes, ask questions, participate with intention.

Accept feedback and offer feedback. Critique is beneficial to the creative work we make. Not only will your participation be factored into your grade, but it will ensure you exercise critical observation and communication skills you will need in your career as a designer. Participate actively in critique, we will all benefit greatly from it.

open studio

Once a week we will have open studio hours in one of the classrooms where you are encouraged to come and work, ask for feedback, or get technical help. More information on the class site and in class.

special accommodations

If you need any special accommodations, please communicate these to me at the beginning of the course or as soon as they arise.

comity and performance

Be respectful and act professionally (even while you're still a student). The classroom is a safe space to explore and question design aspects and approaches. To benefit extensively from our meetings, please make sure to act and communicate with tolerance, respect, and civility.

Strive to create work you love. At first not everything will come out the way you envision it and that is okay. You are still learning, after all! The more you try, the more skills you will garner, making the creative process easier for you. Learn and admire other designer's work (you're welcome to copy it as a personal exercise if you feel so inclined); but when it comes to deadlines, do not plagiarize. I want to see YOUR ideas at work.

We thrive working together. Reach out and learn from your peers, building a supportive community will offer growth, inspiration, and a more exciting environment where to learn.

Though I am guiding this course, I will ask for your input on your performance. Doing so allows me to be a better educator. While this course is required for you, I hope it also offers inspiration as you culminate your education as a creative.

work in class

There will be periods of work during class time. Please use this time wisely, to work on class-related projects only. You are making a considerable investment, make the most out of it, save social media and other social interactions for after class.

communication

Whenever in doubt, ask. I may not have all answers but I want to make sure I can offer guidance and advocate for you. If something is not clear, if you are facing challenging circumstances, reach out to me (either via email, in person, or during office hours), do not wait until the last minute to ask for help.

final critique

Your attendance during final critique is indispensable. Final critique offers a wholesome view of all the work developed during the semester. It is also a unique opportunity to celebrate what you have learned and accomplished. Please make the necessary arrangements to ensure you will be present during our final meeting and for its whole duration. Not attending final critique will result in automatic failure of this course.

grading

There are four main aspects that influence your grade: participation, punctuality, commitment, and craft. For further information on grading, please refer to the course rubric on Blackboard or at the end of this syllabus. These will let you know in detail the information taken into account when it comes to evaluation.

technical gaps

This is NOT a technical course. You are encouraged to find tutorials and resources that may increase your understanding of the software we will be using to create our work. The open studio hours are also a great place to get technical help.

stay healthy

Do not brag about all-nighters. Your health is precious. Though you are expected to create work outside of class (average of 6 hours per week), no work from this course should keep you from sleeping, something essential for our best functioning inside and outside the classroom.

If you are feeling sick, please do not come to class. Do let me know if you will be absent (do not wait to tell us weeks later, please) so we can make any necessary arrangements.

zoom

In the event that external factors were to cause this course to switch to online format, we will adapt as best as possible and hold our meetings virtually. Attendance and participation will still be counted towards your grade, projects will still be expected to be turned in in a timely manner.

Whether class is in person or online, we may hold one-on-one meetings via Zoom during office hours. Please make sure to attend these punctually to take profit of our time together.

When it comes to video conferencing and virtual learning, to ensure the best communication possible—I am aware of occasional limitations and unique circumstances—you are strongly encouraged to maintain your cameras turned on while we meet. If you are in a public space, please wear headphones to avoid distractions and maintain our conversation direct.

safe space

This class will aim to function as a collaborative, inclusive, and equitable space. In order to offer a more welcoming classroom, we collectively commit to creating a respectful and supportive environment where we all may flourish. Demeaning or discriminatory language and/or actions will not be tolerated. visual voices lecture series

schedule

The schedule at the end of this syllabus is an outline of what we will be covering this fall. It is subject to additions, subtractions, and general changes and the most current version can be found on the class website.

visual voices

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 four Thursday evenings from 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

For Fall 2022, this lecture series will be held online.

<https://www.masonexhibitions.org/visual-voices-fall-2022>

school of art social media accounts

IG: @gmusoa / FB: gmu.soa / TW: gmusoa

attendance policies

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class (including sections that meet online) 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.

SEPT 10 Bahia Shehab

SEPT 29 Jon Henry

OCT 20 Silas Munro

NOV 3 Ellen Lesperance

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.

anti-racism statement

The School of Art plays an integral role in building an educational environment that is committed to anti-racism and inclusive excellence. An anti-racist approach to higher education acknowledges the ways that individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural manifestations of racism against Black, Indigenous, and other people of color 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 interrupt cycles of racism so as to cultivate a more equitable, inclusive, and just environment for all of our students, staff, faculty, alumni, and friends, regardless of racial background. An anti-racism 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.

land acknowledgment

At the place George Mason University occupies, we give greetings and thanksgivings to these Potomac River life sources, the Doeg ancestors, who Virginia annihilated in violent campaigns while ripping their lands apart with the brutal system of African American enslavement, 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.

students with disabilities and learning differences

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester <http://ods.gmu.edu>

official communications via mason e-mail

Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University e-mail account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason e-mail account.

writing center and library resources

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. For Fall 2022, the Writing Center is holding all sessions online, with writers choosing between meeting their tutor in real time on Zoom or uploading a draft for their tutor's written feedback. Please send your questions to wcenter@gmu.edu

Provisions Research Center for Art & Social Change is located in Room LOO1 of the Art & Design Building. This student resource assists students in exploring and engaging new models for artmaking that lead to a more inclusive, equitable, and connected society. Provisions 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 for more information: drusse10@gmu.edu

Art and Art History Librarian, Stephanie Grimm, will offer appointments and virtual office hours for the Fall 2022 semester: <https://go.gmu.edu/sgrimm4>

mason gen ed/mason core

This course satisfies a Mason Core Integration Requirement for Synthesis and Capstone. The purpose of the synthesis course is to provide students with the opportunity to synthesize the knowledge, skills and values gained from the general education curriculum. Synthesis courses strive to expand students' ability to master new content, think critically, and develop life-long learning skills across the disciplines. While it is not feasible to design courses that cover "all" areas of general education, synthesis courses should function as a careful alignment of disciplinary goals with a range of general education learning outcomes.

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).

covid protocols and face coverings

For all vaccinated or unvaccinated students, faculty, staff, contractors, and visitors, face coverings are optional in all indoor University Facilities (i.e. indoor or enclosed spaces including buildings and vehicles) and traveling to/from sites off University Property for work or study if in a vehicle with other individuals. For more information, please visit: <https://www.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus>

For all vaccinated or unvaccinated students, faculty, staff, contractors, and visitors, face coverings are mandatory:

- In health care facilities or designated waiting spaces for health care patients (for example, Student Health Services, COVID testing sites, Intercollegiate Athletics training and medical facilities, Peterson Population Health Center, CAPS)
- Students in quarantine and isolation as instructed by Student Health Services
- All indoor environments offering programs for minors ages 2 to 5

responsible employee disclosure

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu

caps at mason

Counseling & Psychological Services provides a wide range of free services to students. CAPS offers crisis, counseling, and psychiatric services virtually, and limited services in person. Services are provided by a staff of licensed clinical psychologists, licensed professional counselors, licensed social workers, doctoral-level trainees, and a board-certified psychiatrist. Our individual and group counseling, workshops, and community education programs are designed to enhance students’ personal experience and academic performance. For distance learners, please see our Resources for Distance Learning (<https://caps.gmu.edu/resources-for-distance-learning/>) page. We also provide consultation to faculty and staff who have concerns about a student

CAPS provides short-term mental health services for enrolled students. When a student’s needs require a different level of care, CAPS works with students to transition care to community providers. If a student is currently seeing a professional in the community for therapy and can continue to work with them, we encourage the student to continue care with their current provider.

In order to begin services with CAPS, please call us at 703-993-2380 during our business hours. Due to the rise in COVID cases, we are only offering services via telehealth during this time.

If you are experiencing a crisis after our business hours or on weekends or holidays, please call us at 703-993-2380. Please select option 1 in our phone system to be connected to an after-hours crisis counselor.

If you are interested in connecting with a provider in the community for long term counseling, please visit our Find a Community Provider (<https://caps.gmu.edu/community-provider-search/>) page for our database of community provider options and other options for connecting with a therapist. If you have student health insurance through Aetna, you may also choose to access services through TelaDoc (https://www.aetnastudenthealth.com/schools/Peace_of_Mind_8.5x11.pdf).

honor code

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University 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. <https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>

AUG 22 First Day of Fall Classes
AUG 22 Last Day to Submit Domicile
 Reclassification Application
AUG 29 Last Day to Add: All Individual Sections
 Forms Due
SEPT 5 Labor Day: University Closed
SEPT 6 Last Day to Drop: With 100% Tuition
 Refund
SEPT 13 Final Drop Deadline: Last Day for 50%
 Tuition Refund
SEPT 14–27 Unrestricted Withdrawal Period:
 100% Tuition Liability
OCT 10 Fall Break (classes do not meet)
OCT 11 Monday Classes/Labs Meet (Tues.
 Classes Do Not Meet This Week)
SEPT 19–OCT 14 Mid-term Evaluation Period
SEPT 28–OCT 24 Selective Withdrawal Period
 (Undergraduate students only)
OCT 21 Incomplete Work from Spring/Summer
 2022 Due to Instructor
NOV 23–27 Thanksgiving Recess - No Classes
 (University Closed Nov. 23-27)
DEC 2 Dissertation/Thesis Deadline
DEC 3 Last Day of Class
DEC 5–6 Reading Day(s)
DEC 7–14 Examination Period
DEC 15 Winter Graduation
DEC 17 Degree Conferral Date

important deadlines

Once the add and drop deadlines have passed, instructors do not have the authority to approve requests from students to add or drop/withdraw late. Requests for late adds (up until the last day of classes) must be made by the student in the School of Art office (or the office of the department offering the course), and generally are only approved in the case of a documented university error (such as a problem with financial aid being processed), LATE ADD fee will apply. Requests for non-selective withdrawals and retroactive adds (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs in College Hall.

technology requirements

Note that this course requires/strongly recommends the use of Adobe Creative Cloud applications. If you do not already have an Adobe license and are interested in purchasing one or have an Adobe license and need to renew it, please visit <https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/buy/students.html>. Please note that the Adobe license agreement is on an annual 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. Reservations are strongly encouraged due to COVID-19 precautions and limited amounts of resources, but walk-ins will still be accepted so long as the occupancy of the lab does not exceed the maximum of 16 people <https://its.gmu.edu/service/club/>.

WEEK 1: 8/24	All section meeting Review syllabus Set expectations Cover class format Introduce committee options E1: I am for a design that is... Senior Project: Introduction and proposal guidelines
WEEK 2: 8/31	Share E1 SP: Proposal critique SP: Presentation guidelines Committee selection
WEEK 3: 9/7	SP: Presentations Creating a project timeline
WEEK 4: 9/14	SP: Timeline & initial research small group meetings E2: In class reference/research activity
WEEK 5: 9/21	SP: Individual meetings
WEEK 6: 9/28	SP: Small group check ins on progress Committee check ins
WEEK 7: 10/5	SP: Mid point critiques for first half of students
WEEK 8: 10/12	SP: Mid point critiques for second half of students
WEEK 9: 10/19	SP: Small group check ins on progress Committee check ins
WEEK 10: 10/26	SP: Individual critiques
WEEK 11: 11/2	SP: Opposite instructor check in
WEEK 12: 11/9	SP: Due
WEEK 13: 11/16	Exhibition work Project documentation Project maintenance
WEEK 14: 11/23	No class, Fall Break.
WEEK 15: 11/30	Gallery prep workshop Committee check ins Final critiques

design project rubric (100 points total)

	UNSATISFACTORY (0)	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (6)	SATISFACTORY (8)	EXEMPLARY (10)
FORM	The design is inconsistent, unorganized and incoherent. The design interferes with meaning.	The design is standard, default, unsurprising. The content and the design are at odds with one another.	The design is clear and organized. The design fits the content and does not distract from it.	The design is compelling and inventive. The design responds to the content, enhances meaning, and takes advantage of its media/format.
CRAFT	Hastily put together with no care for craft.	Several major craft issues present that show a general lack of care for details.	A few minor craft issues present that could have been addressed.	No craft issues present. Project is put together and finished well.
TYPOGRAPHY	No evident hierarchy on the typography. Typeface choices conflict with legibility. Principles of good typography (tracking, leading, size, etc.) are not present. Type remains static, inexpressive, and conveys no visual meaning.	Basic use of typographical hierarchy, minimal differences between elements. Typefaces choices are default and uninspired. Few principles of good typography (tracking, leading, size, etc.) are apparent. Type remains static, inexpressive, and conveys little visual meaning.	Clear typographical hierarchy, with some overlap between elements. Type choices are safe. Most elements follow principles of good typography (tracking, leading, size, etc.) with a few exceptions. Type is somewhat expressive and conveys some visual meaning.	Clear hierarchy to the typography with identifiable differences between elements. Typefaces choices are smart and add to the overall design. Principles of good typography (tracking, leading, type size, etc.) are followed consistently. Type is dynamic, expressive, and conveys visual meaning.
CONTINUITY	No continuity is present.	Continuity is present but not effective. There's no evident thought given to how continuity influences the pace of the project.	Continuity is evident throughout the project but stayed too safe within boundaries.	Continuity and pace are well considered throughout the process. Understanding of continuity is tangible in the design of the project.
EFFORT	No effort present.	Occasional check ins missed and minimal effort put into integrating feedback and pushing the work further.	All check ins made and feedback incorporated but designs stayed too safe.	All check ins met and feedback taken well. Project consistently pushed forward each week well beyond the minimum requirements.
EXPLORATION	There is no evidence of exploration. Concept doesn't offer anything new.	Very little exploration is evident. The project doesn't exhibit any exploration in concept, layout, or typographical choices.	Some exploration present. The design exhibits explorations in concept, layout, or typographical choices that could be pushed further.	Exploration of concept, layout, and typography are clear, innovative, and effective.
PROCESS	Project completed without any real process evident from beginning to end. Project is submitted with little integration of feedback given.	Little process evident through the project. The initial ideas and designs were not pushed very far for the final submission.	Process is evident and some improvements happened week to week.	Strong process with a commitment to improving and pushing the project throughout the duration of the assignment.
COMPLETION	None of the requirements of the project are met.	Few of the requirements of the project are met.	Most of the requirements of the project are met.	All requirements of the project are met or exceeded.
SUBMISSION	Over a week late.	Up to a week late.	One day late.	Early or on time.
OVERALL	Project is incomplete, hastily done, and missing requirements.	All requirements are present but the form and execution of the project are basic.	Project fulfills requirements but there is still room for improvement.	Project exceeds requirements and the design is well executed showing care for details and concept.