

**ENG**  
**280**

# Introduction to Comic Studies

CRN: 16980

Fall 2019

260 CON

MWF 2-2:50 pm

## Debarghya Sanyal

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Office: PLC 222

Hours: Fri 10:30 am - 1:30 pm

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\*he/his

## Required Texts

*Hogan's Alley/The Yellow Kid, Krazy Kat, Little Nemo* and others  
(selections on Canvas, as pdfs)

*Fall Guy For Murder, Johnny Craig*  
(selections on Canvas, as pdfs)

*Swamp Thing Book 1*, Alan Moore

*The Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S.*,  
Jaime Hernandez

*Adi Parva*, Amruta Patil

*On a Sunbeam*, Tillie Walden (online)

## Course Outline:

This course provides an introduction to the analysis of comics and graphic narratives in terms of their poetics, genres, forms, history, and the academic discipline of Comics Studies. Our multifaceted examination will balance close readings of primary texts with in-depth research and analysis of the development of the form in and beyond U.S. culture. By reading a range of comic-art forms (the newspaper strip, the comic book, the graphic novel, etc.), informed by several examples of contemporary comics scholarship, we will investigate the medium's complex interplay of word and image as well as the role of cultural factors in the publication history of comics.

## Learning Outcome:

This course aims to introduce students to the basic analytical tools and skills required for a critical reading, understanding and enjoyment of imagetexts. The course seeks to impress upon students the value of close reading images with words, with an eye for larger theoretical implications for understanding visual cultures within which comics remain embedded.

# Course Requirements

## 20% Annotated Biblio

Page limit:

2-3 pages

Components:

A **500-word** synopsis of your final essay

**Three** secondary sources, properly cited according to MLA 8<sup>th</sup> or Chicago 17<sup>th</sup> edition

**One** primary source, cited similarly

One annotation for each of these citations, **200-250 words**, according to assignment prompt



## 10% Quizzes

Quick 10-min questionnaires, comprehension or multiple choice, held unannounced at the beginning of classes. **Best of 4 out of 5.**

## 40% Final Essay

Page limit:  
5-7 pages

Components:

A clear, easily identifiable, single-sentence Thesis, which is **not an obvious observation**

A **close reading** of a substantial portion of your selected text, with careful attention to **formal** as well as **narrative** elements



A clear explanation of how the close reading proves your larger inference about character, place or theme in the text, in context of your chosen secondary text

A bibliography

## 20% Discussions

Components:

Post on Canvas a **300-350 word** (closely read) observation or question from the week's primary readings, discussions or lecture.



A **200-word** analytical response to any one other student's post, with proper reasoning and arguments

## 10% Participation


Attend classes with required readings; Take active part in class discussions; Stay connected with me for ideas, doubts, and attendance related queries through mail and office hour visits




All submissions on Canvas. In .docx file format only. Maintain size-12 Times New Roman font. Double spaced.

# Schedule


## Unit One: Lines, they are drawn!

 Week 1	10/02 Introductions
	10/04 Lecture 1 <u>Readings Due:</u> "The Yellow Kid"; "Little Nemo in Slumberland", "Krazy Kat" .pdfs Close Reading Discussion Response (11:59 pm on Canvas)
Week 2	10/07 Lecture 2 <u>Readings Due:</u> "Peanuts"; "Nancy"; "Mut and Jeff" .pdfs and others + Canvas readings
	10/09 Lecture 3 <u>Readings Due:</u> "Peanuts" etc. continued + Canvas readings
	10/11 Discussion class 1

## Unit Two: Mysterious Beginnings

 Week 3	10/14 Lecture 4 <u>Readings Due:</u> Selections from <i>Fall Guy For Murder</i> + Canvas readings
	10/16 Lecture 5 <u>Readings Due:</u> Selections from <i>Fall Guy For Murder</i> contd. + Canvas readings
	10/18 Discussion class 2 Close Reading Discussion Response (11:59 pm on Canvas)
Week 4	10/21 Lecture 6 <u>Readings Due:</u> Selections from <i>Swamp Thing #1</i> + Canvas readings
	10/23 Lecture 7 <u>Readings Due:</u> Selections from <i>Swamp Thing #1</i> contd. + Canvas readings
	10/25 Discussion class 3

## Unit Three: Tell-Tale Signs


 Week 5	10/28 Lecture 4 <u>Readings Due:</u> Selections from <i>Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S</i> + Canvas readings
	10/30 Lecture 5 <u>Readings Due:</u> Selections from <i>Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S</i> contd. + Canvas readings
	11/01 Discussion class 4 Annotated Bibliography and Brief Synopsis (2-3 pages, 11:59 pm on Canvas)

Week 6	11/04 Lecture 6 <u>Readings Due:</u> Selections from <i>Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S</i> contd. + Canvas readings
	10/06 Lecture 7 <u>Readings Due:</u> Selections from <i>Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S</i> contd. + Canvas readings
	11/08 Discussion class 5

## Unit Four: Distant Histories

Week 7	11/11 Lecture 8 <u>Readings Due:</u> <i>Adi Parva</i> + Canvas readings
	11/13 Lecture 9 <u>Readings Due:</u> <i>Adi Parva</i> contd. + Canvas readings
	11/15 Discussion class 6 Close Reading Discussion Response (11:59 pm on Canvas)
Week 8	11/18 Lecture 10 <u>Readings Due:</u> <i>Adi Parva</i> contd. + Canvas readings
	11/20 Lecture 11 <u>Readings Due:</u> <i>Adi Parva</i> contd. + Canvas readings
	11/22 Discussion class 7

## Unit Five: A Twist in the Tail!

Week 9	11/25 Lecture 12 <u>Readings Due:</u> Selections from <i>On a Sunbeam</i>
	11/27 Lecture 13 <u>Readings Due:</u> <i>On a Sunbeam</i> contd. + Canvas readings
	11/29 <b>Classes cancelled for Thanksgiving</b> Close Reading Discussion Response (12/01, 11:59 am on Canvas)
Week 10	12/02 Lecture 14 <u>Readings Due:</u> <i>On a Sunbeam</i> contd. + Canvas readings
	12/04 Lecture 15 <u>Readings Due:</u> <i>On a Sunbeam</i> contd. + Canvas readings
	12/06 Conclusions
Week 11	 Final Essay (5-7 pages, Monday 11:59 on Canvas)

# Course Policies

## Access

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me in week one if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu).

## Academic Honesty

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course, which means you may not submit papers or portions of papers you have written for any other course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. In cases where academic misconduct has been clearly established, the award of up to an F for the final course grade is the standard practice. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

## Attendance

Attendance is required. You may miss the equivalent of one week of class meetings for any reason. Additional unexcused absences will each lower your course grade by 1/3. For example, the first additional absence after one week of absences will reduce a B- to a C+, the second additional absence will reduce a C+ to a C, so on.

Documented illness and personal emergencies are excused absences: you will not be penalized for an excused absence. If you are ill, contact me in advance of any missed class to touch base and find out what you will need to make up before next class.

You are responsible for anything you miss, when not in class. Any absence after 2 full weeks of missed class may result in course failure. Any absence after 3 full weeks of missed class *will* result in course failure.

## Incompletes

Please see me if circumstances arise that make it difficult for you to complete the course. The Director of Undergraduate Studies must approve requests for the grade "Incomplete" in advance of the end of the quarter. Such approval will be granted only in cases when some minor but essential aspect of the course cannot be completed by students through unforeseen circumstances beyond their control.

## Late Work

Assignments are due by the day/time indicated on the syllabus. Late assignments will be docked 3 points (approximately 1/3 of a letter grade) for each day they are late, unless explicit arrangements have been made in advance. Assignments that are extended will be judged late as above if not handed in by the extended deadline.

You may ask for an extension if the due date is more than 72 hours (3 days) later, and the earlier the better. When you contact me, please let me know how long an extension you are requesting. In case of a looming or unexpected disaster, consideration will be given if you keep me in the loop and communicate in advance – i.e. even if the assignment is due in less than 3 days. Stay in touch.

**Note: In case of suspected Canvas hic-ups, please e-mail me a copy besides your Canvas submission.**

### Personal Technology Use & Classroom Respect

Any personal communication or non-class work on personal electronics is not permitted during class time. Anyone using a device for things other than class-specific work will receive a 0 (zero) in their FINAL participation grade.

### Observance of Religious Holidays

Students who observe their religious holidays at times when academic requirements conflict with those observances must inform instructors in advance of the holiday. Students are responsible for making up missed work according to a schedule determined with the teacher.

### Communications

The Canvas site for this course contains important course-related materials including assignments, announcements, links, copies of lecture slides, etc. Please check Canvas regularly for updates. I encourage you to communicate with me as early as possible regarding any course-related issues or questions during my office hours or via email. If you need to make appointments outside of regular office hours, the best way to do so is via email. I respond to all weekday emails within 24 hours. For weekend emails, expect a response on Monday at the earliest. Finally, in your emails, I request you to include a subject line that mentions the course title (ENG 280), as well as proper salutations, message, and your name.

### Emergency and Student Safety

UO Emergency Management & Continuity Program (UOEMC) has an entire website dedicated to helping students, staff, and faculty become better prepared in the event of an emergency: <http://emc.uoregon.edu/>. This website offers a wide range of helpful tips, including how to create your own emergency supply kit to updates on any recent alerts. Three recommendations in particular pertain to this class: confirm that you are signed up for emergency alerts (for both emails and text messages), practice at least two routes out of this classroom so that you already know them in the event of an evacuation (there are evacuation maps available in most hallways that you can consult to help you identify the best routes) and know the evacuation assembly area. For emergency assistance on campus call 911. For non-emergency assistance on campus call 541-346-2919. Never assume others have called when you witness an emergency that endangers yourself or others. Students who experience gender-based violence: Any student who has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, coercion, and/or sexual harassment is encouraged to seek help. Please visit <https://safe.uoregon.edu> for information. You are also strongly encouraged to contact Renae DeSautel, Sexual Violence Response & Support Services Coordinator, [desautel@uoregon.edu](mailto:desautel@uoregon.edu). She will keep your information confidential. In addition, the UO Ombuds office (541 346-6400 or [ombuds@uoregon.edu](mailto:ombuds@uoregon.edu)) can provide confidential support and assistance. You can also contact any pastor, priest, imam, or another member of the clergy. All of these people, including all UO faculty members, have an obligation not to reveal your name or other specific information without your permission, although faculty members do have to provide “general information” that will help us create a safer campus. As your instructor, I can also reassign work partners and make other necessary accommodations.

**Quick Warning:** This class will include the reading of texts that contains explicit depictions of sex, violence, adult themes, coarse language, and material that many might find offensive. If you think that this might be a problem, please come talk to me about whether we can find a solution, or if this is the best class for you. Any and all changes to syllabus and/or assignments will be notified on Canvas.

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