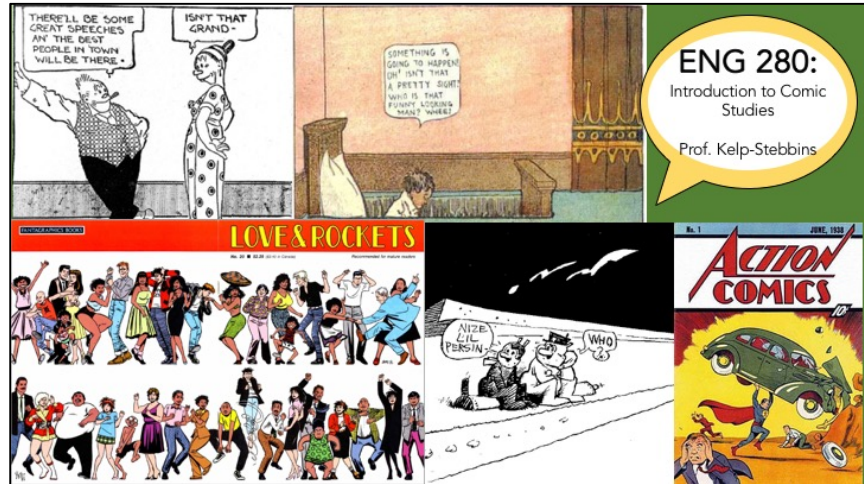


ENGLISH 280: Introduction to Comics Studies

SPRING 2020 | WEB | CRN
32147
MARCH 31-JUNE 4



ENG 280:
Introduction to Comic
Studies
Prof. Kelp-Stebbins

Instructors:

Prof. Kelp-Stebbins (she/her/hers)

Contact: kkelp@uoregon.edu

Secondary: <https://uoregon.zoom.us/my/kkelp>

Office Hours: T 11-2pm, I will be available during this time via our course Canvas chat. If you need to make an appointment to Zoom outside of these hours please email directly.

TA Rachel Combs (she/her/hers)

Contact: rcombs@uoregon.edu

Office Hours: Available by appointment.

Course Description

4 Credits, Fulfills A & L, English Major, Lower-Division Elective, English Minor, Comics Studies Minor

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 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.

Required Texts

- *Watchmen*, Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons
- *The Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S.*, Jaime Hernandez
- *Safe Area Goražde*, Joe Sacco
- *Fun Home*, Alison Bechdel
- *The Best We Could Do*, Thi Bui
- Other **required readings** are posted to Canvas.

All of our books are available at the Duck Store, which is now offering free shipping for all textbooks.

Because this is an online course, you will need reliable access to the internet. If you need to request a laptop on loan for the term, please visit the [UO Loaner Laptop Request](#) site. UO also has resources for [low-cost and free internet options](#). If you require further assistance, please contact the [College of Arts and Sciences IT](#).

Course Objectives

In this course, you will learn about the historical development of comics and how to apply a range of comics-specific reading strategies. Given the shift to remote instruction, our course will be divided into ten modules with required readings and assignments. This course constitutes four credits, or 120 hours of student engagement; therefore, you are expected to spend 10-14 hours on the course each week. You will critically read and post questions about each assigned reading; you will annotate secondary texts; you will complete a midterm assignment; you will write one short essay and a longer final project in which you demonstrate your understanding of course materials and concepts.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT INVENTORY

Educational activity	Hours student engaged
Assigned Readings and Discussion Board Posts	60
Annotations	10
Midterm	5
Writing Assignments (1 micro essay, 1 final project)	40
Online Interaction (online quizzes, office hours, contributions to discussions, etc.)	5
Total hours:	120

Course Requirements

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

25% Discussion Posts	15% Annotations	15% Midterm
15% Micro-Essay	25% Final Project	5% Online Interaction

Discussion Board Posts: We have a course discussion board on our Canvas site. You are expected to post regularly to our board based on the instructions on the syllabus and Canvas. Make sure that you complete your postings when they are due.

Reading Annotations: When a digital secondary reading is assigned, you will be responsible for submitting annotations online. Instructions for annotations will be posted to Canvas. You will also annotate one two-page spread from *The Best We Could Do*.

Micro-Essay: You will write one short essay and upload it to Canvas.

Midterm: We will have a midterm examination at the end of Week 4. This exam will provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate your attention to course concepts and materials.

Final Project: Your final project should reflect everything that you have learned in the course. You will use the course concepts in order to analyze a graphic narrative—either one that you produce yourself, or one from the required readings.

Online Interaction: You are required to attend at least one digital office hours. Online interaction will also account for occasional quizzes on readings and lectures that you will complete through Canvas.

SUBMITTING WORK

All assignments must be submitted to Canvas by the day and time they are listed as due in the syllabus—Pacific Standard Time. You must submit your assignment as a .doc, .docx, or a .pdf. All word processing programs will allow you to “save as” or “export to” one of these formats. For your information, all work submitted to Canvas is automatically filtered through the Vericite anti-plagiarism system.

GRADING SCHEMA

A 100 % to 93.5% **A-** < 93.5 % to 89.5% **B+** < 89.5 % to 86.5% **B** < 86.5 % to 83.5%
B- < 83.5 % to 79.5% **C+** < 79.5 % to 76.5% **C** < 76.5 % to 73.5% **C-** < 73.5 % to 69.5%
D+ < 69.5 % to 66.5% **D** < 66.5 % to 63.5% **D-** < 63.5 % to 60.0% **F** < 60.0 % to 0.0%

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Read comics and graphic narratives with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions; 2. Draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts; 3. Perform critical, formal analyses of comics and graphic narratives; 4. Write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose.

Accessible Education Statement of Support

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 360 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoac@uoregon.edu.

Course Policies

RESPECT, TOLERANCE, AND DIFFICULT CONTENT

A respectful environment is essential to facilitate discussions and to create a safe space for students to share their thoughts. Everyone in our class—regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, class status, education, physical features, political belief, or religious belief—is worthy of respect as a human being. Our diversity is our strength. We don't always have to agree, and genuine ignorance can be an opportunity for personal and communal growth. This is especially important to keep in mind because some of our course materials features plot details, language, and visual imagery that you may find troubling.

We will critically engage with these texts and their underlying ideologies online discussions based on mutual respect and understanding. You may wish to further interrogate these issues in your writing as well. Regardless of your personal beliefs, disagreement and ignorance are never excuses for cruelty or intolerance. At times, discomfort can be productive when our ideas are challenged, but at no time will we tolerate sexist, racist, homophobic, or transphobic comments in our class platforms and interactions. I reserve the right to sanction students if they do not adhere to these guidelines. Furthermore, the UO Student Conduct Code provides

clear guidelines regarding student behavior. You are responsible for acting in accordance with this code or you will be subject to disciplinary action. Additionally, if you are having particular difficulty with a text, or feel especially troubled by a specific discussion, please let me know.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND HONESTY

The UO Student Conduct Code defines plagiarism as: “using the ideas or writings of another as one’s own.” Plagiarism is not only detrimental to your own development as a scholar and a writer; it is also a serious violation of UO policy. Any plagiarized assignment will result in a failing assignment grade, the threat of a failing course grade, and academic sanctions as determined by the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards. Please contact me with any questions about how to avoid plagiarism.

HARRASSMENT, ASSAULT, DISCRIMINATION

UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and gender-based stalking. If you have experienced gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, getting academic and housing accommodations, getting legal protective orders, and accessing other help. If you tell me about harassment or assault, I am not required to report this information to anyone unless you request that I do so. I am required to consult with a confidential UO employee (someone with legal confidentiality, such as a counseling professional or a crisis center advocate) to ensure that you are supported. If you decide to make a report, I and other UO employees will help you to do so. My goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available and that you have access to the resources you need. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO’s 24-hour hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options or visit the SAFE website at safe.uoregon.edu.

Course Schedule

This class is online, and you can complete the assignments and readings at your own pace as long as you submit the assignments by their designated due dates. However, in order to help you conceptualize how this course might work “in the real world,” I have constructed this agenda.

Week 1: Course introductions

3/31	4/2
Read: Syllabus and Canvas Site Watch: Zoom Class Meeting	Watch: 4/2 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board Syllabus quiz (Due 4/1 by 5pm)	Complete: Discussion board

Week 2: Newspaper Comics

4/7	4/9
Read: "Hogan's Alley"/"The Yellow Kid" .pdfs "Little Nemo in Slumberland" .pdfs "Krazy Kat".pdfs Watch: 4/7 Lecture	Read: "Bringing Up Father" .pdfs "Peanuts" .pdfs Newspaper strips .pdf "Famous Funnies" .pdf Newgarden and Karasik, "How to Read Nancy" .pdf Watch: 4/9 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board	Complete: Discussion board posts Lectures quiz "How to Read Nancy" annotations

Week 3: Early Comic Books→Watchmen

4/14	4/16
Read: Action Comics .pdf Daredevil Battles Hitler .pdf (skim this one) Crime Does Not Pay .pdf Young Romance .pdf Crime SuspenStories .pdf Watch: 4/14 Lecture	Read: Moore and Gibbons <i>Watchmen</i> Chapters 1-4 Excerpt from McCloud, <i>Understanding Comics</i> .pdf Watch: 4/16 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board post	Complete: Discussion board post McCloud annotations

Week 4: Watchmen

4/21	4/23
Read Moore and Gibbons <i>Watchmen</i> Chapter 5-8	Read: Moore and Gibbons <i>Watchmen</i> Chapters 9-12 Watch: 4/23 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board post	Complete: Discussion board post Midterm

Week 5: Underground and Alternative Comics

4/28	4/30
Read: Hernandez, <i>The Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S.</i> (1-93) Excerpt from Hatfield, <i>Alternative Comics</i> .pdf Watch: 4/28 Lecture	Read: Hernandez, <i>The Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S.</i> (94-202)
Complete: Discussion board post Hatfield annotations	Complete: Discussion board post

Week 6: Alternative Comics and Comics Journalism

5/5	5/7
Read: Hernandez, <i>The Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S.</i> (203-284) Watch: 5/5 Lecture	Read: Sacco, <i>Safe Area Goražde</i> (beginning-75) Watch: 5/7 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board post	Complete: Discussion board post Lectures quiz

Week 7: Comics Journalism

5/12	5/14
Read: Sacco, <i>Safe Area Goražde</i> (76-149)	Read: Sacco, <i>Safe Area Goražde</i> (150-227) Watch: 5/14 Lecture
Complete: : Discussion board post	Complete: Discussion board post Micro Essay due 5/16 by 10pm

Week 8: Graphic Memoir

5/19	5/21
Read: <i>Fun Home</i> (1-86) Excerpt from Baetens and Frey, <i>The Graphic Novel: An Introduction</i> .pdf Watch: 5/19 Lecture	Read: <i>Fun Home</i> (87-150)
Complete: Discussion board Baetens and Frey annotation	Complete: Discussion board

Week 9: Graphic Memoir

5/26	5/28
Read: <i>Fun Home</i> (151-end) Watch: 5/26 Lecture	Read: <i>The Best We Could Do</i> (1-130) Watch: 5/28 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board	Complete: Discussion board Lectures quiz

Week 10: The Best We Could Do and Conclusion

6/2	6/4
Read: <i>The Best We Could Do</i> (130-262)	Read: <i>The Best We Could Do</i> (263-end) Watch: 6/4 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board <i>The Best We Could Do</i> Annotation	Complete: Discussion board Final Project due by 6/8