

# ENGLISH 385: Graphic Narratives and Cultural Theory

## Home and Away

SPRING 2020 | WEB | CRN 32157  
MARCH 31-JUNE 4

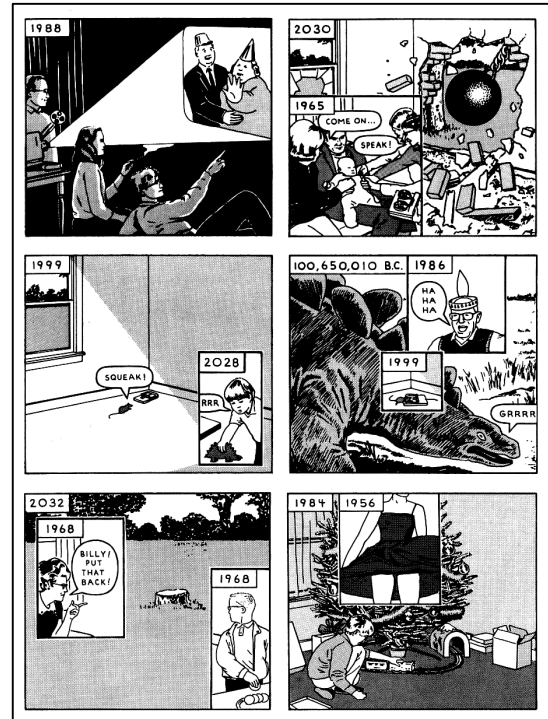
### Instructor:

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

Contact: [kkelp@uoregon.edu](mailto: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.



### Course Description

4 Credits, Fulfills A & L, Old Major: D-Literary Theory/Criticism, D-Theory/Rhetoric, E Media/Folklore/Culture, Comics Studies Minor, English Minor

Comics and graphic narratives are uniquely suited to exploring cultural location because they transform the storytelling unit of the page into a space of representation. The comics page graphically negotiates dynamics of home and away, self and other, as well as race and culture. In this course, we will read a number of graphic narratives--such as *Fun Home*, *The Arab of the Future*, and *The Best We Could Do*--and theoretical texts that provide a framework for considering comics in terms of location. Recent attention to comics as a global or transnational medium invites analysis of how comics shape our understanding of "home" and its attendant positions of "out," "in transit," "im/migrant," "lost," "exiled," or "displaced." What are the borders of "home" as represented in comics and graphic narratives? Which characters and subjects have the privilege of feeling at home in the comics page? How do comics frame the world as it is encountered "away" from home?

### Required Texts

- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home*
- Tom King and Gabriel Hernandez Walta, "The Vision: Little Worse Than a Man"
- Zeina Abirached, *A Game for Swallows*
- Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas, *Red: A Haida Manga*
- Riad Sattouf, *The Arab of the Future*
- Thi Bui, *The Best We Could Do*

Other **required** texts posted to Canvas.

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

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 develop and 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 a discussion board response about each assigned reading; you will annotate secondary texts; you will complete two “micro-essay” assignments; you will write compose one 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
Writing Assignments (2 micro essays, 1 final project)	40
Online Interaction (biographical post, online quizzes, office hours, additional contributions to discussions, etc.)	10
<b>Total hours:</b>	<b>120</b>

## Course Requirements

### GRADE BREAKDOWN:

25% Discussion Posts	20% Annotations	5% Online Interaction
20% Micro-Essays (10% each)	30% Final Project	

**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.

**Micro-Essays:** You will write two short essays according to assignment requirements and upload them to Canvas.

**Final Project:** Your final project should reflect everything that you have learned in the course. You will use the course concepts in order to produce and analyze a graphic narrative.

**Online Interaction:** You are required to attend at least one digital office hours. Online interaction will also account for assignments such as the biographical profile, lecture responses, the final project proposal workshop, and 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 graphic narratives and theoretical texts with deepened understanding of their conventions; 2) Explore relevant cultural and/or historical information in order to situate comics within their historical, cultural, and political contexts; 3) Perform critical, formal analyses of a narrative medium that combines visual and verbal elements in a unique way; 4) Write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose; 5) Employ creativity and interpretive skills to produce persuasive, original arguments; 6) Utilize a diverse array of primary and secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation, to generate a persuasive written argument.

## **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 [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@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 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](http://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	Read: McGuire, “Here” Hatfield, “An Art of Tensions: The Otherness of Comics Reading” Watch: 4/2 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board Self-homing Assignment Syllabus quiz (Due 4/1 by 5pm)	Complete: Discussion board Hatfield annotation

**Week 2: Home? (Bechdel's *Fun Home*)**

4/7	4/9
Read: <i>Fun Home</i> (1-86) Watch: 4/7 Lecture	Read: <i>Fun Home</i> (87-150)
Complete: Discussion board	Complete: Discussion board posts Lectures response

**Week 3: Home and Unhome (Bechdel's *Fun Home* and King and Walta's *Vision*)**

4/14	4/16
Read: <i>Fun Home</i> (151-end) Chute, "Animating the Archive" Watch: 4/14 Lecture	Read: King and Walta, <i>Vision</i> (1: "Visions of the Future" and 2: "Everything Slips Through Their Fingers") Watch: 4/16 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board post Chute annotation	Complete: Discussion board post Micro-Essay #1 Due 4/17 by 11:59pm

**Week 4: Trauma and War (King and Walta's *Vision* and Abirached's *A Game for Swallows*)**

4/21	4/23
Read: King and Walta, <i>Vision</i> (3: "In and Out" to end)	Read: Abirached, <i>A Game for Swallows</i> (1-67) Miller, "The Codes and Formal Resources..." Watch: 4/23 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board post	Complete: Discussion board post Miller annotation

**Week 5: Divided Homeland (Abirached's *A Game for Swallows*)**

4/28	4/30
Read: Abirached, <i>A Game for Swallows</i> (67-129) Abirached, "Artist's Statement"	Read: Abirached, <i>A Game for Swallows</i> (130-188) Monroy, "Creating Space" Watch: 4/30 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board post Abirached annotation	Complete: Discussion board post Monroy annotation

**Week 6: Redrawing the Borders (Yahgulanaas' *Red*)**

5/5	5/7
Read: Yahgulanaas, <i>Red</i> (1-57) Spiers, "Creating a Haida Manga: The Formline of Social Responsibility in <i>Red</i> " Watch: 5/5 Lecture	Read: Yahgulanaas, <i>Red</i> (58-108)
Complete: Discussion board post Spiers annotation	Complete: Discussion board post Lectures response

**Week 7: Culture and Belonging (Sattouf's *The Arab of the Future*)**

5/12	5/14
Read: Sattouf, <i>The Arab of the Future</i> (1-44) Watch: 5/12 Lecture	Read: Sattouf, <i>The Arab of the Future</i> (47-100)
Complete: Discussion board post	Complete: Discussion board post Micro-Essay #2 due 5/15 by 11:59pm

**Week 8: Sattouf's *The Arab of the Future***

5/19	5/21
Read: Sattouf, <i>The Arab of the Future</i> (100-end) Francis, "Trauma in Arab Graphic Novels"	Proposal Workshops
Complete: Discussion board Francis annotation	Complete: Final Project Proposal

**Week 9: Exile (Sacco's "The Unwanted" and Bui's *The Best We Could Do*)**

5/26	5/28
Read: Sacco, "The Unwanted" Parts 1+2 Saïd, "Reflections on Exile" .pdf Watch: 5/26 Lecture	Read: Bui, <i>The Best We Could Do</i> (1-130) Watch: 5/28 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board Saïd annotations	Complete: Discussion board Lectures response

**Week 10: The Best We Could Do and Conclusion**

6/2	6/4
Read: Bui, <i>The Best We Could Do</i> (130-262) Earle, "A New Face for an Old Fight" .pdf	Read: Bui, <i>The Best We Could Do</i> (263-end) Watch: 6/4 Lecture
Complete: Discussion board Earle annotation	Complete: Discussion board Final Project due by 6/10