Instructors:
Prof. Kelp-Stebbins*  
(she/her/hers)
Contact: kkelp@uoregon.edu
Secondary: https://uoregon.zoom.us/my/kkelp
Office Hours: M 2-5pm, I will be available during this for Zoom appointments. Email me to schedule a time or to make arrangements to meet outside of office hours. Please do not hesitate to contact me by email anytime that you have a question or issue with the course; I will respond as soon as I can.  
*My students are always welcome to address me as Dr. K or Prof. K in email, Canvas, and Zoom interactions. Otherwise, you can refer to me as Prof. Kelp-Stebbins in all course communication.

TA Pai Miller*  (she/they)
Contact: pmiller6@uoregon.edu
Office Hours: By appointment, send an email to schedule a time
*Pai is pronounced “Pay.”

Land Acknowledgement
The University of Oregon is located on Kalapuya Ilihi, the traditional indigenous homeland of the Kalapuya people. Following treaties between 1851 and 1855, Kalapuya people were disposessed of their indigenous homeland by the United States government and forcibly removed to the Coast Reservation in Western Oregon. Today, descendants are citizens of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians of Oregon, and continue to make important contributions in their communities, at UO, and across the land we now refer to as Oregon.

Course Description
4 Credits, Fulfills A & L, English Major, Lower-Division Elective, English Minor, Comics Studies Minor
Welcome to ENG 280. I want to begin by highlighting the ways our online format impacts our plans and policies. Most important is that we take care of each other and ourselves to the best of our abilities. I am sure that I share many of your disappointments regarding the constraints and drawbacks of the current pandemic situation. Even though we will not meet together, we will still work to:
• Be moved and challenged by comics and graphic novels;
• Practice close-reading and critical analysis, which are cross cutting, transferrable skills;
• Engage in ethical dialogue that widens our perspectives and deepens our knowledge;
• Treat each other with kindness and care and work to develop an online learning environment that is safe and supportive.

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
- *Safe Area Goražde*, Joe Sacco
- *The Best We Could Do*, Thi Bui
- *Good Talk*, Mira Jacob
- 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 |
Lecture Quizzes

Total hours: 120

Course Requirements
GRADE BREAKDOWN:
25% Discussion Posts   15% Annotations   15% Midterm
15% Micro-Essay         25% Final Project  5% Lecture Quizzes

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.

Lecture Quizzes: Lecture quizzes will allow you to demonstrate everything that you learn from lectures posted online.

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 uoaecc@uoregon.edu.

**Course Policies**

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Class Sessions**

We will hold an online course orientation session on March 29 at 2pm. This session will last approximately one hour, and we will discuss course requirements as well as our Canvas site. I will record this session and post it on our Canvas site. This is the only time that we will “meet” virtually. The course will be conducted via online assignments, lectures, and modules.

**Communication**

Our class will communicate through our Canvas site. Announcements and emails are archived there and automatically forwarded to your UO email, and can even reach you by text. Check and adjust your settings under Account and enable Text Notifications.

I will host “live” office hours through Zoom each week on Mondays from 2pm-5pm, and I also have a running discussion forum on our Canvas called “Class Questions and Answers” for the entire group to ask and answer. I welcome meetings outside my regular office hours, too, knowing that there is considerable uncertainty in all of our lives right now. Just email me, kkelp@uoregon.edu, to set a time. If you experience Internet access challenges, my office phone, (541) 346-1520, is set up to deliver voicemails to my inbox.

Because we will not meet in person, it is especially important that you ask for any clarification you might need. If you are unsure about an assignment, a Canvas or technology issue, a reading, or a concept, ask me. It’s also okay to contact me if there is an idea that excites or interests you and which you want to discuss in more detail. Please also be in touch to tell me how you are doing in these difficult times—are you having a tough week? Having troubling with some aspect of the course? I would like to strategize with you. I will do everything I can to help you succeed.

**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.

**YOUR WELL BEING**
Life at college can be very complicated. Students often feel overwhelmed or stressed, experience anxiety or depression, struggle with relationships, or just need help navigating challenges in their life. If you're facing such challenges, you don't need to handle them on your own—there's help and support on campus.

As your instructor if I believe you may need additional support, I will express my concerns, the reasons for them, and refer you to resources that might be helpful. It is not my intention to know the details of what might be bothering you, but simply to let you know I care and that help is available. Getting help is a courageous thing to do—for yourself and those you care about.

[University Health Services](https://www.uoregon.edu/university-health-services) help students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. If you need general resources on coping with stress or want to talk with another student who has been in the same place as you, visit the Duck Nest (located in the EMU on the ground floor) and get help from one of the specially trained Peer Wellness Advocates.
University Counseling Services (UCS) has a team of dedicated staff members to support you with your concerns, many of whom can provide identity-based support. All clinical services are free and confidential. Find out more at counseling.uoregon.edu or by calling 541-346-3227 (anytime UCS is closed, the After-Hours Support and Crisis Line is available by calling this same number).

**BASIC NEEDS**

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students Office (346-3216, 164 Oregon Hall) for support.

The UO Basic Needs Resource Guide includes resources for food, housing, healthcare, childcare, transportation, technology, finances, and legal support.

**Course Schedule**

Schedule subject to change; I will alert you of any changes in schedule.

**Week 1: Course introductions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mar 29-Apr 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read/Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Syllabus and Canvas Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Zoom Class Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Week 1 Lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do/Make</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Discussion board (Due 3/31 by 5pm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Getting to know you and course covenant survey (Due 3/31 by 5pm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Syllabus quiz (Due 4/2 by 5pm)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Week 2: Newspaper Comics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apr 5-9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read/Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Week 2 Lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Newspaper Comics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Hogan’s Alley&quot;/&quot;The Yellow Kid&quot; .pdfs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Little Nemo in Slumberland&quot; .pdfs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Krazy Kat&quot;.pdfs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Bringing Up Father&quot; .pdfs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Peanuts&quot; .pdfs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper strips .pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Famous Funnies&quot; .pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Newgarden and Karasik, “How to Read Nancy” .pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do/Make</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Discussion board post (Due 4/7 by 5pm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) “How to Read Nancy” annotations (Due 4/7 by 5pm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Lectures quiz (Due 4/9 by 5pm)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Week 3: Early Comic Books → Watchmen

**Apr 12-16**

| Read/Watch          | 1) Week 3 Lecture  
|                     | 2) Comic Books:    |
|                     | Action Comics .pdf  
|                     | Crime Does Not Pay .pdf  
|                     | Young Romance .pdf  
|                     | Crime SuspenStories .pdf  
|                     | 3) Moore and Gibbons *Watchmen* Chapters 1-4  
| Do/Make             | 1) Comic Books discussion board post (Due 4/14 by 5pm)  
|                     | 2) *Watchmen* discussion board post (Due 4/16 by 5pm)  

### Week 4: Watchmen

**Apr 19-23**

| Read/Watch          | 1) Week 4 Lecture  
|                     | 2) Moore and Gibbons *Watchmen* Chapters 5-12  
|                     | 3) Excerpt from McCloud, *Understanding Comics* .pdf  
| Do/Make             | 1) Watchmen discussion board post (Due 4/21 by 5pm)  
|                     | 2) McCloud annotations (Due 4/21 by 5pm)  
|                     | 3) Midterm (Due 4/23 by 5pm)  

### Week 5: Underground and Alternative Comics

**Apr 26-30**

| Read/Watch          | 1) Week 5 Lecture  
|                     | 3) Excerpt from Hatfield, *Alternative Comics* .pdf  
| Do/Make             | 1) Alternative Comics discussion board post (Due 4/28 by 5pm)  
|                     | 2) Hatfield annotations (Due 4/28 by 5pm)  
|                     | 3) Course reflection survey (Due 4/30)  

### Week 6: Alternative Comics and Comics Journalism

**May 3-7**

| Read/Watch          | 1) Week 6 Lecture  
|                     | 3) Sacco, *Safe Area Goražde* (beginning-75)  
| Do/Make             | 1) *The Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S.* discussion board post (Due 5/5 by 5pm)  
|                     | 2) *Safe Area Goražde* discussion board post (Due 5/7 by 5pm)  
|                     | 3) Lectures quiz (Due 5/7 by 5pm)  

### Week 7: Comics Journalism

**May 10-14**
| Read/Watch | 1) Week 7 Lecture  
 2) Sacco, *Safe Area Goražde* (76-227) |
|---|---|
| Do/Make | 1) Discussion board post (Due 5/12 by 5pm)  
 2) Micro Essay due (Due 5/14 by 5pm) |

### Week 8: Graphic Memoir

**May 17-21**

| Read/Watch | 1) Week 8 Lecture  
 2) Bui, *The Best We Could Do* (1-172)  
|---|---|
| Do/Make | 1) *The Best We Could Do* discussion board (Due 5/19 by 5pm)  
 2) Baetens and Frey annotation (Due 5/21 by 5pm)  
 3) *The Best We Could Do* annotation (Due 5/21 by 5pm) |

### Week 9: Graphic Memoir

**May 24-28**

| Read/Watch | 1) Week 9 Lecture  
 2) Bui, *The Best We Could Do* (173-end)  
 3) *Good Talk* (1-105) |
|---|---|
| Do/Make | 1) *The Best We Could Do* discussion board (Due 5/26 by 5pm)  
 2) *Good Talk* Discussion Board (Due 5/28 by 5pm)  
 3) Lectures quiz (Due 5/28 by 5pm) |

### Week 10: Good Talk and Conclusion

**May 31-Jun 4**

| Read/Watch | 1) Week 10 Lecture  
 2) *Good Talk* (106-349) |
|---|---|
| Do/Make | Course Conclusion discussion board (Due 6/2 by 5pm)  
 *Final Project due by 6/7 by 5pm* |