

# INF 327E - 27160 - Spring 2018 - Information & People: Comics, Graphic Novels, and Manga

Thursdays 7:30-9:00pm in Parlin Hall (PAR) 304

<https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/1216843>

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGfJPf\\_I2HjSpkB8fAH4VOQ/](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGfJPf_I2HjSpkB8fAH4VOQ/)

**Sarah Lundberg:** [sarahlundberg@utexas.edu](mailto:sarahlundberg@utexas.edu)

**Teaching Assistants:** [ta\\_pool@ischool.utexas.edu](mailto:ta_pool@ischool.utexas.edu)

## INTRODUCTION:

This is the Syllabus for the Course. To view Course Content, go to [Modules](#).

*Pages and Files* are hidden from the Student View as *everything you need* is in Modules.

This fusion course of online and in-person content is a survey of Comics, Graphic Novels, Manga, and other materials under the umbrella of Sequential Art. The world history of Comics and Manga will be explored, beginning with early visual narrative development, series paintings, newspaper cartoons, superheroes, development of the Graphic Novel, and the future projection of web comics and visual novels. In addition to history, students' will also become familiar with the genres of Comics, Graphic Novels, and Manga, and the major artists and writers that have helped define the field of Sequential Art. The assignments will seek to gain understanding of the Comics/Manga creation process through traditional knowledge-testing assignments, along with art assignments. While the various formats of Sequential Art are commonly enjoyed by children and presumed to be material reserved for the young, Comics and Manga are for all ages and this class will explore the nuanced mature aspects of Sequential Art as well as content for children. No prior knowledge of comics or artistic ability is required for this course, but an outside knowledge base is enjoyable to behold.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Become familiar with the transition from early art and visual narrative media to modern day advances in technology and the significant manner that Sequential Art has played on culture and society.

- Look into various social phenomena outside of or in parallel with Sequential Art to understand Comics and Manga, including artistic movements, banned and censored material, youth culture, and underground/alternative art society.
- Evaluate reading materials for various age groups in context to the challenges and conflicts of the characters within the literature and the intended audiences.
- Distinguish between genres and recognize recurring themes within Sequential Art, especially between 'funnies' and satire, superheroes, crime, romance, horror, underground/alternative, nonfiction, and autobiographical.
- Understand and analyse the structure of Sequential Art including page layout, audio and visual cues, panel design, language and word selection, character design, and tool selection by creating small selections of Sequential Art.

## COURSE ROAD MAP:

### MODULE ONE: History through Art History and Culture Studies

*Module Ends With: Art History Quiz & One Panel Comic*

- Section 01: European History: 1400s - 1900s
  - January 18th - In-Person Discussions & Reinforcement, including a full syllabus run-down
- Section 02: Asian History: 1200s - 1950s
  - January 25th
    - Pre-Semester Survey Due
- Section 03: Modern Times: 1920s to 1970s
  - February 1st
- Section 04: Graphic Novels & Underground: 1970s to Today
  - February 8th - Module 01 Ends

### MODULE TWO: Genres and Characters

*Module Ends With: Genre Identification of Unseen Comics Quiz & Four Panel Comic*

- Section 05: Crime and Thrillers / Horror and Monsters
  - February 15th
- Section 06: Superheroes and Their Giant Universes
  - February 22nd
- Section 07: Non-Fiction and Fictional Accounts of Real Life
  - March 1st
- Section 08: The Underground

- March 8th - Module 02 Ends

### MODULE THREE: Author Focus in America and Japan

*Module Ends With: Reflective Three-Page Paper on Favorite Comic & Proposal on Final Project*

- Section 09: American and English Comics
  - NO IN PERSON CLASS - Have a Good Spring Break!
  - **By March 11th**, Choose a Sequential Art Object to write about in Three Page Paper
- Section 10: Japanese Mangaka
  - March 22nd
- Section 11: American and Japanese Animators
  - March 29th
- Section 12: Student's Four-Panel Comic
  - April 5th - Module 03 Ends

### MODULE FOUR: The Future

*Module Ends With: 5 Minute Video / 5 Page Comic / 5 Page 'Scratch' Comic Book & Final Reflection Essay*

- Section 13: Visual Novels
  - April 12th
- Section 14: Web Comics
  - April 19th
- Section 15: Final Reflection Essay and Choice of Final Project-
  - April 26th
  - May 3rd
    - 5 Minute Video Presentation
    - 5 Page Complete Sequential Art Short Story
    - 5 Page Sequential Art Object Assembled from Existing Material
    - FINAL PROJECT DUE **May 4th BY MIDNIGHT**

### LITERATURE TO PURCHASE FOR THE COURSE:

This text is read in its entirety during this course, and thus, must be purchased. All other readings required within this course are available on the course's Canvas page, a separate public external site, or through the University of Texas' on-campus libraries.

- *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*, by Scott McCloud
- ISBN-13: 978-0060976255
- Cost: \$15.00 or less

This text does not have to be new, nor does it have to be a specific edition, as the ISBN is merely there to squash any confusion as to what book I am referring to.

Understanding Comics is read in completion in four weeks, so a library copy of the book may suit your needs, but it will still very useful many times throughout the course, it is rather affordable, so I would argue to just purchase it instead.

## ASSIGNMENTS:

Total in this course, there are 19 total main assignments, with 2 possible bonus point assignments. The total number of points that can be earned in this course is 200 points.

Here is a point split:

- 15 Participation Opportunities / Discussions - 5 Points Each for 75 Total
- 3 Module Assignments - 25 Points Each for 75 Total
- 1 Final Project with Essay - 50 Points Total
- **Grand Total - 200 Points**
  - Possible Bonus Points:
    - 1 Pre-Class Survey 5 Points [in Module 1]
    - 1 Bonus Participation Assignment 5 Points [in Module

Example Grade:

- + 75 Points (from Participation)
- + 60 (from Module)
- + 40 (from Final)
- + 5 (from Bonus Participation) =
- 180 Points Total
- **Divided by 200 Total Receivable = 90%** ... just squeezing in an A -

[Hint: Showing up to class every week really adds up]

Grading Scale:

|     |   |          |     |   |         |
|-----|---|----------|-----|---|---------|
| A   | = | 100 ~ 93 | C + | = | 79 ~ 77 |
| A - | = | 92 ~ 90  | C   | = | 76 ~ 73 |
| B + | = | 89 ~ 87  | C - | = | 72 ~ 70 |
| B   | = | 86 ~ 83  | D + | = | 69 ~ 67 |
| B - | = | 82 ~ 80  | D   | = | 66 ~ 63 |

D - = 62 ~ 60

F = 59 ~ 0

**For Pass / Fail, student must receive a grade of at least 120 points, or 60% to Pass**

## ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

### Participation Opportunities / Discussions:

- When the class meets once a week, instead of conducting a roll-call, each student who attends class can participate in an writing or art assignment to prove participation, knowledge learned, and added value to that knowledge and activity gained in meeting in person. Each week will be a different assignment, and can only be completed when meeting in person for the course. The participation assignments can NOT be made up.

### Module 01:

- Art History Quiz:
  - This is a open notes quiz consisting in part of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answers focusing on the history of creators and major moments of creation in Sequential Art History. This is not a quiz testing knowledge retention of specific dates and accurate number recollection, but testing your in-person and video-lecture notes, and ability to accurately recall and catalogue the information that has been presented to the student thus far with their note taking abilities and knowledge base.
- One Panel Comic Art Assignment:
  - As described in Ivan Brunetti's assignment, a one panel comic will be completed by each student individually focusing on a single scene and a quote from that scene from a selection of possible novels. This one panel comic does not have to demonstrate great artistic style, but should demonstrate basic principles gained from reading a small collection of sequential art objects and from the minor art assignments thus far.

### Module 02:

- Genre Identification Quiz:
  - This open notes quiz will feature a selection of images from sequential art objects from different genres and times. The student will respond by short

answer to each image presented with an estimate of what the genre of the given image is, and why this image would be within that genre.

- Four Panel Comic Art Assignment:
  - Moving on from the one panel art assignment, the student will now complete a four panel comic completed from a selection of twelve initial panel sketches as directed from the Ivan Brunetti's assignment. While the twelve initial sketches are timed, the final four panel comic should show effort and dedication to redrawing initial ideas, adding details, and inserting an understandable narrative from one panel to the next.

#### Module 03:

- Three Page Paper on Favorite Comic/Sequential Art Object:
  - The student will have selected by **March 11th** a favorite comic, graphic novel, manga, or other sequential art object, then write a three page paper that analyzes why the object works so effectively as a good piece of art/reading. This assignment does not grade over misplaced commas, apostrophes, or one incorrect word placement. This assignment does grade over consistent errors/misspellings, unsupported ideas, and bad sentence/paragraph construction. The first and last paragraph are the most important, and *uncited ideas can result in huge grade deductions or a zero.*
- Final Project Proposal:
  - Before the final project is due, students will submit a proposal for his/her intended project. While the final project does not have to follow to the letter what the proposal sets up, it is still a very necessary component of the final project assignment. The proposal tells the instructor (me) what direction the project will go in is visible before all efforts are dedicated towards a project that does not fulfill the project guidelines. *A Final Project will not be accepted without a Final Project Proposal being submitted beforehand.*

#### Module 04:

- Final Project
  - Students will have already chosen one of three possible project options, then submit their project by midnight of May 4th, the last day of classes.
- Final Reflection Essay
  - Along with the final project, students will submit a final reflection essay reflecting on his/her experiences with the class. *A final project submitted without a final reflection essay will NOT be accepted.*

## NOTE ON HOW WORK CAN BE DONE:

“A fundamental principle for any educational institution, academic integrity is highly valued and seriously regarded at The University of Texas at Austin. More specifically, you and other students are expected to maintain absolute integrity and a high standard of individual honor in scholastic work undertaken at the University. This is a very basic expectation that is further reinforced by the University's Honor Code. At a minimum, you should complete any assignments, exams, and other scholastic endeavors with the utmost honesty, which requires you to:

- acknowledge the contributions of other sources to your scholastic efforts;
- complete your assignments independently unless expressly authorized to seek or obtain assistance in preparing them;
- follow instructions for assignments and exams, and observe the standards of your academic discipline; and
- avoid engaging in any form of academic dishonesty on behalf of yourself or another student.”\*

[http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint\\_student.php](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php)

No matter how work is done on these assignments, these assignments will be of genuine originality, not copied, ‘borrowed’, or with outside assistance in part or whole. No cheating. No stealing. Cite everything you have taken from an outside source, including ideas and inspiration, especially quotes. Cite any assistance you receive, such as help reviewing or editing a writing assignment from the writer's center on campus, or help drafting an art assignment from an artist or a friend. The student can use any citation style, but the style should be consistent and recognizable from one of the many academic citation styles available. I find MLA is the easiest and most flexible, but you do not have to use MLA.

## TURNING THINGS IN:

All assignments are to be posted to Canvas before the due date. Assignments can only be turned in after the due date in the case of personal emergency with Valid Evidence.

Valid Evidence Includes:

- Doctor’s Note

- Obituary of a Family Member

Valid Excuses are only extended towards Module Assignments, not for Participation Assignments. Participation Assignments are arranged as to be minor grade additions with other ways to acquire points in their stead, so missing one or two will not severely affect final grade.

Plan ahead for emergencies as necessary, and stay on top of your work.

#### UNIVERSITY SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Any students with disabilities should contact the Services for Student Disabilities to seek any necessary accommodations. If the student already has an exemption or anything he or she needs to talk about, please feel free to email me at my utexas email address to talk about needs and what I can do to help.