

INF 327E - 28120 - Fall 2017 - Information & People: Comics, Graphic Novels, and Manga

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INTRODUCTION:

This course 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, superhero genre, crime genre, horror genre, alternative comix, 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. 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. The assignments of this course involve writing and creating art, but no prior experience as an artist is required.

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 autobiography.
- 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
- Section 02: Asian History: 1200s - 1950s
- Section 03: Modern Times: 1920s to 1970s
- Section 04: Graphic Novels & Underground: 1970s to Today

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
- Section 06: Superheroes and Their Giant Universes
- Section 07: Non Fictional and Fictional Accounts of Real Life
- Section 08: The Underground

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
- Section 10: Japanese Mangaka
- Section 11: American and Japanese Animators
- Section 12: Student's Four-Panel Comic

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
- Section 14: Web Comics
- Section 15: Final Reflection Essay and Choice of Final Project-
 - 5 Minute Video Presentation
 - or 5 Page Complete Sequential Art Short Story
 - or 5 Page Sequential Art Object Assembled from Existing Material

LITERATURE TO PURCHASE FOR THE COURSE:

This text is read in its entirety during this course, and thus, must be purchased. All other reading referenced within this course is 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 reflect 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 20 total assignments. The total number of points that can be earned in this course is 100 points. Here is a point split:

- 14 Weekly Discussion - 2.5 Points Each for 35 Total
- 3 Module Assignments - 15 Points Each for 45 Total
- 1 Final Project with Essay - 20 Points Total
- Grand Total - 100 Points
 - Possible Bonus Points:
 - 1 Pre-Class Survey 2.5 Points [in Module 1]
 - 1 Participation Assignment 2.5 Points [in Module 4]
 - 1 Make-Up Weekly Discussion 2.5 Points [in Module 4]

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

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 of these assignments. No cheating. No stealing. Cite everything you have taken from an outside source, including ideas and inspiration, especially quotes. 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.)

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 Excuses.

Valid Evidence Includes:

- Doctor's Note
- Obituary of a Family Member
- Personal Illness involving Extended Hospital Stay
- Valid Excuses are only extended towards Module Assignments, and for only a finite period of time.
- Due dates can NOT be extended for Weekly Discussions. Plan ahead for emergencies as necessary, and stay on top of your work, so when life happens, it does not ruin grades.

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 address to talk about needs and what I can do to help.