

INTD 101 Understanding Comics: Comics as Literature

Instructor: Kate Pitcher

W 5:30-6:20pm -- Milne 213

***DRAFT* Fall 2006 SYLLABUS**

SCHEDULE

Class Dates	Readings	Discussion	Assignments Due
Week 1 August 30		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Syllabus 	
Week 2 September 6	Eisner, Chapters 1-3	Elements of literature; What is a story? (plot, character, setting, style, theme)	Blog post
Week 3 September 13	McCloud, Chapters 1 & 2	Definition of comics	Blog post
Week 4 September 20	McCloud, Chapter 3-5	History of comics	Blog post
Week 5 September 27	ERes reading from <i>The Language of Comics</i>	Language & art of comics	Book Review #1
Week 6 October 4	Reading from <i>Sandman</i>	Forms of literature: mythology	Blog post
Week 7 October 11	Eisner, Chapters 4 & 5	Forms of literature: drama	Blog post
Week 8 October 18	Reading from <i>Persepolis</i>	Forms of literature: biography, memoir	Blog post
Week 9 October 25	Selections from: <i>Jonah Hex, Superman, Batman</i>	Genre fiction (comics telling stories through science fiction, mystery, western, fantasy, etc.)	Book Review #2
Week 10 November 1	McCloud	History	Blog post
Week 11 November 8	McCloud Eisner	Pop culture	Blog post
Week 12 November 15	Selected readings from Joe Sacco's <i>Palestine</i> and <i>Safe Area Gorazde</i>	Social issues	Book Review #3
Week 13 November 22		NO CLASS Happy Thanksgiving!	
Week 14 November 29	Selected readings from Alan Moore; DVD copy of "Ghost World" movie	Comics into Films; clips from several films will be shown in class	Blog post
Week 15 December 6	Last chapter of McCloud	Wrap-up	Final blog post
Week 16 December 13		Evaluations, hand in project	Final Project

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

	Students will be able to...
1.	Understand the elements of literature and how comics and graphic novels use these elements to tell a story.
2.	<u>Define</u> the basic elements of a comic book and graphic novel.
3.	Understand the history of comic books and graphic novels.
4.	Analyze the different genres of literature used to tell stories through the medium of comics.
5.	Articulate reasons, both literary and social, for the use of comics as storytelling medium.
6.	Understand the cultural, historical, literary, and social significance of comics in the U.S.

REQUIRED TEXTS (available from Sundance Books or Amazon.com):

Understanding Comics, Scott McCloud

Graphic Storytelling & Visual Narrative, Will Eisner

Selected readings will be placed on Electronic Reserve (ERes), available through the Milne Library website:

<http://library.geneseo.edu> and choose ERes →

Search by Course Instructor →

Choose Pitcher →

Look for this week's assigned reading → password will be **comics**

ASSIGNMENTS DUE

1) Blog postings

There will be required postings to the class blog at <http://understandingcomics.blogspot.com>

The instructor will invite each student to join the blog. Your participation is required! Please join {insert instructions for Blogger here} One posting will be due by class meeting day, on a topic given by instructor. Topics will be posted on the Thursday after our class meeting, which gives each student sufficient time to read the post, think about a response, and write a blog post before the next class.

2) Book Review

Three book reviews will be assigned throughout the semester to give students time to evaluate and critique three different comics.

Book reviews will be the student's own evaluation and critique of one piece from each of the following comic formats.

<i>Book Review #1</i> will be a review of any <u>one</u> comic book from the following group:	<i>Book Review #2</i> will be a review of any <u>one</u> graphic novel from the following group:	<i>Book Review #3</i> will be a review of any <u>one</u> manga title from the following group:
<i>American Splendor</i>	<i>Persepolis</i>	<i>Akira</i>
<i>Aeon Flux</i>	<i>Maus</i>	<i>Astro Boy</i>
<i>Batman: The Dark Knight Returns</i>	<i>Ghost World</i>	<i>Megatokyo (volume 1)</i>
<i>Bone</i>	<i>Jimmy Corrigan</i>	<i>Old Boy (volume 1)</i>
<i>A Contract with God</i>	<i>Pedro and Me</i>	
<i>The Sandman (any volume)</i>	<i>Palestine: In the Gaza Strip</i>	
<i>Sin City</i>	<i>Safe Area Gorazde</i>	
<i>V for Vendetta</i>	<i>Stuck Rubber Baby</i>	
<i>Watchmen</i>		

3) Final Project

A final project will explore the different themes we will discuss during the semester, tying together the literary, cultural, historical and social significance of comics and graphic novels. Students will be required to consult with the instructor to find a topic that ties together these themes and uses comics as a storytelling medium. Suggested topics will be given out during class {TBA}. Final projects will not necessarily be a paper -- ALL mediums will be considered and discussed with the instructor. Possibilities include a multimedia presentation, webpage, film, comic book, etc.

GRADING

<u>Item</u>	<u>Value</u>
Blog posts	10%
Class Participation	15%
Book Review #1	15%
Book Review #2	15%
Book Review #3	15%
Final Project	30%
Total	100%

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

SUNY Geneseo makes reasonable accommodations for persons with documented physical, emotional or learning disabilities. Students in this situation should consult with the Director in the Office of Disability Services (Tabitha Buggie-Hunt, 105D Erwin, tbuggieh@geneseo.edu) and individual faculty regarding any needed accommodations as early as possible in the semester.