

ENGL 24: UNMASKING COMICS: THE DAWN OF THE GRAPHIC NOVEL

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Demonstrated proficiency in English by placement via multiple measures OR through an equivalent placement process OR completion of ESLL 125 & ESLL 249.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area I: Humanities
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Student Learning Outcomes

- Apply literary theory to graphic novel or memoir.
- Demonstrate thesis driven essay writing about the graphic novel.

Description

Introduction to the history of graphic communication, emphasizing the burgeoning and dynamic form of contemporary graphic narrative: from memoir writing, to crime fiction, to the superhero, to socio-political writing. Explore how the history and evolution of this distinct literary genre has made it a relevant form of expression for artists and writers across the world and how reading comics challenges traditional modes of reading. Because this form of storytelling is used by artists all over the world to express the human condition and specific socio-cultural insight, the course inspires world-wide cross-cultural awareness.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Understand and situate the modern form of graphic narrative in world historical and literary contexts
- Recognize and apply basic literary terminologies, theories, categories, motifs, and genres appropriate to an introductory college-level discussion of literature
- Critique graphic narrative with greater insight and work to seek cross-cultural understanding

Course Content

- History of communication
 - Evolution of communication toward writing
 - Speech/symbols
 - Cave painting, petroglyphs, pictograms, ideograms, writing, alphabet
 - Focus on the early pictographic forms as sequential narrative art
 - History of comics
 - Early narratives in visual art (15th-20th century)

- Defining comics
 - Superhero comics: golden, silver, bronze, modern
 - Variety of forms and emerging forms
- Application of literary theory to graphic writing
 - Modern criticism: New Critical and Structural criticism
 - Plot, theme, structures
 - Imagery, symbol, metaphor
 - Post-modern criticism: Deconstruction, Feminist, Marxist, Psychoanalytical and other literary theory
 - Multiplicity of meanings through different lenses appropriate to textual/visual analysis
 - Visual analysis
 - Composition, contrast, point of view, framing, text placement
 - Genre analysis: Memoir, Fantasy, Crime, Superhero and other genres
 - Critique and analyze graphic writing
 - More than Superhero: separate content/form
 - Visual only storytelling
 - Reading panels/reading text/conflict and synergy
 - Intertextuality/ metatextuality
 - Socio-cultural issues addressed through graphic writing
 - Compare/contrast similar forms or themes across cultures

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

- When taught on campus, no special facility or equipment needed.
- When taught via Foothill Global Access, ongoing access to computer with email software and capabilities and current internet browser, email address.

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

- At least two critical papers and/or essay exams.
- Quizzes, journals, midterm, oral reports, and/or final exam.
- Participation in classroom discussion.

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

- Lecture
- Discussion
- Small group activities

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

- Ito, Junji. *Fragments of Horror*. Viz Media, 2017.
- Duffy, Damian, adapted from Octavia Butler. *Kindred*. Abrams ComicsArt, 2017.
- Wolk, Douglass. *Reading Comics; How Graphic Novels Work and What They Mean*. Cambridge: De Capo, 2007.
- McCloud, Scot. *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. New York: Harper Collins, 1994.
- Moore, Alan, and Dave Gibbons. *Watchmen*. New York: DC Comics, 1986.
- Spiegelman, Art. *Maus: A Survivor's Tale*. New York: Pantheon, 1996.

Auster, Paul, adapted by Paul Karasik and David Mazzucchelli. City of Glass. New York: Faber and Faber 2004.

Keiji, Nakazawa. Hiroshima: The Autobiography of Barefoot Gen. San Francisco: Last Gasp, 2006.

Bechdel, Allison. Fun Home: A Family Tragic Comic. New York: Mariner, 2006.

Although one or more of the above texts is older than the suggested "5 years or newer" standard, it remains a seminal text in this area of study.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

A. Compare/contrast two graphic novels in two separate genres, to examine how the art form employs the use of text and image to evoke a message for readers.

B. In what ways do text/image create meaning in the graphic novel, across genres?

Discipline(s)

English