

English 20: The Graphic Novel

Spring 2016

Instructor:	Professor Noelle Brada-Williams
Office Hours:	Mondays and Wednesday from 2-3:30 PM, after class on Fridays, and additional times by appointment in FO 102.
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Class:	Fridays 9:30-12:15 AM in WSQ 109
GE Category:	C2

Course Description:

This class will examine “sequential art” or visual narrative. It will focus on the interplay of written and visual forms of narration in the illustrated texts that have come to be called “graphic novels,” a term that has been used for both fiction and nonfiction, as well as long works and anthologies of shorter works. Although the styles and methods of narration developed in the graphic novel have come to have a profound impact on literature and film production in the 21st century, its origins as a unique artistic form are deeper. This section of English 20 will focus on a few of the graphic novel’s obsessions: autobiography, war, and family—and the surprising frequency in which these three themes intersect. The graphic novel’s tendency to explore both humanity’s creative and its destructive abilities will be the focus of this class.

Course Goals, Content and Learning Outcomes

GE Learning Outcomes

Reading and discussing assigned texts will focus on enduring human concerns, and allow students to

- a. examine significant works of the human intellect and imagination
- b. understand the historical and cultural contexts in which such specific texts were created
- c. recognize the accomplishments of women and diverse cultures reflected in such texts.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to

GELO 1: Recognize how significant works illuminate enduring human concerns

GELO 2: Respond to such works by writing research-based critical analyses and personal responses

GELO 3: Write clearly and effectively (writing will be assessed for correctness, clarity, and conciseness).

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO): Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to

1. Analyze significant works of graphic novels or related texts.
2. Understand the varied and diverse historical/cultural contexts in which specific texts were created
3. Recognize the accomplishments and issues related to women and diverse cultures as reflected in the assigned texts.

Departmental Learning Objectives (“E” in syllabus) English 20 serves four of the five learning objectives of the Department of English and Comparative Literature, by having students demonstrate the ability to

E 1. read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of “close reading” or close analysis in both the study of literature and the study of film;

E 3. write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and the nature of the subject;

E 4. develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively;

E 5. articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

Assignments and Grading Policy:

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a *minimum* of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at

<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>. Coursework will include frequent reading quizzes designed to test students’ completion and comprehension of the reading material, class discussions of and lecture material on the cultural contexts and forms of the works under discussion, two research papers, and a final exam.

Assignments:

1. *Participation, Written and Oral* (10%): You are expected to come to class ready to participate in our discussion of the literary texts we are reading together. Occasionally, you will be expected to produce short out-of-class or in-class writing assignments that will build toward your longer papers. There will be quizzes on the reading. You may also be expected to work together with your classmates on short assignments.

2. *Research Paper #1* (30%): Due March 18, this 1250-1750 word paper requires you to use research to support your analysis of one of the assigned texts from the first half of the class. See the assignment sheet on CANVAS for a lengthier description of this assignment.

3. *Research Paper #2* (30%) Due May 13, this 1250-1750 word paper also requires you to use research to support your analysis of one of the assigned texts from the second half of the class.

4. *Final Exam* includes short responses and a comparative essay of approximately 500 words minimum that covers material from the entire semester (30%)

Research Paper One (GELO 1, 2, & 3)	Approximately 4-6 page analysis w/ research 1,250-1750 words	30%
Research Paper Two (GELO 1, 2 & 3)	4-6 page analysis w/ research 1,250-1750 words	30%
Final Exam (GELO 1, the personal response half of 2, & 3)	5 I.D.'s & 1 comparative essay	30%
Reading Quizzes & other in-class assignments	15 class discussions, quizzes, etc.	10%
Total		100%

Grading Policy

The following statement has been adopted by the Department of English for inclusion in all syllabi: In English Department Courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the SJSU Catalog ("The Grading System"). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure.

In written assignments for English 20, this scale is based on the following criteria:

A [90-92=A-, 93-96=A, 97-100=A+] = Excellent: The "A" essay is articulate and well developed with fluid transitions and a clear and persuasive use of evidence, which is drawn from the text itself, lecture materials (when appropriate), and research materials. An "A" essay contains a fresh insight that teaches the reader something new about the subject matter.

B [80-82=B-, 83-86=B, 87-89=B+] Above average: The "B" essay demonstrates a good understanding of its subject, a clear and persuasive use of evidence, a certain level of ease of expression, and solid organization. However, it usually lacks the level of originality and creativity that characterizes the insight found in an "A" essay.

C [70-72=C-, 73-76=C, 77-79=C+] = Average: The "C" essay makes a good attempt at all the assignment's requirements. It has a reasonable understanding of its subject matter but its ideas are frequently simplistic or over-generalized. The writing style is also more bland and repetitive than the style shown by "A" and "B" essays and it often contains flaws in grammar, punctuation, spelling and/or word choice. It may also use textual evidence out of context.

D [60-62=D-, 63-66=D, 67-69=D+] = Below average: The "D" essay is poorly organized and generally unclear. It has inappropriate or inadequate examples, is noticeably superficial or simplistic, and/or contains some serious mechanical and grammatical problems. A "D" essay may also reveal some misunderstanding of the assignment requirements.

F = Failure: An "F" essay has not addressed the requirements of the assignment and is unacceptable work in terms of both form and content.

Late paper policy: keeping in mind the many emergencies and unforeseen events that can occur in the average SJSU student's life, I have a very generous extension policy. As long as you give me the request in writing—print or email— (complete with a new deadline) *before* the paper's due date, most requests for an extension will be granted. **If the original deadline is passed by a student who has not received an extension or an extended deadline has been passed, 10% of the total points possible will be taken off for lateness up to one week. Extended or late papers will be graded AFTER on-time student work.** Note that *doing the reading and being able and willing to respond* to the comments and questions of both the professor and your fellow students on a daily basis is a

requirement of the course. Reading quizzes and other in-class assignments will be given to ensure that students are indeed completing and understanding the readings. These cannot be made up. Due dates for all papers and the time for the final exam are listed on the reading and assignment schedule at the end of the syllabus. In-class pop quizzes, discussions and assignments serve a variety of purposes and will be used to focus on whatever learning goals the class is perceived to need extra help with—thus no single SLO is designated for that category. Most of our GE goals will actually be met in the process of doing the course reading, and attending our weekly lectures and discussions.

Classroom Protocol

You are required to be courteous and professional to both classmates and the professor. Most people take this as a requirement in their daily lives and this statement does not need to be reiterated here. However, people sometimes forget that the classroom is a professional setting and rules that govern a business meeting apply here. For example, devices such as cell phones need to be turned off; coming to class late is unacceptable. While you may use a laptop to take notes in class, you may not waste class time by texting or performing non-course related activities on a phone or computer. If an emergency arises that requires your absence from class, please contact the professor. Simply prioritizing your education behind other time commitments does not constitute such an emergency. Participating in class discussions and listening to and taking notes on class lectures are absolutely necessary for the successful completion of this course. Protocol for written work requires that all quotations must be enclosed in quotation marks or, when more than three lines, put in an indented block. Full citation of the original author and source must also be included. For all papers, review a writing handbook for help with quote integration, formatting & proper citation (most of you will have purchased one for your Freshman composition classes). The professor or graduate assistant will be happy to discuss issues related to writing and composition in office hours. Also see the University policy on “Academic Integrity” below for help defining and avoiding plagiarism of all kinds.

University Policies

General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU’s policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. To learn important campus information, view [University Policy S90–5](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf> and SJSU current semester’s <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as the next step.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](#) at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The [Late Drop Policy](#) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes. Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](#), <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor’s permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”
 - It is suggested that the greensheet include the instructor’s process for granting permission, whether in writing or orally and whether for the whole semester or on a class by class basis.
 - In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. [Presidential Directive 97-03](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec) (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

Ten Required Texts:

Lynda Barry, *One! Hundred! Demons!* ISBN 9781570613371
 Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* ISBN-10: 0618871713
 Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* ISBN: 006097625X
 Shigeru Mizuki, *Onwards Toward Our Noble Deaths* ISBN: 1770460411
 Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons, *The Watchmen*, ISBN: 1401245250
 Mine Okubo, *Citizen 13660* ISBN: 0295959894
 Marjane Satrapi, *The Complete Persepolis* ISBN-10: 0375714839
 Art Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 25th Anniversary Edition ISBN: 9780679406419
 GB Tran, *Vietnamerica: A family’s Journey* ISBN: 0345508726
 Gene Luen Yang, *American Born Chinese* ISBN: 0312384483
 Additional readings may be found in the SJSU library, on CANVAS, or via email from the professor.

You also need to make sure that your MySJSU account has your most accessible and current email address. Since we only meet once a week, expect to occasionally get questions or information emailed to you. The texts can be purchased at Spartan Books as well as via internet sellers. Be sure that any books you purchase have the ISBN numbers listed above so that you know you are getting the text you want and not just one with a similar name.

**English 20: The Graphic Novel Course Schedule
Spring 2016**

Please have the reading and assignments done by the date listed below:

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Jan. 29, 2016	Introduction to course and a discussion of the pre-20th century roots of sequential visual art Discussion of William Hogarth's <i>Progresses</i>
2	Feb. 5, 2016	Developing the Language of Analysis Have all of Scott McCloud, <i>Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art</i> read. Discussion of how we might apply McCloud's terms.
3	Feb. 12, 2016	Cold War Warriors Have Gibbon and Moore's <i>The Watchmen</i> read through Chapter 6. Discussion of Moore and Gibbon's reworking of the superhero comic to explore the morality (or amorality) of power. Work on the drafting of theses.
4	Feb. 19, 2016	Superheroes after Hiroshima Complete <i>The Watchmen</i>
5	Feb. 26, 2016	Visualizing the Holocaust Read part 1 <i>My Father Bleeds History</i> of Art Spiegelman's complete <i>Maus: A Survivor's Tale</i> . Work on finding and integrating resources.
6	March 4, 2016	Trauma and Visual Narrative Read part 2 <i>And Here My Troubles Began</i> of Art Spiegelman's complete <i>Maus: A Survivor's Tale</i> . Discussion of Spiegelman's choices in depicting not only history but his own family.
7	March 11, 2016	Visual Art as History Read Mine Okubo's <i>Citizen 13660</i> and electronic text "Looking Back: Teaching Miné Okubo's <i>Citizen 13660</i> " (Brada-Williams) on Canvas. Discussion of the uses of popular visual medium in both the recording of history and the transmitting of personal experience.
8	March 18, 2016 Research Paper	<i>A Graphic War Memoir from Across the Pacific</i> Read <i>Onward to our Noble Deaths</i> by Shigeru Mizuki Discussion of Mizuki's visual vocabulary and comparison with the American and British artists we have examined so far. Research Paper 1 Due (GE 1, 2 & 3)
9	March 25, 2016	Lynda Barry's "Autobiofictionalography" Read <i>One! Hundred! Demons!</i> and Melinda de Jesus, "Liminality and Mestiza Consciousness in Lynda Barry's <i>One Hundred Demons</i> " in F. L. Aldama's <i>Multicultural Comics: From Zap to Blue Beetle</i> (electronic text via SJSU library).
	March 28- April 1	Spring Break—Campus is closed
10	April 8, 2016	Family, Sexuality, and the Graphic Novel Alison Bechdel, <i>Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic</i>
11	April 15, 2016	Family and Migration in the Graphic Novel Read GB Tran, <i>Vietnamerica: A family's Journey</i> and Caroline

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Hong's "Disorienting the Vietnam Way: GB Tran's <i>Vietnamerica</i> as Transnational and Transhistorical Graphic Memoir" in <i>AALDP</i> (find at http://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/aaldp/)
12	April 22, 2016	A Male Coming of Age Tale in America Read Gene Luen Yang's <i>American Born Chinese</i> and "Same Difference: Graphic Alterity in the Work of Gene Luen Yang, Adrian Tomine, and Derek Kirk Kim" in F. L. Aldama's <i>Multicultural Comics</i> (SJSU ebook)
13	April 29, 2016	A Female Coming of Age Narrative in Iran Read Marjane Satrapi's <i>The Complete Persepolis</i> , to page 153.
14	May 6, 2016	Coming of Age Alone and Abroad Finish reading all of Satrapi's <i>The Complete Persepolis</i> .
15	May 13, 2016 Research Paper 2	Wrap up of the class and Review for the Final. Research Paper 2 Due (GE 1, 2 & 3)
Final Exam	May 20, 2016	7:15 AM to 9:30 AM Final exam with 5 short response questions and one comparative essay (GE 1, the personal response half of 2, & 3)