

San José State University
School/Department
English 20: The Graphic Novel, Section 1, Fall, 2019

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Edwin Sams
Office Location:	FOB 212
Telephone:	(408) 924-4485
Email:	Edwin.Sams@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Tuesdays/Thursday 10:30 a.m.—Noon, Fridays 8:00-9:00 a.m.
Class Days/Time:	Fridays 9:30 a.m.—12:15 p.m.
Classroom:	BBC 205
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	Area C2

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on [Canvas Learning Management System course login website](#) at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through [MySJSU on Spartan App Portal](#) <http://one.sjsu.edu> (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor) to learn of any updates.

Course Description

In English 20 we shall study how pulp literature—comic books, comic strips, underground comix, etc.—influenced the development of graphic novels and how the graphic novel has influenced literary novels and popular films. By studying works from diverse cultures and marginalized communities, as well as learning the historical and cultural backgrounds from which they were produced, we shall explore how this new genre expresses enduring human concerns.

Course Goals and Learning Objectives

GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

1. GE writing requirements are met with essays totaling 3000 words.
2. Reading and discussing assigned texts will focus on enduring human concerns, writing a documented argumentative essay will allow students to respond by writing research-based critical analyses and personal responses, as well as write clearly, correctly, and concisely.

Upon successful completion of this program, students will be able to:

- (1) Recognize how significant works illuminate enduring human concerns
- (2) Respond to significant works by writing research-based critical analyses and personal responses

(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) Examine significant works of the human intellect and imagination
- (2) Understand the historical and cultural contexts in which such texts were created
- (3) Recognize the accomplishments and issues related to women and diverse cultures reflected in such texts

Required Texts/Readings Textbook

Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home* (ISBN 13: 978-0-618-8717-1) at campus bookstore
Chabon, Michael. *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*. (ISBN 0-312-28299-0) at campus bookstore
Eisner, Will. *A Contract with God*. (ISBN 978-0-393-32804-2) at campus bookstore
Gaiman, Neil. *The Sandman: Preludes & Nocturnes*. (ISBN 781401225759) at campus bookstore
Lavalley, Victor. *Destroyer*. Boom! Studios. (ISBN 1684150558) at campus bookstore
McCloud, Scott. *Understanding Comics*. (ISBN 0-06-097625-X) at campus bookstore
Millar, Mark & John Romita Jr. *Kick Ass*. (ISBN 978-0-7851-3261-5) at Amazon.com
Moore, Alan & Dave Gibbons. *Watchmen*. (ISBN 780930 289232) at campus bookstore
Satrapi, Marjane. *Persepolis, Vol. I* (ISBN 978-0-375-71457-3) at campus bookstore
Spiegelman, Art. *Maus I & II*. (ISBN 978067948403) at campus bookstore
Yang, Gene Luen. *American Born Chinese*. (ISBN 13: 978-1-59643-152-2) at campus bookstore

Watchmen - Available through San Jose Public Library's Hoopla (e-book vendor)

Sandman: Preludes & Nocturnes - Available through San Jose Public Library's Hoopla (e-book vendor)

Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics* can be read for free through the following links:

<https://youtu.be/C8EQ5pGke4c>

https://youtu.be/pums9_uh6h0

<https://youtu.be/fY-wYvaBhQQ>

<https://youtu.be/fXYckRqsdjl>

<https://youtu.be/P46qJVkxGo8>

Course Requirements and Assignments

English 20 is a readings course. Students will be tested on their reading and understanding of the assigned texts in two comprehensive exams. The first will cover the first half of the semester; the second will cover the second half. Both will have 25 fill-in-the-blank questions on reading and two essay questions (250 word minimum).

English 20 also has a significant writing requirement of 3000 words. Besides the four essay questions in the exams, there will be one in-class personal response essay and one out-of-class argumentative essay informed by research.

As a humanities elective, English 20 also fosters cooperative participation in group presentations, the most important of which is the group PowerPoint presentation on famous writers and artists in the genre.

- [University Syllabus Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>.
- Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

The [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf), *Course Syllabi* (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>) requires the following language to be included in the syllabus:

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

Final Examination or Evaluation

The final exam will be an in-class essay comparing the graphic novel with the literary novel.

Grading Information

A student’s final average will be determined by the breakdown of these grades:

Two 1000-word essays=20%

Two comprehensive exams mid-quarter and at the end of the semester (40%)

Ten participation grades involving classroom exercises and homework (10%).

One (1) group PPT (10%).

Final exam essay=20%

Classroom Expectations

Students are expected to be in their seats when class begins. They should have all the necessary books and readings ready for class activities and discussion. The day’s assignments should have been read and assigned homework ready to turn in. All out-of-class assignments should be computer-generated drafts submitted as hard copies. All in-class work should be written in ink. Cellphones should be used for classwork only. Computers in class should be used only for note-taking.

Plagiarism is using other writers’ work without attribution. Evidence of plagiarism will be sent to the Office of Student Conduct and the guilty student will be failed from the course.

NOTE that University policy F69-24, “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.”

Grading Policy

Exams will be graded on a 100-point scale.

Participation grades will receive $\sqrt{+}$ (100) for work that is on time and complete, $\sqrt{}$ (85) for work that is on time, and $\sqrt{-}$ (70) for work that is late.

All essays will receive letter grades ranging from A to F.

A+=100, A=95, A-=90: Excellent writing that is informative, persuasive, correct

B+=89, B=85, B-=80: Above average writing that is organized, developed, and effective

C+=79, C=75, C-=70: Satisfactory writing that is clear, coherent, and complete

D+=69, D=65, D-=60: Unsatisfactory writing that is unclear, incoherent, and incorrect

F=50: Writing that is off-topic, plagiaristic, late, or brief

NOTE: The plus (+) sign with a letter grade indicates the highest degree of performance or value within that range; a minus (-) sign indicates the least performance or lowest value within that range.

“This course must be passed with a C- or better as a CSU graduation requirement.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>". **Make sure to visit this page, review and be familiar with these university policies and resources.**

English 20: The Graphic Novel, Fall 2019 Schedule

List the agenda for the semester including when and where the final exam will be held. Indicate the schedule is subject to change with fair notice and how the notice will be made available.

Course Schedule

Week (Optional)	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines (If appropriate, add any extra column(s) to meet your needs.)
1	8/23	Intro to syllabus, groups assigned,
1	8/23	in-class personal essay on comic books, strips, etc.(GE 1, 3) (CLO 1,2,3)
2	8/30	McCloud(Ch. 1/3) (GE1),
2	8/30	Satrapi, (CLO 1, 2, 3)
3	9/6	McCloud (Ch.4-6), Yang, PPT: Manga
3	9/6	(GELO 1, 3) (CLO 1, 2, 3)
4	9/13	McCloud (Ch. 7-9)
4	9/13	Gaiman, PPT: E.C. Comics, (GELO 1,3) (CLO 1, 2)
5	9/20	Chabon (Part I)
5	9/20	Eisner, (GELO 1, 2, 3), (CLO 1, 2, 3)
6	9/27	Exam
6	9/27	Chabon (69-122), PPT: D.C. Comics (GELO 1) (CLO 1, 2, 3)
7	10/4	Chabon (123-187), Moore-Gibbons (Parts I-V),
7	10/4	PPT: Marvel Comics (GELO 1), (CLO 1, 2)
8	10/11	Chabon (188-256), Moore-Gibbons (Parts VI-XII),
8	10/11	(GELO 1) (CLO 1, 2, 3)
9	10/18	Chabon (257-321), <i>Maus I</i> ,
9	10/18	(GELO 1, 2, 3) (CLO 1, 2, 3)
10	10/25	Chabon (322-392), <i>Maus II</i> ,
10	10/25	PPT: Underground comics, outline due, (GE 1, 2, 3), (CLO 1, 2, 3)
11	11/1	Chabon (393-459), Bechdel, PPT: <i>Young Romance</i>
11	11/1	(GE 1, 2, 3) (CLO 1, 2, 3)
12	11/8	Chabon (460-526), <i>Kick Ass</i> , PPT: <i>Archie</i> film,
12	11/8	(GE 1, 3), (CLO 1, 2)

Week (Optional)	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines (If appropriate, add any extra column(s) to meet your needs.)
13	11/15	Chabon (527-593), <i>Kick Ass</i>
13	11/15	PPT: <i>Crime Does Not Pay</i> , film (GE 1) (CLO 1, 2, 3)
14	11/22	Chabon (594-636), LaValle's <i>Destroyer</i>
14	11/22	argumentative essay due
15		Thanksgiving Holiday
15		Thanksgiving Holiday
16		Exam , Final exam prep, (GE 1, 2, 3) (CLO 1, 2, 3)
Final Exam		Tuesday, December 17, 7:15-9:30 a.m.