



**FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION  
*School of Information*

**LIS 5577– GRAPHIC NOVELS IN LIBRARIES**

**SECTION(S)**

**TERM 20XX, COURSE MEETING DAY/TIME, COURSE MEETING LOCATION**

**MODE OF INSTRUCTION: ONLINE**

*Students all meet with instructor for class weekly, synchronously, using a multi-media conferencing system such as Collaborate, at a specific class time indicated in the University's course schedule for each semester. Additional asynchronous interactions among students and with instructor will be required, as indicated below in course evaluation and assessments, to complete the course.*

**Instructor:**

**Email:**

**Office:**

**Phone:**

**Course Location/Website:**

**Office Hours (in office, online or via phone):**

**Teaching Assistant:**

**Email:**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A survey of graphic novels, including manga and manhwa, for readers of all ages, but focusing primarily on materials for young adults and adults. Examines issues related to evaluation, collection development, organization, promotion, readers' advisory, programming, intellectual freedom, and the use of graphic novels in school and college classrooms.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the diversity of the graphic novels format.
2. Discuss the history of graphic novels as a medium of communication and storytelling.
3. Define key terms related to graphic novels.
4. Explain the synergistic relationship between images and text in graphic novels.
5. Discuss the role of graphic novels in libraries, classrooms, and popular culture.
6. Discuss key social, political, psychological, and philosophical issues as portrayed in graphic novels.
7. Describe various readers' advisory, programming, and other strategies for promoting graphic novels.
8. Develop a graphic novels resource guide on a chosen topic.

## COURSE MATERIALS

### Required Textbook

Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (William Morrow, 1994)

### Required Graphic Novels

The course will use graphic novels representative of the various genres covered. Specific titles used will vary each time the course is taught. Seven to eight titles will be required reading for everyone; students will also have choices with additional assigned readings. The titles listed below are a sample of the kinds of graphic novels that will be used:

- Nicole J. Georges, *Calling Dr. Laura: A Graphic Memoir*
- Kim Dong Hwa, *The Color of Earth*
- Hajime Isayama, *Attack on Titan: 1*
- Derek Kirk Kim, *Same Difference*
- Frank Miller et al., *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*
- Joann Sfar, *The Rabbi's Cat*
- Raina Telgemeier, *Drama*

### Recommended Books

- Francisca Goldsmith, *The Readers' Advisory Guide to Graphic Novels* (American Library Association, 2010)
- Elizabeth F.S. Kalen, *Mostly Manga: A Genre Guide to Popular Manga, Manhwa, Manhua, and Anime* (Libraries Unlimited, 2012)
- Michael Pawuk, *Graphic Novels: A Genre Guide to Comic Books, Manga, and More* (Libraries Unlimited, 2007)

### Additional Readings

Additional readings, consisting mostly of articles, will be assigned throughout the semester.

- Christian Davenport, "The Brother Might Be Made of Steel, But He Sure Ain't Super...Man," *Other Voices* 1.2 (Sep.1998). Available: <http://www.othervoices.org/1.2/cdavenport/steel.php>
- Thomas Doherty, "Art Spiegelman's *Maus*: Graphic Art and the Holocaust," *American Literature* 68.1 (1996): 69-84. Available in JSTOR database, through the FSU Libraries website. Note: you must be logged in for off-campus access.
- Sarah Glazer, "Manga for Girls," *New York Times* (Sep. 18, 2005). Available: <http://www.nytimes.com>. Search using the title of the article.
- "Graphic Novels and Video Games," *DiamondBookshelf*. Available: <http://www.diamondbookshelf.com/Home/1/1/20/626?articleID=76594>.
- "Graphic Novels for Your School," *DiamondBookshelf*. Available: <http://www.diamondbookshelf.com/Home/1/1/20/182?articleID=37742>. Note: DiamondComics is a comics distributor. You may want to browse some of the articles and other resources here.

- Kristin Hohenadel, "An Animated Adventure Drawn from Life," *New York Times* (Jan. 21, 2007). Available: <http://www.nytimes.com>. Search using the title of the article.
- Janette Hughes & Alyson E. King, "Dual Pathways to Expression and Understanding: Canadian Coming-of-Age Graphic Novels," *Children's Literature in Education* 41 (2010): 64-84. Available in Omnifile database, through the FSU Libraries website. You must be logged in for off-campus access.
- John Osinski, "Promoting a Graphic Novel Collection: Sometimes Innovation Means Utilizing Someone Else's Expertise," *Journal of Library Innovation* 1.1 (2010): 42-51. Available in Omnifile database, through the FSU Libraries website. Note: you must be logged in for off-campus access.
- Marion D. Perret, "Not Just Condensation: How Comic Books Interpret Shakespeare," *College Literature* 41.4 (2004): 72-93. Available in Omnifile database, through the FSU Libraries website. Note: you must be logged on for off-campus access.
- Mokoto Rich, "Using Video Games as Bait to Hook Readers," *New York Times* (Oct. 5, 2008). Available: <http://www.nytimes.com>. Search using the title of the article.
- Peter Schjeldahl, "Words and Pictures: Graphic Novels Come of Age," *New Yorker* (Oct. 17, 2005): 162-68. Available: [http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2005/10/17/051017crbo\\_books1](http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2005/10/17/051017crbo_books1)
- Gretchen Schwarz, "Expanding Literacies through Graphic Novels," *English Journal* 95.6 (July 2006): 58-64. Available in JSTOR database, through the FSU Libraries website. Note: you must be logged in for off-campus access.
- Judith Thurman, "Drawn from Life: Alison Bechdel's Home Truths," *New Yorker* (Apr. 23, 2012): 48-55. Available: <http://www.newyorker.com>. Search using the title of the article.
- Eva Volin, "Good Comics for Kids: Collecting Graphic Novels for Young Readers," *Children and Libraries* 9.1 (Spring 2011): 3-9. Available in Omnifile database, through the FSU Libraries website. Note: you must be logged in for off-campus access.
- Lisa Zunshine, "What to Expect When You Pick Up a Graphic Novel," *SubStance* 40.1 (2011). Available in the Project MUSE database, through the FSU Libraries website. Note: you must be logged in for off-campus access.

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

**Adaptation Assignment:** Read a graphic title of your choosing that represents some sort of adaptation. For instance, it might be a graphic version of a Shakespeare play, or some other classic; it might be a graphic novel version of a recent book (for example, Neil Gaiman's *Coraline*); it might be a graphic adaptation of a video game or movie; or it might be a graphic adaptation of a nonfiction "event" (for example, *The 9/11 Report*). Write an essay of 1000-1200 words comparing and contrasting the original and the adaptation. What is changed in the adaptation? What (if anything) is lost? What (if anything) is gained? What is your overall assessment of the success and value of the adaptation?

**Promoting Graphic Novels Assignment:** Three options are offered; please choose one.

1. *Programming for a library.* Develop a programming activity than could be done in a library setting (you can choose the type of library—public, school, academic) in order to promote graphic materials to a particular audience. Write an essay of 1000-1200 words in which you define your purpose, your audience (age group, etc.), your rationale for using graphic materials (as opposed to other kinds of resources), the particular kind(s) of graphic materials you plan to include, specific titles, and a detailed description of how you would use the graphic materials with your intended audience: what content you would present, what props and/or other visual aids you might use, what activity (or activities) you would have your audience engage in, etc. Be sure to include a brief description of how you would evaluate your program. Please use APA or MLA format to cite and document any sources that you use
2. *Graphic materials in the classroom.* Develop a lesson plan using graphic materials in the classroom (elementary, middle school, high school, or college). Write an essay of 1000-1200 words in which you define your purpose, your audience (age group, etc.), your rationale for using graphic materials (as opposed to other kinds of resources), the particular kind(s) of graphic materials you plan to include, specific titles, and a detailed description of how you would use the graphic materials with your intended audience. Describe the overall theme you would be emphasizing in the lesson, the learning objectives you would have, and any assessment activities (essays, tests, etc.) you would use. Please use APA or MLA format to cite and document any sources that you use.
3. *Author/illustrator profile.* Choose an author and/or illustrator—just one person (some creators are authors only, like Neil Gaiman; some are illustrators only, like Dave McKean; some are both, like Marjane Satrapi). Then do some research on that person for the purpose of writing an essay that will promote that author’s/illustrator’s work to an audience that you will define. Write an essay of 1000-1200 words in which you define your intended audience (i.e., the audience for your essay), provide some brief biographical information on the author/illustrator, discuss the kind of work the person does (writing, drawing, both), identify all or some of the major titles the person has published, discuss major themes/styles/motifs in the person’s work, discuss any awards or honors the person has received, and explain why you think this person’s work is worth reading. Regardless of the audience you choose, your purpose should be to provide a thoughtful introduction of the author/illustrator and her/his work. Please use APA or MLA format to cite and document any sources that you use.

**Resource Guide:** Develop an annotated bibliography of at least 15 graphic titles on a particular topic or focus of your choosing. (See the instructions for the final project below; you may want to use the same topic for both assignments, if you choose the “theme paper” option.) If you wish you may include some critical resources as well, but you must have a minimum of 12 graphic titles. Your final project should include an introduction of approximately 300-400 words, in which you define your topic, define your audience for these materials, and explain how you went about selecting the resources you included in the bibliography. Each annotation should be relatively brief—approximately 3-4 sentences in length.

**Final Project:** Two options are offered; please choose one.

1. *Theme paper.* Choose a particular theme or issue and discuss how it is portrayed in 3 or 4 graphic titles. Some possible issues include: gender, sexuality, identity, race/ethnicity, child vs. adult, religion/philosophy, etc. Be creative. You're not limited to this list. You should choose something you're interested in exploring in the graphic format. You may want to choose 3 or 4 titles from your resource guide. Write an essay of 1000-1200 words in which you define the issue you're focusing on and discuss how that issue is portrayed in the titles you've selected. What does each title say about the issue? Do you find that you agree with some of the portrayals but not others? Why? What is your overall assessment of each title based on the way it presents this particular issue?
2. *Create-your-own graphic resource.* Develop your own graphic resource to be used with a particular audience for a particular purpose. One example would be the comic book that Elaine Sponholtz and her collaborators created for use with migrant youth in Florida (see the course website for a pdf of the book). Write an essay of 200-300 words in which you describe your purpose (it can be primarily educational, primarily entertainment-oriented, or some of both), your audience, and your approach. The "creative" part will be a rough storyboard of the various panels and pages OR 3-4 finished pages with a description of what would follow.

Please use APA or MLA format to cite and document any sources that you use.

**Discussion Board Postings:** Beginning with Week 1, I will post a discussion topic for the week. You will have one week to respond to the topic in a posting of approximately 150-200 words. I am asking you to post 10 times (i.e., over 10 different weeks). Each weekly posting is worth 10 points for a maximum discussion grade of 100 points.

### GRADE CALCULATION:

The final grade will be determined as follows:

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS
Adaptation assignment	200
Promoting GNs assignment	200
Resource guide	200
Final project	200
Reading responses	100
Attendance	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000</b>

### GRADE SCALE:

Letter grades are assigned according to the following scale:

A	930-1,000
A-	900-929
B+	880-899
B	830-879
B-	800-829

C+	780-799
C	730-779
C-	700-729
F	699 and below

## **COURSE OUTLINE:**

- 1: Course introduction / History of graphic novels
- 2: How graphic novels work / Review sources
- 3: Adaptations: Literature, movies, games & graphic novels
- 4: Graphic novels in the classroom
- 5: Superheroes / Awards
- 6: Fantasy & science fiction I / Programming
- 7: Fantasy & science fiction II
- 8: Realism I / Intellectual freedom
- 9: Realism II / Readers' advisory
- 10: Manga
- 11: Manhwa
- 12: Creating your own graphic novel
- 13: Nonfiction: History, science / Graphic nonfiction in the classroom
- 14: Nonfiction: Biography & memoir I
- 15: Nonfiction: Biography & memoir II

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES:**

### **University Attendance Policy:**

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

### **Academic Honor Policy:**

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "...be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy>.)

### **Plagiarism**

**Plagiarism** of any type, including material from Internet sources, will not be tolerated. Cases of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism and cheating will be investigated & pursued vigorously according to departmental and (if needed) university procedures. Before submitting any work for this class, please read the "Academic Honor System" in its entirety (see link above) and ask me to clarify any of its expectations that you do not understand.

### **Americans With Disabilities Act:**

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

- (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
- (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center  
874 Traditions Way  
108 Student Services Building  
Florida State University  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167  
(850) 644-9566 (voice)  
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)  
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu  
<http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

### **Syllabus Change Policy**

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice.

## **SCHOOL OR DISCIPLINARY POLICIES:**

### **Copyright Statement**

Some of the materials in this course are possibly copyrighted. They are intended for use only by students registered and enrolled in this course and only for instructional activities associated with, and for the duration of, the course. They may not be retained in another medium or disseminated further. They are provided in compliance with the provisions of the *Technology, Education, And Copyright Harmonization* (TEACH) Act (refer to the 3/7/2001 TEACH Act at [www.copyright.gov/legislation/archive/](http://www.copyright.gov/legislation/archive/) ).

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

It is the policy of the University that its employees and students neither commit nor condone sexual harassment in any form. [http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/graduate/information/university\\_notices/](http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/graduate/information/university_notices/)

**iSchool Hardware and Software Requirements**

A list of all hardware and software requirements for students participating in the School of Information (iSchool) courses can be found at the following location:

<http://ischool.cci.fsu.edu/academics/online/requirements/>

**Student Eligibility for an Incomplete Grade**

Incomplete (“I”) grades will not be assigned, except in the case of exceptional unforeseen circumstances that occur within the last three weeks of the semester and your work has otherwise been satisfactory (C average).