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ENG 5742-600: Studies in Genre for Writers and Teachers

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History, Memory, and Multicultural Graphic Narratives

English 5742 – Fall, 2022



Provisional...

Professor

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Schedule an appointment whenever you like here: <https://calendly.com/timengles/30min>

Books (EIU's Textbook Rental Service)

Understanding Comics, Scott McCloud

Maus: A Survivor's Tale, Vols. 1 & 2, Art Spiegelman

Nat Turner, Kyle Baker

Citizen 13660, Miné Okubo

They Called Us Enemy, George Takei, et al.

The Murder of Emmett Till, Karlos Hill and Dave Dodson

Darkroom: A Memoir in Black & White, Lila Quintero Weaver

The Outside Circle, Patti Laboucane-Benson and Kelly Mellings

Shortcomings, Adrian Tomine

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND POLICIES

Scholars, teachers, and an increasing number of authors now generally agree that the medium of comics has never deserved its reputation as something less than “art,” and that many comic books instead deserve a place on any literary shelf. This heightened appreciation for comics has contributed to a recent explosion of novel-length stories, or “graphic narratives” (a genre often called graphic novels, even though some are not fictional). Many of these comics reach astounding heights of artistry, often with captivating stories and mesmerizing images both produced by the same person. As we will notice, some of these narratives also stress the significance of individual memories and a collective form of remembering, “history”; both are especially consistent themes in comics by artists who create from minoritized perspectives. Such works deploy the

unique possibilities of comics to encourage new understandings of the past, often by depicting an interplay between individual memory and broad historical narratives, and between dominant forms of historical denial and subordinated understandings of the ongoing relevance of alternative histories.

We will study canonical and more recent multicultural graphic narratives in these terms, as well as scholarship that illuminates how insightfully comics can portray vexed personal memories against the backdrop of competing histories. Our course will be conducted as an inquiring conversation, with your active participation central to our work. Because the success of our conversations will depend so heavily on everyone's participation, it is crucial that you develop your own schedule for staying on track with our scheduled readings and assignments.

Note that while you can to some extent work at your own pace, we have due dates for various assignments (which are normally due by 11:59 p.m.). You also will not be able to work all that far ahead; since we need to work together in some ways, course material will be rolled out during the semester on a biweekly basis. For those looking ahead, I have provided a Master List in our syllabus Module, and all assignments are also listed in our Course Calendar.

Finally, for the record, here's the EIU catalog description of our course:

ENG 5742 – Studies in Genre for Writers and Teachers

(3-0-3) This course is a focused study of genre. The topic will vary from semester to semester. The course may be repeated with the permission of the department chairperson.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of our course, students will be better able to:

- ✓ Interpret graphic narratives that express a wide range of cultural perspectives and values, and think more critically and write more analytically about them
- ✓ Interpret graphic narratives written from the perspectives of membership in minoritized social categories, and in light of suppressed historical memories
- ✓ Participate effectively in discussions of multicultural graphic narratives, the issues they raise, and scholarship related to them
- ✓ Demonstrate an increased understanding and appreciation for varied social, cultural, intellectual, and aesthetic ideas and methods

- ✓ Apprehend academic scholarship and its conventions, and utilize concepts and terminology drawn from it
- ✓ Use improved research skills to find useful scholarly materials, and properly apply the principles of documentation
- ✓ Apply concepts and terminology from other fields of research to the study of multicultural graphic narratives, and vice versa

Technical Requirements

Students in this course should already have taken the D2L Student Orientation. You must have regular access to the Internet while using a laptop or desktop computer and know how to download and upload email attachments, install software, and use a webcam and microphone. Papers must be submitted in Microsoft Word; D2L cannot open papers submitted, for example, with Apple's program, Pages. You also must have access to Adobe Reader (free download) or Preview (for Macs), as well as a recent version of PowerPoint. EIU students can download Word and PowerPoint here for free.

For technical support with D2L, you can contact the ITS Help Desk at 217-581-4357, or itshelp@eiu.edu, or CATS Training Services for Students at 217-581-8358.

Grades, Assignments & Due Dates

Unless otherwise indicated, I promise to grade assignments within three days of their due date. All grades are on a 100-point scale (90-100 = A, 80-89 += B, etc.), and your final grade will work in the following way.

- 25% Class Participation
- 25% Average of Response Papers (usually 1000-1200 words each)
- 20% Recorded Presentation (Pecha Kucha Format)
- 5% Semester Project Proposal (300-400 words)
- 25% Semester Project (4000-4500 words)

To a limited extent, you can work at your own pace. However, given the possibility at any point that software and internet connections may be down or working slowly, I *strongly* recommend against completing assignments right before deadlines.

Response Papers and the major essay must be submitted in Word format, double-spaced with 12-point Times New Roman font, and in MLA Style. Unlike the final essay,

Response Papers WILL NOT require a Works Cited page. If you have questions about MLA formatting, you should consult [Purdue's Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#).

Note that **Class Participation** includes not only the writing of your own Forum posts, but also the reading of significant numbers of posts by classmates, the reading of my comments on your graded writings, and the complete viewing of each of my recorded presentations and our other videos (remember, I have background ways of seeing whether you regularly do each of these activities).

Note also that **late assignments** will be penalized fifteen points for each day they are late, beginning one hour after the time that they are due. All assignments are due by 11:59 pm on their due date.

Academic Integrity

We will work under the Academic Integrity policy followed by all Eastern Illinois University students. Plagiarism and cheating are not tolerated, and the consequences are severe. For any concerns you might have in this area, see EIU's [Code of Conduct](#). If you have questions about whether any particular method you want to use might violate this code, be sure to ask me about it.

General Grading Rubric

We will assess a sample student essay along with the rubric specifically used for grading English course assignments. More generally, your assignments in this course will be graded in the following terms:

- ✓ **A grade of A** indicates work that is truly outstanding in every way. In addition to completely and promptly following the guidelines for the assignment, work that receives an A grade provides a depth of analysis that adds substantive insight to the conversation surrounding its topic. This level of work engages deeply with the themes, issues and ideas involved in a particular text and often links those themes, issues and ideas to the larger ones that arise in our course. A-level work is rare, and it should be noted that merely writing MORE than what was assigned does not in itself merit a grade of A.
- ✓ **A grade of B** indicates that, in addition to completing the assignment on time and completely, you have provided a depth of insight and analysis that shows deep thought about the assignment and its implications, active engagement with the topic at hand, and careful thought about it, all expressed in clear, cogent and insightful writing. In other words, B-level work does more than simply complete the assignment; it engages deeply with the assignment.

- ✓ **A grade of C** indicates that you have completed the assignment as required in an adequate, satisfactory and punctual manner. All necessary components of the assignment are present and completed according to what was required. The writing is clear and grammatically correct. In other words, merely doing the assignment adequately and on time merits a grade of C.
- ✓ **A grade of D** indicates that the work does not meet the requirements of the assignment in some major ways. In other words, work might be given a D if it does not engage adequately with the assigned topics and issues. Note that a grade of D may be given to work that partially completes the assignment, but is incomplete.
- ✓ **A grade of F** indicates that the assignment is either extremely incomplete or that it does nothing to engage with the assigned topic.

For Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the [Office of Student Disability Services](#) (581-6583) as soon as possible. Also, of course, let me know what I can do to help accommodate your needs.

About Our Discussion Forums

Since we will not meet as a group, our Discussion Forums will be an extremely important way for us to discuss our course materials together. Notice above that class participation is a large part of your final grade; below is a rubric that I will use for grading your participation. I will not assign a grade to each of your posts, but I will be closely watching our Discussion Forums, and participating in them.

Be aware that just as listening to others in an in-person classroom is important, so too is reading posts by other students. D2L allows me to see how often you do so (just as it allows me to see whether you watch the Recorded Presentations), and note that before posting, you should hit the "Subscribe" button so you receive alerts when others reply to yours. I can also tell when a student hastily dips in and out of Forums, merely dropping in their own posts and merely doing the minimal number of required replies to others. On the other hand, don't write overly long posts; do write enough to get your well-supported points across, but also be aware that writing a *lot* will mean that your post will largely go unread.

Discussion Forum Grading Rubric

Criteria	Grade: A	B	C	D
<i>Response to Prompt</i>	Brought new, well-supported understanding to discussion of the prompt's topic	Good response but could have been more clearly connected to prompt	Attempted adequate response but may have missed main idea or wandered too far from topic	Post(s) not made at all, or not at all connected to topic
<i>Replies to others (when required)</i>	Clear, direct and detailed engagement with other students; specific references to others' ideas; reads most posts by others	Engaged with other students but could have been more specific or original	Engagement with other students minimal, very brief, or vague; reads very few posts by others beyond those replied to	Missing or extremely weak replies; doesn't read posts by others
<i>Language</i>	Proper use of clear, mostly error-free language; appropriately professional communication	Language could have been clearer or more polished at some points	Communication is weak, unclear, or highly inappropriate in an academic setting	Breaking of basic rules of appropriate communication in an academic environment OR post was not made
<i>Evidence</i>	Clear connections made to specific course issues and topics, with solid supporting evidence	Some good evidence, but lacking in examples and specificity	Little supporting evidence presented	Misunderstood nature of evidence or lacked evidence entirely
<i>Timeliness</i>	Post and any required replies met deadlines	One deadline or one component may have been missed	Deadlines were missed or did not include all requirements	Post(s) extremely late (if missed entirely: F)