**ENGL 2303-012 Graphic Literature**

**Summer II 2016**

Instructor: Cathy Corder, Ph.D.

Office Hours: 12n – 1pm

Office: Carlisle Hall 523

Email: ccorder@uta.edu

**Course Information**

Course number: ENGL 2303-002

Room: TH 115

Meeting times: MTWTh 1 – 3:00pm

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this class, students will read comics (print and web), graphic novels, and manga--and they will examine these visual narratives as significant works of literature and learn to analyze them for plot development, characterization, style, and significant themes related to gender, ethnicity, and social and cultural values.  Students will consider how the juxtaposition of text and image works to tell rich and vivid stories, as well as how these narratives reveal elements of film making (wide, medium, and close-up shots) and graphic design (color, black/white, panels, and gutters). Possible readings may include early works by Lynn Ward and Will Eisner, Art Spiegelman’s *Maus*, and Alan Moore’s *Batman: The Killing Joke*, among others. In addition, students will have hands-on opportunities to draft graphic retellings of familiar fairy tales or urban myths and to experiment with such apps as Pixton and Comic Life as they create a short comic or storyboard (no artistic talent required!).

**Course Goals**

* To encourage students to see that literary studies matter and to foster enjoyment of literature, as students engage with ideas and beliefs in ways that extend beyond the English classroom.
* To help students recognize that literature does not occur as isolated literary events, but as a complex dialogue with cultural and historical contexts.
* To develop students’ ability to read critically by studying a variety of elements relevant to graphic literature, such as form, structure, style, gutters, speech balloons, and closure.
* To enable students to demonstrate their understanding of graphic literary texts and their ability to analyze such texts in writing, in online discussions, and through class discussions.

By the end of the semester, students should be able to do the following:

* Demonstrate their knowledge of a variety of literary terms and elements.
* Identify a variety of elements within graphic literature texts.
* Explain and analyze how context shapes the composition, reception, and interpretation of texts.
* Demonstrate their ability to discuss literature using textual evidence to support assertions.
* Conduct research using the UTA Library resources.
* Use correct MLA documentations of primary and secondary sources.

**Required Texts**

The following books are available at the UTA bookstore, and you can easily find used copies online:

*Batman: The Killing Joke*, by Alan Moore (2008)

*Ghost World*, by Daniel Clowes (1993)

*Maus I and II*, by Art Spiegelman (1997)

The following readings are available on Blackboard:

Short story: “The Tell-Tale Heart,” written by Edgar Allan Poe (1843)

Classics Illustrated, “The Tell-Tale Heart,” adapted and illustrated by Jim Wilcox (1951)

Short story: “The Facts in the Case of Mr. Valdemar,” written by Edgar Allan Poe (1845)

“Mister Valdemar,” adapted and drawn by Alberto Breccia and Carlos Trillo (1982)

*Preacher, Issue #1,* written by Garth Ennis with artist Steve Dillon (1995)

*One! Hundred! Demons!* “Intro” and “Head Lice and My Worst Boyfriend,” by Lynda Barry

(2002)

*Wimmen’s Comix*, “She Chose Crime,” by Didi Glitz, from Women Artists and Cartoonists (1974)

*Cancer Made Me a Shallower Person*, by Miriam Engelberg

**Class Resources**

On the Blackboard site for this class, you will find the course policies and procedures, the class syllabus, as well as assignment prompts, readings, and additional resources for studying graphic literature.

**DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

* **Class Participation:** Class participation includes coming to class prepared, making thoughtful contributions in response to the readings, asking and answering questions, and presenting a general attitude of interest in the course content. **We will be examining visual materials, so you will need to have either a laptop or tablet available for class discussions**. I would prefer that you NOT use cell phones to access readings in class, since we will be paying close attention to detail, and you will miss those on a small screen.
* **Group Project (50)**: The first week of class, you will work with a small group to produce a graphic adaptation of a fairy tale, urban legend, or myth. Samples of adaptations are posted in the folder on Blackboard.
* **In-class Writing (25 each):** Once each week, you will begin the class by writing an informal response to the reading assigned for that day.
* **Discussion Boards (50 each):** Every week you will respond to an open-ended discussion question on Blackboard. These are due every Thursday by the beginning of class (1pm).
* **UTA Signature Assignment (100)**: A three- to four-page essay. Please see the assignment prompt on Blackboard.
* **Final Graphic Project (300)**: Each day in class you will have time to work on your final graphic project, which may be hand-drawn or generated by a comics app. Please see the assignment prompt on Blackboard.
* **Presentation of Final Project (50):** Five-minute presentation on final project to class.

**Grading**

Your final grade for this course will consist of the following:

Group Project 50 points

In-class writing (25 x 5) 125 points

Discussion Boards (50 x 5) 250 points

UTA Signature Assignment 100 points

Presentation 50 points

Final Graphic Project 300 points

**Total 875 points**

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

A 787 – 875 points

B 700 – 788 points

C 612 – 699 points

D 525 – 611 points

F 524 and below

**CLASS POLICIES**

**Attendance.** At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students’ academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance.

As the instructor of this section, I will take attendance, but I will not factor any unexcused absences into your final grade. However, be sure to pay attention to my policy on late assignments, which follows.

**Excused absences** include official university activities (such as athletics), military service, religious holidays, and/or the death of a close family member. You must inform me in writing at least one week in advance of an excused absence (except for a death, of course), and I will work with you to reschedule or make up missed work.

**Unexcused absences** may be the result of any number of situations: bad traffic, previous class running late or in a building far away, you really need to study for that calculus test this afternoon, you really need to catch up on sleep this morning, you’re just not feeling well.

**PLEASE** do not email me to say that you won’t be in class for WHATEVER unexcused reason. Do not email me and ask if you missed anything in class that day. Do not email me and ask how you can make up the work you missed. **I will not supply what you miss by email or phone. It is your responsibility to get together with a peer to get this material or make an appointment to see me in person.**

**Late Assignments.** I will notprovide make-up opportunities for in-class writing, discussion boards, or presentations. I do not accept signature assignment essays that are more than three days late. I will not accept any late final projects. If you must be absent, your work is still due on the assigned date.

**Classroom Behavior.** Class sessions are short and require your full attention. Bring books (print or digital) to every class. Students are expected to participate respectfully in class, to listen to other class members, and to comment appropriately. I also expect consideration and courtesy from students. Professors are to be addressed appropriately and communicated with professionally.

Academic Integrity. All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University. "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts" (Regents’ Rules and Regulations, Series 50101, Section 2.2)

You can get in trouble for plagiarism by failing to correctly indicate places where you are making use of the work of another. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the conventions of citation by which you indicate which ideas are not your own and how your reader can find those sources. All students caught plagiarizing or cheating will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

Americans with Disabilities Act. The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**Writing Center**

Location: Room 411 of the Central Library

Hours: 9 a.m. to 8:15 p.m. Mon-Th, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fri, and 12n to 5:15 p.m. Sat and Sun

Students must register and can make appointments online at [http://uta.mywconline.com](http://uta.mywconline.com/). Face-to-Face and online appointments for undergraduate students are scheduled for 40 minutes. Writing Center consultants assist with any aspect of academic writing, from understanding an assignment, brainstorming, revising an early draft, to polishing a final draft. However, the Writing Center is not an editing service; consultants will not correct grammar or rewrite assignments during our long sessions. Please see [www.uta.edu/owl](http://www.uta.edu/owl) for more information about services and guidelines.

**ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY**

You must have access to a computer with internet capabilities. You should check email **daily** for course information and updates. I will send group emails through Blackboard. I am happy to communicate with students through email. However, I ask that you be wise and professional in your use of this tool. Make sure you have consulted the syllabus for answers before you send me an email. Remember, I do not monitor my email 24 hours a day. I check it several times during the day, but not after 10pm or before 7am, and only occasionally on weekends. I will always try to respond to your email within 24 hours.

**EMAIL POLICY**

The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University “MavMail” address as the sole official means of communication with students. MavMail is used to remind students of important deadlines, advertise events and activities, and permit the University to conduct official transactions exclusively by electronic means. For example, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation are now sent to students through the MavMail system. All students are assigned a MavMail account. Students are responsible for checking their MavMail regularly. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/email/>. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active even after they graduate from UT Arlington.

**STUDENT FEEDBACK SURVEY**

At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**CONFERENCES AND QUESTIONS**

I have three regularly scheduled office hours each week. These times are reserved for students to drop by or to make an appointment to discuss course assignments, grades, or other class-related concerns. I will be happy to make other appointment times for you if your class schedule conflicts with regular conference times or if I am not available on certain days. If you receive a grade on an assignment or quiz about which you have questions, please wait twenty-four hours before discussing it with me. This gives you time to process the assignment comments and to think about how your course work meets the requirements set forth for each assignment. I do not discuss individual student issues in the classroom before, during or after class.

**SYLLABUS AND SCHEDULE CHANGES**

I try to make my syllabus as complete as possible; however, during the course of the semester I may be required to alter, add, or abandon certain policies /assignments. Instructors reserve the right to make such changes as they become necessary. I will inform students of any changes through email.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

Tues 7/12 Introduction: class policies and course schedule

History, concepts, and terminology of comic studies

Apps for creating comics

Wed 7/13 Analyzing visual story-telling

**In-class:** Read the short story, “The Tell-Tale Heart” and the Classics Illustrated comic, “The Tell-Tale Heart” on BB

Thurs 7/14 How do image and text work together?

“The Facts in the Case of Mr. Valdemar” and the graphic adaptation,“Mister Valdemar” on BB

**Note:** TheDiscussion Board this week is due on Friday, 7/15 by noon. This week only!

Mon 7/18 *Preacher, Issue #1*,on BB

Tues 7/19 *Preacher*

**Due:** Group projects

Wed 7/20 *One! Hundred! Demons!* On BB

Thurs 7/21 *Wimmen’s Comix* on BB

**Due:** Discussion Board #2

Mon 7/25 *Cancer Made Me a Shallower Person* and *Our Cancer Year* on BB

Tues 7/26 *Batman: The Killing Joke*

Wed 7/27 *Batman: The Killing Joke*

Thurs 7/28 *Batman: The Killing Joke*

**Due:** Discussion Board #3

Mon 8/1 *Ghost World*

**Due:** UTA Signature Assignment

Tues 8/2 *Ghost World*

Wed 8/3 *Ghost World*

Thurs 8/4 *Maus*

**Due:** Discussion Board #4

Mon 8/8 *Maus*

Tues 8/9 *Maus*

Wed 8/10 *Maus*

Thurs 8/11 Presentation of final projects

**Due:** Discussion Board #5