



FACULTY OF ARTS
Department Of English

ENGL 322: Introduction to Comics
Spring 2022
T/Th 4:00 – 6:45 EDC 388

Instructor	Bart Beaty
Email:	beaty@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	T/Th 9:00 – 10:00. Zoom link provided on D2L

Course description:

An examination of the formal, historical, and social aspects of comics (comic strips, comic books, and graphic novels). Topics to be examined include the historical development of the comic form; formal analysis of the properties of comics; and the significance of comics in the contemporary media landscape.

Course learning outcomes:

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

1. Demonstrate a knowledge of the history of the comic book in the United States
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the formal properties of comics
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the way meaning is communicated in comics
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the major genres of comics in the United States

Texts and readings:

All texts for this course are available for sale in the University of Calgary bookstore.

Bart Beaty and Charles Hatfield. *Comics Studies: A Guidebook*. Rutgers University Press

Alison Bechdel. *Fun Home*. Mariner Books.

Brian K Vaughan and Fiona Staples. *Saga: Volume One*. Image Comics.

Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons. *Watchmen*. DC Comics

Mariko Tamaki and Jillian Tamaki. *This One Summer*. Groundwood Books.

Learning technology requirements:

There is a D2L site for this course which contains relevant class resources and materials (see d2L.ucalgary.ca).

Assessments and Evaluation:

This class will use a version of scaffolded learning for its evaluation. The advantage of this approach is that it places responsibility for workload directly in the hands of the students. There are a total of twenty-nine different assignments for this course, ten of which will be completed during class time and nineteen outside of class time. Students are not required to do all the assignments, but the final grade in the course will reflect the effort contributed by each student. Assignments will be graded as Proficient, Below Proficient, and Above Proficient. A grade of Proficient will result in full marks being assigned for the work. Works adjudicated as Below Proficient will lose up to half their marks, while those graded as Above Proficient may receive greater than 100%. A breakdown of the various assignments and their weights is below:

In-Class Writing (10 x 20 points each = 200 points). During ten of our class sessions, students will be afforded time to do brief responses to prompts in the lecture either individually or in groups. In-Class writing will be collected at the end of class sessions (please leave it by the door on your way out!).

Guidebook Writing Response (10 x 50 points each = 500 points). At ten points during the term, students will be prompted on D2L to write a brief response to a question posed by the instructor that directly relates to the chapter(s) from *Comics Studies: A Guidebook* for the class session. Students should respond in approximately a paragraph to the prompt. Students are required to post their response to the dropbox on D2L no later than 1:00pm on the day of the class session in which it is due.

Creative Response (6 x 50 points each = 300 points). At six times during the term (no more than once per week), students will be prodded to produce a short (generally one page) creative response to a work that we are examining in class. These projects will be prompted on D2L and may include Tracing project; Drawn lecture notes; Detournement; Autobiographical breakdown; Fable thumbnails; and Three Card Nancy. Students are required to post their response to the dropbox on D2L no later than 1:00pm on the day of the class session in which it is due.

Graphic Novel Review (Due June 16) (1 x 200 points = 200 points). Students should write a short review (1 to 2 pages) of any graphic novel of their choice. The review should discuss how formal, stylistic, and thematic choices made by the cartoonist(s) become evident in the work. This assignment may be handed in at any time during the term but must be handed in no later than June 16.

***Comics Studies: A Guidebook* Project (Due June 7)** (1 x 400 = 400 points). Students will prepare a short essay response to a chapter or chapters in *Comics Studies: A Guidebook*. If the project takes the form of an essay, it should be approximately five to seven pages. Essays may build on earlier written responses, but need not. Essays may also address one or more of the unassigned chapters from the *Guidebook*. If the project takes a creative form, the work should be comparable to an essay of approximately five to seven pages. Projects will be graded on scholarly research, analysis, and argumentation. Students are required to post their response to the dropbox on D2L no later than midnight on the due date.

Annotation Project (Due June 16) (1 x 400 = 400 points). Pick a page that you find interesting in a comic book and trace it. Do not attempt to recreate the original page, but attempt to distill its main features in a simplified drawing. If text appears on the page you should trace the captions or balloons, but do not fill in the text. When this is complete, annotate the page that you have created in the empty spaces (balloons, captions, gutters) in order to highlight the important features. You might consider: colour, shading, line styles, shapes, sizes, angles, placement, perspective, framing, layering, blocking. Consider the relationship between elements and the overall layout. Please provide a copy of the original page with your tracing. You might consider photocopying your tracing before annotating it as this will allow you to make corrections.

There is no Registrar-scheduled final exam in this course.

There are no opportunities for extra credit in this course.

Attendance and participation expectations:

Students are expected to attend class regularly and to be fully present and engaged in class activities and discussions. If students miss a class session that is included as a component of participation, and wish to receive credit for that day’s work, they must contact the instructor within 24 hours to discuss options to make up that component.

Conduct:

Students, employees, and academic staff are also expected to demonstrate behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment. As members of the University community, students, employees, and academic staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary Calendar, the Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures, which can be found at:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Policy on use of electronic devices:

The use of laptop and mobile devices in class is acceptable when used in a manner appropriate to the course and classroom activities. Please refrain from accessing websites and resources that may be distracting to you or for other learners during class time. Students are responsible for being aware of the University’s [Internet and email use policy](#).

Grading System:

1800 pts	A+	4.0	1340-1399	C+	2.3
1700-1799	A	4.0	1280-1339	C	2.0
1600-1699	A–	3.7	1200-1279	C–	1.7
1540-1599	B+	3.3	1100-1199	D+	1.3
1480-1539	B	3.0	1000-1099	D	1.0
1400-1479	B–	2.7	0 – 49 %	F	0

Academic Integrity:

This course, like all courses at the University of Calgary, holds students to high standards of honest and responsible scholarship. Please consult the [Academic Integrity website](#) for a detailed description of university policies, which will be enforced in this course. Cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Associate Dean of Arts for a ruling.

Plagiarism is a type of academic misconduct. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of another person as their own. Another equally serious form of plagiarism occurs when a student submits something they have written themselves for credit in two or more courses without first securing written permission from all those course instructors. Consequences for plagiarism include failure on the assignment, failure in the course, and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense.

Deferral of term work and final examinations:

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an [Application of Deferment of Term Work](#) must be completed. It is the student's responsibility to initiate this process with the instructor. The University also has regulations governing the [deferral of final examinations](#).

Grade appeals:

To pursue a Reassessment of Graded Term Work or a Reappraisal of an Academic Assessment, Consult the [University Calendar](#) and request advice from the English Department at engl@ucalgary.ca. Please note that mere dissatisfaction with a grade is not sufficient grounds for an appeal.

[English Department Website:](#)

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English.

Scribe and Muse Club for English Students:

The [Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club](#) fosters and champions reading and writing through community service, leadership, and engagement. Our email address is smecuofc@gmail.com.

Writing support:

[The Student Success Centre](#) offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students.

[Academic regulations and schedules](#)

Student Academic Accommodations:

The Student Accessibility Services website is available [here](#). University accommodation policies can be found at the following links:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6-1.html>

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6.html>

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6-2.html>

Program Advising and Student Information Resources is done through the Faculty of Arts Students' Centre. Office location: SS102; phone: 403-220-3580; email: ascarts@ucalgary.ca
Website: <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate>

Instructor's Intellectual Property

Course materials created by instructors, including presentations, posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams, remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may not be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Student information will be collected in accordance with usual classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty and teaching assistants. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

Sexual violence policy:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Sexual-and-Gender-Based-Violence-Policy.pdf>

Other important information:

- [Wellness and Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Student Success](#)
- [Student Ombuds Office](#)
- [Student Union \(SU\) Information](#)
- [Graduate Students' Association \(GSA\) Information](#)
- [Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points](#)
- [Safewalk](#)

Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI):

Please participate in [USRI Surveys](#) toward the end of the course. The feedback they provide helps us evaluate teaching, enhance student learning, and guide students as they select courses.