

# ***CES 286 – Popular Culture: The Graphic Novel***

## **Tentative Syllabus**

## **Winter 2014**

**INSTRUCTOR:** James Torrence

**OFFICE:** R230S

**OFFICE PHONE:** (425)564-2168

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** Please e-mail me using Canvas e-mail

**OFFICE HOURS:** M/W 4:00-6:00, T/Th 3:00-5:00, or by appointment

**REQUIRED TEXTS:** *V for Vendetta*, by Alan Moore  
*The Complete Maus*, by Art Spiegelman  
*Are You My Mother?*, by Alison Bechdel  
*The Complete Persepolis*, by Marjane Satrapi  
*American Born Chinese*, by Gene Luen Yang  
*Incognegro: A Graphic Mystery*, by Mat Johnson  
*Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*, by Frank Miller  
*Che: A Graphic Biography*, by Sid Jacobson and Ernie Colon  
You will also need a copy of Microsoft Word or Open Office (software).

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course focuses on the analysis of graphic novels and film adaptations.

**COURSE OUTCOMES** - Students who successfully complete this course will:

After completing this class, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to synthesize information from various sources/media and communicate that insight effectively.
- Discuss the theme, orally or in writing, showing the interrelation of historical events, literary works and social changes.
- Demonstrate an understanding of trends in American thought and attitude regarding the course theme.
- Demonstrate an understanding of their own previously held perspectives on the theme.
- Explain how those perspectives may have changed.

**GRADING:** For more info, see the “Grading Criteria” and “Paper Format” sections below.

- Journal: 30%
- Participation: 20%
- One final essay: 20%
- One mid-term essay: 20%
- Self-evaluation essay: 10%

**ATTENDANCE:** Participation accounts for 20% of your grade for the course.

- If I see or hear your phone, iPod, laptop, etc. in class, I will ask you to leave and/or count you absent.
- Late arrivals or early departures need to be made inconspicuously.
- Assignments, handouts, and announcements will not be repeated.
- Missing more than 10 minutes of class is considered an absence.
- Each absence lowers your course grade by two percent.

**GRADE SCALE:**

A	94-100%	C+	77-79%
A-	90-93%	C	74-76%
B+	87-89%	C-	70-73%
B	84-86%	D	66-69%
B-	80-83%	F	00-65%

**PLAGIARISM:** PLAGIARISM IS AN ISSUE I TAKE VERY SERIOUSLY. PLAGIARISM OR ANY OTHER KIND OF CHEATING, WHETHER INTENTIONAL OR NOT, WILL EARN THE OFFENDING STUDENT(S) AN “F” FOR THE QUARTER.

Please review the Arts & Humanities division standards <https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/socsci/policies.asp>

### ***Values Conflicts***

Essential to a liberal arts education is an open-minded tolerance for ideas and modes of expression that might conflict with one’s personal values. By being exposed to such ideas or expressions, students are not expected to endorse or adopt them but rather to

understand that they are part of the free flow of information upon which higher education depends.

To this end, you may find that class requirements may include engaging certain materials, such as books, films, and art work, which may, in whole or in part, offend you. These materials are equivalent to required texts and are essential to the course content. If you decline to engage the required material by not reading, viewing, or performing material you consider offensive, you will still be required to meet class requirements in order to earn credit. This may require responding to the content of the material, and you may not be able to fully participate in required class discussions, exams, or assignments.

## ***Formal Essay Grading Criteria***

There are five things I look for when I am grading your writing. They are:

**1. Content.** Most importantly, your ideas must be fully developed with vivid, concrete detail. The topic and thesis statement must be significant and clearly expressed. Basically, the paper as a whole should be interesting and substantial. Plagiarized material will earn you a “0” for the assignment in which it is found.

**2. Organization.** Your essay should be ordered in logical steps, which remind me that your mind is at work behind the essay. The organization of the essay should reveal a sense of symmetry, beginning with an introduction and ending with a conclusion. Your paragraphs should be properly developed (typically 4 to 8 sentences) and should be linked with transitions. Overall, the structure of the essay should be coherent, cohesive, and clear.

**3. Expression.** Your sentences should be forceful, but not monotonous. Your language should be appropriate (not slang), precise (not vague), and efficient (not wordy). Your tone should complement the subject, distinguish the writer, and define the audience.

**4. Mechanics.** Use proper grammar. Use proper syntax. Avoid punctuation, spelling, or usage errors.

**5. Format.** Use 10-point font. Use the standard document design available in your syllabus.

*\*\*\*\*As a final note, please remember that your assignments need to be submitted in a professional manner and **on time**. Late papers lose 10% of their point value for every day late and will be graded at the end of the quarter.\*\*\*\**

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## ***Class Participation Grading Criteria***

You are expected to participate in class discussion, small group activities/discussions, writing workshops, and presentations. Though there is a somewhat subjective element to grading students’ class participation and behavior, this is how I define them in an educational context:

- **An “A” student** takes leadership roles during group activities, consistently contributes to peers’ learning, is not afraid to ask questions, respects others, always comes to class on time, and treats instructors with respect. *Score: 90%-100%*
- **A “B” student** is usually productive in class, willing to help others, respects peers and instructors, usually shows up, and is usually on time. *Score: 80%-90%*
- **A “C” student** is passive during classroom activities, doesn’t actively contribute but is responsive when addressed, respects peers and instructors but doesn’t communicate, or is absent or late once or twice a week. *Score: 70%-80%*
- **A “D” student** is un-productive in class, tries to make others do all the work, distracts or annoys peers and instructors, degrades himself and/or others, or is frequently absent or late. *Score: 65%-70%*
- **An “F” student** is counter-productive in class, tries to manipulate peers or instructors, verbally attacks peers or instructors, engages in any inappropriate behavior, degrades himself and/or others, or is chronically absent or late. *Score: 0%-65%*

Regarding evaluation: half-way through the quarter, you will receive a “Mid-Quarter Evaluation” from me, assessing your classroom performance up to that point. Your participation score at that time will be averaged with your participation score for the second half of the quarter to calculate your participation grade for the quarter, a matter of record. If at mid-quarter evaluation, or any other time, you feel you have been unfairly treated, please proactively approach me about it.

% of your grade for the course.