

Time: W 2-4 → Wednesdays 8:30-11:30am

Place: MAT 0014

Instructor Name: Dr. Margaret Galvan

Email: margaretgalvan@ufl.edu

Office: TUR 4348

Office Hours: Wed., 12-2pm, Thurs., 1-2pm; email to make appt.

Canvas Website: <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>

Course Website: <https://eng4936spring2020.school.blog/>

Course Description:

This honors seminar introduces undergraduate students to the rigors of graduate study in the humanities. Students will learn how scholars develop their own area of interest, theories, and methods by surveying the growth of comics studies as an academic discipline, from its beginnings in the 1970s through the present day. We will read academic criticism and the comics discussed therein and trace how academic journals, special issues, and university presses play a role in shaping a field. Students will conduct original research in digital, grassroots, and university archives and learn about the methods of archival research. This course will prepare students for long-form, sustained academic research, including writing an honors thesis in a future semester (if desired).

Books to Purchase:

- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (2006), Mariner Books, ISBN: 0544709047
- Miné Okubo, *Citizen 13660* (1946), University of Washington Press, ISBN: 0295993545
- Kyle Baker, *Nat Turner* (2008), Harry N. Abrams, ISBN: 0810972271
- Alan Moore & Dave Gibbons, *Watchmen* (1987), DC Comics, ISBN: 1779501129
- G. Willow Wilson & Adrian Alphona, *Ms. Marvel*, “Vol. 1: No Normal” (2014), Marvel, ISBN: 078519021X
- Neil Gaiman, *The Sandman*, “The Doll’s House” (1990), Vertigo, ISBN: 1401285066
- Marjorie Liu & Sana Takeda, *Monstress*, “Volume 1: Awakening” (2016), Image Comics, ISBN: 1632157098

Course Texts: Be sure to get the exact editions of the books you must purchase. Comics are often published in various editions where content, pagination, etc. can vary widely. Additional course texts will be available for download as PDFs via Canvas or through online links posted on the syllabus and course website. Some course texts are on reserve, as indicated via Canvas. When you write about course texts, you must cite from the version indicated on the syllabus.

Absence & Lateness Policy: In this honors seminar, all members of the class will participate in actively discussing each others’ insights about course texts. To do well in this class you must be present: physically, mentally, and intellectually. Much of our foundational learning will happen in classroom conversations and activities. Lateness is also not tolerated. If you are having scheduling problems, see me as soon as possible. Your course grade drops by one full letter for each “unacceptable” absence after three. Please see this link for details:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Assignments & Grading:

Refer to the university grading policy for overarching information:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

- **Participation (10%, all semester):** you will be assessed based on your contributions to class discussion and completion of in-class assignments, such as workshops, impromptu freewriting exercises, presentations, etc. You will receive evaluations of your participation according to a rubric at multiple points throughout the semester.
- **Introduction Post (10%, due Week 2):** You will publish a post of roughly 500 words on the course website that introduces your academic interests, connects them to the subject matter of the course, and identifies your goals. You will incorporate and respond to at least one of the assigned articles for Week 1 and craft one question for discussion. You'll publish your post on the course website at least one day in advance of our Week 2 meeting.
- **Digital Posts + Discussion Questions (20%, due Weeks 3-15):** You will publish two digital posts of roughly 500 words each on the course website throughout the semester. In these posts, you will connect the claims of the assigned scholarly essay to the assigned comic. You will create three discussion questions for related passages in the main comic. To receive credit, you must be present to help lead discussion on the days you select. You'll publish your post on the course website at least one day in advance.
- **Short Paper (10%, due Week 7):** you will compose a typed paper of 3-5 pages in length that analyzes a short comic of your choosing from UF's Comics Collection, Comic Book Plus, or a new-to-you issue from our local comic shop, demonstrating your claims through close-readings of a given comic in conversation with course texts about comics theory.
- **Annotated Bibliography/Proposal (20%, due Week 11):** you will write a 3-page proposal for your seminar paper, accompanied by an annotated bibliography of 10 sources. You can choose to write about one of the assigned comics or you may write on comics discovered through archival research in UF's comics collections. All students will schedule a meeting with me to discuss your topic before spring break.
- **Seminar Paper (30%, due Week 16):** You will write a 15-20 page seminar paper on one of the assigned comics or on archival research. You may design an alternate, equivalent assignment in consultation with me.

Assignments Format & Due Dates: You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course. Aside from digital and creative work, assignments should be typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, with page numbers and 1-inch margins. They should adhere to MLA or Chicago format, contain a bibliography, and be submitted on paper at the beginning of class. Digital posts are due online the day before a given class, as stated here and in the assignment sheet. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade for each week late. No extensions will be granted the day before an assignment is due.

Academic Honesty & Definition of Plagiarism: Plagiarism of a draft or final version of any assignment will be reported to the Dean of Students. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, refer to the Student Conduct and Honor Codes: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/students/student-conduct-code/>

Computers in the Classroom: You may use a laptop or tablet for note-taking, in-class work, or referring to classroom materials.

Accommodations: Any student requesting academic accommodations based on disability is required to register with the Disability Resource Center 352-392-8565. More information can be found here: <https://drc.dso.ufl.edu/>

Policy on Harassment: UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty:
<https://hr.ufl.edu/forms-policies/policies-managers/sexual-harassment/>

Counseling and Wellness: Students who face difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center 352-392-1575 or contact them online: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>

Course Evaluations: Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/>

Requesting Recommendations: If you plan to request a recommendation letter from me, read this guide before doing so: <http://margaretgalvan.org/pedagogy/recommendation-letter-guidelines/>

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

Wednesday, January 8 (no class meeting)

- **No class on account of Modern Language Association (MLA) conference**
- Christopher Pizzino, “The Doctor Versus the Dagger: Comics Reading and Cultural Memory,” *PMLA* 130.3 (2015)
- Don Ault, “Librorum Comicorum Explicatio,” *Occident* (1973)
- Don Ault, “Comic Art and How to Read It,” *California Monthly* (1976)
- Aaron Kashtan, “Comics criticism: Basic questions to ask when reading a comic — version for students,”
<https://ogresfeathers.wordpress.com/2017/08/28/comics-criticism-basic-questions-to-ask-when-reading-a-comic-version-for-students/>
- Ramzi Fawaz, “How to Read and View: A Worksheet”
- “Comics Terminology” handout,
<https://www.cartoonstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/terminology.pdf>

WEEK 2**Wednesday, January 15**

- **Introduction Post due**
- **Sign-up for Digital Posts (in-class)**
- Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics* (1993), selections
- Charles Hatfield, "Introduction: Alternative Comics as an Emerging Literature," in *Alternative Comics* (2005)
- Hillary Chute, "Comics as Literature? Reading Graphic Narrative" in *PMLA* 123.2 (2008)
- Hillary Chute, "Introduction: Comics for Grown-Ups?" in *Why Comics?* (2017)
- Ramzi Fawaz, "A Queer Sequence: Comics as a Disruptive Medium," *PMLA* 134.3 (2019)

WEEK 3/CHILDHOOD**Wednesday, January 22**

- Ernie Bushmiller, *Nancy* (1938-1982), read some selections of "classic" *Nancy* here: <https://www.gocomics.com/nancy-classics/2015/02/23>
- Olivia Jaimes, *Nancy* (2018-present), read from the beginning of the run to the present day here: <https://www.gocomics.com/nancy/2018/04/09>
- Mark Newgarden & Paul Karasik, "How to Read Nancy" (1988)
- Michelle Ann Abate, "Introduction: 'It's A Bird! It's a Plane! It's an Elementary-Aged Girl!': Remembering a Time in American Comics When Young Female Protagonists Ruled," *Funny Girls* (2019)
- Michelle Ann Abate, "I Slant My Gags to the Lawrence Welk Gum Chewers: *Nancy* and the Vaudeville Aesthetic," *Funny Girls* (2019)
- Check out some Golden (1930s-1950s) & Silver Age (1950s-1970s) strips featuring children/teenagers: <https://comicbookplus.com/?cbplus=childrenteenagers>

WEEK 4/QUEER**Wednesday, January 29**

- Roberta Gregory, *Dynamite Damsels* (1976)
- Lee Marrs, *The Further Fattening Adventures of Pudge, Girl Blimp* (1973-1977)
- Margaret Galvan, "Feminism Underground: The Comics Rhetoric of Lee Marrs and Roberta Gregory," *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly* 43.3-4 (2015)

WEEK 5/ARCHIVES**Wednesday, February 5**

- **Class Visit: University of Florida Comics Collections (Meet at Library East)**
- Jenny Robb, "The Librarians and Archivists," *The Secret Origins of Comics Studies* (2017)
- Randall W. Scott, "Comic Art Collection at the Michigan State University Libraries," *Graphic Novels and Comics in Libraries and Archives* (2010)
- Nicholas Yanes and Robert G. Weiner, "Interview with Randall W. Scott," *Graphic Novels and Comics in Libraries and Archives* (2010)
- The Suzy Covey Comic Book Collection (video): <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=10153757169139632>
- Overview of comics collections at UF: <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/spec/belknap/comics/comics.htm>

WEEK 6/QUEER**Wednesday, February 12**

- Howard Cruse, *Stuck Rubber Baby* (1995)
- Simon Dickel, "Can't Leave Me Behind": Racism, Gay Politics, and Coming of Age in Howard Cruse's "Stuck Rubber Baby," *Amerikastudien / American Studies* 56.4 (2011)

WEEK 7/QUEER**Wednesday, February 19**

- **Short Paper Due**
- **Schedule a meeting to discuss your proposal and seminar paper**
- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (2006)
- Valerie Rohy, "In the Queer Archive: Fun Home," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 16.3 (2010)

WEEK 8/HISTORY**Wednesday, February 26**

- **Schedule a meeting to discuss your proposal and seminar paper**
- Miné Okubo, *Citizen 13660* (1946)
- Xiaojing Zhou, "Spatial Construction of the "Enemy Race": Miné Okubo's Visual Strategies in *Citizen 13660*" *MELUS* 32.3 (2007)

WEEK 9**Wednesday, March 4**

- **Spring break**

WEEK 10/HISTORY**Wednesday, March 11**

- Kyle Baker, *Nat Turner* (2008)
- Jonathan W. Gray, "Commence the Great Work?: The Historical Archive and Unspeakable Violence in Kyle Baker's *Nat Turner*," *Afterimages of Slavery* (2012)

WEEK 11/FANTASY**Wednesday, March 18**

- **Annotated Bibliography/Proposal Due**
- Neil Gaiman, *The Sandman*, "The Doll's House" (1990)
- Justin Mellette, "Serialization and Empire in Neil Gaiman's *The Sandman*," *Studies in the Novel* 47.3 (2015)

WEEK 12/FANTASY**Wednesday, March 25**

- **Guest Visit: Ayanni C. H. Cooper (University of Florida)**
- Marjorie Liu & Sana Takeda, *Monstress*, "Volume 1: Awakening" (2016)
- Ayanni C. H. Cooper, "There's More to Me Than Hunger': Female Monsters and Liminal Space in *Monstress* and *Pretty Deadly*," *Monstrous Women in Comics* (Forthcoming: May 2020)

WEEK 13**Wednesday, April 1 (no class meeting)**

- No class on account of Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS) conference
- Work on Seminar Paper

WEEK 14/SUPERHERO**Wednesday, April 8**

- Alan Moore & Dave Gibbons, *Watchmen* (1987)
- Andrew Hoberk, "Introduction: Is It Literature?" *Considering Watchmen* (2017)
- Umberto Eco, "The Myth of Superman," *Diacritics* 2.1 (1972)
- Check out some Golden (1930s-1950s) & Silver Age (1950s-1970s) strips featuring superheroes: <https://comicbookplus.com/?cbplus=superhero>

WEEK 15/SUPERHERO**Wednesday, April 15**

- G. Willow Wilson & Adrian Alphona, *Ms. Marvel*, "Vol. 1: No Normal" (2014)
- Ramzi Fawaz, "Legions of Superheroes: Diversity, Multiplicity, and Collective Action against Genocide in the Superhero Comic Book," *Social Text* 36.4 (2018), section: "From Diversity to Heterogeneity"
- Miriam Kent, "Unveiling Marvels: *Ms. Marvel* and the Reception of the New Muslim Superheroine," *Feminist Media Studies* 15.3 (2015)

WEEK 16**Wednesday, April 22**

- Seminar Paper Due