

## **Introduction to Comics Studies** **COM 2023 / MMC 2023**

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Office Hours  
MWF 10:00 - 11:00  
2:00 – 3:00  
TR 11:00 – 12:30

**Course Objectives:** This course is designed to help the student

*Appreciate* the diversity and potential of the comic book/graphic novel medium;  
*Understand* comic books/graphic novels as a unique medium of communication;  
*Discover* the governing principles of comic books/graphic novels as an art form;  
*Apply* knowledge of the medium to the creation of comic books/graphic novels;  
*Analyze* the role of comic books/graphic novels in American society and culture;  
*Evaluate* works of the comic book/graphic novel medium

**Grading:** Grades are determined on a 1000 point scale. The minimum points for each grade:  
A - 900; B - 800; C - 700; D - 600. The points will be distributed as follows: Tests (400 pts.);  
Analysis Papers (300 pts.); Exercises (230 pts.); Auteur Report (50 pts.); Participation (20 pts.).

**Attendance:** You must have an excused absence to make-up a test. A test must be made up **before the graded test is handed back to the class**. Assignments turned in late will not receive full credit. Hopefully, there will be a great deal of discussion in this class. If you are not in class to take part in the discussion, your participation grade will be reduced.

**Required Text:** *The Power of Comics: History, Form and Culture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (2015) by Duncan & Smith

**Grievance Procedure:** If you wish to appeal a grade in this course you should schedule an appointment with the instructor and explain the reasons for your appeal. The instructor will explain the basis for the grade. If you are still not satisfied, you should see the chair of the Communication and Theatre Arts Department

**ADA:** Anyone who feels he/she may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability (e.g.: sensory, learning, psychological, medical, mobility) should contact me to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs. I rely on the Disability Resource Center (located in Foster Hall) for assistance in verifying your eligibility for academic accommodations. For more information, visit the DRC website at [www.hsu.edu/disability](http://www.hsu.edu/disability).

### **Content Warning**

Some of the readings in this course contain sexually explicit scenes or adult language. A few of the books might also contain offensive racist stereotypes and representations of physical and sexual abuse that may be painful for some students to read. Students who would prefer to substitute other readings for these works are welcome to do so and should consult with the instructor on suitable substitute texts. Students who require other modifications to the reading list, including adjustments because of reading ability or perceptual issues should see the instructor at the beginning of the course to discuss appropriate modifications.

*Please silence your cell phone before coming to class*

## COURSE OUTLINE

- M Aug 24 introduction to the course / survey / Ex. 1 – Brunetti comic (10 pts.)
- W Aug 26 Reading: Introduction, Chapter 4 / Ex. 2 – Paradigmatic Choices (10 pts.)
- F Aug 28 Chapter 4 continued / Ex. 3 – “Our Block” (10 pts.)
- M Aug 31 Chapter 5
- W Sept 2 Chapter 5 continued / Ex. 4 – Image Functions (10 pts.)
- F Sept 4 discussion of *March: Book One* / review for test /  
Ex. 5 – Analysis of your Brunetti comic (10 pts.)
- M Sept 7 LABOR DAY – no class
- W Sept 9 No Class / Post Ex. 6 – Spirit Analysis (20 pts.) on the Angel blog
- F Sept 11 **Test 1** (Chapters 5, 6) (100 pts.)
- M Sept 14 discuss *March: Book Two*
- W Sept 16 Chapter 6
- F Sept 18 **Due:** Analysis Paper # 1 (50 pts.) / discuss Warlock (on Angel)  
Assigning books for Analysis Paper # 2
- M Sept 21 Chapter 1
- September 22, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in Arkansas Hall Auditorium: Authors John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell will speak on campus. A book signing will follow.**
- W Sept 23 discuss *Breakdowns* (on Angel)
- F Sept 25 Ex. 7 – History of Comics (10 pts.) [in class]
- M Sept 28 Chapter 1 continued / discuss Simon & Kirby (on Angel)
- W Sept 30 Chapter 1 continued / Ex. 8 – Comparing Eras (20 pts.)
- F Oct 2 Chapter 2 / discuss Marvel comic (on Angel)
- M Oct 5 Chapter 2 continued / discuss Crumb and *Raw*  
Assigning books for Analysis Paper # 3
- W Oct 7 **Due:** Analysis Paper # 2 (50 pts.) / Chapter 2 continued
- F Oct 9 Chapter 3 / Ex. 9 – Transmediation (10 pts.)

M Oct 12 Chapter 3 continued

W Oct 14 **Test 2** (chapters 1-3, 6) (100 pts.)

F Oct 16 FALL BREAK – no class

M Oct 19 Chapter 7 / discuss superhero story / Ex. 10 – Super You (10 pts.)

W Oct 21 Chapter 7 continued / discuss revisionist superhero

F Oct 23 Chapter 7 continued / Ex. 11 – Superhero Narrative (10 pts.)  
Ex. 12 – Significant Seven (10 pts.)

M Oct 26 Chapter 8  
Oct 27 – last day to drop with a “W”

W Oct 28 Chapter 8 continued / discuss memoir excerpt

F Oct 30 Chapter 8 continued / Ex. 13 – Mini Memoir (20 pts.)  
Assigning books for Analysis Paper # 4

M Nov 2 **Due:** Analysis Paper # 3 (50 pts.)

W Nov 4 Chapter 9

F Nov 6 Chapter 9 continued / **Auteur Reports** (50 pts.)

M Nov 9 Auteur Reports

W Nov 11 Auteur Reports

F Nov 13 Auteur Reports

M Nov 16 TBA

W Nov 18 **Due:** Analysis Paper # 4 (50 pts.)

F Nov 20 [NCA] TBA

M Nov 23 Chapter 11

THANKSGIVING BREAK

M Nov 30 Chapter 10 / Ex. 14 – Fandom Ethnography (10 pts.)

W Dec 2 Chapter 12 / Ex. 15 – International Comics (10 pts.)  
**Due:** Ex. 16 – Adaptation (50 pts.)  
*Dec 3 – last day to drop or withdraw*

F Dec 4 TBA

M Dec 7 **Test 3** (chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, auteur reports) (100 pts.)

W Dec 9 TBA

F Dec 11 **Due:** Analysis Paper # 5 (100 pts.) / review for final

W Dec 16 **Final Exam** (100 pts.), 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.