Syllabus
English 4338: Reading the Graphic Novel
July 10 - August 8
M-F 10:00 – 11:45 – Academic 005
Laurence Musgrove
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Course Description: A special topics course focusing on the study of comics with extended readings in the comics theory and graphic fiction and non-fiction.

Course Learning Outcomes
- Students will demonstrate understanding of the conventions of reading and analyzing comics and graphic narratives.
- Students will demonstrate effective research and annotation abilities.
- Students will demonstrate clear and concise writing.
- Students will demonstrate visual thinking and analysis.

Course Texts

Course Assignments
- 2 handmade thinking responses per class period
- Midterm comic of at least 2 pages and 12 panels demonstrating life and influence of important figure or figures in history of comics and graphic novels.
- Midterm exam – an in-class, open-book/internet exam in which students demonstrate their abilities to analyze a short comic narrative and respond to questions about McCloud’s *Understanding Comics* and Moore and Gibbon’s *Watchmen*.
- Final exam – an in-class, open-book/internet exam in which students demonstrate their abilities to analyze a short comic narrative and respond to questions about McCloud’s *Understanding Comics*, Bechdel’s *Fun Home*, and Ware’s *The Adventures of Jimmy Corrigan*.
- Final comic of at least 2 pages and 12 panels that portrays a thematically or emotionally unified personal experience with annotations describing the comic vocabulary utilized throughout.

Contract Grading
To receive an A in this course, you will
- Submit 35 handmade responses that meet minimum requirements
- Submit midterm and final comics that meet minimum requirements
- Achieve a A on the midterm and final exam

To receive a B in this course, you will
- Submit 35 handmade responses that meet minimum requirements
- Submit midterm and final comics that meet minimum requirements
- Achieve a B or better on the midterm and final exam

To receive a C in this course, you will
- Submit 30 handmade responses that meet minimum requirements
- Submit midterm and final comics that meet minimum requirements
Achieve a C or better on the midterm and final exam

To receive a D in this course, you will
- Fail to meet the requirements of the C grade and/or have 6 half class absences.

To receive an F in this course, you will
- Fail to meet the requirements of the C grade and/or have 8 half class absences.
- Fail to demonstrate academic honesty because you have plagiarized the work of others

No incompletes are available. Late work will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Minimum Requirements for Handmade Responses

Academic Honesty
All work composed for this class must be written exclusively for this class and be your original work. You may of course receive assistance on your writing, but submitting someone else’s work as your own or failing to acknowledge sources appropriately will be grounds for plagiarism. Violations of academic honesty will result in failure. See your Student Handbook for more on Academic Honesty.

Students with Disabilities: Persons with disabilities that may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office in order to request such accommodations prior to any being implemented. You are encouraged to make this request early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Tutors in Writing Center. The Writing Center offers tutoring in writing at no cost. Tutors will not write or edit your papers, but they will help you develop the skills you need to plan, draft, and revise your work.

Computer Labs: Verify availability of all University computer labs on campus and in the dormitories. Schedules should be posted at each lab.
Minimum Requirements for Written and Handmade Responses

For each reading assignment, you will compose handmade response.

In your handmade response to the assigned reading, draw a picture in landscape format on an 8.5 X 11 sheet of plain white paper that creatively and originally represents the author’s argument, narrative, or compelling idea.

This picture should be a combination of images, words, and colors in the white space of the page. The drawing must be an original drawing, follow one or more of the twenty-one visual formats show below, and include no clip art.

Whichever handmade response format you select, your drawing should be presented in landscape format, be effectively developed, and include at least three colors (black may be one of those colors).

On the reverse of the reading visual in the top left corner, write your name, the date, the name of the reading assignment, and the name of visual format(s) you are using.

Also on this side, include at least one brief quote from the assigned text (along with the parenthetical page reference) that corresponds to your drawing.

To fulfill the minimum requirements of handmade responses, they

1. Must be free from virtually all errors in sentences and words.
2. Demonstrated honest effort, clear engagement, and fresh thinking on the assigned text.
3. Follow the format requirements as described above.
21 Visual Formats for Handmade Thinking

- Portrait, Map
- Comic, Comparison/Contrast, Venn Diagram, Seesaw, Scale
- Tree, Web, Organizational Chart, Genealogical Chart
- Bar Graph, Pie Chart, Multivariable Graph
- Timeline, Before and After, Equation, Process, Freytag Plot, XY +- Plotline, Layers
Your original drawing on one side of the page.

Name
Date
Title of Assignment
Visual Format Used

“Brief quote from poem or story that corresponds to the drawing” (#).

Your header and quotation on the other side of the page.
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UC = Understanding Comics  
M = Maus I  
W = Watchmen  
F = Fun Home  
J = Jimmy Corrigan  

HR = Handmade Response