

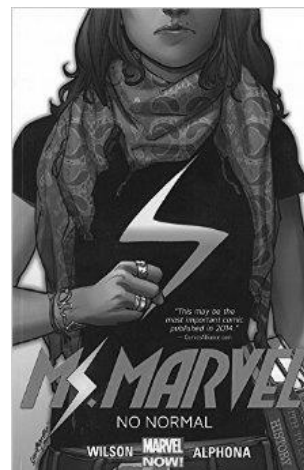
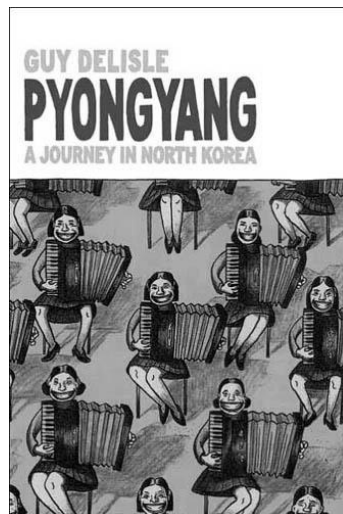
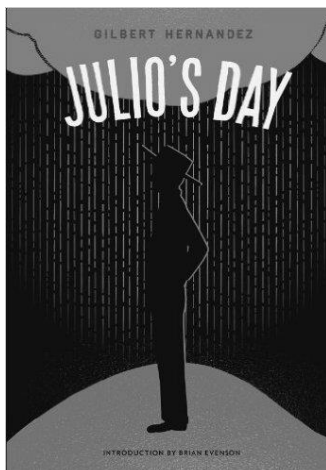
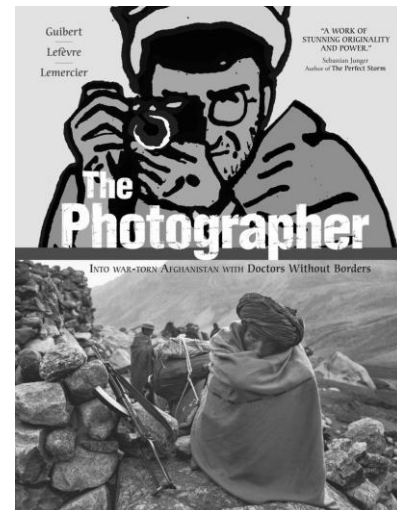
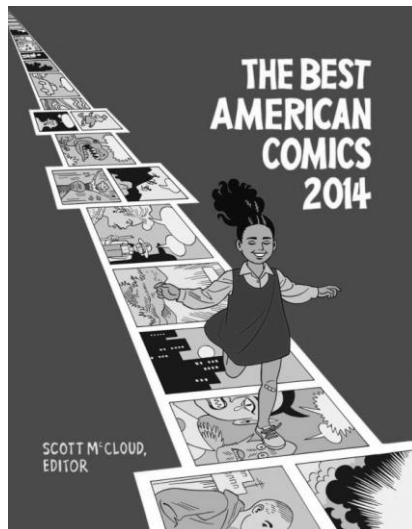
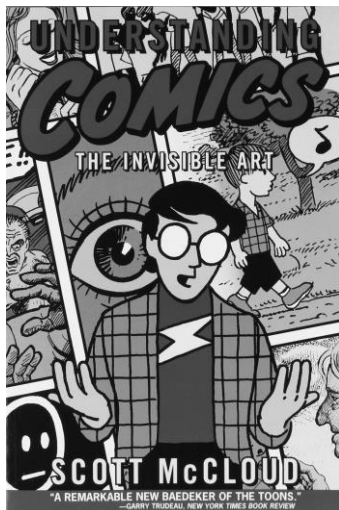
ENC 3375.0001, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 – 10:15 AM (ENG 224)
 SYLLABUS / CLASS POLICY, Spring 2017

Instructor: Nathan Holic

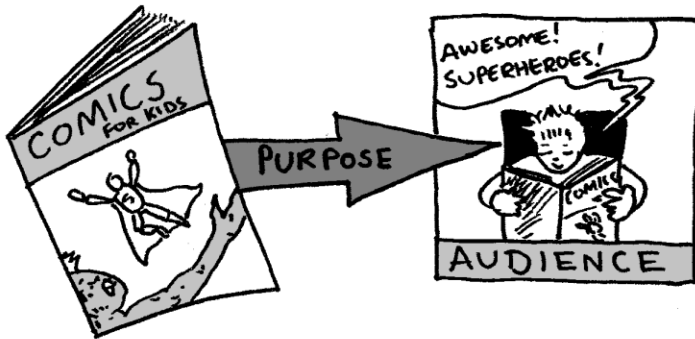
Email: Nathan.holic@ucf.edu

Required Texts:

- Understanding Comics – Scott McCloud (\$16)
- Best American Comics 2014 – Scott McCloud (editor) (\$20)
- The Photographer – Emanuel Guibert (\$22)
- Ms. Marvel Vol. 1: No Normal – G. Willow Wilson (\$15)
- Hawkeye Vol. 2: Little Hits – Matt Fraction (\$15)
- Pyongyang – Guy Delisle (\$12)
- Julio's Day – Gilbert Hernandez (\$15)
- * Approximate Amazon Prices



Course Objectives



Analyze a variety of comics genres, focusing on how the work is constructed with a specific audience in mind.

Practice the conception and creation of comics as a rhetorical process, proceeding from an understanding of audience and purpose.

Demonstrate a working understanding of the "language of comics"

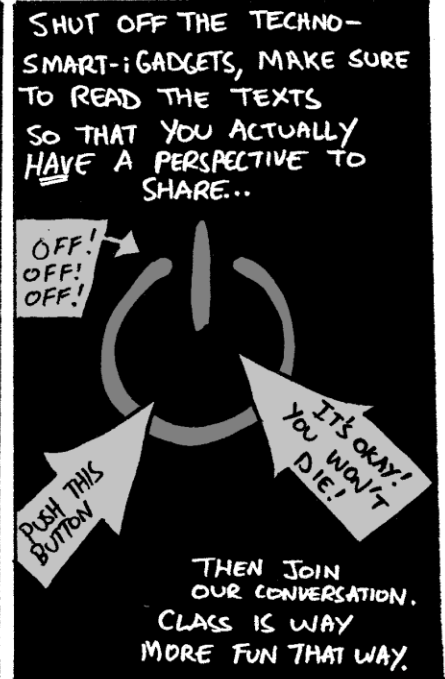
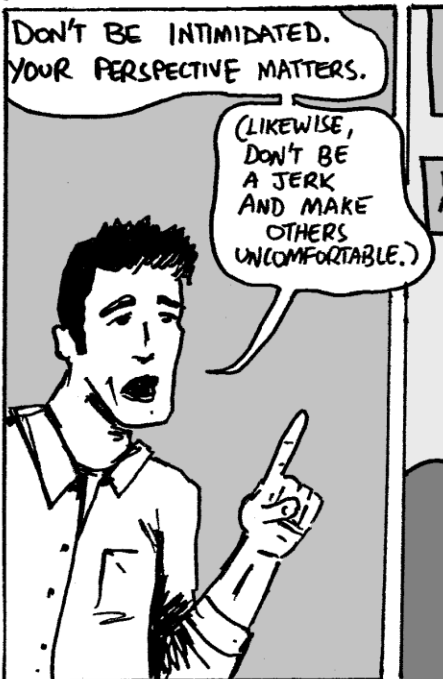
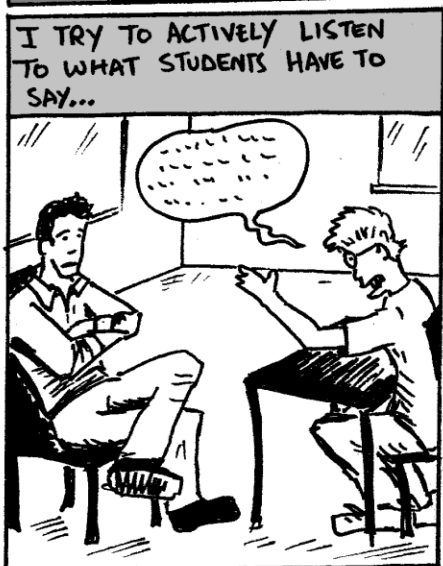
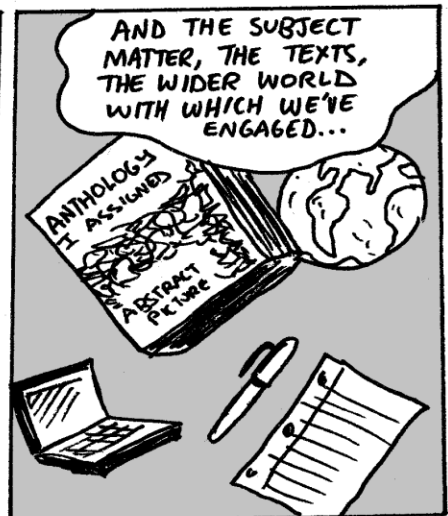


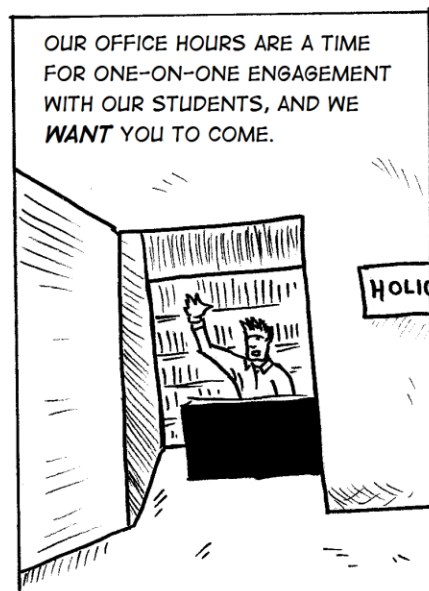
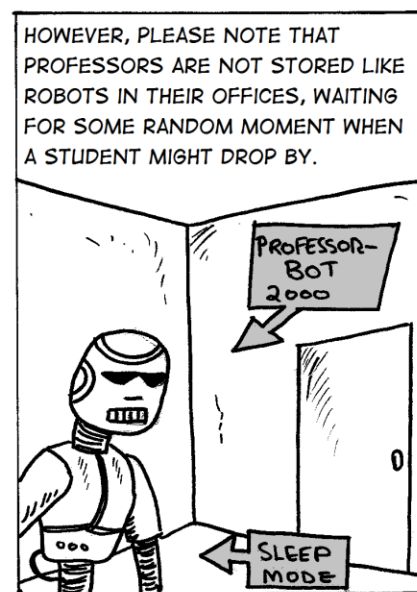
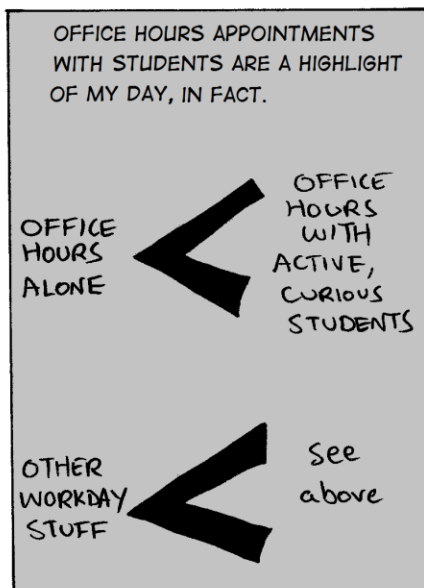
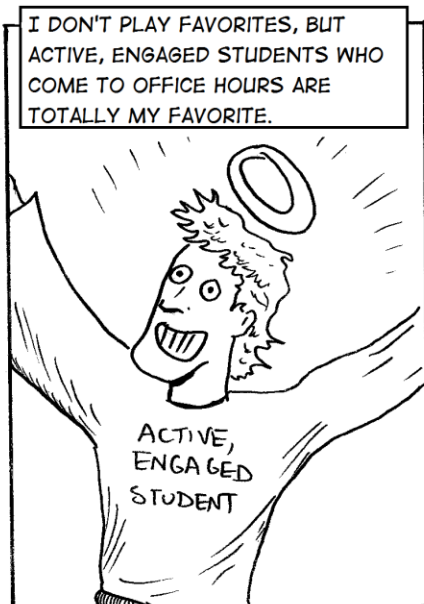
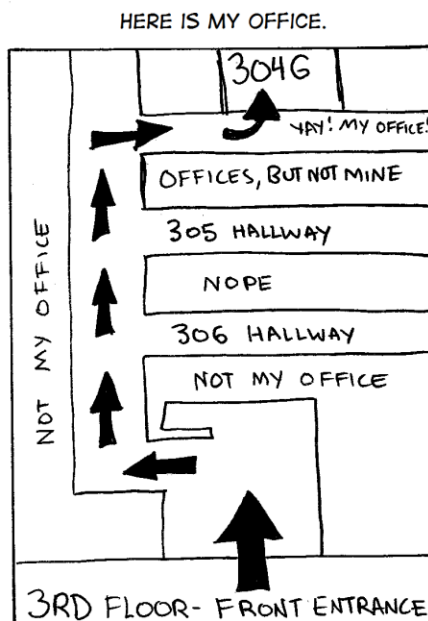
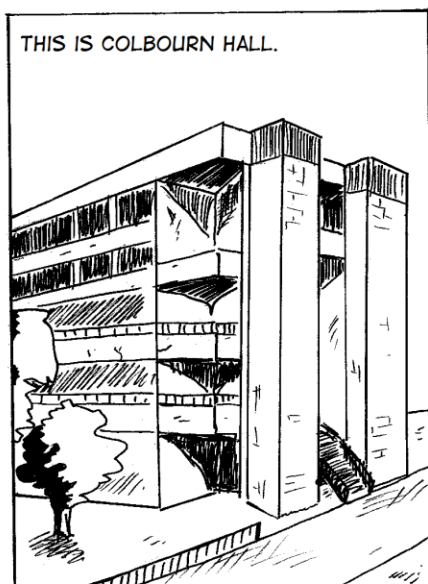
Practice a variety of planning and drafting techniques, and consider how this process compares and contrasts with our own writing process.

Analyze and practice a number of rhetorical strategies found in the comics medium, and consider how these strategies could apply to other genres of writing.

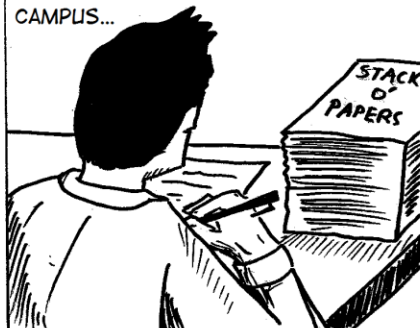


Class as a Conversation





JUST REMEMBER THAT OUR JOBS INVOLVE A LOT OF RESPONSIBILITIES. WE HAVE ONLY A SET NUMBER OF HOURS WE CAN DEDICATE TO "OPEN OFFICE HOURS." OUTSIDE OF THIS TIME FRAME, WE'RE TEACHING, PLANNING, GRADING, RESEARCHING, AND ATTENDING MEETINGS ACROSS CAMPUS...



IF YOU COME TO OUR OFFICE OUTSIDE OF OFFICE HOURS, EXPECT IT TO BE DARK.

THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE HATE YOU. THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE ARE INACCESSIBLE.

IT JUST MEANS YOU MISSED OFFICE HOURS. AND, LIKE A MOVIE WITH MORE SHOWTIMES TOMORROW, YOU'LL HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE IF YOU PLAN AHEAD.

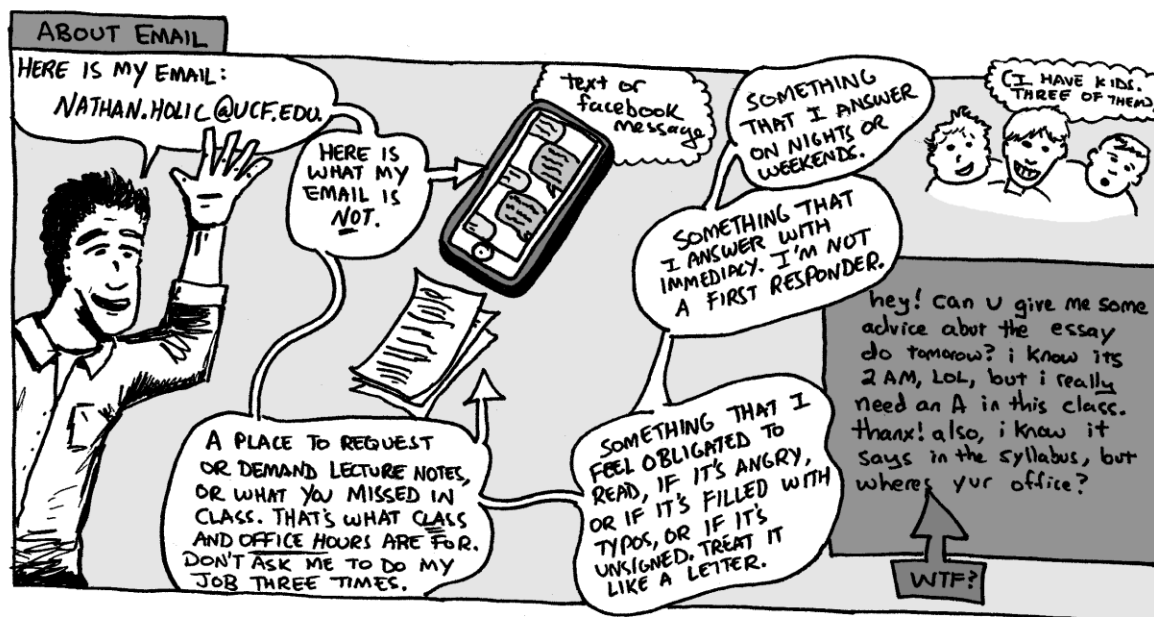
Attendance & Missed Assignments:

Yes, you've paid for your classes here at the university. But no, that doesn't make me a "customer service rep" for students, and that doesn't make class into an "entertainment experience," where your ticket entitles you to set your own rules. This isn't a football game. There is no tolerance for hecklers, or for those who stroll in and out at their leisure.

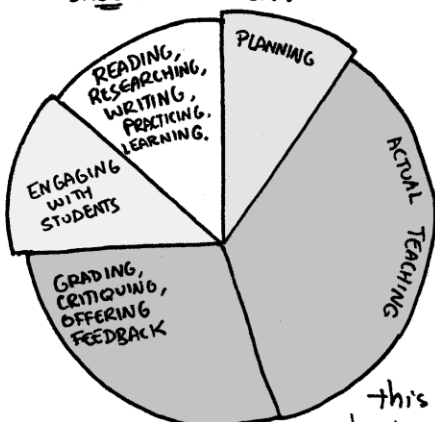
If you're enrolled in this course, I expect you to be an active participant in the course. As discussed above, our face-to-face meetings are especially important, as they give us the time to gather and discuss the concepts (and comics) that will help us to leave the semester as changed writers/ readers/ thinkers/ creators. Learning often occurs in unexpected times and places; even when you're not engaged in active note-taking, your presence in class and your participation in discussions could help you to process ideas, brainstorm possibilities...Miss a class, and (even if you've decided that it's an unimportant session because it's "just a discussion," or "just a workshop") you've missed a vital part of the education.

And keep in mind: I treat all absences equally, whether you have a family emergency or you want to catch up on sleep. Manage your time wisely.

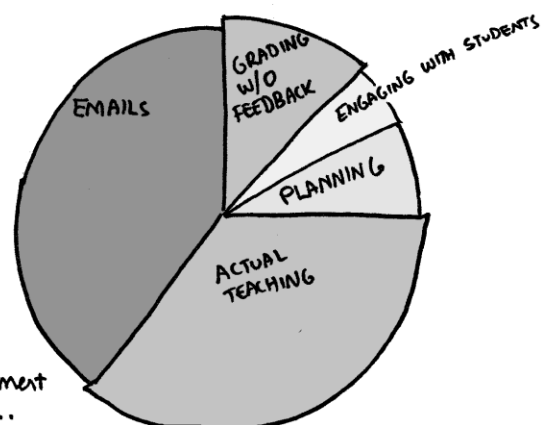
Additionally, I do not allow you to make up in-class activities/quizzes, and I do not allow late completion for assignments. I expect that assignments are turned in *on the due date*, and *during class*. If you are absent or tardy when an assignment is due (or when a quiz or exam or in-class writing is given), you will receive a zero (0) for the assignment. If you know ahead of time that you will have to miss class, make sure that the assignment is either delivered to me during class, or delivered to my office beforehand.



How My Day As A Professor SHOULD BE SPENT.



How My Day IS TOO OFTEN SPENT.



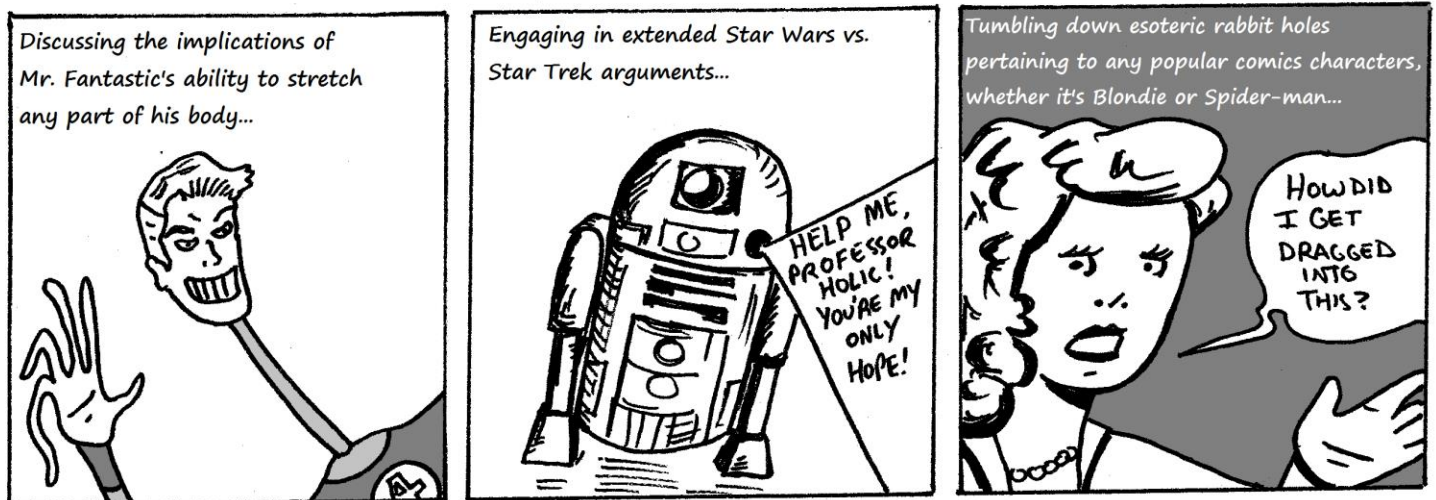
The Rhetoric of Comics: What Are We Doing Here?

Because comics are a highly accessible medium, they're often taken for granted. Much like picture books, they're often dismissed as "kid's stuff," and when we think of comics in the popular culture, we picture superheroes, or talking animals populating newspaper interiors. But comics are used in countless ways throughout our culture, and are known by a variety of different names: sequential art, graphic narrative, text-image, and visual storytelling, among them. And, no matter the subject, they are a highly sophisticated medium, challenging to produce, and operate according to their own language and conventions.

This course focuses upon the rhetorical considerations that comics creators must understand in the creation of comics. Students will read and analyze a variety of comics genres (including single-panel cartoons, "funnies," graphic novels, comic adaptations, instruction manuals, comic journalism, comic memoirs, and comic essays) in an attempt to understand how comic genres are constructed with specific audiences and purposes in mind. We'll examine narrative persona in nonfiction comics: how do we present ourselves on the page, and what style of art works best for the work we are producing? We'll learn the language of comics, and will practice different strategies and techniques essential to the medium. In discussing these visual and narrative strategies, we'll also ask how this could be applicable to our writing lives/ careers outside of this single course.

One of our most important goals throughout the semester, quite simply, will be to explore the **many different possibilities available to you** as writers/illustrators/creators. We will deconstruct comics to figure out how they work, and how they can be used, and what sort of stories/ narratives/ arguments we can deliver.

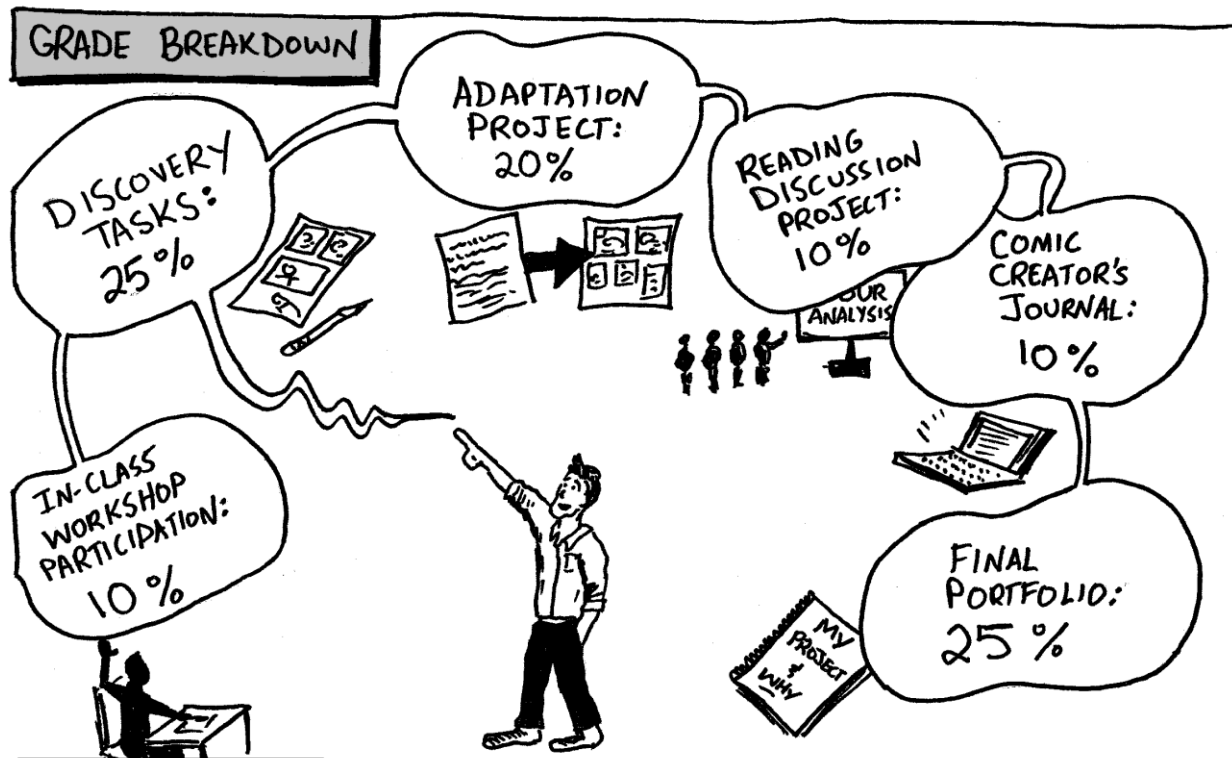
THINGS WE ARE NOT DOING HERE



Or in any other way turning this class into a fanboy (or fangirl) convention...

Course Structure:

This course will be divided into the following units: (1) **The Visual Language of Comics**, (2) **The Genres of Comics**, (3) **The Process of Comics Creation**. In an ideal OCD world, each unit would be of equal length, and each class period would follow the exact same format, but the reality is that the journey of education is a messy one, so take note of the assignment descriptions and the schedule below (which breaks down the units into tentative class periods), and always remember to stay flexible. Things could change.



The Department of Writing & Rhetoric at UCF uses the **plus/minus grading system** for final grades. The following scale indicates the grade distribution that I will use:

		89-87	B+	79-77	C+	69-0	F
100-93	A	86-83	B	76-73	C		
92-90	A-	82-80	B-	72-70	C-		

Assignments (Full Descriptions and Semester Schedule Online in **Webcourses**):

Comic Creator's Journal: Throughout the semester, you'll keep a "Comic Creator's Journal" (note that I use the word "creator" rather than either artist or writer...this course is preparing you to be both). This will be an online space for you to reflect upon your own efforts, and upon the material that you're reading.

Discovery Tasks: "Discovery Exercises" are quick practice activities designed to be "**low-stakes**." Nearly every class period, you'll be asked to create a comic, or a single illustration, or some piece of sequential art...And nearly every week, you'll be asked to practice some comic-creation technique or strategy outside of class (to be posted online on your "Comic Creator's Journal"). It's impossible, after all, to gain any experience without actually practicing (and practicing a *lot*). In this course, I want you writing and reading and writing/drawing ("wrawing"?), constantly...but I don't want to kill your grade as you learn the craft and try something new.

Reading Discussion Project: Part of the semester's "practice" involves the creation of comics. And the other part involves the reading and discussion of comics. For this project, the class will divide into groups. Each group will perform a "close read" of an assigned comic (i.e. "reading like writers"), analyzing and dissecting the creator's strategies and techniques (panel transitions, cover art, persona, voice, art style). The entire class will be responsible for reading the selection, and for participating in the discussion.

Adaptation Project: The "Adaptation Project" will help you to explore why certain material can/ could/ should be rendered as comic, and how this medium can be used to better effect a specific purpose. What can comics do that other mediums cannot? For the Adaptation Project, I will give you a list of text-only works from which to choose (fiction, poetry, memoir, blog post, book review, essay), and you will create a **3-4 page comic** that adapts the plain text into sequential art. Your Adaptation Project should include a 1-2-page cover letter that argues for the rhetorical effectiveness for the comic.

Final Portfolio: While we are practicing and reading throughout the semester, I also want you to think about *one comic* you could produce on your own. The comic could take the form of any genre (from tutorial, to adaptation, to memoir, to advertising campaign), for any purpose and any audience. You may also choose to continue your Adaptation Project. Your Final Portfolio will need to include three total sections: (1) **four finished pages** of an envisioned comic, (2) **a detailed rhetorical context**, in which you argue why your comic is necessary, what it is doing and why, and to whom it is speaking; all rhetorical choices in the comic (from narrative persona to page design) must be purposeful, (3) **a final creator's reflection** on how the semester's comics have shaped the work you are now presenting.

Other Important Statements (That'd Take Me Forever to Draw):

Formatting of Assignments: Refer to the examples on each assignment page for proper formatting. If you turn in a manuscript that does not follow our manuscript format *exactly*, your score could face serious point deductions.

Financial Aid Compliance: In order to document that you began this course, you will need to complete an online assignment by the end of the first week of classes. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

UCF Disability Statement: (From Student Disability Services): UCF is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. If you have a disability and need accommodations in this course, you must contact me during my office hours within the first week of the semester to discuss necessary accommodations. You must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132 (phone: 407-823-2371; TDD only phone 407-823-2116) before requesting accommodations from me.

Plagiarism & New Work: Plagiarism is the theft of ideas and words. Plagiarism in this course will not be tolerated, and will result in failure and a review by the Office of Student Conduct. It should be noted, however, that many exercises will ask you to adapt pre-existing work to comic form, or will allow you to use images found elsewhere. Brief descriptions of the original sources might be required, in those cases.

Important Dates:

January 12 (R): Last day to Drop Courses
January 16 (M): MLK Jr. Day (No classes)
March 13 – 18: Spring Break (No classes)
March 22 (W): Withdrawal Deadline
April 25 (T): Study Day (No classes)
April 26 – May 2: Final Exams

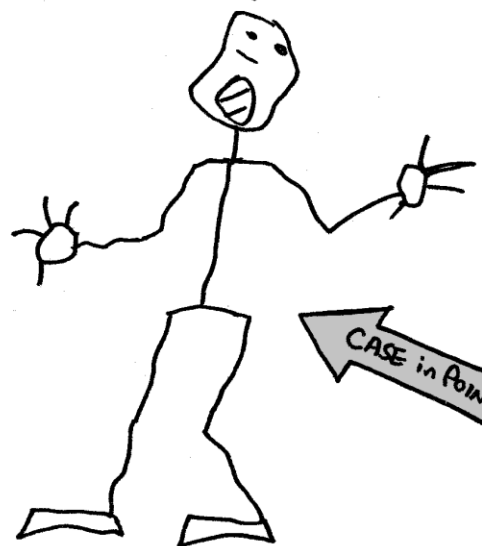
DO I NEED TO BE
A GOOD ARTIST?



HA HA HA!
NO!



I'M NOT. AND
THERE'S PLENTY OF
BAD ART IN THIS
SYLLABUS TO PROVE
IT!



WHAT YOU NEED, HOWEVER, IS
A WILLINGNESS TO LEARN, AN
EAGERNESS TO PRACTICE AND TRY
NEW STRATEGIES, AND A SENSE
OF CREATIVITY & INVENTION.



IT'S POSSIBLE FOR "GOOD ARTISTS"
TO CREATE LOUSY COMICS, SIMPLY
BECAUSE THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW
THE MEDIUM WORKS.

CONVERSELY, IT'S POSSIBLE
FOR "BAD ILLUSTRATORS" TO
MAKE FANTASTIC SEQUENTIAL
ART USING ONLY STICK
FIGURES AND WORD BALLOONS.



NO MATTER YOUR SKILL
LEVEL, TREAT THE
COURSE (AND THE MEDIUM)
WITH THE RESPECT IT
DESERVES, AND CHALLENGE
YOURSELF IN NEW WAYS...



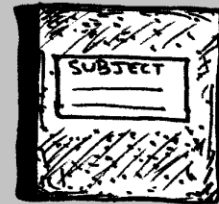
Materials Needed For Class

INDEX CARDS
(PACK of 50)



I'LL USE THESE FOR
DAILY DRAWING TASKS,
WHICH I'LL OFTEN
COLLECT TO TAKE
ATTENDANCE.

BRING THEM
EVERY CLASS
PERIOD.



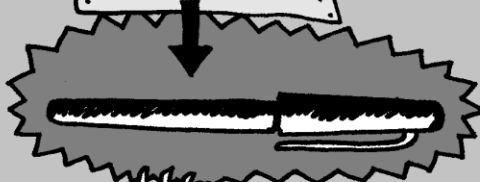
NOTEPAD/
JOURNAL/
SKETCHPAD

WE'LL SPEND TIME
PRACTICING OTHER
VISUAL STRATEGIES,
DOODLING, SKETCHING...
SO BRING PAPER
THAT IS SPECIFICALLY
FOR THIS PURPOSE.

MY SUGGESTION:
BUY A \$1 COMPOSITION
NOTEBOOK OR SKETCHPAD
FOR THIS CLASS ALONE.

I MIGHT ASK YOU TO
UPLOAD SOME OF THESE
DRAWINGS TO YOUR JOURNAL.
OTHERS MIGHT BE USEFUL
STARTING POINTS FOR OTHER
ASSIGNMENTS.

A GOOD PEN.



OPTIONAL:
A PENCIL, if you
fear permanence.

GET A NICE WET-INK
PEN OR MARKER-PEN FOR
DRAWING. SOMETHING DARK,
THAT YOU DON'T NEED TO
SCRIBBLE WITH TO GET IT TO
WORK.

NOTHING
EXPENSIVE.
I SUGGEST
PAPERMATE,
FLAIR.

OUTSIDE of CLASS:
A SKETCHBOOK of
CRISP WHITE PAPER.

IT GLIDES
OVER the PAGE
WITHOUT EFFORT
AND COSTS
ABOUT \$2.00.

YOUR
PREFERENCE.

MAKE SURE
the PAPER IS
HEAVIER
THAN PRINTER
PAPER.

THIS ISN'T AN
"ART CLASS,"
BUT SUPPLIES
DO MATTER.

CRAYONS AND
NOTEBOOK PAPER
WILL JUST FRUSTRATE
YOU, AND GIVE YOU
AN INFERIOR
PRODUCT.

TOTAL PRICE: \$15 TOPS

