

# ENGL-230: THE GRAPHIC NOVEL

## Effective Term

Fall 2025

## CC Approval

11/17/2023

## AS Approval

12/12/2023

## BOT Approval

12/14/2023

## COCI Approval

05/01/2025

## SECTION A - Course Data Elements

### CB04 Credit Status

Credit - Degree Applicable

### Discipline

Minimum Qualifications	And/Or
English (Master's Degree)	

### Subject Code

ENGL - English

### Course Number

230

### Department

English (ENGL)

### Division

Language and Developmental Studies (LADS)

### Full Course Title

The Graphic Novel

### Short Title

The Graphic Novel

### CB03 TOP Code

1501.00 - English

### CB08 Basic Skills Status

NBS - Not Basic Skills

### CB09 SAM Code

E - Non-Occupational

### Rationale

This course will diversify and expand ENGL Department Literature offerings. With a multimodal approach, the course will provide students with tools to understand and critically approach both written and visual texts. The familiarity with the medium will also be attractive and accessible to students, increasing demand and supporting student success.

## SECTION B - Course Description

### Catalog Course Description

This course is a survey of graphic literature as literary and artistic form. The course will examine conventions of form and genre so students can explore the types of stories being told through this unique, vital medium and the effects they have on the reader. The

course will also review the literary and artistic techniques used in composing graphic narratives, and use formal analysis and critical approaches to analyze the ways historical, social, economic, psychological, and aesthetic forces shape graphic literature. Focus will be on graphic novels, but will also explore other graphic narratives such as comics and digital comics.

## SECTION C - Conditions on Enrollment

### Open Entry/Open Exit

No

### Repeatability

Not Repeatable

### Grading Options

Letter Grade or Pass/No Pass

### Allow Audit

Yes

## Requisites

### Prerequisite(s)

Completion of ENGL-120 or ENGL-120B with a minimum grade of C.

## Requisite Justification

### Requisite Description

Course Not in a Sequence

### Subject

ENGL

### Course #

120

### Level of Scrutiny

Content Review

### Upon entering this course, students should be able to:

- A. Think, read, and write critically about a variety of ethical, civic, and cultural topics.
- B. Write unified, coherent, well supported, and grammatically correct documents while also demonstrating adequate research skills, including locating, evaluating, integrating, and documenting sources using discipline appropriate styles, such as MLA.

### Requisite Description

Course Not in a Sequence

### Subject

ENGL

### Course #

120B

### Level of Scrutiny

Content Review

### Upon entering this course, students should be able to:

- A. Think, read, and write critically about a variety of ethical, civic, and cultural topics.
- B. Write unified, coherent, well supported, and grammatically correct documents while also demonstrating adequate research skills, including locating, evaluating, integrating, and documenting sources using discipline appropriate styles, such as MLA.

## SECTION D - Course Standards

Is this course variable unit?

No

**Units**

3.00000

**Lecture Hours**

54.00

**Outside of Class Hours**

108

**Total Contact Hours**

54

**Total Student Hours**

162

## Distance Education Approval

Is this course offered through Distance Education?

Yes

**Online Delivery Methods**

DE Modalities	Permanent or Emergency Only?
Entirely Online	Permanent
Hybrid	Permanent
Online with Proctored Exams	Permanent

## SECTION E - Course Content

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Demonstrate through explication, interpretation, and/or analysis an understanding of the textual and visual components of graphic literature.
2.	Demonstrate through explication, interpretation, and/or analysis a basic understanding of the historical contexts, cultural perspectives and major themes informing graphic literature.

**Course Objectives**

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Define and apply basic vocabularies of graphic storytelling and literary analysis.
2.	Demonstrate critical reading skills and comprehension of graphic texts.
3.	Articulate and analyze genre differences within graphic storytelling.
4.	Interpret selected works using various critical approaches and contexts.
5.	Compose written textual analyses that show an understanding of the historical and cultural perspectives and their significance to individual texts or graphic literature in general.

**Course Content**

1. Characteristics common to graphic literature
  - a. Definition of the medium
  - b. Types of graphic literature, possibly including the following: superhero, coming-of-age stories, memoir, manga, experimental, digital
2. Vocabulary of literary elements and graphic literature
  - a. Literary elements
    - i. Character
    - ii. Setting

- iii. Theme
  - iv. Narration
  - v. Symbolism
- b. Graphic elements
  - i. Page layout
  - ii. Panel structure and pacing
  - iii. Drafting style
  - iv. Transitions
  - v. Use of color
- 3. Relevant contexts
  - a. Historical
    - i. From superheroes to sequential art (1930's-1970's)
    - ii. Underground comics (1960's-1980's)
    - iii. Alternative comics (1990's)
    - iv. Contemporary graphic novel
    - v. Setting of narrative itself (for example the Hiroshima bombing in *Barefoot Gen*)
  - b. Social/Cultural
    - i. Gender
    - ii. Nationality
    - iii. Race
    - iv. Sexual orientation/identification
    - v. Disability
    - vi. Age
    - vii. Religion
- 4. Major figures in graphic literature
  - a. Contribution of major writers, possibly including: Lynda Barry, Kate Beaton, Alison Bechdel, Thi Bui, Daniel Clowes, Neil Gaiman, Jason Lutes, Scott McCloud, Alan Moore, Keiji Nakazawa, Marjane Satrapi, Art Spiegelman, Chris Ware
- 5. Literary Research
  - a. Secondary Sources
  - b. MLA Documentation

## Methods of Instruction

### Methods of Instruction

Types	Examples of learning activities
Discussion	Reading Discussion, Critical Discussion
Activity	Reflection activity, essay preparation activity, analysis activity
Group Work	Peer review, group analysis of texts
Lecture	Historical context lecture, genre lecture, author introduction lecture, textual analysis lecture

### Instructor-Initiated Online Contact Types

Announcements/Bulletin Boards  
 Chat Rooms  
 Discussion Boards  
 E-mail Communication  
 Video or Teleconferencing

### Student-Initiated Online Contact Types

Chat Rooms  
 Discussions  
 Group Work

### Course design is accessible

Yes

## Methods of Evaluation

### Methods of Evaluation

Types	Examples of classroom assessments
Essays/Papers	literary analysis essays, formal research essays
Exams/Tests	short answer and timed writing essay exams
Homework	reading and annotation assignments, reflections, comic journal and analysis assignments
Oral Presentations	discussion leading, research presentations
Projects	formal research projects

## Assignments

### Reading Assignments

Students will be required to read approximately 50-100 pages of a graphic novel or other assigned texts per week.

For Example: Read selected chapters from *Fun Home*. A significant part of this text is Bechdel's understanding and depiction of her parents, and the extent to which those understandings are fluid/changing. How did your perception of the parents evolve or remain static throughout the text? How does Bechdel portray her father's sexuality in various ways? Cite specific pages and/or panels to support your analysis.

For Example: Compare the use of graphic narratives to communicate major historical events: WWII and the Holocaust in Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, with the Vietnam War in Thi Bui's *The Best We Could Do*. What is the role of art in processing history and/or trauma?

For Example: discuss Ware's use of stream of consciousness narration in *Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid on Earth* as it pertains to the themes of dreams and fantasy.

### Writing Assignments

Students will write response papers, in-class and out-of-class essays, analyzing the literature and its context. Word count for the semester should total approximately 4000 words.

For Example: Write an essay performing a close reading of *Watchmen*. In this analysis, you will explain how formal details (visual and textual) of the text contribute to the larger themes.

For Example: Analyze how *Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid on Earth* both upholds and subverts the conventions of superhero narratives. Is this a "superhero" story?

For Example: Compare and contrast two graphic memoirs from the following list: *Maus*, *Fun Home*, *The Best We Could Do*, *Ducks*, *Persepolis*, *Good Talk*. How do these authors treat the themes of time and memory as they communicate both personal and political histories?

## SECTION F - Textbooks and Instructional Materials

### Material Type

Textbook

### Author

Scott McCloud

### Title

Understanding Comics

### Publisher

Harper-Perennial

### Year

1994

### Rationale

classic text

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### Material Type

Textbook

**Author**

Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons

**Title**

Watchmen

**Publisher**

DC Comics

**Year**

1986-1987

**Rationale**

Classic Text

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**Material Type**

Textbook

**Author**

Alison Bechdel

**Title**

Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic

**Publisher**

Mariner Books

**Year**

2006

**Rationale**

Classic Text

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**Material Type**

Textbook

**Author**

Chris Ware

**Title**

Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid On Earth

**Publisher**

Pantheon Books

**Year**

2000

**Rationale**

Classic Text

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**Course Codes (Admin Only)**

**ASSIST Update**

Yes

**CB00 State ID**

CCC000652260

**CB10 Cooperative Work Experience Status**

N - Is Not Part of a Cooperative Work Experience Education Program

**CB11 Course Classification Status**

Y - Credit Course

**CB13 Special Class Status**

N - The Course is Not an Approved Special Class

**CB23 Funding Agency Category**

Y - Not Applicable (Funding Not Used)

**CB24 Program Course Status**

Program Applicable

**Allow Pass/No Pass**

Yes

**Only Pass/No Pass**

No