

F^x MCAD Class Syllabus 14

Course Name: Readings in the Graphic Novel

Course Number: HS 3875 01 / AH 3875 01

Class Meets: W 6:30-9:00 PM

Classroom Location: Main Building 416

Faculty's Name: Dr. John Pistelli

MCAD Email Address: jpistelli@mcad.edu

MCAD Telephone Number, Academic Affairs: (612) 874-3058

Office Hours: W 4:30-6:30

Office Location: Main Building 308

Faculty Biography: John Pistelli holds a Ph.D. in English literature from the University of Minnesota. His academic interests include modern and contemporary fiction, literary theory and aesthetics, the graphic novel, and creative writing. His non-fiction has appeared in *Rain Taxi*, *Ragnarok*, *New Walk*, and *The Millions*, while his short fiction has been published in *Whole Beast Rag*, *Revolver*, *The Squawk Back*, *Winter Tangerine Review*, and elsewhere. He is also the author of *The Ecstasy of Michaela: a novella* (Valhalla Press, 2012).

Course Description: The graphic novel is an art form that offers the best of both worlds. While gaining legitimacy as a literary/art form, it retains the excitement and unique properties of reading a comic book. Students will read, discuss, and analyze graphic novels, as well as engage extensively with critical scholarship on and about the graphic novel form. Looking at graphic novels in the genres such as mystery, superhero, manga, memoir, and works beyond categorization, students will examine how these stories are structured: the forms of novel, novella, and short story will help differentiate and explain the subtleties of these forms. The class will focus on social, structural and thematic issues of these specific texts, and explore the possibilities of the form itself.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will improve writing and research skills. Students will increase their capacity for academic writing and critical thinking in an academic model.
2. Students will learn the nuances of the graphic novel, in terms of the factors that set it apart from other art forms and other narrative forms.
3. Students will learn about genre, story type and character, as reflected in assigned texts and related works.
4. Students will apply this understanding to related art and literary forms.

Methodology of Instruction:

This is a discussion-based course. Students will come in prepared to talk about the assigned readings, and will also respond to them in weekly Blackboard posts.

Required Textbooks, Readings and Websites:

Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home*
Marian Churchland, *Beast*
Daniel Clowes, *Ghost World*
Dave McKean, *Cages*
Carla Speed McNeil, *Finder:Talisman*
Gabriel Moon and Fabio Ba, *Daytripper*
Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons, *Watchmen*
Grant Morrison and Frank Quitely, *All-Star Superman*

Library Reserve Information:

Books are reserved on 2-hour loan

Materials and Tools list:

Laptop or tablet for Blackboard participation and course presentation as well as writing and submitting written assignments

Blackboard: Access the Blackboard site for this course via the MCAD intranet homepage. We will use Blackboard for online responses, supplemental readings, and assignment submissions.

Email Usage: Email is used by college/administrative offices as the official means of communicating with the student body. Official college announcements regarding policy, classes, registration, deadlines, etc. are delivered via email. Students are expected to check their MCAD email frequently and are held responsible for all official information communicated to them via the email system. Misuse or misrepresentation of official communications by students will result in disciplinary action.

Attendance: Attendance in classes is mandatory. There are no officially excused absences. For classes that meet once a week, two absences will result in one full grade deduction. Any additional absences will result in the loss of one half of a letter grade. For classes that meet twice a week, four absences will result in one full grade deduction. Two additional absences will result in the loss of one half of a letter grade. Repeated tardiness will result in the loss of a letter grade.

Grading Policy: Grades at MCAD are based primarily on the quality of outcomes. Grades consider student' performance of assignments listed on each course syllabus, participation in class, magnitude of improvement, attendance, level of project difficulty, timeliness of project completion, compliance with class policies, and effort/dedication.

A - Excellent work, progress far beyond expectations of effort and outcomes, and full class participation.
B - Good work, completion of course requirements and preparedness for the more advanced study or next course in a sequence.
C - Average work, completion of course requirements and preparedness for the more advanced study or next course in a sequence.
D - Passing but below average work, some promise of improvement if the class were repeated.
F - Work not acceptable or not enough course requirements completed to receive a passing grade.
Plus and minus notations on letter grades indicate which side of the grade spectrum work and performance falls, whether above the assigned letter grade but short of the next higher one or short of the assigned letter grade and at risk of falling to the next lower one.

Grading Procedure / Criteria: Grading will be based on five areas: 1. 10% class participation (this includes being prepared for class, speaking in class, attending office hours, completing all other assignments); 2. 10% online participation (you will be required to post once a week to Blackboard with at least a well-written and edited commentary on some aspect of that week's assigned reading); 3. 20% presentation (each student will, in a group of two, present on a comic or graphic novel not assigned in the course; the group's choice must have my approval, and the presentation must be supplemented by a report submitted to me the week after the presentation); 4. 50% papers (students will submit a mid-term and a final essay on one or more of the course texts). More detail about assignments will be provided as the course progresses.

Academic Deficiencies: MCAD notifies students of deficiencies in academic performance throughout the semester. Notices are placed in student mailboxes. Students are encouraged to contact the faculty immediately and take steps to remedy the deficiency. If a student has two or more deficiencies at mid-semester the student will be contacted by the Dean of Student Affairs. A subsequent meeting will be scheduled to help the student analyze the problem and make realistic plans to remedy the situation and succeed in school.

Midterm Grade Notification: At the midterm I will provide your grade to date.

Assignments / Deliverables:

Presentation/report, weekly Blackboard postings, and two essays. See course calendar for due dates.

Course Calendar:

09/03

Introduction to the Course

PART 1. SUPERHEROES: FROM CULTURAL CRITIQUE TO THE NEW SINCERITY

09/10

READING

- Moore and Gibbons, Watchmen chapters 1-6

09/17

READING

- Watchmen chapters 7-12

DUE

- Group 1 presentation

09/24

READING

- Morrison and Quitely, All-Star Superman chapters 1-6

DUE

- Group 2 presentation

10/01

READING

- All-Star Superman chapters 7-12

DUE

- Group 3 presentation

PART 2. ALTERNATIVE AND AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL COMICS: AESTHETICS OF EVERYDAY LIFE

10/08

READING

- Clowes, Ghost World

DUE

- Group 4 presentation

10/15

READING

- Bechdel, Fun Home chapter 1-3

DUE

- Group 5 presentation

10/22

READING

- Fun Home chapters 4-7

DUE

- Essay #1

PART 3. THE UNCATEGORIZABLE: EXPERIMENTALISM, MAGICAL REALISM, AND INTERNATIONALISM

10/29

READING

- McKean, Cages chapter 1-3

DUE
• Group 6 presentation

11/05

READING
• Cages chapters 4-6
DUE
• Group 7 presentation

11/12

READING
• Cages chapters 7-10
DUE
• Group 8 presentation

11/19

READING
• Moon and Ba, Daytripper chapters 1-5
DUE
• Group 9 presentation

11/26

NO CLASS

12/03

READING
• Daytripper chapters 6-10
DUE
• Group 10 presentation

PART 4. SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY: DREAM WORLDS

12/10

READING
• McNeil, FINDER: Talisman

12/17

READING
• Churchland, Beast
DUE
• Essay 2

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THE LEARNING CENTER: The Learning Center provides interdisciplinary support for all MCAD students, including face-to-face and online tutoring, an online writing and learning lab (OWLL), small and large group workshops and in-class presentations, as well as academic accommodation services for students with disabilities. The Learning Center works with students to make them better learners and prioritizes equal access and opportunity for all students. Tutoring areas include writing, software and technical skills, time management, and study skills. For more information on the Learning Center's Hours, instructions for how to make an appointment, and access to the MCAD OWLL, visit learningcenter.mcad.edu or call (612) 874-3671.

LYNDA.COM: Students can access a wide variety of online tutorials at Lynda.com using their MCAD login information: <https://intranet.mcad.edu/modules/lynda/>

COURSE EVALUATIONS: Course evaluations are an integral part of MCAD curriculum development. Student feedback on courses are instrumental in creating a vibrant, informed, and robust learning community at MCAD. For these, and many other reasons, students are encouraged at the end of the semester to provide extensive feedback on course evaluations.

CELL PHONE POLICY (optional): Cell phones should be put on mute or vibrate during class. Calls can be made during breaks, as well as before or after class.

CREDIT HOUR DEFINITION: In lecture/discussion courses requiring outside preparation, 1 hour of credit represents 50 minutes contact time each week in class, and 2 hours of work outside of class. Therefore, a 3-credit lecture course requires 2.5 hours in class per week and approximately 6 hours outside of class.

In studio/laboratory courses, 1 hour of credit requires a minimum of 1.5 hours contact hours each week in class and approximately 1.5 hours of work outside of class. Therefore, a 3-credit studio course represents a minimum of 4.5 contact hours in class and approximately 4.5 hours of work outside of class per week.

In online courses, 1 hour of credit requires approximately 3 hours of work per week for all activities (i.e., reading, viewing, making, scanning, responding to discussion threads, collaborating, etc.). Therefore, a 3-credit online course requires approximately 9 hours per week to complete the necessary activities.

ATTENDANCE (ONLINE COURSES): Registration for an online course presupposes that the student will attend/fully participate in all online activities. Each student is responsible for meeting all course requirements.

CLASSROOM LAPTOP USAGE POLICY: Participation in a classroom community has many benefits, but students will also find that along with those benefits come responsibilities:

- + Students are responsible for bringing laptops to class when scheduled to do so.
- + Student laptops should be in good working condition. If a student is experiencing problems with a laptop, it is the student's responsibility to go to Computer Support for help: <https://intranet.mcad.edu/modules/css/?css=1>. Technical difficulties such as problems printing, uploading, saving, or retrieving files do not excuse late or missing work.
- + During classroom discussion, demonstration, or lecture, students should not be connected to network resources unless students are specifically instructed to do so.
- + Chatting, using social media, or emailing is no more acceptable than talking on a cell phone during class time. Non-class related use of a laptop during class time, including working on homework for other courses, may result in restriction of laptop use or a grade penalty.
- + Unless otherwise indicated, students should never use headphones during class time.
- + Students should always store copies of files in two backup locations. Students should never store the only copy of a paper/project on the student server space in case the server is down, and students are unable to access the paper/project.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY / SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY: Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in MCAD courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action.

The MCAD Student Handbook defines academic dishonesty as follows:

Submission of false records of academic achievement; cheating on assignments or examinations; altering, forging or misusing a College academic record, document or funds; taking, acquiring or using test materials without faculty permission; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records to obtain grades, honors, awards or professional endorsement in a dishonest manner; plagiarizing.

- + Plagiarizing: Quoting uncited materials, visual or written; presenting the work of others as your own; using work of other MCAD students without their express permission.
- + Using the Same Work in Different Courses: Students may not submit the same work for more than one class without the knowledge and consent of all faculty.
- + Consequences for plagiarizing and double submissions may include failing the assignment or the course, or academic probation.

Within this course, a student who is responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to an including an "F" for the course. If students have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, they should consult with their professor.

Using the Same Assignment in Different Courses: Studio projects are assigned and assessed according to the specific learning objectives for each

course. Occasionally students may be assigned a project in one course that shares many of the learning objectives of an assignment given in a different course. While turning in the same assignment for two courses is not encouraged, students who wish to do so are required to first notify the faculty member of each course and get permission. Faculty may assign additional requirements. Failure to notify faculty can result in failure of the assignments in both courses.

Accessibility and Equal Access: Persons with disabilities have a right to equal opportunity as prescribed by law. MCAD is responsible for creating a barrier-free environment while empowering students to grow toward independence and self-assertion. It is the individual student's responsibility to make their needs known and request accommodation. First-time disclosures must be made via appointment with the Learning Center or via our Disability Disclosure Form. For more information, visit learningcenter.mcad.edu or call (612) 874-3671.

ARCHIVING YOUR WORK: All students must turn in images of their work from each class every semester. The image format should follow MCAD archiving standards, which are found at:

<http://kb.mcad.edu/index.php?category=64>

Images should be accompanied by a Word document containing relevant information, found at:

[http://kb.mcad.edu/index.php?article=166 - Text Listing](http://kb.mcad.edu/index.php?article=166-Text%20Listing)

Intranet.MCAD.edu
MCAD Knowledgebase
Computer support
Archiving Standards for Student work