

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**
<https://ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

2021-2022 C LIT 299, Science in Comics
(Fall Term)

Instructor: Dr. Bettina Egger
Office: REMOTE
E-mail:
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Time: Tuesday & Thursday, 9:30-10:50
Place: REMOTE/HYBRID

Office Hours: 11 to noon, Tuesdays,
or by appointment
Course Website: see eClass for C LIT 299

Bachelor of Arts / Major in Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:
<https://www.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies/undergraduate-program-information/prospective-undergraduate-students>

Course Prerequisite: None or consent of department

It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate prerequisites for the course.

Technology requirements (minimum): internet access and access to a scanner or camera

It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate technology for the course.

Experiential Learning Component

X this course has a significant experiential learning component (15% or more of the course grade)

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes X No, not needed

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available

Exam registry – Students' Union

<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>

X See explanations below

Document distributed in class

Other (please specify)

NA

Course Description, Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes:

This course is an introduction to science in non-fiction comics and comics-based research, with a focus on major works and present-day examples. The course will be based on examples from international comics artists and engage topics such as the documentary form in comics, comics as a visual-verbal medium of knowledge transmission, different artistic practices of science comics, academic research in comics form (comics-based research), and comics as a tool for scientific communication. At least two professional comic artists will present their own practice of comics about science to the students. The students will also be invited to elaborate their own science comic in hands-on sessions. At the end of the course, students will be able to analyse and comprehend different styles, aesthetics and narrative forms in non-fictional science comics and have basic skills in communicating scientific knowledge in the comics form.

Course Format:

The objectives of this course will be realized through a combination of assigned readings, lectures, class discussions, artists' presentations, student presentations, audio-visual materials, hands-on sessions and a graphic research project.

Texts:

Required

- Delalande, Arnaud & Liberge, Éric: *The Case of Alan Turing*, 2016. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.
- McCloud, Scott: *Understanding Comics. The invisible art*, 1993. New York: Harper Perennial.
- Sousanis, Nick: *Unflattening*, 2015 Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Abbott, Edwin: *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions*. 1994 (1884)
<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/97>
- Robb, Jenny E. & Alec Longstreth: *Bill Blackbeard: The Collector Who Rescued the Comics*, 2009. (will be provided during the course)
- Hatfield, Charles: *An Art of Tensions*, 2009. In: Heer, Jeet & Worcester, Kend: *A comics studies reader*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, pp. 132-148.

Recommended

- Eisner, Will: *Comics and Sequential Art*, 1985. Tamarac-Florida: Poorhouse press.
- Groensteen, Thierry: *The System of Comics*, 2007. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Hatfield, Charles: *Alternative Comics. An Emerging Literature*, 2005. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Rius: *Marx for Beginners*, 1976. New York: Pantheon books.
- Del Rey Cabero, Enrique: *Beyond Linearity: Holistic, Multidirectional, Multilinear und Translinear Reading in Comics*, 2019. In: *The Comics Grid: Journal of Comics Scholarship*, Vol. 9(1), N°5, S. 1-21.
- Kuttner, Paul J. & Sousanis, Nick & Weaver-Hightower, Marcus B.: *How to Draw Comics the Scholarly Way. Creating Comics-Based Research in the Academy*, 2018. In:

Leavy, Patricia: *Handbook of Arts-Based Research*. New York – London: The Guilford Press, S. 396-422.

- Vandermeulen, David: *La bd et la transmission du savoir*, 2017. In: *Le Débat*, N°195, S. 199-208.

- Sabin, Roger: *Comics, Comix & Graphic Novels: A History Of Comic Art*, 2001. Phaidon Press.

Additional readings and reading assignments will be introduced in class.
For further information see the assignment section of this syllabus.

Additional Course Fees

Yes No

Important Dates: [See Academic Schedule in current Calendar](#)

First Day of Class: September 2, 2021

50% Withdrawal Date: October 4, 2021

Withdrawal Date: November 30, 2021

Last Day of Class: December 7, 2021

Final Exam Date (if applicable): December 13, 2021 at 9:00a

Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable): *Please consult the following site:*

<https://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=34&navoid=10107 - examinations-exams>

Deferred Final Examination: For information on how to apply for a deferred exam see [“I Missed my Final Exam, Now What?”](#)

Components of Course Grade (see “Explanatory Notes”):

In-class presentation: 20% (300 words abstract to be prepared in advance, 15min. presentation, 5min Q & A)

Major assignment: 35% artistic project in comics form (min. 2 pages, up to 10) **or** major essay (1,800 to 2,000 words),

due in eClass (or on paper), at 1st of December 2021, by Midnight

Class participation: 10%

Final examination: 35% (two-hour examination); **13th of December, 9:00a**

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

Your grade will depend, in part, on the compositional quality of your submissions. For your in-class presentation you will have to choose one of the comics (excerpts) about science listed below, read it carefully and prepare a written summary of about 300 words in advance (to be handed out in class). You will then have to do a 15 min presentation of your chosen comic in class, followed by a 5 min. question and answer session. The major assignment (comics

project, 2-10 drawn pages) must be submitted electronically on eClass. The format of the images should be JPEG or TIFF. However, it is possible to present a major essay of (1800-2000 words) instead of the comics project (also to be submitted electronically on eClass). In that case, the essay should be in MLA style. MLA style and formatting guide can be found at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>. Instructions for the in-class presentation, the in-class essay, and the major assignment will be provided in class.

List of recommended comics/excerpts for the in-class preparation task (choose one):

- Susan Merrill Squier & Ian Williams: *Introduction*. In: *The Graphic Medicine Manifesto*, 2015. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania University Press, pp. 1-20.
- NASA (collective): *Raindrop Tales: GPM meets Mizu-Chan*, 2015. Online: <https://gpm.nasa.gov/education/comics>
- Marion Montaigne: *Dans la combi de Thomas Pesquet*, 2017 (French). Paris: Dargaud.
- Marion Montaigne: Blog (French). <http://tumorrasmoinsbete.blogspot.com/>
- Jens Harder: *Alpha. Directions*, 2010. Berlin: Carlsen/ English: 2015, Knockabout
- Lynda Barry: *Syllabus*, 2014. Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly.
- Rius: *Cuba for Beginners*, 1971. Atlanta: Pathfinder Press.
- one book of the series *La Petite Bédéthèque des Savoirs* (French), Le Lombard, <https://www.l lombard.com/incontournable/la-petite-bedetheque-des-savoirs>
- Daryl Cunningham : *Science Tales*, 2012. Myriad Editions.
- Apostolos Doxiadis & Christos Papadimitriou: *Logicomix. An Epic Search for Truth*, 2009. London : Bloomsbury.
- Michael Goodwin & Dan E. Burr: *Economix. How our economy works (and doesn't work)*, 2012, Abrams & Chronicle books.
- Moebius: *La faune de Mars*, 2019. Paris: Moebius Production.

If you would like to work on a comic about science of your own choice for this task, please contact me.

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

Deferral of term work is a privilege and not a right; there is no guarantee that a deferral will be granted. Misrepresentation of facts to gain a deferral is a serious breach of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#).

In this course, In this course, 10% of the total course grade will be assigned for in-class participation.

Policy for Late Assignments:

A late penalty of 5% per calendar day late will be imposed on tardy written submissions. The condition of being “busy” is not a valid excuse for tardiness. Effective time management is an important element of successful university-level studies. Given scheduling constraints, in-class presentations cannot be re-scheduled.

Required Notes:

Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.

Student Responsibilities:

Academic Integrity:

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

All students should consult [the Academic Integrity website](#). If you have any questions, ask your instructor.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

The following best practice suggestions are made with regard to protecting the privacy of individuals and protecting the intellectual property associated with your teaching

materials if you decide to video or audio record formal lectures and other teaching materials.

Those enrolled in a class should be fully informed:

- I. That the lecture or discussion is being recorded. Please ask that students ensure that no other people are in the student's camera/recording view and that there is nothing identifiable or sensitive in that view (personal belongings, records, medications, etc.) prior to the class recording starting. Students should be informed that they can turn off their computer's camera or microphone if they are uncomfortable with being recorded.
- II. Why the recording is being made and any additional uses (beyond sharing with the students in the course) that will be made of the recording.
- III. Who will have access to the recording and how it will be disseminated (through eclass, google drive, zoom cloud drive, etc.). And
- IV. How long this access will be provided and when the recordings will be destroyed or otherwise deleted.

Disclaimer:

Any typographical errors in this syllabus are subject to change and will be announced in class and posted on eClass. The date of the final examination is set by the Registrar and takes precedence over the final examination date reported in this syllabus.

Student Resources:

The best all-purpose website for student services is: <https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students>.

[The Academic Success Centre](#) provides professional academic support to help students maximize their academic success and achieve their academic goals. We offer appointments, advising, group workshops, online courses, and specialized programming year-round to students in all university programs, and at all levels of achievement and study.

They also administer the University of Alberta's [Duty to Accommodate procedure](#) for students and works with students, instructors, campus units, Faculties and departments, community and government agencies, and on and off-campus service providers to coordinate students' disability-related accommodation needs for participation in university programs.

For general information and to register for services visit the [Academic Accommodations](#) webpage.

[The Centre for Writers](#) offers free one-on-one writing support to students, faculty, and staff. Students can request consultation for a writing project at any stage of development. Instructors can request class visits and presentations.

[The First Peoples' House](#) provides an environment of empowerment for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners to achieve personal and academic growth.

[Health and Wellness Support for Students](#) outlines available mental and physical health resources that are offered on-campus and in the community.

[The Office of the Student Ombuds](#) is a confidential service that strives to ensure that university processes related to students operate as fairly as possible. We offer information, advice, and support to students, faculty, and staff as they deal with academic, discipline, interpersonal, and financial issues related to student programs.

Learning and working environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring that all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment.

It is the policy of the University of Alberta that sexual violence committed by any member of the University community is prohibited and constitutes misconduct. Resources and more information can be found at <https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-life/sexual-violence>

The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.

Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) section of the University Calendar.

Grading:

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

“MLCS Graduate Grading Scale”

A+	97-100	Excellent
A	93-96	Excellent
A-	90-92	Excellent
B+	87-89	Good
B	79-86	Good
B-	74-78	Satisfactory

C+	68-73	Satisfactory
C	63-67	Failure
C-	58-62	Failure
D+	54-57	Failure
D-	50-53	Failure
F	00-49	Failure

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