

**Course Title:** Graphic Literature

**Instructor:** Shu-yu Lee

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Classroom Language:** English

**Course Description:**

In our world of increasingly multimedial cultural production, the graphic narrative, a mode of story-telling that combines images and texts, has obtained a new status as a serious genre in contemporary literature. This course aims to help students build their understanding of graphic story-telling as distinguished from word-based ones and develop their ability to appreciate and analyze visual representations. We will begin by strengthening our visual literacy and familiarizing ourselves with the language of comics as well as sequential art in general. With a strong knowledge base in visual culture, we will go on to explore the formal features of graphic literature that resonates with contemporary cultural sensibilities. By looking at specific works, we will examine the relationship between form and content, that is, how the form of the graphic narrative helps to express contemporary ideas about identity, memory, and trauma.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Students will become improve their visual literacy.

Students will develop the ability to analyze and interpret contemporary multimedial literature.

Students will be able to learn to engage in scholarly discussions with their peers.

**Core Capabilities (大學部學生核心能力):**

1. The ability to communicate and express oneself in English (溝通表達與語文能力) 10%
2. The ability to analyze classic canons of literature (文學經典的分析與詮釋) 10%
3. The ability to look for problems and conduct research (問題發掘與研究能力) 20%
4. The ability to think creatively (創作與創新能力) 30%
5. The ability to examine issues through global and multicultural perspectives (全球化與國際視野及多元文化認知能力) 30%

**Required Texts:**

Molly Ban

*Picture This: How Pictures Work*

Scott McCloud

*Understanding Comics*

Douglas Wolk

*Reading Comics: How Graphic Novels Work and What They Mean*

Will Eisner

*A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories*. 1978. Kitchen Sink Press, 1985.

Art Spiegelman

*Maus: A Survivor's Tale I & II*. 1986. Pantheon, 1991.

Paul Auster

*City of Glass*

Paul Karasik and David Mazzucchelli

*City of Glass*

Alison Bechdel

*Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*. Mariner, 2006.

**Supplementary Readings:**

Randy Duncan, Matthew J. Smith, and Paul Levitz

*The Power of Comics: History, Form, and Culture*

Thierry Groensteen

*The System of Comics*

*Comics and Narration*

Ian Hague

*Comics and the Senses: A Multisensory Approach to Comics and Graphic Novels*.

**Assessment:**

Attendance and Participation	20%
Group Discussions	30%
Mid-Term Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%

**Class Policies:**

1. To eliminate distraction and optimize classroom learning, the use of electronic devices unrelated to educational purposes is prohibited during class.
2. No make-up exam will be given.

**Schedule:**

Week 1	09/10	Introduction
Week 2	09/17	Molly Bang: <i>Picture This: How Pictures Work</i>
Week 3	09/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● McCloud: Chapter 1: Setting the record straight</li> <li>● Wolk: Chapter 1 "What Comics Are and What They Aren't" (3-28)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wolk: “Auteurs, Authors, and Art,” from “Chapter 2: Auteurs, the History of Art Comics, and How to Look at Ugly Drawings” (29-36)</li> <li>● Wolk: “Names and How to Use Them” from “Chapter 3: What’s Good About Bad Comics and What’s Bad About Good Comics” (60-64)</li> </ul>
Week 4	10/01	McCloud: Chapters 2-5.
Week 5	10/08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● McCloud: Chapters 6-9.</li> <li>● Wolk: “Chapter 5: Pictures, Words, and the Space Between Them” (118-34)</li> </ul>
Week 6	10/15	<i>A Contract with God</i>
Week 7	10/22	<i>A Contract with God</i>
Week 8	10/29	<i>Maus I</i>
Week 9	11/05	Mid-Term Exam
Week 10	11/12	<i>Maus I &amp; Maus II</i>
Week 11	11/19	<i>Maus II</i>
Week 12	11/26	<i>City of Glass</i> (Paul Auster)
Week 13	12/03	<i>City of Glass</i> (Paul Auster)
Week 14	12/10	<i>City of Glass</i> (Paul Karasik and David Mazzucchelli)
Week 15	12/17	<i>City of Glass</i> (Paul Karasik and David Mazzucchelli)
Week 16	12/24	<i>Fun Home</i>
Week 17	12/31	<i>Fun Home</i>
Week 18	01/07	Final Exam