COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD FOR
DEGREE CREDIT COURSE

X Transfer Course  X A.A. Degree applicable course  
(check all that apply)

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE: ENG 290 -- Comic Books As Literature

UNIT VALUE: 3

MINIMUM NUMBER OF SEMESTER HOURS: 48

BASIC SKILLS REQUIREMENTS: Appropriate Language Skills

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

PREREQUISITE: Eligibility for ENG 100

COREQUISITE: NONE

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION: NONE

SCOPE OF COURSE:
An analysis of the comic book in terms of its unique poetics (the complicated interplay of word and image); the themes that are suggested in various works; the history and development of the form and its subgenres; and the expectations of comic book readers. Examines the influence of history, culture, and economics on comic book artists and writers. Explores definitions of “literature,” how these definitions apply to comic books, and the tensions that arise from such applications.

SPECIFIC COURSE OBJECTIVES:
The successful student will:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the unique poetics of comic books and how that poetics differs from other media, such as prose and film.

2. Analyze representative works in order to interpret their styles, themes, and audience expectations, and compare and contrast the styles, themes, and audience expectations of works by several different artists/writers.

3. Demonstrate knowledge about the history and development of the comic book as an artistic, narrative form.

4. Demonstrate knowledge about the characteristics of and developments in the various subgenres of comic books (e.g., war comics, horror comics, superhero comics, underground comics).

5. Identify important historical, cultural, and economic factors that have influenced comic book artists/writers.

6. Think critically about how literary value is defined and accorded to artistic works.
CONTENT IN TERMS OF SPECIFIC BODY OF KNOWLEDGE:

I. The study of how words and pictures work together to produce meaning in comic book narrative.
   A. Principle of "closure" in comics
   B. Panel composition
   C. Page layout
   C. Visual aspects -- similarities to and differences from film and painting
   D. Narrative aspects -- similarities to and differences from other media
   E. Artistic/narrative options available to the comic book artist/writer
   F. Unity of artistic style and narrative content

II. The study of differences in style and theme among comic book artists/writers and the ways in which these differences contribute to the medium as a whole.

III. The study of various subgenres of comic books and how they have developed over time.
   A. War comics
   B. Horror comics
   C. Humor comics
   D. Romance comics
   E. Superhero comics
   F. Underground/independent comics
   G. Autobiographical comics
   H. The "graphic novel"
   I. Influence and impact of EC Comics and MAD Magazine

IV. The study of how specific historical, cultural, and economic forces have both restricted and enabled comic book writers and artists.
   A. World War II, The Korean War, and The Vietnam War
   B. McCarthyism
   C. Fredric Wertham, Seduction of the Innocent, Congressional Hearings on Juvenile Delinquency, and the creation of the Comics Code
   D. Political unrest in the 1960's
   E. Women's Liberation Movement
   F. Expansion of the direct market in the 1980's
   G. First Amendment violations and protection
   H. The proliferation of collectors
   I. The proliferation of corporate media culture

V. The study of what constitutes “literature,” canon formation, and how these debates apply to comic books.

VI. The study of comic book writers and artists such as:
   A. Winsor McCay
   B. George Herriman
   C. Walt Kelly
   D. Carl Barks
   E. Will Eisner
   F. Jack Cole
   G. Harvey Kurtzman
   H. Stan Lee
   I. Jack Kirby
   J. Bernie Krigstein
   K. Hergé
   L. Robert Crumb
   M. Jack Jackson
   N. Roberta Gregory
   O. Spain Rodriguez
   P. art spiegelman
   Q. Alan Moore
   R. Frank Miller
   S. Neil Gaiman
   T. Jaime & Gilbert Hernandez
   U. Dan Clowes
REQUIRED READING:
A selection of five to ten texts appropriate for the course, such as the following:


Kubert, Joe.  Fax from Sarajevo. Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Books, 1996.


SUGGESTED READING:
Texts appropriate for the course, such as the following:


REQUIRED WRITING:
A minimum of 10 to 15 typed pages of written work primarily based on the readings (subjects to be discussed with the instructor).

OUTSIDE ASSIGNMENTS:
Students are expected to spend a minimum of three hours per unit per week in class and on outside assignments, prorated for short-term classes.

Outside work may involve reading the texts, preparing for exams, researching and writing the papers, and preparing projects.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY:

Check all that apply:

X lecture
laboratory
lecture-laboratory combination
directed study

DISTANCE LEARNING:

This course may be offered as a distance learning course and meets Title 5 regulations 55370, 55372, 55374, 55376, 55378, and 55380.

Yes X No

If yes, check all that apply:

Television Course (Video one-way, e.g. ITV, video cassette, etc.)
Online Course (Text one-way, e.g. newspaper, correspondence, electronic file, etc.)
Two-Way Video Conferencing (Two-way interactive video and audio)
One-Way Video Conferencing (One-way interactive video and two-way interactive audio)
Computer Assisted Instruction (A specialized form of mediated instruction relying primarily on student access to information and prepared lessons or teaching materials through a computer terminal, but not under immediate supervision of a qualified instructor.)

GRADING POLICY AND STANDARDS (include methods of determining whether the stated objectives have been met by students):

Papers 40 -- 70%
Exams 20 -- 50%
Projects up to 40%
Homework up to 20%
Class Participation up to 10%

IS COURSE REPEATABLE FOR REASON(S) OTHER THAN DEFICIENT GRADE?
Yes    No  X   Number of times course may be taken for credit:

If yes, identify specific provision of Title 5 Division 2 section(s), 55761-55763 and 58161 which qualifies course as repeatable:

CONTACT PERSON:
Dr. Rocco Versaci, ext. 2971
SIGNATURES:

By signing this form, I certify that this course outline of record meets all the minimum requirements for associate degree credit courses as specified in Title 5 Section 55002.

Prepared by: __________________________________________________________
(signature) (date)

*Department Chairperson/Director: _________________________________
(signature) (date)

*Division Dean: ____________________________________________
(signature) (date)

*Curriculum Committee Representative: _________________________
(if applicable) (signature) (date)

*I certify that this course meets all the minimum requirements for A.A. degree applicable courses.

Course outlines of record should be reviewed regularly and revised as necessary.

NOTE: Some revisions to course outlines of record require Curriculum Committee approval, others may not. Please consult your dean or the Instruction Office if you need assistance.