

NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

College: **[Humanities]**

Department: **[English]**

Note: Use this form to request a single course that can be offered independently of any other course, lab or activity.

1. Course information for Catalog Entry

Subject Abbreviation and Number: **[ENGL 413 A-Z]**

Course Title: **[Selected Topics in Popular Culture]**

Units: **[3]** units

Course Prerequisites: **[Completion of the lower division writing requirement]** (if any)

Course Corequisites: **[]** (if any)

Recommended Preparatory Courses: **[ENGL 313]** (if any)

2. Course Description for Printed Catalog: *Notes:* If grading is NC/CR only, please state in course description. If a course numbered less than 500 is available for graduate credit, please state "Available for graduate credit in the catalog description."

[ENGL 413 A-Z: Selected Topics in Popular Culture (3-3)] Prerequisite: Completion of the lower division writing requirement. Preparatory: ENGL 313. Intensive study of a particular topic in popular culture (such as blockbuster movies, fashion, sports, or social media) as seen from historical and critical perspectives. Topics will change from semester to semester. Coursework may include field work and creative projects; critical reading and critical writing required. May be repeated once for credit, provided the topic is different. Available for graduate credit.]

3. Date of Proposed Implementation: (Semester/Year): **[Fall] / [2018]**

4. Course Level

☐ Undergraduate Only

☐ Graduate Only

☒ Graduate/Undergraduate

5. Course Abbreviation "Short title" (maximum of 17 characters and spaces)

Short Title: **[T•o•p•i•c•s• •i•n• •P•o•p•C•u•l•t]**

6. Basis of Grading:

☐ Credit/No Credit Only

☒ Letter Grade Only

☐ CR/NC or Letter Grade

7. Number of times a course may be taken:

☒ May be taken for credit for a total of **[2]** times, or for a maximum of **[6]** units

☐ Multiple enrollments are allowed within a semester

8. C-Classification: (e.g., *Lecture-discussion (C-4).*)

[3] units @ **[c]** **[4]**

9. Replaces Current Experimental Course?

☐ YES ☒ NO

Replaces Course Number/Suffix: **[]**

Previously offered **[]** times.

10. Proposed Course Uses: *(Check all that apply)*

- ☒ Own Program: ☒ Major ☒ Minor ☒ Masters ☐ Credential ☐ Other
☐ Requirement or Elective in another Program
☐ General Elective
☐ General Education, Section []
☐ Meets GE Information Competence (IC) Requirement
☐ Meets GE Writing Intensive (WI) Requirement
☐ Community Service Learning (CS)
☐ Cross-listed with: *(List courses)* []

11. Justification for Request: *Course use in program, level, use in General Education, Credential, or other. Include information on overlap/duplication of courses within and outside of department or program. (Attach)*

See attachment, below

12. Estimate of Impact on Resources within the Department, for other Departments and the University. *(Attach)*

See attachment, below

13. Course Outline and Syllabus *(Attach)* *Include methods of evaluation, suggested texts, and selected bibliography. Describe the difference in expectations of graduates and undergraduates for all 400 level courses that are offered to both.*

See attachment, below

14. Indicate which of the PROGRAM'S measurable Student Learning Outcomes are addressed in this course. *(Attach)*

SLOs for the minor in Popular Culture addressed in ENGL 413 A-Z:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply critical thinking to popular culture.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply and critically engage with theories relevant to the study of popular culture.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to research, critically evaluate, respond to, and ethically use information sources in popular culture studies.

SLOs for the major in English addressed in ENGL 413 A-Z:

1. Students will demonstrate critical reading skills.
2. Students will demonstrate effective writing skills.

SLO for the graduate program in English addressed in ENGL 413 A-Z:

Students will produce advanced analyses that take into account current schools of aesthetic, critical and historical methodology and are informed by disciplinary standards appropriate to their option.

15. Assessment of COURSE objectives *(Attach)*

- A. Identify each of the course objectives and describe how the student performance will be assessed

See matrices, below

(For numbers 14 and 15, see [Course Alignment Matrix and the Course Objectives Chart](#))

16. If this is a General Education course, indicate how the General Education Measurable Student Learning Outcomes (from the appropriate section) are addressed in this course. *(Attach)*

N/A

17. Methods of Assessment for Measurable Student Learning Outcomes *(Attach)*

- A. Assessment tools: For English 413A-Z, assessment tools may include one or more of the following:
- a. Regular responses to assigned readings
 - b. Written assignments or assignment sequences, such as a short paper or papers that build toward a final written project
 - c. Presentations
 - d. A final paper or project that advances an argument about an aspect of popular culture in relation to social, cultural and political issues, and/or about a critical debate in popular culture studies
- B. Describe the procedure dept./program will use to ensure the faculty teaching the course will be involved in the assessment process (refer to the university's policy on assessment)

The English Department chair will work with the faculty of the course to ensure that they are aware of and have incorporated the program SLOs. Faculty members will collaborate to discuss and share data from student written work (such as assignments, exams, and/or final exam) that can be used to demonstrate the extent to which students achieve the SLO's for the course. Revisions of the course will come from faculty experience, knowledge of the field, and observations of student responses and performance in the course with regard both to course objectives and program SLOs. Adjustments to teaching methods, course content, and assessment techniques will occur as needed.

18. Record of Consultation: *(Normally all consultation should be with a department chair or program coordinator.) If more space is needed attach statement and supporting memoranda.*

| Date: | Dept/College: | Department Chair/ Program Coordinator | Concur (Y/N) |
|-------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| [4/11/17] | [AIS] | [Brian Burkhart] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [AAS] | [Eunai Shrake] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [AFRS] | [Theresa White] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [ANTH] | [Sabina Magliocco] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [ART] | [Edward Alfano] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [CAS] | [Beatriz Cortez] | [Y] |

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|-----------------------|-------|
| [4/11/17] | [CHS] | [Gabriel Gutierrez] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [COMS] | [Kathryn Sorrells] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [CTVA] | [Jon Stahl] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [FCS] | [Yi Cai] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [GWS] | [Breny Mendoza] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [JS] | [Jody Myers] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [JOUR] | [Linda Bowen] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [LRS] | [Ranita Chatterjee] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [LING] | [Ana Sanchez Munoz] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [MCLL] | [Brian Castronovo] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [MUS] | [Ric Alviso] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [PHIL] | [Tim Black] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [QS] | [Greg Knotts] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [RS] | [Rick Talbott] | [Y] |
| [4/11/17] | [RTM] | [Mechelle Best] | [Y] |

Collection Development Coordinator

Please send an email to: collection.development@csun.edu

Date

[]

19. Approvals:

| | | |
|---|-------|------------|
| Department Chair/Program Coordinator: Kent Baxter | Date: | [5/1/17] |
| College (Dean or Associate Dean): | Date: | [] |
| Educational Policies Committee: | Date: | [] |
| Graduate Studies Committee: | Date: | [] |
| Provost: | Date: | [] |

ATTACHMENTS:

- 11. Justification for Request:** *Course use in program, level, use in General Education, Credential, or other. Include information on overlap/duplication of courses within and outside of department or program. (Attach)*

ENGL 413A-Z: Selected Topics in Popular Culture will provide a valuable opportunity for students to explore a single topic in popular culture through in-depth theoretical study. The course is envisioned as corresponding to similar courses in other options in the English department, such as ENGL 457A-Z: Selected Topics in Creative Writing and ENGL 459A-Z: Selected Topics in Writing and Rhetoric. This course is a core required course for students completing our new Popular Culture Minor.

Creating ENGL 413 as a “selected topics” (A-Z) course enables us to pivot quickly to new and emerging topics in a fast-changing, international field. It allows our program to accommodate courses that do not fit into our existing categories, and, more importantly, creates a space to expose our students to emerging and current areas of study. In addition, ENGL 413 enables students to work on a topic under the direction of a faculty member who

specializes in that topic. In short, by creating ENGL 413 we will be adding breadth, diversity, and depth to our program.

ENGL 413 builds on the other core and elective courses in the minor, which introduce students to the scope of the field of popular culture as a whole, to scholarly resources, and to the varied theoretical and critical paradigms in the field. Whereas the long-established ENGL 313, for example, presents methodologies for the study of popular culture broadly, ENGL 413 will enable students to study closely the scholarly debates within a specific area. It applies the skills and knowledge gained in ENGL 313 to a particular object of study, thus extending and deepening students' understanding. For example, while ENGL 313 might introduce students to overarching concepts in audience studies, ENGL 413 might delve into the *otaku* (nerd, geek, or fan) culture originating in Japan, with the help of critical studies specific to the Japanese context (e.g. Azuma 2009; Lunning 2007) and with focus on cultural phenomena such as videogaming or *anime*.

In addition, as a course available for graduate credit, ENGL 413 provides English MA students an opportunity to apply the advanced skills and knowledge gained through courses such as ENGL 638 (Seminar in Critical Approaches to Literature) and ENGL 653 (Literary and Rhetorical Genre Theory) to aspects of popular culture. Graduate students in ENGL 413 perform additional work in the course appropriate to their level, such as presenting a seminar paper or creative project (see *Assignments* under the Course Outline, below), leading a classroom discussion, or curating an online scholarly resource.

12. Estimate of Impact on Resources within the Department, for other Departments and the University. (*Attach*)

This course does not duplicate current course offerings, and will make use of existing spatial and technological resources. With no foreseeable changes or additions to accommodations, facilities, and technological holdings on campus, there will be no increased costs for such resources. The English Department has both lecturers and full-time faculty available to teach English 413A-Z.

There will be no additional costs for administrative support. Furthermore, the library's holdings already include primary texts (books, film and other media) and relevant research (see attached bibliography). As a core course in the newly created Popular Culture Minor, the course will be rotated through the schedule regularly.

One section will be offered per year for at least the first two years. As long as the course fills to at least 12 students, the department is prepared to absorb the cost of running it while it builds enrollment and while the Popular Culture Minor grows. After that, we will assess demand and increase or decrease the offer frequency accordingly.

There are no foreseeable additional costs through the production of departmental publications or an increase in the library's holdings.

13. Course Outline and Syllabus (*Attach*) Include methods of evaluation, suggested texts, and selected bibliography. Describe the difference in expectations of graduates and undergraduates for all 400 level courses that are offered to both.

ENGL 413 Course Outline

This course outline reflects a consensus of relevant faculty in English. Unlike the accompanying sample syllabus, this outline addresses faculty, establishing the broad contours of the course.

I. Course Description

ENGL 413 provides students an opportunity to explore in depth theoretical issues in the field of popular culture studies. All sections will include critical reading and critical writing. Students will engage with both primary and secondary materials. Presentation methods may include (but are not limited to) lecture, discussion, workshops, and small group activities. Examples of specific course topics might include: “Superheroes,” “The Romantic Comedy,” “James Bond in Fiction and Film,” “Epic Fantasy,” “Science and Popular Culture,” “Rethinking Animal Rights,” “The Woman Warrior,” “Teen Blockbusters,” “Dystopias,” and so on.

University catalog copy: ENGL 413 A-Z: Selected Topics in Popular Culture

Prerequisite: Completion of the lower division writing requirement. Preparatory: ENGL 313. Intensive study of a particular topic in popular culture (such as blockbuster movies, fashion, sports, or social media) as seen from historical and critical perspectives. Topics will change from semester to semester. Coursework may include field work and creative projects; critical reading and critical writing required. May be repeated one time. Available for graduate credit.

II. Pre-Requisites

Completion of the lower-division writing requirement. English 313 is recommended as a preparatory.

III. Course Objectives

Through intensive study of a particular topic in popular culture, students will:

1. Analyze critically the production, consumption, and interpretation of popular culture.
2. Explain the social and ideological influences on, and impact of, popular culture.
3. Demonstrate critical thinking in discussing important theories and debates in popular culture studies.
4. Conduct substantial research into popular culture.

IV. Methods of Evaluation

Readings:

Instructors will assign a range of texts and resources (potentially including print, digital, and/or other media resources) appropriate to the particular topic of study. Among these texts will be sources of theoretical and/or historical-contextual study.

Assignments:

ENGL 413A-Z is intended to be a senior-level course in which students who have had several courses in popular culture develop and deepen their ability to think critically and write critically/creatively about a specific facet of popular culture. Potential assignments include but are not limited to:

- Research projects
- Research essays
- Group-led discussions and presentations
- Blogging, Wiki editing, or online presentations
- Annotated bibliographies
- Creative projects (e.g., zines, comics, visual essays, photography, illustration, design work, video, narrative or lyrical writing, performance, etc.)
- Field studies
- Service Learning and Community Engagement projects

Instructors will choose assignments that meet the particular needs and orientation of their courses. In all sections, graduate students will complete an additional project to receive graduate credit, such as presenting a seminar paper or creative project.

SLOs for the minor in Popular Culture addressed in ENGL 413A-Z:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply critical thinking to popular culture.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply and critically engage with theories relevant to the study of popular culture.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to research, critically evaluate, respond to, and ethically use information sources in popular culture studies.

SLOs for the major in English addressed in ENGL 413A-Z:

1. Students will demonstrate critical reading skills.
2. Students will demonstrate effective writing skills.

SLO for the graduate program in English addressed in ENGL 413A-Z:

Students will produce advanced analyses that take into account current schools of aesthetic, critical and historical methodology and are informed by disciplinary standards appropriate to their option.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY IN POPULAR CULTURE STUDIES

Adorno, Theodor W. *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*. Ed. J. M. Bernstein. Routledge, 1991.

- Aldama, Frederick L., ed. *The Routledge Companion to Latina/o Popular Culture*. Routledge, 2016.
- Avila, Eric. *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*. U of California P, 2006.
- Azuma, Hiroki. *Otaku: Japan's Database Animals*. Trans. Jonathan E. Abel and Shion Kono. U of Minnesota P, 2009.
- Bacon-Smith, Camille. *Enterprising Women: Television Fandom and the Creation of Popular Myth*. 1991. U of Pennsylvania P, 2005.
- Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies*. 1957. Trans. Annette Lavers, 1972. Hill and Wang, 2013.
- Brooker, Will, and Deborah Jermyn, eds. *The Audience Studies Reader*. Routledge, 2003.
- Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Trans. Steven Rendall. U of California P, 1984.
- Creekmur, Corey K., and Alexander Doty, eds. *Out in Culture: Gay, Lesbian, and Queer Essays on Popular Culture*. Duke UP, 1998.
- Davé, Shilpa, LeiLani Nishime, and Tasha G. Oren, eds. *Global Asian American Popular Cultures*. NYU Press, 2016.
- Dines, Gail, and Jean M. M. Humez, eds. *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Text-Reader*. Sage, 1995.
- Doty, Alexander. *Making Things Perfectly Queer: Interpreting Mass Culture*. U of Minnesota P, 1993.
- Ewen, Stuart. *All Consuming Images: The Politics of Style in Contemporary Culture*. Basic Books, 1988.
- . *Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of the Consumer Culture*. Basic Books, 2001.
- , and Elizabeth Ewen. *Channels of Desire: Mass Images and the Shaping of American Consciousness*. U of Minnesota P, 1992.
- Farrell, James J. *One Nation Under Goods: Malls and the Seductions of American Shopping*. Smithsonian Books, 2010.
- Fiske, John. *Introduction to Communication Studies*. 3rd ed. Routledge, 2011.
- . *Understanding Popular Culture*. 2nd ed. Routledge, 2011.
- Frank, Thomas. *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism*. U of Chicago P, 1998.

- Gray, Jonathan, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harrington, eds. *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World*. NYU Press, 2007.
- Habell-Pallán, Michelle, and Mary Romero, eds. *Latino/a Popular Culture*. NYU Press, 2002.
- Halberstam, J. Jack. *Gaga Feminism: Sex, Gender, and the End of Normal*. Beacon, 2012.
- Hebdige, Dick. *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. 1979. Routledge, 2011.
- hooks, bell. *Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations*. Routledge, 1994.
- Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. 1947. Seabury Press, 1972.
- Hutcheon, Linda, with Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. Routledge, 2013.
- Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism: Or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. 1991. Verso, 2009.
- Jenkins, Henry. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. NYU Press, 2006.
- . *Fans, Bloggers, and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*. NYU Press, 2006.
- . *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*. Routledge, 2013.
- Leland, John. *Hip, the History*. Ecco, 2004.
- Lewis, Justin. *Beyond Consumer Capitalism: Media and the Limits to Imagination*. Polity, 2013.
- Lunning, Frenchy, ed. *Mechademia 2: Networks of Desire*. U of Minnesota P, 2007.
- Maasik, Sonia, and Jack Solomon, eds. *Signs of Life in the U.S.A: Readings on Popular Culture for Writers*. 8th ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015.
- Milestone, Katie, and Anneke Meyer. *Gender and Popular Culture*. Polity, 2012.
- Nguyen, Mimi Thi, and Thuy Linh Nguyen Tu, eds. *Alien Encounters: Popular Culture in Asian America*. Duke UP, 2007.
- Ott, Brian L, and Robert L. Mack. *Critical Media Studies: An Introduction*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
- Peele, Thomas, ed. *Queer Popular Culture: Literature, Media, Film and Television*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Radway, Janice A. *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature*. U of North Carolina P, 1991.
- Scanlon, Jennifer, ed. *The Gender and Consumer Culture Reader*. NYU Press, 2000.

Solomon, J. Fisher. *The Signs of Our Time: Semiotics, the Hidden Messages of Environments, Objects, and Cultural Images*. J.P. Tarcher, 1988.

Trier-Bieniek, Adrienne. *Feminist Theory and Pop Culture*. Sense Publishers, 2015.

Underhill, Paco. *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping*. 1999. Rev. and updated ed. Simon & Schuster, 2009.

Verney, Kevern. *African Americans and US Popular Culture*. Routledge, 2005.

Zeisler, Andi. *Feminism and Pop Culture*. Seal Press, 2008.

Sample Syllabus: English 413A-Z: Selected Topics in Popular Culture

ENGL 413SH: **THE COMIC BOOK SUPERHERO**

Class #, days & times TBD

[professor]

[contact information]

Office hours: TBD



OVERVIEW: We will study the history, narrative and artistic conventions, audiences, and cultural significance of the costumed superhero genre, with emphasis on its original medium, the comic book. From the genre's first boom in the late 1930s and early '40s, through its revival in the '60s, to its revision and elaboration since—and its enormous presence today in films, TV, videogames, and other media—we'll examine the superhero in cultural and aesthetic terms. Given that this genre has always been about identity, the body, and difference, we will pay particular attention to issues of race, gender, sexuality, and disability.

Prerequisite: Completion of the lower division writing requirement. Recommended preparatory: ENGL 313. *This course stresses critical reading, writing and research, and requires regular use of online resources.*

OBJECTIVES OF 413

Through intensive study of the superhero genre, you will:

1. Analyze critically the production, consumption, and interpretation of popular culture.
2. Explain the social and ideological influences on, and impact of, popular culture.
3. Demonstrate critical thinking in discussing important theories and debates in popular culture studies.
4. Conduct substantial research into popular culture.

More specifically, you will work toward the following:

- Familiarity with *the history of the superhero as a genre* from the early 20th to the early 21st century, including major periods, trends, and figures.

- Ability to discuss, analytically and critically, the common *conventions of the genre*, including character types, plots, settings, and other narrative and artistic conventions.
- Ability to discuss, analytically and critically, *the political, ethical and ideological implications and influence of the genre*.
- Familiarity with *fandom* as a vital participant in supporting and defining the genre.
- General familiarity with the *history of comic book publication, distribution, retailing and reception* from the mid-1930s to today, including the rise and impact of the comic book specialty shop or “local comics shop” (LCS).

REQUIREMENTS



- **Participation.** Attendance, focus, energy, contributions to class discussion. 20% of your grade.
- **Blog:** Each of you will create and maintain a blog devoted to superhero studies that will serve as the platform for your course work. On this blog, you’ll be expected to post at least the following: responses to our readings each week; three responses to an ongoing superhero comic book series of your choosing; a report on a local comics shop; a response to a superhero story in another medium, such as film, TV, or videogame; the design and origin of your own superhero; and materials related to your critical paper (see below). Posts should generally run to about 300 words. The look of your blog and much of its content are up to you; constant maintenance of the blog will be the key to your success in class. Blogs should be launched by Week 2, and you should be posting regularly by Week 3. Detailed guidelines are available in our online (Canvas) syllabus, and we will discuss them in class. Reading responses: 20%. Overall content and design of blog: another 20%.
- **Responding to others’ blogs:** You should post substantial, relevant comments on at least two of your classmates’ blogs each week (starting in Week 3). Respond thoughtfully and in depth; always aim for at least one solid paragraph of feedback or debate, one that gives your classmate something to think about or work with. Be sure to set up your own blog to receive and post comments from readers; that is, choose a blog provider, such as Weebly, Wix, or WordPress, which will allow comments easily (no Tumblr or Instagram, please!). I recommend you regulate the comments on your blog by requiring comments to be approved by you before they go public; this helps prevent spam. I also urge you to set up an RSS feed, so that your classmates can subscribe and thus get your updates automatically. We will bring some of this back-and-forth blog discussion into the classroom. 20%.

- **Critical Paper:** By semester's end, you'll produce an 8 to 10-page research-based argumentative essay that engages critically with the superhero genre in terms relevant to our course. This essay should be a self-directed project that serves as a capstone for your experience in 413SH. I'll expect you to blog a 300-word proposal for the paper, along with an annotated bibliography of at least four sources, by Week 11, and to blog a preliminary draft of the paper by Week 13. 20%.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Articles, book chapters, and comics in PDF (via Canvas)
- Coates, Stelfreeze, & Martin, *Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet* (Marvel)
- Fawaz, *The New Mutants: Superheroes and the Radical Imagination of American Comics* (NYU)
- Hatfield, Heer, & Worcester, eds., *The Superhero Reader* (UP of Mississippi)
- Hoberek, *Considering Watchmen* (Rutgers)
- Kane, Finger, Robinson, et al., *Batman Chronicles* Vol. 1 (DC)
- Marston & Peter, *Wonder Woman Chronicles* Vol. 1 (DC)
- Marvel Unlimited digital subscription, \$10/month (gives access to Marvel comics)
- Miller, et al., *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* (DC)
- Moore, Gibbons, & Higgins, *Watchmen* (DC)
- Morrison, Quitely, & Rich, *All-Star Superman* (DC)
- Sadowski, ed., *Supermen!* (Fantagraphics)
- Siegel & Shuster, *Superman Chronicles* Vol. 1 (DC Comics)
- Wilson, Alphona, et al., *Ms. Marvel* Vol. 1: *No Normal* (Marvel)
- Yang & Liew, *The Shadow Hero* (First Second)

GRADING RUBRIC (1000 points possible)

| Requirement | % value | Points possible |
|--------------------------------|---------|-----------------|
| Participation | 20 | 200 |
| Reading responses | 20 | 200 |
| Blog overall | 20 | 200 |
| Responses to classmates' blogs | 20 | 200 |
| Critical Paper | 20 | 200 |

ENGL 413SH: THE COMIC BOOK SUPERHERO—Schedule

Post your responses to assigned texts by **5:00pm the day before** we are to discuss them in class.

Week 1—Course Intro

- What to expect in this course, and how to prepare
- Intro to the superhero as genre: its motifs and conventions

Week 2—Superman and the Rise of the Genre

- **Read:** Siegel & Shuster, *Superman Chronicles*; selections from *The Superhero Reader (TSR)*: Introduction, Jones, Wylie, and Reynolds
- **Write:** a 300 to 500-word response to *Superman Chronicles* and Reynolds. For this week, you may submit your response on paper if necessary, but by Week 3 you should be posting reading responses to your blog.
- Discussion: creating, trouble-shooting, and maintaining your blog; blogging criteria

Week 3—Gearing Up for War: The Early Superheroes, Anxious Nationalism, and Racism

- **Your blog should be up and running smoothly by now, and your reading response posted there.** Also, this week everyone should begin commenting on each other's blogs.
- **Read:** Sadowski, ed., *Supermen*; *TSR*: Coogan, Feiffer; plus, Simon & Kirby, "Meet Captain America" (1941, PDF available on Moodle)
- Lecture: Precursors to and influences on the superhero genre

Week 4—Superman Revised, and Superman Now

- **Read:** Morrison, Quitely, & Rich, *All-Star Superman* (a postmodern take on the Man of Steel); selected Superman tales from the Silver Age (PDFs); Eco, "The Myth of Superman" (PDF); *TSR*: Brooker. *Recommended:* Gordon, *Superman: The Persistence of an American Icon*.

Week 5—Batman and Masked Vigilantes

- **Read:** Kane, Finger, et al., *Batman Chronicles*; selected post-1940s Batman comics (PDFs); *TSR*: Bukatman
- *Recommending viewing:* *The Mark of Zorro*, either the silent 1920 version starring Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. (dir. Niblo) or the 1940 version starring Tyrone Power (dir. Mamoulian); the *Batman* movie serial, Ch. 1 (Columbia, 1943, dir. Hillyer)
- By now: post at least one blog entry about the superhero comics series you are following.

Week 6—Batman Revised, and Batman Now

- **Read:** Miller et al., *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*; TSR: Klock; Meehan, “Holy Commodity Fetish, Batman!” (PDF)
- **View:** *The Dark Knight* (dir. Nolan, 2008); “Legends of the Dark Knight” (dir. Riba, from *The New Batman Adventures*, 1998)

Week 7—Wonder Woman’s Feminist Alternative

- **Read:** Marston & Peter, *Wonder Woman Chronicles*; Saunders, “Wonder Woman: Bondage and Liberation” (PDF); TSR: Robbins, Steinem, Stuller. *Recommended:* Lepore, *The Secret History of Wonder Woman*.

Week 8—Queer[ing] Heroes

- **Read:** TSR: Medhurst; Williamson, “‘Draped Crusaders’: Disrobing Gender in *The Mark of Zorro*” (PDF); Chabon, “Secret Skin” (PDF)

Week 9—The Silver Age and the Rise of Marvel

- **Read:** Marvel Unlimited: origin stories for Fantastic Four, Hulk, Spider-Man, Iron Man, and Avengers (1961-63); TSR: Hatfield. *Recommended:* Hatfield, *Hand of Fire*.
- By now: blog your comic shop report.

Week 10—Queer Kinship and the Superhero Team in the Age of Marvel

- **Read:** Marvel Unlimited: Kirby & Lee, *Fantastic Four* #45-53 (1965-66); Fox & Sekowsky, JLA stories from 1960 (PDFs); Fawaz, *The New Mutants*, Introduction and Chs. 1-3. *Recommended:* Alaniz, *Death, Disability, and the Superhero*.
- By now: blog your analysis of a superhero story in another medium.

Week 11—The X-Men, Mutant Superheroes, and Allegories of Diversity

- **Blog your proposal for your Critical Paper (c. 300 words).**
- **Read:** Marvel Unlimited: Kirby & Lee, *X-Men* #1 (1963); Byrne & Claremont, *Uncanny X-Men* #135-137 (1980); Morrison & Quitely, *New X-Men* #114 (2001); Fawaz, Chs. 4 and 7
- **View:** *X-Men* (dir. Singer, 2000)

Week 12—Watchmen, and How the 1980s Changed the Superhero

- **Read:** Moore, Gibbons, & Higgins, *Watchmen*; Hoberek, *Considering Watchmen*
- By now: post another blog entry about the superhero series you are following.

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| <p>Week 13—Superheroes and Race, Revisited</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Blog the preliminary draft of your Critical Paper (c. 1200 words). ▪ Read: Coates, Stelfreeze, & Martin, <i>Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet</i>; TSR: Nama; Davis, “Bare Chests, Silver Tiaras, and Removable Afros: The Visual Design of Black Comic Book Superheroes” (PDF) |
| <p>Week 14—Superheroes, Race, and Social Identity Complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read: Wilson & Alphona, <i>Ms. Marvel</i>, Vol. 1; Yang & Liew, <i>The Shadow Hero</i>; Singer, “‘Black Skins’ and White Masks: Comic Books and the Secret of Race” (PDF) |
| <p>Week 15—Course Outro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Blog your own, self-created superhero by now. Plus, before Finals Week, post your final blog entry about the superhero series you’ve been following. ▪ In-class conversation: your heroes! |
| <p>FINALS WEEK: FINAL DRAFT OF YOUR CRITICAL PAPER DUE ON EXAM DAY!</p> |

COURSE POLICIES

Content warning: Superhero stories (like comics in general) vary in style, tone, and theme. They may be targeted at adults as well as, or instead of, children, and may contain content that some audiences find troubling. Superhero stories deal with violence, power, the body, and difference, so they can be shocking. Further, our required texts reflect diverse attitudes, ideological positions, and social problems; I expect everyone in class to be able to deal with that. If something in our texts bothers you, I invite you to consider your response and express your opinions thoughtfully; after all, working with challenging content is part of learning to interpret culture seriously. I expect everyone to participate equally in discussion of all texts (I do not usually offer alternate assignments).

Attendance policy: Active participation in class is prerequisite to doing well in this course, and to our success as a group. For every unwaived absence, i.e. every class you miss without due explanation, your Participation score will drop by 10 percent. Two times late counts as a full absence, and leaving class early counts as an absence too. Understand that the only absences I waive are medical or family emergencies, bereavements, and court dates. If you absolutely must miss class due to such an emergency, and would like to make sure that this does not harm your Participation score, provide me documentation (e.g., doctor’s letter).

Beware the lure of gadgets. You're not "on call" when you're in this classroom. I'm not either. Phones and other communication devices should be silenced and put away before we come in. Also, while using a tablet or laptop for taking notes or looking up class resources is fine, computing not related to the content of class, such as random Netsurfing, is a hindrance to learning, and I take it as a sign of disengagement and disrespect for the class. *If you're involved with your gadgets to the exclusion of class discussion, then, in my book, you are absent.*

Plagiarism short-circuits the mind and cancels out your work. As a reminder, passing off the words, ideas, or work of another as your own, *without properly crediting your source*, is plagiarism and considered a violation of academic honesty. This serious breach of conduct is discussed at length in CSUN's Catalog, in the Policies section, under "Academic Dishonesty" (<http://catalog.csun.edu/policies/academic-dishonesty>). To avoid plagiarism, be sure to acknowledge all ideas and quotations from other sources. Keep full, accurate notes when working from other texts, and recheck your citations and quotations at every step of your writing process. Also, whenever you use an outside source, always give full bibliographical information in the form of a proper MLA bibliography. I recommend the Oviatt Library's online research and citation resources, including the tools EndNote Web or Zotero. Be advised that assignments plagiarized in whole or in part will receive a zero, and, in line with CSUN policy, the student responsible will be reported to Student Affairs for possible further action.

Avoid late work. I generally do not accept work submitted after deadline. When I do, I typically deduct 20 percent from the grade immediately. Timeliness is crucial, so set your targets early, consult your calendar often, and make sure your work is on time. Talk to me in advance if you expect deadline problems; we can work out extensions if needed.

Remember: Writing for class is not the same as texting, IMing, or sending personal email. Keep your writing clear and professional, properly grammatical, correctly punctuated, and cleanly formatted. Avoid texting lingo and Netgeek abbreviations (OMG, LOL, etc.). Make all the writing you do for course credit, including your blog, strong, smart, and complete!

Ours is not a new field! See this selected bibliography of superhero studies:

Ahrens, Jörn, and Arno Meteling, eds. *Comics and the City: Urban Space in Print, Picture, and Sequence*. Continuum, 2010.

Alaniz, José. *Death, Disability, and the Superhero: The Silver Age and Beyond*. UP of Mississippi, 2014.

Aldama, Frederick L., ed. *Multicultural Comics: From Zap to Blue Beetle*. U of Texas P, 2010.

- Arnaudo, Marco. *The Myth of the Superhero*. Trans. Jamie Richards. Johns Hopkins, 2013.
- Berlatsky, Noah. *Wonder Woman: Bondage and Feminism in the Marston/Peter Comics, 1941-1948*. Rutgers, 2015.
- Brooker, Will. *Batman Unmasked: Analyzing a Cultural Icon*. Continuum, 2000.
- . *Hunting the Dark Knight: Twenty-First Century Batman*. Tauris, 2012.
- Brown, Jeffrey A. *Black Superheroes, Milestone Comics, and Their Fans*. UP of Mississippi, 2001.
- Bukatman, Scott. *Hellboy's World: Comics and Monsters on the Margins*. U of California P, 2016.
- . *Matters of Gravity: Special Effects and Supermen in the 20th Century*. Duke, 2003.
- Burke, Liam. *The Comic Book Film Adaptation*. UP of Mississippi, 2015.
- Cocca, Carolyn. *Superwomen: Gender, Power, and Representation*. Bloomsbury, 2016.
- Costello, Matthew J. *Secret Identity Crisis: Comic Books and the Unmasking of Cold War America*. Continuum, 2009.
- Cremins, Brian. *Captain Marvel and the Art of Nostalgia*. UP of Mississippi, 2016.
- DiPaolo, Marc. *War, Politics and Superheroes: Ethics and Propaganda in Comics and Film*. McFarland, 2011.
- Fawaz, Ramzi. *The New Mutants: Superheroes and the Radical Imagination of American Comics*. NYU Press, 2016. Print.
- Gabilliet, Jean-Paul. *Of Comics and Men: A Cultural History of American Comic Books*. Trans. Bart Beaty and Nick Nguyen. UP of Mississippi, 2010.
- Gateward, Frances, and John Jennings, eds. *The Blacker the Ink: Constructions of Black Identity in Comics and Sequential Art*. Rutgers, 2015.
- Gibson, Mel, David Huxley, and Joan Ormrod, eds. *Superheroes and Identities*. Routledge, 2015.
- Gordon, Ian. *Superman: The Persistence of an American Icon*. Rutgers, 2017.
- Gordon, Ian, Mark Jancovich, and Matthew P. McAllister, eds. *Film and Comic Books*. UP of Mississippi, 2007.
- Hatfield, Charles. *Hand of Fire: The Comics Art of Jack Kirby*. UP of Mississippi, 2012.
- Hatfield, Charles, Jeet Heer, and Kent Worcester, eds. *The Superhero Reader*. UP of Mississippi, 2013.

- Heer, Jeet, and Kent Worcester, eds. *Arguing Comics: Literary Masters on a Popular Medium*. UP of Mississippi, 2004.
- Hoberek, Andrew. *Considering Watchmen: Poetics, Property, Politics*. Rutgers, 2014.
- Howe, Sean. *Marvel Comics: The Untold Story*. Harper, 2012.
- Lepore, Jill. *The Secret History of Wonder Woman*. Knopf, 2014.
- Murray, Christopher. *Champions of the Oppressed? Superhero Comics, Popular Culture, and Propaganda in America during World War II*. Hampton Press, 2011.
- Nama, Adilifu. *Super Black: American Pop Culture and Black Superheroes*. U of Texas P, 2011.
- Ndalianis, Angela, ed. *The Contemporary Comic Book Superhero*. Routledge, 2009.
- Pearson, Roberta E., William Uricchio, and Will Brooker, eds. *Many More Lives of the Batman*. BFI Palgrave, 2015.
- Pizzino, Christopher. *Arresting Development: Comics at the Boundaries of Literature*. U of Texas P, 2016.
- Pustz, Matthew. *Comic Book Culture: Fanboys and True Believers*. JUP of Mississippi, 1999.
- Regalado, Aldo J. *Bending Steel: Modernity and the American Superhero*. UP of Mississippi, 2015.
- Reynolds, Richard. *Superheroes: A Modern Mythology*. UP of Mississippi, 1994.
- Ricca, Brad. *Super Boys: The Amazing Adventures of Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster—the Creators of Superman*. St. Martin's, 2013.
- Robinson, Lillian S. *Wonder Women: Feminisms and Superheroes*. Routledge, 2004.
- Saunders, Ben. *Do the Gods Wear Capes?: Spirituality, Fantasy, and Superheroes*. Continuum, 2011.
- Schelly, Bill. *The Golden Age of Comic Fandom*. Rev. ed. Hamster Press, 1999.
- Singer, Marc. *Grant Morrison: Combining the Worlds of Contemporary Comics*. UP of Mississippi, 2012.
- Stuller, Jennifer K. *Ink-Stained Amazons and Cinematic Warriors: Superwomen in Modern Mythology*. Tauris, 2010.
- Wright, Bradford W. *Comic Book Nation: The Transformation of Youth Culture in America*. Johns Hopkins, 2001.

COURSE ALIGNMENT MATRIX

14. Directions: Assess how well ENGL 413 contributes to the program's student learning outcomes by rating each course objective for that course with an I, P or D.

| Course Objectives | Pop Culture Minor SLO #1: Students will demonstrate the ability to apply critical thinking to popular culture. | Pop Culture Minor SLO #2: Students will demonstrate the ability to apply and critically engage with theories relevant to the study of popular culture. | Pop Culture Minor SLO #3: Students will demonstrate the ability to research, critically evaluate, respond to, and use information sources in popular culture studies. | English SLO #1: Students will demonstrate critical reading skills | English SLO #2. Students will demonstrate effective writing skills | English Grad SLO: Students will produce advanced analyses that take into account current schools of aesthetic, critical and historical methodology and are informed by disciplinary standards appropriate to their option. |
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| 1. Students will analyze critically the production, consumption, and interpretation of popular culture. | D | P | D | D | D | D |
| 2 Students will explain the social and ideological influences on, and impact of, popular culture. | D | P | D | P | D | D |
| 3 Students will demonstrate critical thinking in discussing important theories and debates in popular culture studies. | D | D | D | P | D | D |
| 4 Students will conduct substantial research into popular culture. | P | D | D | P | D | D |

15. Assessment of COURSE objectives

| Course Objectives | Assessments of Student Performance |
|--|--|
| 1. Students will analyze critically the production, consumption, and interpretation of popular culture. | Weekly in class discussions, reading responses, participation, research paper |
| 2 Students will explain the social and ideological influences on, and impact of, popular culture. | Weekly in class discussions, participation, blog |
| 3 Students will demonstrate critical thinking in discussing important theories and debates in popular culture studies. | Weekly in class discussions, participation, research paper, responses to blogs |
| 4 Students will conduct substantial research into popular culture. | Weekly in class discussions, participation, research paper, blog |