

**GRADLIS 9312L 001: EXPLORING & UNDERSTANDING COMICS IN LIBRARIES**  
**MLIS Program, Faculty of Information & Media Studies**  
**Western University Summer 2020**

### **1. COURSE INFORMATION**

Time: Online May 5 – August 4

OWL site: <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal/site/27ddddd21-4d8a-4667-b53b-gdcdb9a46327>

### **2. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Instructor:** Dr. Lucia Cedeira Serantes, Assistant Professor (LD)

**Email:** [lcedeir@uwo.ca](mailto:lcedeir@uwo.ca). Please add the **course number 9312** to the Subject of ALL your emails.

**Office hours:** In order to set individual or group synchronous meetings with the instructor, 48 hours notice is required, unless for emergencies. These sessions will be held using Zoom.

**Use of Zoom:** For any course meetings with the instructor and/or guest speakers, we will use [Zoom through UWO](#). If you have any questions about your privacy or data, you may read [this section](#).

### **3. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The goal of this course is to introduce students to comics within the framework of their potential use in libraries. Therefore, the study and evaluation of comics will be a major component of the course. The selected works will attempt to represent major trends, creators, and publishers and, although we will focus on the North American market, we will also discuss the European and Asian markets. We will evaluate these materials, reflect about emerging issues and their role in the context of different information environments: public, school, and academic libraries.

#### **Course Objectives**

1. To understand and evaluate comics as a unique, diverse and multimodal medium of communication and storytelling.
2. To determine the similarities and differences between the past and present place of comics in North American culture as well as in other notable comics cultures worldwide.
3. To evaluate and help improve current and future comics collections for diverse communities.
4. To responsively contribute to the increasing number of comics-focused services and programs developed by different libraries.

#### **Course-Level Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of readings, assignments, and class participation, students will be able to:

1. Situate and understand the past and present of comics as reading material, their readers, and their place in different information environments (program level learning outcomes 1, 5);
2. Recognize the extensive and diverse production of graphic materials, especially major publishing markets, specific canonical and popular works, and key authors (program level learning outcome 8);
3. Select and evaluate comics that specifically connect with a library's community and mission (program level learning outcome 3);
4. Critically reflect on the qualities and benefits of the form in light of the frequent challenges and stereotypes about these materials (program level learning outcomes 3, 5).

### Course breakdown (tentative)

Section	Topic/s	Dates
Introduction	<i>Introduction and familiarization with OWL site, course organization and resources</i>	Week 1 (May 5- May 11)
Module 1	<i>Comics medium, its history and worldwide reach</i>	Weeks 2-4 (May 12 – May 31)
Reading week	<i>Your choice: Rest, catch up, advance work etc.</i>	Week 5 (June 1-June 5)
Module 2	<i>Readership and production</i>	Weeks 6-9 (June 9- July 6)
Module 3	<i>Comics and libraries</i>	Week 10-13 (July 7-August 4)

### Course requirements

- The course will be structured primarily as an **asynchronous learning experience**, but it will be necessary to participate in three meetings, one per module. In some special circumstances you may need to be available for synchronous communication with the instructor or other students. For these meetings you will need a working microphone and, optionally, also a webcam.
- Presence in this online course will be measured through engagement in the course's online learning community. I understand that the Covid-19 crisis has provoked or exacerbated different expectations in our lives. Because of this, ***I have thoughtfully worked to design a course that attempts to be flexible and adaptable*** so you are able to work on the course content in different ways and in a variety of group and individual contexts. However, for many, ***learning is a communal endeavor*** and creating and sustaining community will certainly also be part of your profession. Therefore, your active participation in the online course will be welcomed and encouraged, so we can all learn from each other.
- Students should expect to ***spend approximately 10-12 hours per week*** on assignments, reading (i.e., assigned reading, research, course engagement), and viewing and listening to resources. ***Online learning both needs and takes time***, so students should try to plan accordingly as much as they can. If this is your first online course or you would like some advice about how to organize yourself, you may want to check [this resource about how to get ready to learn online](#).
- Grading follows the [MLIS Grading System](#), available on the FIMS intranet for consultation.

### 4. COURSE MATERIALS

- All required readings are available through OWL in the Resource section or electronically through Western Libraries. The FIMS Graduate Library has also worked in collaboration with London Public Library to facilitate MLIS students' access to their digital collections. More information about this access will be provided by the instructor. Students may also explore how to access digital collections via their local public libraries. Other online accessible materials will be assigned from time to time through OWL.
- The instructor will provide bibliographies of basic materials to support independent exploration and project selection and development but ***students will be expected to research and use additional library materials for exercises and projects***. Under the current circumstances, accessibility could be an issue, so contact your instructor as soon as possible if you cannot access a material that you consider essential for your learning experience or project development.

## 5. METHODS OF EVALUATION (TENTATIVE)

To complete this course, you must complete the following assignments:

Projects	Weight	Due Dates
Engagement in the online learning community through a variety of exercises/activities available in each module (exercises, self-assessment, forums). Evaluation will be based on depth and quality of content and consistency in participation.	20%	Throughout term
Choice of individual project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Factsheet of comics history around the world</li><li>- Reflection on your experience reading the module's comics.</li></ul>	20%	Module 1 (deadline by the end of the module)
Proposal for Module 3 project (group, pair or individual)	15%	Module 2 (deadline Monday June 22)
Choice of group project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Response to Comics Naysayers (video, sound file or report)</li><li>- Review writing and evaluation</li></ul>	20%	Module 2 (deadline by the end of the module)
Choice of project (group, pair or individual): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Comics readings guide</li><li>- Comics program proposal</li><li>- Report on access issues to comics</li></ul>	25%	Module 3 (deadline by the end of the course)

## 6. STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC OFFENCES

Academic Offences - Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence at the following website:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_grad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf)

See also the [section on Academic Offences in the FIMS Intranet](#).

## 7. SUPPORT SERVICES

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Western's "Health and Wellness" at [https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/index.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Also, you may consult the [Resources section](#) in the FIMS Intranet. For Western updates on Covid-19, you may consult [this webpage](#) created specifically for students.