

LIS 9312 Comics in Libraries
Master of Library and Information Science Program
Faculty of Information and Media Studies
The University of Western Ontario
Winter 2023

I would like to begin this academic term and course by acknowledging that the land on which the institution that offers this course sits on is located on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Chonnonton Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. To say that is to acknowledge a debt to those who were here before us and to recognize our responsibility, as guests, to respect and honour the intimate relationship Indigenous peoples have to this land. As a settler in Turtle Island, I directly benefit from the colonization and genocide of the indigenous people of this land. I am grateful to have the opportunity to exist on this land and we must constantly engage in acts of decolonization.

1. COURSE INFORMATION

Time: Wednesdays, 9am-11:50am January 11 – April 12, 2023

Class Location: FNB 2230

Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in the Master of Library and Information Science.

2. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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

Email: For general course communication **use the OWL message system**. If you need to contact me with an urgent matter, use lcedeir@uwo.ca. and add the **course number 9312** and **URGENT** to the Subject.

- Allow for 48hrs for any response.
- Note that I do not check communication over weekends, so plan accordingly.

Office hours: Office FNB 4050, on Wednesday 1pm-2pm. Possibility of Zoom appointments, if requested 48hrs in advance.

Instructor's website: https://www.fims.uwo.ca/people/profiles/lucia_cedeira_serantes.html

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 comics market and culture, we will also discuss the European and Asian comics markets and cultures. 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).

1. COURSE MATERIALS

There will be two reading lists for this course: the Primary Materials (comics readings) and Scholarly/Professional Readings:

- The required Scholarly/Professional Readings will be available through OWL or through Western Libraries.
- For the Primary Materials students are encouraged to explore their local public libraries and use their access to print and digital collections. If there are texts not available in your area and you do not live in London, the FIMS Graduate Library has worked in collaboration with London Public Library to facilitate MLIS students' access to their digital collections. More information about how to use this access is provided in the FIMS Graduate Library in the [Resource/FIMS Databases section](#). For any material that is difficult to access, the instructor will attempt to make copies available through the FIMS Graduate Library. The sooner you communicate any difficult of access, the easier will be for the instructor to solve any issues.

Course requirements

- For many, *learning is a communal endeavor* and creating and sustaining a professional community will certainly also be part of your profession. Therefore, your active participation in the course will be welcomed and encouraged, so we can all also learn from each other. Course preparation and engagement is crucial in this course and we will work on exercises and discussions during class time. Coming to class having read the materials and prepared with notes is crucial for your participation and the development of a rich learning community.

- o Students should prepare to **spend approximately 10-12 hours per week** on reading, group work, class exercises, course assignments, and viewing and listening to resources. **Learning both needs and takes time**, so students should try to plan accordingly as much as they can.
- o **Coursework evaluation** follows the [MLIS Grading System](#), available on the FIMS intranet for consultation. During the term this course will use a qualitative marking system that will consider the progression of the student, based on the following equivalences:

100-90 A+	79-77 B+	69-67 C+
89-85 A	73-70 B-	66-64 C
84-80 A-	76-74 B	

2. COURSE TIMELINE (TENTATIVE): The following timeline is tentative. It might be changed due to guest lectures or site visits.

Week		Topics	Main coursework
1	01/11	Our stories with comics Topic: Situating comics in media history	<i>Course introduction</i> <i>During this week, you should explore the course organization and schedule. Sign up for Lightning Talks</i>
2	01/18	Topic: Graphic storytelling Comics: Modern Classics	
3	01/25	Topic: a history of comics (and libraries) Tentative guest lecture: Amie Wright	
4	02/01	Topic: Readership and production Comics: Beyond Batman vs. Spiderman - New approaches to capes and crusaders	Due: Library and bookstore visit (20%)
5	02/08	Topic: Comics in Canada Comics: Comics and everyday life	Due: Lightning Talks (x2)
6	02/15	Topic: Comics in libraries I Comics: Escaping to other worlds: Adventure, fantasy, and bits of sci-fi and horror	Due: Lightning Talks (x2) Due: Pairs sign up and choice of library collection by email to the instructor
READING WEEK (Feb 20-24)			

7	03/01	Topic: Response to Comics Naysayers Comics: Bande dessinée, historietas, tegneserier, fumetti...	Due: Lightning Talks (x3)
8	03/08	Topic: Comics in libraries II Comics: Non-fiction comics I	Due: Lightning Talks (x2)
9	03/15	Topic: Comics in libraries III Comics: Non-fiction comics I	Due: Lightning Talks (x3)
10	03/22	Topic and coursework to be determined	Due: Will Eisner Grant application (25%)
11	03/29	Comics: Manga, manhwa, and other East Asia publishing markets	Due: Lightning Talks (x3)
12	04/05	Comics: A publishers' explosion – Comics for youth	Due: Lightning Talks (x3)
13	04/12	Project presentations	Due: Grant presentation (10%)

Toronto Comics Arts Festival April 29-30, 2023
 Free Comic Book Day May 6, 2023 (Worldwide)
 Vancouver Comic Arts Festival May 20 & 21st 2023
 Montreal Comics Arts Festival May 26- 28, 2023

3. METHODS OF EVALUATION (TENTATIVE DATES)

Work	Description and due dates	Weight
Preparation and engagement Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class presence is expected Active course participation. Preparation and engagement with course materials, instructor exercises, and other participants' contributions <p>Due date: Ongoing</p>	20%
Choice of Individual Project - Lightning Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Factsheet of comics history around the world Factsheet of a comics publisher you do not know <p>Due date: Ongoing. Factsheet document is due on OWL on the Monday of the week you present, by noon. Your presentation is due in class the week you sign up for.</p>	25%

Grant application: Visit, Report, and Presentation Individual and pairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library and bookstore visit - Week 3 (individual) • Organize in pairs and choose a comics library collection - Week 6 • Will Eisner Grant application – Week 10 (pairs) • Presentation: Grant presentation – Week 13 <p><i>Due date:</i> Week 3 (Feb 3), Week 6 (Feb 17), Week 10 (March 24), and Week 13 (in class)</p>	20%+25% +10% (60%)
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4. HEALTH/WELLNESS SERVICES

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

5. ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION WESTERN (AEW)

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

6. STATEMENT ON 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 Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf