

## Visual Narratives & Storytelling Decal

Fall 2018 | 2 units, P/NP

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### Course Description:

Our Decal is dedicated to examining various visual narratives in order to teach ourselves, as creators, how to construct our own fictional stories. We'll be looking at films, animation, graphic novels, video games, and other miscellaneous fun things, in addition to creating new things for ourselves!

Three main focuses: **looking, analyzing, and creating**. This means 1) critically looking at various visual narratives through different theoretical lenses, utilizing what they see in order to 2) create a visual/verbal narrative project of our own.

These texts that we look at, are meant to be jumping off points from which can explore our own creative practices and modes of storytelling. As a result of the course, students will be able to critically look at media representations and meanings in multiple cultural and social contexts, observe technical aspects of both the visual and textual, and apply their learning in producing a final creative project.

Our Decal is meant to be an experimental process, open and spontaneous, and a constant feedback-loop. We want to stretch you creatively!

### Course Structure:

**In-class sessions** will be divided into discussions, informal lectures, and workshops. Discussions focus on collaborative analysis of medium and thematic material in texts. Informal lectures are shorter, practical information centers, referencing text background and/or storytelling technique. Lastly, workshops are small kinesthetic learning projects for students to apply learning by creating.

**Out-of-class assignments** will consist of engaging with visual texts (films, graphic novels, etc. ), short responses, take-home workshop activities, and/or readings. In addition, time will be provided to work on and critique Final Projects both in and out of class session.

### **Course Requirements:**

Grades are based upon the following:

#### Attendance and participation (25%)

Attendance and participation are crucial, as the bulk of the class will be made up of discussion and workshop material that requires students to actively engage with the texts before them. Two unexcused absences are given. We value you and your thoughts!

#### Readings and self-screenings for discussion (20%)

Readings are given throughout the weeks from academic journals and visual narrative texts. They will be short readings and excerpts from relevant to the material in the next class as well as to learning about storytelling. Academic readings and multimedia sources will be available online. Please watch the films and read the texts before next class session as they are pertinent to discussion.

#### Text responses and workshop assignments (20%)

Students will respond to the visual texts through informal responses that address a specific question about the text itself. These will be 1-2 paragraphs, and will be submitted online through the course website. Students are allowed to skip 3 short responses. The responses should answer the question and make relevant connections between the text and its themes and techniques. The responses are designed for reflection and critical exploration. Similarly, workshop assignments on storytelling will be given throughout. They will be simple exercises focusing on narrative elements, and will be shared in class.

#### Project proposal and Final Project (35%)

The final of this course will culminate in a final narrative project of the student's choice (whether short film, fiction, comics, etc. ) that incorporates the elements learned and provides the liberty for students to form a creative work. A project

proposal, 2–3 paragraphs of a general outline of what the student intends to do for their final project, will be due first. The final project will be presented on the last day of class for an in-class critique, allowing students to engage critically with both their own and other students' work.

## **Policies**

Homework is due the next class meeting, unless further specified.

Late assignments will be accepted only with a reasonable excuse. If there are conflicts and you need more time to complete an assignment, please contact us and we can further discuss it.

All work must be original work from the students. Academic integrity is valued in regards to both written work and visual work. Plagiarism is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

## 8/28 : Introduction

- Logistics and information
- Icebreaker – short stories
- Short film analysis – Stutterer
- Homework: Pick 5 images (with description)

## 9/4 : Storytelling?

- Lecture – Basic storytelling devices review
- 5 images
- Intro to comics?
- Homework: Read comic, short response 1

## 9/11 : Comics

- Discussion
- Lecture – Sequential Art
- Comic activity
- Homework: Read comic, short response 2, project pitches

## 9/18 : Comics

- Discussion
- Lecture – Character Design, Dialogue, Structure (webcomics?)
- Project pitches discussion
- Homework: Watch animation, short response 3, work on draft 1

9/25 : Animation

- Discussion
- Lecture
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- Homework: Watch animation, short response 4, work on draft 1

10/2 : Animation / film?

- Discussion
- Lecture
- Draft 1 workshop
- Homework: Watch film, short response 5, work on draft 2

10/9 : Film

- Discussion
- Lecture
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- Homework: Watch film, short response 6, work on draft 2

10/16 : Film

- Discussion
- Lecture
- 
- Homework: Watch film, short response 7, work on draft 2

10/23 : Film

- Discussion
- Lecture
- Draft Workshop 2 – Character Profiles
- Homework: Watch film, short response 8, work on draft 3

10/30 : Film

- Discussion
- Lecture
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- Homework: Video games, short response 9, work on draft 3

11/6 : Videogames

- Discussion
- Lecture
- Stanley Parable?
- Draft Workshop 3?
- Homework: Video games, short response 10, work on draft 3

11/13 : Videogames

- Discussion
- Lecture
- Roleplaying?
- Homework: Short response 10, work on draft 3

## 11/20 : Music

- Lecture
- Free talk
- Homework: Work on draft 3

## 11/27 : Final Critique

- Last day of class: Project presentations.
- Roleplaying?
- Homework: Video games, short response 10, work on draft 3