

Clark College Community and Continuing Education

Comic Essentials for Beginners

Spring 2025 Course Syllabus

Course Information

- **Instructor:** Caitlin Cook
- **Instructor email:** anhecomics@gmail.com
- **Day & time:** Wednesdays from 6:00pm-7:00pm
- **Number of sessions:** 6
- **Course dates:** 4/23-5/28



Course Objectives

- Walk students through the process of making a comic.
- Teach students to consider different storytelling tools (such as art style, lettering, and color) as they go about making a comic.
- Have students do a number of drawing exercises to get them comfortable with drawing and encourage them to think about drawing in new ways.
- Create a one-page comic to be put into a class zine for distribution at the end of the course.



Supply List

- **Pen or a pencil**
- **Sketchbook**
- **Other art supplies (optional, for final project)**

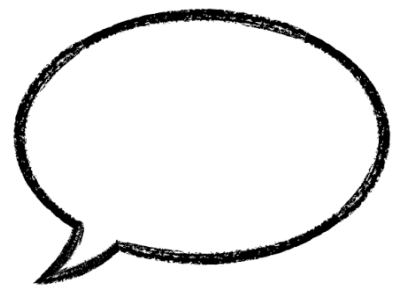
General Course Structure

- Drawing Exercise 1 + discussion (20 min)
- Mini Lecture 1 (20 mins)
- Drawing Exercise 2 + discussion (20 mins)
- Mini Lecture 2 (20 mins)
- Drawing Exercise 3 (10 mins)

Course Schedule

- **4/23 Week 1: Introduction/Establishing Your Art Style**
 - Drawing Exercise 1: ???
 - Mini Lecture 1: Introduction
 - What to expect for the next six weeks

- Instructor and students get to know each other
 - Drawing Exercise 2: ???
 - Mini Lecture 2: Establishing Your Art Style
 - Going over different types of comic/cartoon styles
 - Discussing the different elements of those styles
 - Tips for determining one's own art style
 - Details about final project
 - Drawing Exercise 3: ???
- **4/30 Week 2: Story Essentials and Scriptwriting**
 - Drawing Exercise 1: ???
 - Mini Lecture 1: Fundamentals of Story
 - Examining the 5 things every story needs
 - Learning about different plot structures
 - Drawing Exercise 2: ???
 - Mini Lecture 2: Writing a Comic Script
 - Learning what a comic script looks like
 - How to write and read a comic script
 - Different methods of writing a comic script
 - Looking at real life examples from one of the instructor's projects
 - Drawing Exercise 3: ???
- **5/7 Week 3: Panels and Lettering**
 - Drawing Exercise 1: ???
 - Skip discussion and head straight into lecture
 - Mini Lecture 1: The Power of Panels
 - Types of panel layouts and how they can be used
 - How to create a page that flows well for the reader
 - Looking at examples of interesting panel layouts
 - Discuss Drawing Exercise 1
 - Drawing Exercise 2: ???
 - Mini Lecture 2: All About Lettering
 - Discuss different lettering methods
 - Learn about fonts
 - How to properly letter dialogue and captions
 - Effective ways to letter sound effects
 - How to make a heavily-lettered page flow
 - Examples of interesting lettering
 - Drawing Exercise 3: ???
- **5/14 Week 4: Sketching, Inking, and Coloring**
 - Drawing Exercise 1: ???



- Mini Lecture 1: From Thumbnail to Ink
 - How thumbnailing works and why it's done
 - Turning your thumbnails into sketches
 - Different inking methods
- Drawing Exercise 2: ???
- Mini Lecture 2: How to Use Color
 - Going over color theory basics
 - How color can be used in comics for thematic purposes
 - Looking at examples of excellent use of color
- Drawing Exercise 3: ???

***** BRING ANY NECESSARY ART SUPPLIES TO CLASS NEXT WEEK. THERE WILL BE AN OPEN STUDIO FOR YOU TO WORK ON YOUR FINAL COMIC. *****

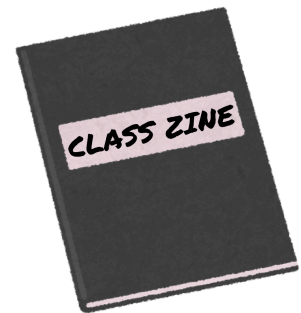
- **5/21 Week 5: Editing/Open Studio**

- NO drawing exercise to start
- Mini Lecture: Editing Methods
 - Learning how to edit comics
 - Tips for looking at your own work with a critical eye
 - How the editing process works in the publishing world
- Drawing Exercise: ???
- Open Studio
 - Students can use this time to work on their final comics and ask the instructor any necessary questions
 - Students can also work on their artist statements during this time

***** FINAL COMICS AND ARTIST STATEMENT DUE MONDAY 5/26 AT MIDNIGHT. IF THEY ARE NOT TURNED IN ON TIME, THEY WILL NOT APPEAR IN THE CLASS ZINE. EMAIL COMICS AND STATEMENT TO ANHECOMICS@GMAIL.COM. *****

- **5/28 Week 6: Publishing/Final Presentations**

- Drawing Exercise 1: ???
- Mini Lecture 1: How to Publish Your Comics
 - Self-publishing vs. traditional publishing
 - How to successfully self-publish
 - How to get a book deal
- Drawing Exercise 2: ???
- Final Presentations
 - A panel-by-panel reading of final comics for the class
 - A short statement covering...
 - Where the inspiration for the comic came from
 - Process and supplies that were used
 - What was learned through this process
- Gifting of class zines



Recommended Reading

- *Understanding Comics* by Scott McCloud
- *Making Comics* by Scott McCloud
- *Reinventing Comics* by Scott McCloud
- *Comics and Sequential Art* by Will Eisner
- *Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative* by Will Eisner
- *Why Comics?* by Hillary Chute
- *Alternative Comics: An Emerging Literature* by Charles Hatfield
- *Drawing Words and Writing Pictures* by Jessica Abel and Matt Madden
- *Cartooning* by Ivan Brunetti
- *The Art of the Graphic Memoir* by Tom Hart

Graphic Novels Your Instructor Really Likes

- *Asterios Polyp* by David Mazzucchelli
- *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi
- *Blankets* by Craig Thompson
- *Ephemera* by Briana Loewinsohn
- *Parenthesis* by Elodie Durand
- *Look Again* by Elizabeth Trembley
- *Flocks* by L. Nichols
- *Everything is Fine* by Mike Birchall