Comics and graphic novels are increasingly important — and popular — and like all important phenomena they can be studied seriously. Through inquiry, research, analysis, and practice we can learn about what part comics and graphic novels play in our lives and why and how they do it.

The goal of this course is to strengthen the abilities you need to study topics seriously at the college level. To achieve this goal, you will be doing a lot of reading, writing, and visual and oral presentation, as well as analysis and research.

**Required Books**

Kazu Kibuishi, ed., *Flight*, vol. 2  
Scott McCloud, *Making Comics*  
Will Eisner, *A Life Force*  
Mark Millar, *Superman: Red Son*  
Hayao Miyazaki, *Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind*, vol. 1  
Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*

**Required Work and Grading**

**Research project (30%)**: You will research a question about comics and present your results in an 8-page paper and a 10-minute presentation to the class.

**Comic and paper (40%)**: You will create and produce a comic of at least 30 panels. You may draw it by hand or use computer drawing/graphics programs, but not programs that create comics for you. The choice of topic, genre, and style is up to you. You will also write a 5-page paper discussing your decisions in making the comic and what you learned in the process.

**Daily work (30%)**: Responses and/or exercises for most class sessions will be assigned in the previous class and posted on the class email list. This work will help you understand comics and graphic novels better and will help you complete the two major assignments.

In writing responses to the four graphic novels, you should write a brief plot summary (no more than 50 words), briefly describe the main characters, discuss the style of the artwork (layout, drawing, use of color or shading, etc.), discuss the theme, and describe and explain your response to the novel.

**Note**: All assignments must be completed to pass the course.
 Attendance and Due Dates
You are most likely to achieve the goals of this course (and complete it with a good grade) if you attend all classes and turn in your work on time. Daily assignments prepare you for the work we will do in class, and they must be completed before you come to class in order to be useful to you.

Note: Always bring your class books to class with you.

ADA Policy
MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students (212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head, or the Affirmative Action Office (310).

Assignment for January 15:
Look through *Flight* and choose two comics you like. Read them carefully and write a response in which you answer these questions in detail:
- What do you like about each comic?
- What aspects of each comic do you admire most?
- What do the two comics you have chosen have in common?
- How do the two comics you have chosen differ?