

ENG 240 Honors: Graphic Novel
Prof. Heidi Bollinger
Hostos Community College, CUNY

Graphic Narrative Assignment

Students will create their own graphic narratives. Remember: success with this assignment is not determined by artistic talent—this assignment is about making thoughtful choices. A graphic narrative can be simple but very powerful.

May 16-22	Final Exam Week: Graphic Narrative and Artist's Statement due. Artist's Showcase date TBA (either May 20 or May 22)
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Students will choose:

- the story you want to tell (autobiographical or fictional)
- theme(s) you want to suggest through your story
- visual and textual style
- medium: students may hand-draw or paint, incorporate collage/photographs, or use digital software.
- intended reading audience and purpose
- format and dimensions
- length of story (to be determined by the story but the minimum number of pages should be _____, as agreed upon by students with input from instructor).

Your graphic narrative must include the following design elements:

- A title
- Panels of different sizes
- Bordered panels and open panels
- At least one splash page
- Text elements:
 - Speech balloons
 - Captions
 - Thought balloons
 - Sound effects
- At least one panel with no text
- At least one close-up image of a face, figure, or object
- Purposeful use of black and white and/or color

Optional Elements:

- Recurring visual or textual motif
- Visual symbols

- Visual hyperbole (exaggeration)
- Anthropomorphic characters

Students may work individually or with a partner to create the graphic narrative, but if working with a partner, each person must engage collaboratively in the process and make a fair and equal contribution, as determined by the partners.

The graphic narrative is worth 15% of the course grade.

I encourage you to start thinking about your project as early as possible, brainstorm, take notes, and make rough sketches of ideas. You may want to find or take photographs to use as visual references. We will do brainstorming and design exercises during the course to help you develop your project, and you are strongly encouraged to make individual appointments to visit my office to conference on your storyboard.

Artist's Statement

Every student will write a **2-3 page reflective statement** explaining the choices they made in designing their graphic narratives. Essentially, the statement will provide the student's interpretation of his or her own work. The Artist's Statement may also connect the student's design choices to course readings and field trips this semester.

Your Artist's Statement should address the following:

- Describe your thought process in developing and designing your narrative.
- Reflect on what you want readers to understand about your story and art style. This can include:
 - specific design and writing choices that you made
 - themes you want your narrative to convey
 - your intended audience
 - tone and genre
- How have the course readings and field trips influenced your own graphic narrative?
 - You may incorporate quotes from course readings; if you do, make sure to cite sources properly using MLA format and include a Works Cited page.
- What were the most challenging and most fulfilling aspects of the process?
- If you could continue working on this project, what might you do differently or develop more?
- What did you realize/learn about the graphic novel as a genre by doing this project?

The Artist's Statement is worth 15% of the course grade.

Writing Support: You are strongly encouraged to visit your professor's office hours to conference on your Graphic Narrative and your Artist's Statement. You are also encouraged to visit the Writing Center and to share your work with peers.