**OUTCOME 1: The reason why I kept this intact in relation to my current Ethnic Studies class, as opposed to changing it for 2201, is to show the adaptability of this exercise. Not only does it stress meaningful, structural concepts related to narrative writing like Choice of Moment, Frame, Image, Words, and Flow, but it also a fun, creative, and flexible project easily connected to a variety of Disciplines.**

**In order to do this assignment the student’s must be instructed in the use of a Comic-Creation program. I use “Comic Life”. It’s easy to use and free for 30 days---the assignment usually takes about 4 or 5 class periods to complete.**

**Additionally, some theory on Comic creation, while not necessary to instruction, would help the student better understand the mechanics behind the exercise. A class on Story boarding also helps.**

* **If any want to see some sample student comics, just come by my office.**

ETHNIC STUDIES “GRAPHIC ESSAY” GUIDELINES

**GRAPHIC ESSAY PROJECT**

**Project:** You will create a comic book (graphic essay) based on an Ethnic Studies focused-concept that you have chosen to explain to a Partner-Audience.

**Purpose:**

o     To learn how to use graphic images effectively to enhance, supplement, or support our concepts or arguments in a paper.

o     To learn how to focus our words and use meaningful text in our paper in a concise and definitive manner.

* To realize that there is more than one medium to argue in and that powerful words and visual images combined can make an effective medium for argument and the expression of unique concepts.
* To learn how to convey concepts of Race and Ethnicity to our “English Second Language” (ESL) Peers in a medium that will make understanding them both easy and informative.

Guidelines:

**Basic GRAPHIC ESSAY STRUCTURE:**

o     There must be a Title page even more so then a regular paper; the title and the visual image that accompanies it must draw the reader to read the graphic essay.

o     The graphic essay must be a minimum of 5 pages (not counting the Title page or the works Cited). The maximum length is 10 pages.

o    References (books, articles, journals, etc..) can be cited IN the comic! There MUST be a Works Cited page attached to the end of the comic. Use the MLA format.

**On WORD BALLONS and CAPTION BOXES:**

The most COMIC looking fonts are the PIG IRON types, but any FONT can be used to create the essay as long as it is readable.

Let the default Font size be a standard guide, **but you can vary your font sizes depending on the emotion or mood you are trying to convey in the essay**. Don’t forget to BOLD information that you want the reader to particularly focus on or has a really important significance to the essay.

Don’t use more than 2 font types or your comic will look chaotic. If you have a good reason to use MORE than two, run it by the instructor first.

Remember, Word Balloons are generally for dialogue. Caption Boxes are for prose (what you wrote in your concept paper) or narration.

Don’t use more than 3 Word balloons or caption boxes in one PANEL. More than that and your project may look chaotic and messy.

**On PANELS:**

When using pictures in PANELS, make sure they convey meaning from one Panel to the next. For example, imagine a Panel of a person ABOUT to slip on a banana peel, followed by a PANEL of a person on the ground with a broken head. This is an action to action example of panel continuity. In a Subject to Subject panel, you might have a picture of Sigmund Freud and then on the opposite panel a picture of a brain or a man in a strait jacket.

Just remember that COMICS are a SEQUENTIAL ART. That means the pictures you use should follow a logical sequence in meaning or concept.

Some panels can be just a background and some text---especially if you have a lot of important information to cover (or need a dramatic pause before the next panel), but try to keep these at a minimum. If you need a number, let’s say not more than 2 per PAGE.

**What you NEED in the ESSAY to Get a GOOD GRADE**

Below are the following criteria by which the graphic essay will be graded.

      **First, the essay must have all the criteria that are in your chosen paper. For example, if you choose to do the Explain a Concept paper in graphic essay form you need:**

* A clear, forecasting thesis
* An organized and logical paper structure
* Clearly stated definitions of terms used to support your subject
* Correct and consistent use of a citation style (In-text AND Works Cited page).
* Correct use of summary, paraphrase, and direct quotations.
* Attention to the rules of grammar and style. (Remember to proofread for grammar, punctuation, and spelling BEFORE passing your comic in---The Comic Book Creator does not have a spell checker).

      **Second, the Visual Images used must be thoughtful and purposeful in expanding and enhancing the writing you use in the comic**. THIS IS WHAT I REALLY MEAN: DON’T USE ANY RANDOM/MEANINGLESS PICTURES. MEANINGFUL OR SYMBOLIC PICTURES RELATED TO YOUR ESSAY ONLY!! NUFF’ SAID!I know that’s KIND of subjective, but remember you are trying to convey MEANING.

      **Thirdly, Use correct citation in the comic.** If you have to use a parenthetical citation (in-text citation) in a panel, CREATE A SMALL CAPTION BOX and put it at the bottom of the panel. You can reduce the size of the citation; just make sure it is readable.

If you have any questions, please contact me at [milesg@ecu.edu](mailto:milesg@ecu.edu).