Academy of Visual Arts
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Visual Arts Programme

VART 2216 Graphic Storytelling

No. of units: 3
Pre-requisite: VART1006 Visual Arts Practice II or any GDCV courses offered by AVA or any Visual Arts courses
Duration: 52 hours
Cluster: Graphic Book

I.1. Course Description & Rationale:

"To be a person is to have a story to tell." - Isak Dinesen

Storytelling is a fundamental element in many creative processes; comic art is a medium that best illustrates its importance through arrangement of visual elements and image-text interactions. This course aims to provide a platform for the students to specifically look into the aesthetics of storytelling. It emphasizes on both the training of practical skills and the investigation of the language of comic and sequential illustrations.

Through the introduction of theories by scholars and artists like Scott McCloud and Will Eisner, and the examination of the recent local independent comic art movement, students are provided with a critical framework to read and understand comics in a new perspective. They will become able to analyze and appreciate local and international works within a specific social and cultural context.

The course also take a look into the process of how abstract concepts and fragmented ideas are transformed into concrete message before it is delivered to the reader creatively. They are required to conduct research in various drawing styles based on the discussion of storytelling methods as presented in Matt Madden's *99 Ways to Tell a Story*.

Besides, a series of studio workshop will be held to provide practical training in the areas such as story structure, scriptwriting, drafting, drawing, inking and the publishing process. Students will be encouraged to experiment with various production methods, and to start developing their unique way of presentation as a first step in becoming a professional illustrator or comic writer.

I.2. Course Content:

No.		Hours	%
1.	Vocabulary of illustration and comic: - Concept of "closure" – space between panels: - "Time" elements in comic; - Use of text balloons; - Layout, composition and camera angles; - Author-reader relationships.	16	31
2.	Story: - Story structure; - Scriptwriting; - Discussion of experimental storytelling approaches based on Matt Maden's comic work, *99 Ways to Tell a Story*.	12	23
3.	Caricature and drawing: - Exploration of various methods of pencilling and inking; - Use of digital tools in comic production (e.g. Manga Studio); - Character design.	12	23
4.	Knowing the industry: - History of comics and illustration in various cultures (e.g. Japan, Europe and North America); - Recent developments of local independent comic movement; - Professional practices.	8	15.4
5.	Case studies and focus research: - Editorial illustration; - Abstract Comics.	4	7.6
		52	100

I.3. Intended Course Learning Outcomes (CILOs):
(Please take note of the PILOs for the overall BA programme in the Programme Document.)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

No. Intended Course Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

1. Reflect an understanding of the theories developed by scholars such as Scott McCloud and Will Eisner;

2. Research on the history and development of local independent comic scene;

3. Create a comic story that emphasizes some specific principles and vocabulary of comics;

4.   Create hand-drawn or digital illustrations to reflect one's unique touch and drawing style, as well as possible approaches in storytelling in the project;

5.   Discuss and criticize one's work in relation to the current trend in local and international comics and illustration.

6.   Adhere to standards of professional practice and ethos.

   * More may be added.

I.4. Alignment of CILOs with PILOs:

Learning Outcomes	Please indicate alignment by checking '√' the appropriate box					
	CILO1	CILO2	CILO3	CILO4	CILO5	CILO6
PILO1.1	✓	✓				
PILO1.2			✓			
PILO2.1		✓				
PILO2.2			✓	✓		
PILO2.3					✓	
PILO3.1						✓
PILO3.2						✓

   * There may not be 6 CILOs, in which case, just leave columns empty.

I.5. Alignment of Teaching and Learning Activities with CILOs:

No.	Teaching and Learning Activities	CILO	Hours
1.	Lectures and artwork showcase: Lectures will introduce the theoretical and historical knowledge necessary, supported by AV-media and occasional Q/A-sessions.	1, 2, 6	12
2.	Comic Story Creation: In-class student-led practical studio working time supervised by the instructor.	3, 4, 6	12
3.	Drawing / illustration workshops: Practical workshops including small in-class exercises will introduce the students to various techniques.	5, 6	16
4.	Studio visits and artist talks: Studio visits and talks with artists will allow student first-hand experience of real-life artistic practice in the field.	2, 6	4

No.		Alignment with CILOs	Hours
5.	Presentation and discussion: Small group or individual tutorials to guide students to develop their projects.	1, 2, 3, 6	8

More may be added.

I.6. Assessment:

No.	Assessment Methods/Activities	Weighting	Alignment with CILOs
1.	Illustration assignment - A project that focuses on the visual communication techniques and the use of certain basic languages in comic art. It also aims to evaluate student's ability in inking and colouring.	25%	1, 2, 3
2.	Research and presentation - Research on chosen local or international artist and investigate his/her impact on the field. Students have to show their ability to analyse work using the principles and knowledge taught in the class.	15%	4, 5
3.	Final project – Comic / Illustration Book Publishing - A project that integrates student's abilities in story creation, visual expression and the experiments of various storytelling formats.	30%	4, 5
4.	Professional Attitude: Professional Attitude within the BA is defined as a set of personal skills that are essential for a career in the visual arts: communication skills, management skills, professional ethos, and general personal conduct. It is assessed indirectly through attendance and participation in classes, language abilities, team-behaviour, demonstrated interest in the subject and similar approaches. It may include the evaluation of sketchbooks or visual diaries, personal notes etc, or be assessed on the basis of personal contact with the student.	30%	6

More may be added.

I.7. **Key References** *(up to 10 books a.o.)*:

Carrier, David. *The Aesthetics of Comics*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.

Chi Hoi, and Craig Au Yeung. *Long Long Road – 25 Years of Independent Comics in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Joint Publishing, 2006.

Duncan, Randy, and Matthew Smith. *The Power of Comics: History, Form and Culture.* New York: Continuum, 2009.

Eisner, Will. *Comics and Sequential Art: Principles and Practices from the Legendary Cartoonist.* New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008.

Gravett, Paul. *Manga-Sixty Years of Japanese Comics.* Taipei: Xiyouji Wehhua, 2006.

Heer, Jeet, and Kent Worcester, eds. *A Comics Studies Reader.* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009.

McCloud, Scott. *Understanding Comics.* New York: Harper Perennial, 1993.

Madden, Matt. *99 Ways to Tell a Story: Exercise in Style.* New York: Chamberlain Bros., 2005.

Male, Alan. *Illustration: A Theoretical & Contextual Perspective.* Lausanne: AVA Publishing, 2007.

Wong, Wendy Siuyi. *Hong Kong Comics.* New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002.

I.8. Academic Integrity:
Students will endeavour to only claim work that they have actually produced themselves. Claiming the work of others is considered plagiarism, and will be dealt with under the academic policies of the university.

I.9. Health and Safety:
Every effort will be made to comply with the intent of Hong Kong's law or acts and the University's policies to maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

I.10. Final Note:
The instructor reserves the right to modify the class and the syllabus or the schedule to adjust to the dynamics of the particular group or to take advantage of opportunities that may arise.