CREATING COMICS COURSE SYLLABUS
Instructor: Becky Varlas

In her book, *Making Comics*, Lynda Barry examines “the power of comics as a way of seeing and being in the world and transmitting our experience of it.” This is not a course that will teach you how to draw. We won’t be creating realistic, refined, elaborate works. If you already know how to draw, that’s fine. If you don’t know how to draw, that’s even better! Lynda Barry says that we have “a basic inclination to find patterns and meaning in random information” and that her course is “not about developing characters, but about waiting to see who shows up in certain circumstances.” Example: If you are a doodler, have you ever started a doodle with no intent and had it turn into something that surprised you? This all sounds very unorthodox…and it is…but it can also be interesting and fun. Many of the activities in this class will be timed (spontaneity!). There is even one that you do with your eyes closed! We are so accustomed to telling stories orally or through the written word. Telling stories through comics will enable us to view them from a totally new perspective. Pre-requisites for this course: an open mind, a willingness to experiment, and the ability to laugh…a lot.

MATERIALS NEEDED – TO START:
- 4 x 6 index cards, lined on one side
- 8 ⅝ x 11 blank paper
- Ruler
- Smart phone to take pictures of your work to send to instructor to share with the class in a power point.

WEEK ONE:
- Introductions
- Resources used and materials needed
- Lynda Barry’s teachings about comics and creativity
- Ivan Brunetti’s method for drawing characters
- Self-portrait

WEEK TWO:
- Sharing of work
- Self-portrait
- Four Drawings in Twelve Minutes
- Closed Eyes Drawings
- Did/Saw/Heard Cards (will be repeated each week, time permitting)

WEEK THREE:
- Self-portrait
• Sharing of work
• Blind Bones
• Scribble Monsters

WEEK FOUR:
• Self-portrait
• Sharing of work
• Monster, Draw Near!

WEEK FIVE:
• Self-portrait
• Sharing of work
• Monster, This is Your Life!
• Two Hands Drawing at Once

WEEK SIX:
• Self-portrait
• Sharing of work
• Faster, Faster!! (lines that surprise us)

WEEK SEVEN:
• Self-portrait
• Sharing of work
• Animal Jam
• Adding line work

WEEK EIGHT:
• Self-portrait
• Sharing of work
• Face Jam: creating nine different faces
• Adding solid black and patterns

WEEK NINE:
• Self-portrait
• Sharing of work
• Character Jam: creating 16 different characters

WEEK TEN:
• Self-portrait
• Sharing of work
• Son of Character Jam: Four 4-panel comic strips

WEEK ELEVEN:
• Sharing of work
• Illustrated memoirs