**Zines!**

*“Zines (pronounced “zeens,” from fanzines) are cut-and-paste, ‘sorry this is late,’ self-published magazines reproduced at Kinko’s or on the sly at work and distributed through mail order and word of mouth. They touch on sex, music, politics, television, movies, work, food, whatever. They’re Tinkertoys for malcontents. They’re obsessed with obsession. They’re extraordinary and ordinary. They’re about strangeness but since it’s usually happening somewhere else you’re kind of relieved.” –*Chip Rowe, from the introduction to [*The Book of Zines: Readings From the Fringe*](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://www.zinebook.com/)

This assignment moves from a historical study of DIY print culture to a more practical one by inviting you to design, make, and circulate your own amateur print publication (AKA zine). You’ll start by ordering your own from any of the following places:

**Zine shops** (most reliable for quick delivery)

* [Pioneers Press](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://www.pioneerspress.com/) (Kansas)
* [Quimby’s](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://www.quimbys.com/) (Chicago)
* [Atomic Books](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://www.atomicbooks.com/) (Baltimore)
* [Printed Matter](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://printedmatter.org/)(NYC)

**Distros**(less expensive, but perhaps not as fast)

* [Etsy](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://www.etsy.com/browse/home-garden/books-music-media/zines-comics)
* [Antiquated Future](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://antiquatedfuture.com/)
* [Brown Recluse Distro](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://www.brownreclusezinedistro.com/)
* [Parcell Press](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://www.parcellpress.com/)
* [Sweet Candy](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://www.sweetcandydistro.com/index.html)
* [Stranger Danger](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://strangerdangerzines.com/)

**Reviews and Hubs**(places to order direct from zine-makers)

* [We Make Zines](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://wemakezines.ning.com/)
* [Broken Pencil](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://www.brokenpencil.com/reviews)
* [POC Zine Project](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/http://poczineproject.tumblr.com/)

You’ll also learn more about the history of zines and their sociopolitical context. You’ll then learn how to write and revise content, make books using a variety of tools and methods, and think about ways to use your web presence to bolster your work. From laying out your publication to making copies, you’ll learn about the larger delivery systems of print culture by seeing a publication through from production to distribution (as this unit will culminate into our very own public zine festival).

**Grading**

*“What makes an “A” zine, and who the hell are you to decide that?”* – [Kelly McElroy](https://web.archive.org/web/20160809143725/https://twitter.com/kellymce), librarian at Oregon State University

Grading for this unit is determined by you, with some supporting structure coming from the class and from me. The process is a bit complicated, but works like this:

**1. Email me a draft of your grade proposal.** Mid-way through the unit you’ll email me a doc, docx, or pages file (no pdfs, please) — a fairly formal document that outlines the criteria necessary for the grade that you expect. This should be one, *single*-spaced page and include your name, the date, and a statement at the top indicating the grade you are proposing (please note that you *do not* have to propose for an “A” — I will not be hurt by this); this document will also make good use of numerals, bullets, bold formatting, etc. The bulk of your document, then, will describe the plan for your zine’s:

* *content* (title, the themes you’ll explore using writing/drawing/photographing/etc.)
* *materials* (kind of paper, binding, ink, printing method, etc.)
* *format* (size of pages, # of total pages, layout/structure)
* *circulation* (# of copies and how you’ll distribute beyond the zine fest)

**2. Conference with me.** After you email me your grade proposal, we will meet to discuss it. Since I’ll have read everyone’s proposals by then, I’ll have a better understanding of what the community’s standards are (that is, what an “A” zine might entail). At this conference we’ll discuss the work involved and I will make some suggestions for revision and other ideas you might consider for your zine.

**3. Revise grade proposal.** Within 24 hours of conferencing with me, you will send me a final version of your grade proposal. At this point this document becomes a quasi-contract — that is, a reference point for your final zine and the accompanying statement.

**4. The accompanying statement**.Things will certainly change as you make your zine and the accompanying statement will help you be accountable for them. At the end of the unit — that is, after your zine has been distributed — you’ll turn in a copy to me, along with a statement that considers several questions:

Required:

* What goals did you have for this zine and did you meet them?
* Reassess your grade based on the contract. What did you earn and why?

Encouraged:

* Think about yourself at the start of this unit/course. What was the extent of your experience or knowledge of zines and DIY print communities at the beginning of the unit? What did you learn about them and how did it apply to your zine?
* Discuss how you arrived at the the idea for your zine. Was it inspired by something specific?
* Talk about the limitations and choices you made with regard to the materials of your zine and the tools required? What was your vision and how was it compromised by these tools and technologies?
* Reflect on your experience planning and witnessing our zine fest. Were you inspired by the reception of your zine? Disappointed?
* Discuss the implications of creating your zine with regard to your future as a writer. How did zine’ing support or complicate your goals?
* What will Issue #2 of your zine look like? How will it build from the lessons of Issue #1?

Your statement will be single-spaced and formatted using a 12-point, readable font. Doc, Docx or Pages formats are acceptable, but please don’t send pdfs. Finally, please put your last name in the actual file name (wilson\_zinestatement.doc) so I can sort them easily. Note: if you are contracting for an A (or striving for one), this statement will need to be at least 1,000 words (2 pages, single-spaced).