

**MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MOORHEAD**  
**Request for Writing-Intensive Course Designation**

Submit to University Writing Committee at least one semester in advance of proposed offering of course.

- **Electronically:** Email the typed document(s) to the [University Writing Committee \(uwrite@mnstate.edu\)](mailto:uwrite@mnstate.edu) and forward the hardcopy *signed* original proposal to **Stacy Voeller**, chairperson.

**DEPARTMENT:** Corrick Center  
**NUMBER:** CCGE 388

**SUBJECT:** CCGE

**COURSE**

**COURSE TITLE:** Virtue and Vice in Gothic Storytelling

**COURSE CREDITS:** 3

1. **Term (s) course will be offered:** Fall  Spring  Both
2. **Effective term course will first be offered:** Spring 2010
3. **Is this Writing-Intensive course applying for Dragon Core status?** X  Yes  No  
*NOTE: If yes, you must also complete Dragon Core proposal requirements. In addition, all course proposals must complete the required APAC forms.*
4. **How will you insure consistency across multiple W-I sections of this course?**

The designers of the course—Dr. Liz Rowse and Dr. Tim Decker—will rotate teaching of the course. Both faculty members have already consulted frequently on the class and will continue to do so.

5. **Indicate which Written Communication competencies of the Dragon Core curriculum are addressed and developed. The course should develop at least four of the following competencies. On your syllabus or a separate attachment, please explain how these competencies are developed.**
  - Use a coherent writing process including invention, organization, drafting, revising, and editing to form an effective final written product. **The writing process will be reviewed (see syllabus for days on which “Writing Discussions” occur). Also, with all three formal papers, students will engage in peer editing, and their final drafts will be submitted along with rough drafts and peer editors’ responses to questions regarding the rough drafts.**
  - Consult effectively and appropriately with others to produce quality written products. **This will occur on the days during which peer editing occurs. Students will also discuss possible paper topics together on days when papers are assigned, which each student having a possible topic/stance by the end of class.**
  - Read, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and integrate appropriately and ethically both information and ideas from diverse sources or points of view in their writing. **Students will be asked to locate, read, analyze, and include in papers several secondary sources regarding works covered. The difference between popular and peer-reviewed sources will be discussed and assignments will**

cover what types of sources students may use. In the final paper in particular, students will read film reviews and peer-reviewed sources regarding the impact of horror literature and movies on children/impressionable adults, and will then be asked to integrate these sources into their writing and synthesize them with a discussion of a particularly violent film. Diversity in points of view will be assured by requiring students to include at least one concession/rebuttal paragraph in their journals and final formal paper.

- ☒ Locate, use, and cite appropriately primary and secondary source materials from both print and electronic resources. **Research requirements are discussed in the section above. Students will work with both print and electronic sources; they will be required to locate and use print sources found in the library, and they will, for the final product, locate film reviews online and include them appropriately in their writing. Additional sources may also be found online.**
  - ☒ Create logical, engaging, effective written products appropriate for specific audiences and purposes. **All three formal papers will ask students to address an Academic audience and therefore require a formal, polished approach. Specific questions regarding ethics and Gothic are included with each assignment. Please see attached assignments for more details.**
  - ☒ Use correct grammar and mechanics in writing. **Grading rubrics for the course will include grammar and mechanics. See attached rubrics.**
6. **Provide a course description that addresses how the formal and informal writing assignments will be incorporated into the course. Indicate how writing serves the goals of the course. Attach course syllabus and sample writing assignments with grading criteria.**

CCGE 388 asks that students (1) understand and articulate the ethical messages communicated through Gothic storytelling and (2) develop and articulate their own stances regarding those ethical messages. Writing must serve as the primary means of accomplishing these goals since (1) students can best comprehend and demonstrate comprehension of the works' themes by stating them in their own words and (2) in order to explain their unique attitudes towards the works' themes students need to explain themselves discursively. Informal journal writings will allow students to begin working through their individual ethical stances while formal papers will allow students to refine and clearly convey their points of view.

Students will complete three formal papers of 5-6 pages in length throughout the course of the semester, and they will be required to total at least 16 pages of formal writing overall (see attached list of Writing Assignments). Students will also be required to maintain an informal writing journal through the course; individual assignments will detail what students are to consider for individual entries. Students will be required to do at least one informal entry per Gothic work discussed.

7. To whom should the committee's questions regarding this course be directed?

**Name:** Tim Decker/Liz Rowse  
**Department:** CCGE

**Telephone:** 4-2186/4-2203  
**E-mail:**  
 deckerti@mnstate.edu/rowseel@mnstate.edu

**Action taken:**

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<i>For Writing Committee use only.</i>	
<i>The course:</i>	
Indicates how writing serves the goals of the course.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Indicates which Written Communication competencies of the Dragon Core curriculum are addressed and how they are developed. The course should develop at least four of those competencies.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Assigns a minimum of 16 pages (4800-5000 words) per student of formal, polished writing in multiple assignments that span the semester.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Includes at least one assignment that requires drafting and revision.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Includes informal writing-to-learn assignments or activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Indicates how the quality of student writing will affect the course grade.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Approved  Not approved

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Writing Committee Chair's Signature

Revised 8/2006  
 Revised 6/2007  
 Revised 11/2007

CCGE 388: Virtue and Vice in Gothic Storytelling  
DC 9: Ethical and Civic Responsibility  
Writing Intensive  
Dr. Tim Decker or Dr. Liz Rowse

Office:  
Office Phone:

Email:  
Office Hours:

**Course Description:** Virtue and Vice in Gothic Storytelling is a course that provides students with the opportunity to understand the (sometimes reactionary) ethical view communicated through works from one of popular culture's most popular genres, gothic horror. Students will first be asked to determine the ethical messages communicated by the works we cover and challenged to determine the validity of those messages. In the process students will engage a variety of works that ethically questions major institutions of our society, including family, government, business, and "the home." The works also challenge traditional societal parameters, including meting out justice, sexual propriety, disobedience of authority, and death rituals and taboos. The course is designed as a writing-to-learn environment in which students will use writing both to reinforce their learning and to demonstrate their learning. As such, it is a writing intensive course.

**Course Objectives:**

1. To provide an opportunity for students to more clearly understand and articulate their own ethical principles by comprehending and responding to moral messages communicated through Gothic storytelling;
2. To provide an opportunity for students to consider personal, familial, and civic responsibilities by responding to ethical issues addressed in Gothic storytelling;
3. To provide an opportunity for students to develop an awareness of the history, conventions, themes, and ethics of Gothic fiction;
4. To provide an opportunity for students to continue to hone writing skills, such as the ability to clearly articulate ideas, to analyze concepts, to synthesize a variety of different sources/points of view into one paper, and to enhance students' use of grammar, mechanics, and appropriate/ethical use of sources;
5. To provide an opportunity for students to more clearly understand how Gothic/Horror relates to the society we live in and the ethical challenges that the very existence of such violent works presents.

**Dragon Core Competencies:**

Students will learn to do the following:

**Understand core ethical concepts including right, wrong, virtue, vice, care, harm, and respect and use them to articulate their own ethical views.** *Much Gothic storytelling deals with transgression. Often, the transgressions include a violation of some group's understanding of what is right, dutiful, virtuous, or respectful, and this violation leads to a series of punishments against the transgressors. The violations of an ethical system can stem from something as terrible as familial abuse (Psycho) or as seemingly harmless as teenage partying (most slasher films). Students will be asked to interpret the ethical messages concerning right, duty, etc., as communicated by the works studied, and then asked to consider the validity of such (sometimes reactionary) themes.*

**Explain the grounds of their ethical and civic commitments and respond constructively to those whose beliefs differ.** *Explain the grounds of their ethical and civic commitments and respond constructively to those whose beliefs differ. Writing assignments will ask students to articulate their views towards the ethical messages delivered by the works studied; students will thereby be encouraged to understand their own ethics. Civic commitment, and the students' attitudes towards it, will be especially addressed in the final unit (Horror's Place is in the Home?) which will examine the ethics of having horror stories and films available to the public in a mostly unfiltered fashion. Students will examine and explain organizations that protect such stories and films as well as those that would censor them. Finally, at least two papers will ask that students include a concession/rebuttal section that confronts the opposite point of view.*

**Make responsible personal, professional and civic decisions and evaluate how these affect other people.** *Gothic storytelling contains a lot of unethical personal and professional behavior for which people are punished; students will be asked whether or not such behavior is as unethical as the stories make it seem. In the final unit, students will be asked to consider the civic ethical dilemmas of making horror readily available to the public.*

**Understand core concepts of self-government including rights, duties, public and private good, pluralism, minority rights, and majority rule and apply them to issues that affect the community and their own daily lives.** *Gothic storytelling, in an allegorical fashion, frequently addresses these issues through the themes of transgressio, punishment for transgression, and fear of the other. Horror tales and films frequently depict a person or persons' rights being violated, and the person or persons seek revenge for this, sometimes from beyond the grave. Those who violate their duties are punished for it (such as the duty of mother to son in *Psycho* or of husband to wife in *Rosemary's Baby*). The issues of public/private goods, pluralism, and minority rights all come together in the popular tale of how a dominant society desecrates a minority's private space, a theme that appears in many of Stephen King's stories as well as in the film *Poltergeist* (which documents the unfortunate fate of a house built on a Native American burial ground).*

**Analyze and reflect on the ethical dimensions of legal, social, cultural, and/or scientific issues.** *Gothic storytelling explores transgressions and irresponsibilities of many legal, social, and cultural institutions, ranging from the real estate business (*Poltergeist* and *Dracula*) to summer camp (*Friday the 13th*) to family life (*Psycho* and *Rosemary's Baby*). Scientific issues are especially apparent in horror/sci-fi of the Fifties (but hearken back to Mary Shelley's 1818's *Frankenstein*), where scientific experimentation (and transgression) leads to a wide variety of deformed humans and mutated bugs.*

**Identify ways to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.** *The final unit of the course will culminate in a paper that asks students to consider whether Gothic storytelling and its sometimes graphically horrific manifestations (horror stories or movies) should be available in the unfiltered ways they currently are, and to explore avenues of either censoring or preserving such availability.*

The schedule of the course that follows on the last page breaks the semester into three groupings. The first two groupings ("Welcome Home" and "Don't Go There") are thematic. They indicate where the transgression and potential punishments take place within the stories, and within those units we will delineate various gothic and ethical elements within the stories themselves. The third division "Horror's Place is in the Home?" asks you to look at the place of this kind of storytelling within the broader context of our popular culture.

### **Writing Intensive Competencies:**

This course is designated as writing intensive. That distinction indicates that you will be doing a minimum of 16 pages of writing (approximately 5000 words). This course will extend the outcomes from the Written Communication section of the Dragon Core and will allow students to meet the following Written Communication competencies:

1. Use a coherent writing process including invention, organization, drafting, revising, and editing to form an effective final written product;
2. Consult effectively and appropriately with others to produce quality written products
3. Read, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and integrate appropriately and ethically information and ideas from diverse sources and points of view in their writing
4. Locate, use, and cite appropriately primary and secondary source materials from both print and electronic resources
5. Create logical, engaging, effective written products appropriate for specific audiences and purposes
6. Use correct grammar and mechanics in writing.

### **Course Requirements\*:**

Credits are earned by completing at a satisfactory level ( $\geq 75\%$ ) each of the following:

**1 credit** will be earned by attending 27 of 30 class sessions, actively and appropriately participating in class activities, actively and appropriately participating in all writing workshops, completing the assigned in-class and out-of-class activities and reading journal activities, and satisfactory performance ( $\geq 75\%$ ) on any quizzes.

**1 credit** will be earned by satisfactorily completing ( $\geq 75\%$ ): Paper 1 and Paper 2

**1 credit** will be earned by satisfactorily completing ( $\geq 75\%$ ): one final project

***Important Note on Earning Credits:*** In the attendance section that follows, you will note why I take attendance and why your attendance of this class is required for success. In addition to what is stated below, you should understand the following: the Corrick Center considers mastery of material to be at at least a 75%-level. If that level is not achieved, you do not receive credit; therefore, any student missing more than 10 class periods (1/4 of the course) will receive no credit and will be required to retake the course at a later time. You must attend *at the very least 75%* of the class in order to receive *any credits for it*.

### **Attendance Policy:**

Because this is an active-learning, workshop-style class (there will be a great deal of in-class writing, discussion, and small group activities) attendance is necessary to achieve success in the class. **Therefore, class attendance, participation, and interaction are essential for your success in CCGE 388.**

I expect you to be in class every day. I believe you will learn by being in class. I take attendance every day. But I also know that there are times when you will be unable to attend class for various reasons, some legitimate – weather-related, school-sponsored, illness, emergencies – and some not so legitimate. It's your decision, however, not mine, to determine which reasons are such.

**Therefore, you are allotted three (3) discretionary days to use for whatever reasons you deem necessary. These are your days to use as you wish. You don't have to tell or explain to me why you missed class. However, please do not confuse being absent from class – even with a legitimate reason -- with being excused from the course work. No one is excused from the work required to earn credits. I can only assign credit for work at a satisfactory level.**

See the attached sheet delineating the policies on attendance and late work. **Please be aware of this policy – on file in the Academic Affairs office at MSUM – which will be enforced. Any exceptions to this policy must be arranged with me.**

### **Reading Journal:**

For each reading project of the semester, you will be asked to do writing assignments (normally 1-2 pages) related to your reading. There will be at least one for every reading assignment and more for others. These journal entries will help you to integrate the terms and concepts introduced in class with the reading you're doing; they will also allow you to discuss themes, issues, and ideas from the readings; finally, they will allow you to make connections among your various readings. The journal pages are due for use in class on the date given on your handout; the entries for each reading assignment will be collected the day we finish talking about the reading together in class. Individual assignments will be handed out at the beginning of each reading.

**Special Accommodations:**

Students with disabilities who believe they may need an accommodation in this class are encouraged to contact Greg Toutges, Coordinator of Disability Services at 477-5859 (Voice) or 1-800-627-3529 (MRS/TTY), CMU 114 as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

**Academic Honesty:** Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are neither expected nor tolerated. (See MSUM's Student Handbook's section on Academic Honesty for elaboration.) If you do plagiarize or otherwise cheat, you will be held to the university's policies.

**Schedule of Assignments  
(Subject to Change)**

1/12 Introduction to Course; Ethical?  
1/14 The ethical context

1/19 Defining Gothic and Horror  
1/21 Gothic and horror, cont.; RJ #1 Due

**Welcome Home**

1/26 Beowulf; Assign Paper 1  
1/28 Icelandic Saga

2/2 "House of Seven Gables"  
2/4 "Yellow Wallpaper"; Development Workshop, Paper 1

2/9 The Turn of the Screw  
2/11 The Turn of the Screw; Workshop Paper 1

2/16 Poltergeist  
2/18 Poltergeist

2/23 Rosemary's Baby (novel)  
2/25 RB (novel)

3/2 RB (novel);  
3/4 Writing Workshop

**Don't Go There**

3/9 "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?"; "Porphyria's Lover": Paper 1 Due  
3/11 "A Good Man Is Hard to Find"

3/16-18 Spring Break

3/23 Dracula  
3/25 Dracula

3/30 "Christabel"  
4/1 "Christabel"; Writing Workshop

4/6 Slasher Movie  
4/8 Slasher Movie

4/13 Psycho (novel)  
4/15 Psycho (novel); Writing Workshop

**Horror's Place is in the Home?**

4/20 Professional Review of Book; Paper 2 Due  
4/22 Professional Review of Movie

4/27 Cultural Critique of Book  
4/29 Cultural Critique of Movie

5/4 Wrap up, like a good mummy  
Final Time: Final Paper Due

### Evaluation Criteria for Formal Papers

Each of the four formal papers assigned in CCGE 385 will be graded according to the following criteria. This evaluation form will be distributed with the course syllabus and discussed the first week of the semester.

**Focus:**

Does the paper satisfactorily address the assignment?

Does the paper have a clear thesis?

Does the paper have clear main points / topic sentences that support the thesis?

Out of 20 points:

**Organization:**

Does the paper have effective paragraphing? (That is, do the paragraphs develop a specific point?)

Does the paper use effective transitions?

Out of 20 points:

**Development:**

Does the paper include sufficient evidence (in the form of quotations and paraphrase) from the film/text being discussed?

Does the paper include sufficient explanation and understanding of a specific ethical point of view?

Does the paper include sufficient material (in the form of quotations, paraphrase, statistics, and/or case studies) from research regarding an ethical issue?

Does the paper address (probably through concession/rebuttal) more than one point of view?

Out of 40 points:

**Clarity:**

Are the paper's sentences clear?

Are the paper's sentences effectively punctuated?

Out of 10 points:

**Voice:**

Is the paper's diction and sentence structure appropriate for an academic audience (that is, for an audience consisting of one's classmates and faculty)?

Out of 10 points:

**Formatting:**

Does the paper following the conventions of formatting discussed in class?

Does the paper successfully employ APA or MLA documentation style?

Out of 10 points:

TOTAL OUT OF 110 points:

	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
	<p>The paper has a very clear thesis and main points; Paragraphs are focused and arranged in a way that strongly enhances the argument; Very strong use of evidence; Exceptional understanding of an ethical issue; Style is clear and appropriate</p>	<p>Some lack of clarity with thesis and main points; Paragraphs occasionally lose focus; rationale for structure could be clearer; Good overall use of evidence; Good understanding of ethical issue; Style occasionally unclear/inappropriate</p>	<p>Thesis/main points are unclear for most of the paper; Paragraphs frequently lack focus; unclear rationale for structure; Evidence is insubstantial; Little understanding of an ethical issue demonstrated; Style often unclear/inappropriate</p>	<p>No discernable thesis/main points; No focus to paragraphs; No rationale for structure; Little or no evidence; No understanding of ethical issue; Style is unclear and inappropriate</p>
<b>Focus</b>				
<b>Organization</b>				
<b>Development</b>				
<b>Clarity</b>				
<b>Style/Voice</b>				

**Grading:**

**High Pass: 90-100%**

**Pass: 75-89%**

**Re-Do: Under 75%**

## Writing Assignments:

### **Informal:**

Reading Journal: Each book/reading assignment will have an informal writing assignment attached to it. These assignments will help build on the theme of the course and also offer students potential writing ideas for their formal papers. Each assignment will be 1-2 pages.

### **Formal:**

The students will do three major writing assignments in this class. They are as follows:

1. Paper 1: We've read works about a variety of haunted or supernaturally afflicted edifices. First of all, identify the ethical message of these works. Some works suggest that people can be guilty of a transgression without even being aware that they are transgressing. Using class discussion and the works we've read, demonstrate whether such punishment is deserved and whether it appropriate within the ethical framework of the readings. (5-6 pages)
2. Paper 2: We have read works in which people have transgressed into domains that they warned against exploring. These explorations bring about horrible punishments. Within the framework of the works, these punishments "fit the crime." Your task in this paper is to consider that crime-punishment relationship within our popular culture's beliefs on ethical and civic responsibility. For example, explain whether or not the behaviors in these works warrant the punishments inflicted; if you believe they do not, what crimes, if any, would? (5-6)
3. We have looked at horror from within its own framework and worked within the ethic presented by these works. For this project, you will read about, examine, and pass judgment on horror itself. Whether or not you believe that horror presents an ethical world within itself, explain how horror is or is not itself *ethical*.

Consider the following questions:

- a. In what ways (if any) does horror contribute to society?
- b. Should such graphic images be allowed?
- c. Does the reactionary justice presented within it undermine real justice?
- d. Does horror's potential to exploit make it unethical?
- e. Is horror's treatment treat diversity in an ethical manner?
- f. Does horror in any way encourage a more ethical society and/or does lead to a more unethical society?
- g. Is horror an ethically justifiable genre, or is primarily unethical in its outlook on society and in its impact on society?

You must use reliable secondary sources in addition to the primary sources presented in class. (6+ pages).

E-mails from other departments.

Tim: The DC9 course in Gothic Literature poses no conflict issues with philosophy.  
Thank you, Ted Gracyk

Tim Decker wrote:

> Hi, all:

>

> And here are the documents. Sorry.

>

> Best,

>

> Tim