

Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror in the Arts

Overview:

The members of the Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror in the Arts program will be focused on improving their knowledge and appreciation of the program's media & literature genres. The program will provide a forum for learning and discussing genre works in casual and academic settings for all levels of knowledge. The members will survey a wide variety of books, stories, movies, comics and games. The group will gather bi-weekly to hold discussions on all aspects of the genres. Students will learn about the origins and influences on the genres through speakers and individual endeavors. Our members will attempt to provide the community with a holistic view of the genres. The main goal of the program is to bring together a good group of welcoming, intelligent, unique individuals that are driven to bring the wonders of science fiction, fantasy, and horror to the community.

Learning Objectives

The program members will gain understanding and knowledge about the genres of science fiction, fantasy, and horror by reading through selected texts and discussing them bi-weekly with other group members, effectively creating a genre book club. Through a surveyed reading of different time periods, authors and styles students will be able to develop a holistic view of the genres.

Action Steps:

- The members will choose 3 short stories and a longer work at the beginning of each semester. Short stories will be discussed at weekly sci-fi meetings.
- The program will discuss selected works in open meetings which are advertised throughout L/L by means of the screens and L/L newsletters.
- To aid in the Science Fiction "book club", we will invite a relevant professor from the university or author to facilitate the some discussions and add further insights.
- The program will have a monthly dinner and discussions for program members to explore the current happenings in the genre world.
- Students will utilize their new-found understandings of the genres in by participating in one Round Robin each semester, which will include either their own addition to a community-based genre story or by editing and improving on the existing work created by their fellow contributors. These will be read to the program on a monthly basis in program meetings to emphasize their relationship the literary genre.
- In order to get modern views of the genres the program will invite an author talk about their work in the genre and their thoughts on the current trends.

- The program will also host two movie nights per semester centered on seminal films in the genres and discuss these movies. These events are designed to be more inclusive of casual fans in the community because of the accessibility of the medium. They will amplify our ability to reach the general community through exciting and interesting displays of the genre. As desired by the program members additional marathons may be held occasionally in a more casual setting.

Program members will gain insight into the origins, influences and driving forces behind science fiction, fantasy and horror in historical and contemporary setting.

Action Steps:

- For each of the selected works (both literature and film) discussed from the previous learning objective a student from the program will research the history and motivations behind that work and present their results to the group, serving as a facilitator for that discussion. If longer works are selected multiple students will work together on the project.
- The program will present a speaker on technologies, ideologies, ideas, social movements and historical facts related to the genres. Possibilities include medical professionals, engineers and computer scientists and historians etc.

The program will elevate the level of community knowledge about science fiction, fantasy and horror, through many different activities. It is expected that each program member will assist with at least five community outreach activities.

Action Steps:

- The program would like to try a one-day writers' workshop led by a faculty member to help community and program members create powerful fictional works.
- The members of the program will provide staffing for the English department's Tolkien Seminar in April.
- The program will hold a Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Short Story competition. Open to the general public, including local high schools and other local colleges. The finalists will be published in a local newspaper and online.
- The program will host a weekly Dungeons and Dragons game open to anyone that wishes to participate, including special attention to beginners and first-timers to encourage widespread participation.
- The members will host gaming nights for various other games, from tabletop to video games. Role Playing Games such as G.U.R.P.S. and D&D, Trading Card Games such as Magic the Gathering; and Video Games such as HALO and others are a few examples.
- The program will coordinate and staff one "Game Day" per semester or several smaller events if one becomes too large. At these events will collect donations for charities such as Child's Play.
- The program will hold an annual book drive for children's literature to be donated to either a Burlington youth center, Fletcher Allen Free Library or a battered women's shelter.

- The program will post the Round Robin stories that the program creates to display how the stories changed over time and to bring interest to the members of the community.

Community Service:

The program will hold a book drive towards the end of the academic year to bring the genre into the community. It will donate these books and the books that the members read to local programs, such as the King Street Youth Center and the Fletcher Allen Free Library, as part of spreading its knowledge/appreciation for science fiction, fantasy, and horror to others in the community. This will coincide with National Library Week in April. In addition we will raise money through donations at Game Days for charity.

Plans for Interactions with Other L/L Programs:

Science fiction, fantasy, and horror are diverse genres, making them very compatible with other Living and Learning Center programs. There are many options available for events that could be held. We could join Anime as an Art Form for movie night and our Game Days, or to hold a chain-mail making night with the Fiber Arts program. We would like to hold a book discussion on the novel “The Left Hand of Darkness” or a similar read with the InGEAR program, and would love to co-host an event with Vermont author Joseph Sitro on his work with Vermont myth and folklore. Perhaps the Inkpot Creative Writing program would like to co-host our short story competition or the writers’ workshop. We could hold discussions with the Global Village programs about the backgrounds of specific international applications of the genres.

Because of the wide variety of inter-program options available to us we believe the Sci-fi program could be housed in any of the following: Diverse Cultures, General and Professional Interests and Liberal Arts. However we feel that we would be best suited to live in the Liberal Arts community because we are primarily a literature based program.