

Living/Learning Center Programs

The University of Vermont

<http://www.uvm.edu/lcenter/>

Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror in the Arts

Overview:

Do you enjoy escaping to alternate worlds in the pages of fantastic novels and films? Have you ever wanted to play Dungeons and Dragons? If so, come join a group of like-minded students in the Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror in the Arts Program!

In the program we will be able to explore novels and films, work on writing of our own, participate in role-playing games and investigate many other collaborative and creative activities. The residential living community will allow the program to be a friendly, safe, encouraging and thoughtful environment; ultimately creating the space for a greater ability to read, write, and communicate with the greater Living and Learning Center. With a body of works as deep and diverse as those in the genres of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror, we will attempt to broaden our horizons; discovering just how deep the rabbit hole goes, and to see if we can find something new for everyone to learn about and enjoy!

Learning Objective #1:

Program members will be able to refresh, reflect and expand upon their knowledge of the genres of science fiction, fantasy, and horror through a wide variety of selected texts. Further, the program will discuss them with other members of the program in bi-weekly gatherings throughout both semesters. With a broad-scope focus on different time periods, authors and styles, students will be able to develop an expansive view of the genres.

Action Steps:

- The members will choose 2 short stories and a longer work at the beginning of each semester. Works will be discussed at weekly sci-fi meetings. We hope to both collaborate with other programs and with members of the UVM faculty on at least one selected work over the course of the year.
- As a measure to reduce the costs of purchasing reading materials for the program, we would like to start selling back the multiple copies of our readings from previous years (while reserving at least one copy of each story for a program bookshelf.)
- In order to get modern views of the genres, the program will invite an author to talk about their work within the genre and their thoughts on current trends.
- The program will have themed monthly dinners to coincide with our literature discussions and would benefit the members' understanding of the text by providing a relaxed and social setting for relevant discussions.

Learning Objective #2:

Program members will develop their own understanding and style through creative writing based on the media we will experience. Immersing the program in the genres

through experiences like reading a range of diverse works and viewing many different films is critical to an understanding of the genres. Equally important is the generation of the program members' own creative works, both interpreting what already exists, as well as pushing the boundaries of what the world has ever considered within the realm of science fiction, fantasy and horror. The program members will extend their understanding of the genres through the important steps of creating their own works, as well as helping to peer-edit for other program members.

Action Steps:

- The program will stimulate the creative process of members by providing a common writing prompt for the program members to begin their own works. We will share and peer-edit these completed works at a separate group meeting.
- The program will invite a published author within the genres to work with program members on developing their creative writing skills within the scope of the genres. This will take the form of a Creative Writing Workshop.
- The program would create and perform a set of theatrical One-Act plays within the themes of the genres, as the process of writing and producing a show would deepen the members' understanding of and appreciation for the script writing process. The performance would take place within the program as a separate meeting where members of the L/L community would be invited to see and contribute to the end result.
- The program would invite a member of the Burlington fantasy community to give a workshop on creating a functioning, logical and interesting world for use in writing and role-playing within the genres.

Learning Objective #3:

The program will consistently strive to increase the awareness of the depth and creativity offered in the genres of science fiction, fantasy and horror in the Living and Learning community (as well as the greater Burlington community) through many different activities. **We will expect that each program member will assist with at least 4 community outreach activities during the year.**

Action Steps:

- 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. The competition will be open to the UVM student body and the finalist will be published online as well as in the Cynic.
- The program will host a weekly Dungeons and Dragons game that is open to anyone who wishes to participate and will include special attention for beginners and first-timers to encourage widespread participation. These games will be advertised through the L/L screens and newsletters.
- The program will coordinate and staff one "Game Day" per semester or several smaller events if one becomes too large. At these events the program 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 a Burlington youth center, Fletcher Allen Free Library or a battered women's shelter. This event will co-inside with National Library Week in the spring.
- The program will also host two movie nights per semester centered on important films within the genres and will 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.

Community Service:

The program will hold a book drive toward the end of the academic year to bring the genres into the community. In addition we will raise money through donations at our Game Days for charity. (See Learning Objective #3's action steps for more information about these events.) In addition, the program could partner with a local library or Fletcher Allen Health Care to host read-aloud sessions with Burlington youth.

Plans for Collaborations with Other Living and Learning Center Programs:

- Game Day, which is hosted with Anime as an Art Form;
- Character Illustration Night, hosted with Anime as an Art Form;
- Chainmail Night, hosted with Creative Art, Jewelry Making, Fiber Arts, Anime as an Art Form, Exploring Culture Through Tea;
- Writer's Workshop, hosted with Inkpot;
- Book Discussions, hosted with Literary Appreciation and/or Gender Equity;
- Movie Nights, hosted with Interpreting Film;
- A night with author Joseph Citro, hosted with Vermont Exploration.

*** 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.***