

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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July 3, 2019

Dear Student,

As Director of the First-Year Writing Program, I am delighted to invite you to enroll in one of two Advanced First-Year Writing courses, "The Gothic Imagination" (76102 section A) or "Dreaming in the 21st Century" (76102 section B).

Your submitted materials point to your eligibility to enroll in our advanced first-year writing course options. You may enroll in one of these 76102 courses or any other First-Year Writing courses (76101, or two half-semester courses 76106/76107/76108). A full-semester course or two minis fulfills your first-year writing requirement.

Our seats are limited in these advanced sections, so please email your course preference to our Assistant Director, Mike Brokos (mbrokos@andrew.cmu.edu) for early registration

Pasted below my signature, you will find the 76102 course descriptions. For the entire list of first-year writing descriptions, click on [this link](#) to our website.

Thank you for your attention to these options—I am thrilled that Professors Gillette and Wigginton are willing to offer some of their very best to our students.

Sincerely,

Danielle Zawodny Wetzel
Director, First-Year Writing Program
Teaching Professor, English

76102 Course Descriptions**76102 Section A, MWF 11:30-12:20, "The Gothic Imagination," Professor Rebecca Wigginton**

In this section of Advanced First Year Writing we will explore the Gothic as an artistic representation—in whatever form—of the oppressive shadow of the unknown, or even the unknowable, that dogs the human race. It is both seductive and threatening, existing at the intersection of realism and fantasy. We will read closely a range of Gothic fictions to consider what it means for a text to be "Gothic," and investigate how this literary mode has evolved since its "invention" in the 1760s. Students will also read and analyze secondary literary and cultural essays to understand and make use of a variety of theoretical lenses, such as feminist criticism, New Historicism, Marxist criticism, digital humanities, postcolonial criticism, and film studies.

Gothic novels often engage with and represent social and political matters such as sexuality, nation, race, war, religion, and class. We will consider how the fantastical rendition of these important issues is related to the

historical and cultural circumstances in which gothic fictions are written and read. Students will be presented with additional contextual materials—such as visual art, music, and historical articles/reviews—to enhance their understanding of “the Gothic imagination” across time.

As a first-year writing seminar, the course will focus on the development of academic and professional communication skills. Assignments will include short analyses, a theoretical lens paper, a research proposal, and a research essay that makes an original contribution to the ongoing academic conversation concerning Gothic literature.

76102 Section B, MWF 10:30-11:20, “Dreaming in the 21st Century,” Professor Colby Gillette

Around ten percent of our lives is spent dreaming, a state which is as likely to produce great scientific discoveries and artistic inspiration as the everyday bafflement we all feel upon waking and remembering a particularly strange dream. Since Freud’s pronouncement that dreams are “the royal road to the unconscious,” dreams have been a subject of renewed interest in Western culture; this abiding interest has led to dreams becoming an area of study within the fields of psychology and anthropology while Freud and Jung’s early writings on dreams were a foundational influence on Surrealism, which has played a significant role in shaping contemporary literature, film, theater, and art. In this course we will examine some of the significant contributions to the field of dream research and deepen our understanding of how this research has impacted the literature, film, theater and art of the 20th and 21st centuries. Throughout the course we will attempt to answer the basic question, What is Dreaming?, by studying some of the major theories put forth since Freud. The varying answers to this question will allow us to see how dream studies can present new perspectives on issues such as the nature of cognition, gender and sexuality, cultural reality, religion and literary theory. In this way, we will try to understand how dreams can contribute to our personal, creative, professional and academic lives. Assignments will include short theoretical “lens” papers, a research proposal and a research paper.