

Name	Heidi Sadler
Department	Writing
What course are you proposing to collaborate on?	WRI 111: The Supernatural in Contemporary Popular Culture
In which semester would you be teaching this class?	Fall 2012
Project Title	Writing Research: Integrating Information Literacy into the First Year Writing Experience

Project Proposal (250–500 words)

Heidi Sadler – FLPP Proposal

Course: WRI 111 The Supernatural in Contemporary Popular Culture

April 5, 2013

In WRI 111, The Supernatural in Contemporary Popular Culture, students are presented with opportunities to practice critical thinking and academic writing with a focus on reading and writing rhetorically. Throughout the term, students compose essays in various modes (summary, rhetorical/source analysis, critique, argument synthesis/source-based essay) with the purpose of building strong composition skills that will help them write thoughtful, creative, relevant, engaged, and well-supported college essays in the course and beyond. By reading fiction, criticism, commentary, and theory, and by viewing films and other forms of audio and visual media, the course seeks to build a web of ideas that illuminates the power and popularity of the horror genre in popular culture. The course is loaded with different ways of seeing and understanding the subject matter and is marked at mid-point and end-point with larger, critical source-based essays that demarcate student engagement and comprehension. It would greatly benefit the course and its outcomes to have a library partnership that will help further develop and support the research outcomes in creative, individualized, and experiential ways. WRI 111's learning goals around information and research literacy are as follows:

- Understand different modes of academic writing
- Learn how to access primary and secondary information that is relevant and interesting
- Learn how to use sources and evidence to support existing and original ideas

These goals could be enhanced by the addition of library instruction sessions during the course of the semester, a librarian's contribution to the development of research assignments and resources for completing them, and the creation of blogs and other web based content that will encourage students to explore the course content in media savvy ways.

For example, students are asked to compose weekly supernatural observation essays, low stakes reflections, and post to elearn discussion threads. I would like to be able to have these essays take the form of a more consistent class blog that can be tied to a Lib guide. Additionally, the students are responsible for watching multiple film clips, accessing online articles, and finding scholarly research that they then use as primary and secondary sources for their critical writing. Having these materials available through the library will allow me to design more sequenced and specific assignments that require students to search for information, read, make connections, and repeat the process in ways that build on the existing course texts and allow for further exploration. Integrating all of these steps, resources, and activities into the syllabus is another area that will benefit from this collaboration.

I look forward to partnering with a librarian to enliven the course and strengthen its information literacy outcomes.

Course Description/Syllabus

Halloween scholar Lesley Bannatyne says, “fear and fantasy are some of the strongest human emotions,” and nowhere is this idea more present than in the fields of literature and film. Though every generation has its monsters, today it seems we live more than ever before in a world inundated with fantastic media. From vampires, to lycans, witches, fairies, ghosts, and even caped crusaders, these characters, and the magical worlds they inhabit, invade our lives through television, movies, books, and graphic novels. Even music, video games, and advertising are haunted by these “supes.” Does the supernatural ebb and flow consistently throughout cultural history, or are we living in a time dominated by fear and fantasy, overpopulated by monsters? By examining popular fiction, film, television, electronic, and print media, this course will look at how these familiar creatures evolved and what they can teach us about ourselves, history, culture, race, sexuality, high and low art, and the genre form. Through lectures, discussion, creative analyses, guided research, and formal writing, students will envision, edit, and revise papers like the analysis, critique, synthesis, and research essay to hone critical thinking skills and practice academic inquiry.