ENGL 2020: Gothic and Horror – Spring 2025

# NIGHTMARE JOURNAL

I am a firm believer that writing informally about and responding creatively to the things you read (and, in this class, watch) helps you better understand them. Therefore, I am asking you to keep what I'm calling a "Nightmare Journal"—essentially, creative notes, responses, and reactions to the texts and films we discuss—each week this semester. This journal will provide a consistent way to help keep you on track and ensure that you are engaging with our readings throughout the semester. The ultimate goal of this project is to help you read more efficiently, thinking about how the various works we study are in conversation with one another, how thinking about them together might help you better understand the genres of Gothic and horror, and how the common themes you notice might resonate with your own life.

## Step One: Weekly Entries ("Spin the Wheel")

I will open up a new space on D2L each week under "Discussions" for you to submit entries (labeled with the week's dates). However, this is NOT your typical discussion post! Each week, we will "spin the wheel" to give you a different prompt—some weeks will be writing focused, while others will include other forms of response, like creating a playlist, making memes, creating a comic strip, etc. I encourage you to read and comment on your classmates' submissions!

Alongside any creative responses to the week's material, I also encourage you to post any questions you have that were not answered in class.

Each week's entry should be posted to the Nightmare Journal blog by **11:59 pm on Sundays**.

You must submit a minimum of **seven** total entries to complete this assignment according to the criteria for getting a "B" in the course, but you may choose to submit **thirteen** entries (or roughly one entry every week) as part of the labor required to get an "A" in the course.

## Step Two: Final Reflections

At the end of the semester, I will ask you to go back through your entries and read what you have written. For your final entry in the Nightmare Journal, you will write a short reflection that addresses some of the following questions: What patterns, themes, or ideas do you see emerging over the course of the semester? Which kinds of creative responses were your favorite, and why? Did you pose questions that were later answered? Do you have any lingering questions about any of the texts? What do you think you noticed in your reading by doing this assignment that you might not have otherwise? What value do you see in doing this kind of reading, writing, and creative responding? These final reflections will be due **Thursday, May 1 at 11:59 pm.**