

Mary Grimm
Nord Grant Proposal

I propose to use a Nord grant to develop a class I'm teaching for the 1st time next year, ENGL 376 Studies in Genre: Urban Fantasy (course description attached). This is a class that I think will be popular not only with English majors, but also nonmajors who have an interest in urban fantasy, with its ties to the graphic novel and gaming. In part this is an outgrowth of my membership in the Popular Culture Working Group in Spring 2011 (funded by the Baker Nord Center for the Humanities). One of the issues discussed was how to integrate popular culture as well as its issues and cultural relevance into the academic classroom. Urban fantasy, with its city setting and urban grittiness opposing the more traditional paradigms and tropes of high fantasy, offers connections with and insight into national myth and folktales, representations of gender and sexuality, political commentary, uses of humor, questions of identity, national and ethnic identity.

I'd use the money in 3 ways: for course materials, mainly books (I've been spending my own money so far, and it's getting expensive); for two speakers—one an urban fantasy writer, and the other a popular culture critic; and last, to go to a conference on pop culture. (Please see attached budget.)

Besides benefiting the students in my class, this grant would be advantageous to the campus community as well, in particular the speakers. My plan is to invite Cinda Williams Chima (who writes a young adult urban fantasy series); and Chuck Coletta, who teaches and writes on popular culture issues at Bowling Green State University, which offers the only popular culture department in the country (they also have extensive library holdings in pop culture).

Mary Grimm
mcg3@cwru.edu
X2355

Proposed Budget:

2 speakers	
Honorariums	\$200 ea.
Lunch	\$60 ea.
Course materials	
(mainly books)	\$300
Conference	
Registration	\$145
Airfare	\$220
Hotel	\$400
Total	\$1325

Signature



Cyrus Taylor, Dean

Date: May 26, 2011

ENGL 376
Studies in Genre

MWF 3:00—3:50

“In urban fantasy you don’t leave the chip shop and go to another world to find the unicorn. Rather, the unicorn shows up at the chip shop and orders the cod.” (Elizabeth Bear)

An exploration of the relatively new genre of urban fantasy. We’ll read contemporary novels and stories and take a look at the history of this trend; alongside, we’ll read texts on how the city is defined to better understand the urban fantasy stance, sometimes described as the transgression of the numinous upon the mundane. Authors may include Paul Auster, Mike Carey, Charles De Lint, Neil Gaiman, Charley Huston, Kim Harrison, Caitlin Kittredge.