

CFP for American Literature Association (ALA) Boston, May 21-24, 2025

Roundtable: Teaching the American Gothic

This round-table panel is designed as an opportunity for scholars to share their best practices for teaching the American Gothic in the many courses where it appears on college campuses today. Hoeveler and Heller's *Approaches to Teaching Gothic Fiction* (MLA Options for Teaching) was published in 2003; Powell and Smith's *Teaching the Gothic* (Palgrave) was published in 2006. Today we are teaching the American Gothic at a time when the world's problems – rising fascism, global conflict, and climate change, among many others – makes the world itself seem downright Gothic. This panel will seek to provide updates on teaching the American Gothic in 2024 and beyond.

Courses on the American Gothic are taught in a wide variety of venues, from community colleges to traditional undergraduate programs to graduate programs, and in both giant lecture gen-ed courses and small upper-level seminars; our students are native speakers of English and students acquiring English later in life. These venues and audiences present different challenges. We are planning for a lively and generative discussion of how best to teach the American Gothic in colleges and universities today.

Potential topics might include:

- Strategies for teaching older (often longer) texts to students with different abilities for and expectations of reading assignments
- Designing assignments with AI in mind
- Managing classroom discussions about common but difficult Gothic topics such as violence, sexual violence, and trauma
- Choosing which texts to include, and which editions of those texts to use
- Syllabus organizational strategies: Chronological? Thematic? Something else?
- Strategies for teaching a Gothic course for English majors versus teaching the general education-type course for students in other majors.
- Are there opportunities for Service Learning in the Gothic course?
- What are the Learning Outcomes we're expecting students to achieve in a course on the Gothic?

We welcome papers that explore both successes and failures in the Gothic classroom. Completed papers should be short (roughly 5 pages) and focus on experiences and best practices in teaching the Gothic at the undergraduate or graduate level. This will allow time for discussion and sharing among panelists and the audience.

Please submit proposals by 15 December 2024 via email to lawrence.mullen@sunysccc.edu and bridget_marshall@uml.edu.

Organizers:

Lawrence Lorraine Hazel-Mullen (SUNY Schenectady)

Bridget M. Marshall (University of Massachusetts, Lowell)

On behalf of the Society for the Study of the American Gothic