



ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

Department of English
English 208A (001): Forms of Fantasy (Fall 2018)
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 –2:20 in SJ2 2002

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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:45 – 12:45 in Sweeney Hall 2207

Course Description

In this course we will examine several classic and contemporary works of fantasy literature, primarily written for an adult audience, to consider many of the stylistic and thematic features of the genre, to get a sense of its development, to explore the relationship between fantasy and our social and political realities, to develop analytical skills, and to present our own arguments about the stories and characters in persuasive ways. Some of these arguments may deal with the functions of fantasy in literature, the ways in which fantasy influences our individual perceptions of our world, attitudes about fantasy literature, and how different media change our engagement with the genre.

In class discussion and in written work, students will develop a vocabulary for identifying the generic conventions of fantasy literature and for analyzing texts, consider the application of critical approaches, and compare and discuss literary works confidently and clearly, with the aim of contributing and defending well-reasoned arguments. Students will also improve their skills in organization, composition, and expression of ideas.

Required Texts

Tolkien, *The Hobbit*

McCaffrey, *Dragonflight*

Beagle, *The Last Unicorn*

Donaldson, *Lord Foul's Bane*

Le Guin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*

Pratchett, *Small Gods*

Gaiman, *The Sandman, Volume One* (graphic novel)

Walton, *Among Others*

Alternate editions of course novels should be okay. Other texts (short fiction) will be available on Learn.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Read all texts in advance of class, come to class cheerful and motivated, and be prepared to discuss the assigned readings with your peers. I will outline my expectations with respect to written assignments in the lectures before their due dates, but for now see the brief descriptions below.

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
Informal in-class responses	Throughout the term	10%
Text analysis, draft 1	October 18	5%
Text analysis, draft 2	November 1	15%
Brief oral or written text recommendation	See note below	5%
Term paper outline assignment	November 22	5%
End-course test	November 29	25%
Term paper	December 4	35%
Total		100%

Attendance and participation

Classes will begin with peer discussion, lasting approximately 10 to 15 minutes and based on several guiding questions about the texts that you will have finished reading before class. Jot down some of your thoughts (these will be handed in at the end of class), and be prepared to share your thoughts with the rest of the class throughout the rest of the lecture. Your oral and written responses will help me to assess attendance, punctuality, preparedness, and thoughtfulness.

Text analysis, draft 1

You will select a passage to analyze from any of the course texts (feel free to read ahead); the first “draft” will involve the completion of a handout designed to guide your thinking. This draft/handout is due in class on October 18 and will be returned the following Tuesday.

Text analysis, draft 2

Use the feedback from your returned draft to compose a formal written analysis (500 words), due November 1.

Brief Oral or Written Text Recommendation

Choose a work of fantasy literature that is not on the course list – a favourite novel or series – and make a recommendation to the class that describes basic story details (without giving away the ending, of course) and that compares elements in the story to one or more texts studied in the course. For example, explain how the main character is very similar to a character we have already encountered in our course reading; explain how the two texts have similar thematic elements. This assignment is due by the end of November or earlier: most of you will write a short recommendation (250-300 words) that can be submitted to me by e-mail attachment; alternatively, there is an opportunity for a few students to deliver a 5-minute talk at some point throughout November (because of the limited number of presentation slots, let me know early if you wish to present).

Term Paper Outline

This 1-2 page document, due on November 22, will provide me with a few ideas about what you have in mind for your term paper, and how you will structure your arguments. More details will be provided.

End-course test

This test will be written on November 29 and will comprise several short- to medium-length (paragraph) answer responses. The questions on the end-course test will cover all readings, but you will have plenty of options.

Term Paper

I will do my best to return your term paper outline assignment by November 27 (29th at the latest), but you should begin drafting your paper as soon as you can. If I indicate concerns, I encourage you to get in touch with me to discuss your ideas further. The term paper (1,500-2,000 words) will be due by December 5 and may be submitted as a hard copy (to my office or the English Department drop box) or by e-mail attachment.

Late Work

Normally, late assignments submitted without a reasonable excuse will be penalized 2% per day; sometimes, however, politely-explained excuses along with appropriate documentation where possible (or at least reasonable advance notice) will justify an extension. Written assignments must be entirely the student's own work, with all citations properly referenced.

Electronic Device Policy

Ringling and vibrating devices—as well as tablets and laptops when not used for classroom work—can cause distractions for me and for those students who are conscientious about participating in the lecture. Leave your devices turned off unless you require them for note-taking only.

Attendance Policy

You are expected to attend all lectures having read the texts in advance of the class (please see above regarding the “attendance and participation grade”).

Important Information

Academic Integrity: To maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo and its Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo (AFIW) are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage and the Arts Academic Integrity webpage for more information](#).

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline](#). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [University of Waterloo Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Appeals](#).

Note for Students with Disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Course Outline / Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment Due
September 6	Course introduction		
September 11 and 13	Conventions of fantasy literature	Read, in advance, a selection of short texts that will be available on Learn	<i>Remember that informal responses will be submitted at the end of every class.</i>
September 19 and 20	Tolkien	<i>The Hobbit</i>	
September 25 and 27	McCaffrey	<i>Dragonflight</i>	
October 2 and 4	Beagle	<i>The Last Unicorn</i>	
October 11	(movie)	<i>The Princess Bride</i>	
October 16 and 18	Le Guin	<i>A Wizard of Earthsea</i>	Text analysis, draft 1 (Oct. 18)
October 23 and 25	Donaldson	<i>Lord Foul's Bane</i>	
October 30 and November 1	Pratchett	<i>Small Gods</i>	Text analysis, draft 2 (Nov. 1)
November 6 and 8	Gaiman	<i>The Sandman, vol. 1</i>	Text recommendation assignment should be submitted during these two weeks.
November 13 and 15	Various authors	A selection of short texts available on Learn	
November 20 and 22	Walton	<i>Among Others</i>	Term paper outline (Nov. 22); term paper due no later than December 4.
November 27 and 29	Course conclusion		Final test (Nov. 29)