

Department of English & Writing Studies

Speculative Fiction: Fantasy
English 2072G (001)
Winter 2018

Instructor: Dr. Gabrielle Ceraldi
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Course Location: Kresge Building K106

Course Date/Time: M 2:30-3:30 pm,
W 2:30-4:30 pm

Office Hours: T & TH 2:30-3:30 pm

Antirequisites: The former English 134E.

Course Description

Wizards, vampires, fairies, and the Chosen One – these figures are no longer confined to a genre ghetto but have instead moved to the mainstream. This course examines the roots of the fantasy genre in novels such as *Dracula* and *The Lord of the Rings* and considers how the tropes of the genre have been reproduced and transformed by authors like J.K. Rowling and Neil Gaiman. We will examine the continuing appeal of stories about magic, whether they involve supernatural intrusions, visits to the realm of faerie, or extraordinary powers hidden in apparently ordinary places.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course, the successful student will be able to:

- Place individual texts into the context of the fantasy genre as a whole;
- Identify and analyze the basic elements of literature such as plot, character, point of view, theme, setting, imagery, and diction;
- Understand the political, religious, moral, and philosophical underpinnings of the texts on the course;
- Write an essay about a work of literature containing an effective thesis supported by adequate evidence from the original text;
- Offer independent insights, beyond those outlined in class;
- Organize and present ideas clearly and effectively.

Course Materials

Required Texts:

- J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (Harper)
- The Two Towers* (Harper)
- The Return of the King* (Harper)
- Jo Walton, *Among Others* (Tor)
- C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Harper)
- Vampire Academy* (Harper)
- Lev Grossman, *The Magicians* (Plume)
- Neil Gaiman, *Stardust* (Morrow)
- Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (Penguin)
- J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (Bloomsbury)

Methods of Evaluation

Assignment #1 (750 words, due February 12)

15%

Essay (1500 words, due March 28)

30%

Discussion of

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases

Grading Rubric

THESIS

Is there a unifying idea in this paper?

Is this idea specific, original, and argumentative?

Is this idea explained clearly near the beginning of the paper?

ARGUMENT

Does the material in this paper go beyond description to explore the implications and meaning of the text(s)?

Have opposing ideas been acknowledged and given a convincing response?

ORGANIZATION

Do paragraph breaks reflect a meaningful shift in topic?

Does the opening sentence of each paragraph identify the central idea of that paragraph and its relationship to the thesis?

MLA Format

Your Name

Surname 1