

ENGL 4317-110 Literary Themes: Tolkien & Medieval Literature

Texas A&M University – Central Texas

Fall 2017

Instructor: Dr. Amber Dunai

Email: Canvas Course Email

Alternate Email: adunai@tamuct.edu

Modality: Face-to-Face

Meeting Room: FH 210

Meeting Times: TR 11-12:15 PM

Office Hours: TR 10-11 AM & by appointment

Office: FH 217 E

Course Description

An in-depth study of one major theme in literary history. Topics vary and the course can be repeated for credit if taken under a different emphasis. Prerequisite(s): [ENGL 1301](#), [ENGL 1302](#), 3 hours of sophomore literature and [ENGL 3305](#).

This semester's topic is the fantasy writing of J. R. R. Tolkien, with particular focus on the influence of medieval literature and Tolkien's scholarly research on his fictional works.

Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Recognize the influences of medieval literature on Tolkien's fictional writing.
- Connect major ideas from Tolkien's scholarly writing to his fictional writing.
- Critically evaluate scholarship on Tolkien's literature and engage in ongoing scholarly discussions about his work.
- Locate scholarly sources relevant to a research question related to the course topic, and collect your research into an annotated bibliography.
- Produce an analytical research essay on a research question related to the course topic.
- Share your research with the class in a clear and coherent manner, and engage with your peers' papers by following up with helpful questions and suggestions for further study.

Required Textbooks

J. R. R. Tolkien. *The Hobbit*. ISBN: 978-0547928227

J. R. R. Tolkien. *The Lord of the Rings*. ISBN: 978-0618640157

Additional readings are available online through the TAMUCT Library electronic course reserve.

Course Reading Schedule

Readings should be completed by the day on which they are listed. While minor assignments are not included in this schedule, major assignments are listed for your convenience.

Abbreviation Key: Abbreviation Key: ER (Electronic Reserve); LotR (Lord of the Rings)

WEEK 1	8/29: Introduction; 8/31: (ER) Excerpts: Beowulf: Monsters and Critics
WEEK 2	9/5: (ER) Shippey Reading; 9/7: <i>Hobbit</i> Ch. 1-5
WEEK 3	9/12: <i>Hobbit</i> Ch. 6-10; 9/14: <i>Hobbit</i> Ch. 11-15
WEEK 4	9/19: <i>Hobbit</i> Ch. 16-19; 9/21: <i>LotR</i> Prologue; Book 1 Ch. 1-3
WEEK 5	9/26: <i>LotR</i> Book 1 Ch. 4-7; 9/28: <i>LotR</i> Book 1 Ch. 8-11
WEEK 6	10/3: <i>LotR</i> Book 1 Ch. 12; Book 2 Ch. 1-2; 10/5: <i>LotR</i> Book 2 Ch. 3-5
WEEK 7	10/10: <i>LotR</i> Book 2 Ch. 6-8; 10/12: <i>LotR</i> Book 2 Ch. 9-10; Book 3 Ch. 1
WEEK 8	10/17: <i>LotR</i> Book 3 Ch. 2-5; 10/19: <i>LotR</i> Book 3 Ch. 6-8
WEEK 9	10/24: <i>LotR</i> Book 3 Ch. 9-11; 10/26: <i>LotR</i> Book 4 Ch. 1-3
WEEK 10	10/31: <i>LotR</i> Book 4 Ch. 4-6; 11/2: (ER) Sinex Reading; Annotated Bibliography Due
WEEK 11	11/7: <i>LotR</i> Book 4 Ch. 7-10; 11/9: <i>LotR</i> Book 5 Ch. 1-3
WEEK 12	11/14: <i>LotR</i> Book 5 Ch. 4-7; 11/16: <i>LotR</i> Book 5 Ch. 8-10
WEEK 13	11/21: <i>LotR</i> Book 6 Ch. 1-3; 11/23: Thanksgiving: No Class Meeting
WEEK 14	11/28: Peer Review Day; 11/30: <i>LotR</i> Book 6 Ch. 4-6; Research Papers Due
WEEK 15	12/5: <i>LotR</i> Book 6 Ch. 7-9; 12/7: Conference Part I
WEEK 16	12/12: Conference Part II; 12/14: No Class Meeting

Grades

10% Participation

10% Conference Presentation

25% Weekly Reflections

25% Annotated Bibliography

30% Research Essay

Grading scale: 90-100: A; 80-89: B; 70-70: C; 60-69: D; 0-59: F

All grades will be posted to Canvas's grade book, and students will be able to view their grades (along with instructor feedback) as they are returned. You can generally expect grades to be returned within one week of the assignment deadline.

Major Assignment Due Dates

Assignments are due by the start of class on the date listed.

Annotated Bibliography: Thursday, November 2

Research Paper: Thursday, November 30

Conference Presentation: Thursday, December 7 & Tuesday, December 12

Participation

Participation is based on course attendance and involvement in class discussions and activities. You will receive a participation score (rated 0-10, with 10 representing excellent participation and 0 representing no participation) at the end of each week, and the average of weekly participation scores will determine the final participation score. A participation rubric will be distributed during Week 1. See the Attendance Policy for information regarding the participation score and absences.

Weekly Reflections

You will complete a total of ten weekly reflections between Weeks 2 and 11 of the semester, after which they will be concluded in order to allow more time for focus on the research paper and conference presentation. Reflections are due at 11:59 PM on the Thursday of each week they are assigned. You will receive a prompt with more information regarding weekly reflections during Week 1.

Annotated Bibliography

The annotated bibliography will be comprised of at least ten peer-reviewed sources and at least one primary source related to the student's selected research topic. A prompt and rubric for the assignment will be distributed at the start of the semester.

Research Essay

A prompt and rubric for the essay will be distributed at the start of the semester. The essay will be 8-10 pages long and will pursue a research question related to the course focus (Tolkien & medieval literature).

Conference Presentation

Each student will present a shortened version of his or her research essay during the two class periods at the end of the semester devoted to the conference. Additionally, students will receive points for attending both sessions and participating actively by asking questions and/or making constructive suggestions for further research. A prompt and rubric for the assignment will be distributed at the start of the semester.

Instructor Availability

You are welcome to contact me with questions or comments via email (but please send emails to me via the Canvas messaging system **only**, unless the site is down). I endeavor to answer all emails within 24 hours of receiving them, not counting weekends and holidays. Appointments are not required during regularly-held office hours (see top of syllabus for details); you can stop by at any time during office hours, although students will be met with on a first-come, first-served basis. You may request an appointment outside normal office hours in person or by email; however, I do ask that any appointment request be made *at least* 24 hours in advance of the desired meeting time. Do not assume that the meeting will take place unless I have responded to your request and confirmed the time. **Please only request an appointment if it is impossible for you to meet during regularly-scheduled office hours.**

Draft Review Policy

Students often ask me whether I'll look at major assignment drafts and give advice on how to improve them. The answer is yes, with two requirements. First, students who wish for me to review an entire draft must come to office hours or make an appointment to do so and must bring a print copy of the draft with them. I will not review drafts that are emailed to me with no explanation; over email, I will only address specific questions that can be answered in a brief email response. Second, students who wish for me to review an entire draft must also come to the meeting with two or three specific areas in their assignment that they'd like to discuss. They might mention punctuation, paragraph structure, thesis statement strength, document organization, or other such topics. This does not mean that I will not comment on other areas for improvement; I simply require that students spend a little time thinking about their own writing beforehand in order to make the meeting a more productive one.

Classroom Etiquette

Students are to maintain a high level of collegiality and respect when interacting with one another and the instructor. Please refrain from using profanity or slurs in interactions related to this course (including discussion postings and emails). When interacting with others online, write in complete sentences and avoid informal abbreviations (for example, type out "you" rather than writing "u").

Please also observe professional email etiquette when corresponding with the instructor and your classmates. Emails should include a line of address with a professional salutation, a concise message, and a signature. I prefer that you address me as Dr. Dunai or Professor Dunai. If you have a preferred name other than the one listed in the roster, please indicate this during the first week of class so that your classmates and I can use it.

Late Submission Policy

I do not accept late/make-up work unless the student has missed the deadline due to a documented, university-excused absence or emergency (for example, an illness or an accident experienced by the student or a member of his or her immediate family).

If you miss a deadline due to a university-approved, documented reason, it is your responsibility to initiate a discussion regarding a deadline extension in a timely manner, ideally within 24 hours of missing the deadline. Documentation must be presented before a new deadline will be scheduled, and must be provided within 24 hours of the extension request. After a new deadline for the assignment is established and the confirmation of the new deadline is emailed to you, you must abide by this deadline or else receive a zero on the assignment. *In all situations regarding missed and/or extended deadlines, it is the student's responsibility to contact the professor if any issues arise. If I do not hear from you and do not have your submission after a deadline passes, I will assume that you do not intend to turn in the assignment and will put a zero in the gradebook.*

Attendance Policy

Because class meetings this semester will be light on lecture and heavy on activity and discussion, attendance is of utmost importance. You may miss up to two classes without a documented, university-excused absence before your participation score will be affected. Any unexcused absences beyond these two will result in a zero participation score for the missed day, which will be factored into the participation score at the end of the week. **Any in-class activities or assessments missed without a documented, university-excused absence cannot be made up, even if they are missed during the two allotted "free" absences.** A sign-in sheet will be posted during each class meeting; it is your responsibility to initial the sheet to record your attendance each meeting.

Program Assessment Statement

To ensure the learning outcomes are met in the English Department, there is a program-wide artifact collection process. To that end, some of the projects you complete for ENGL 4317 this semester may be used for programmatic assessment. Please note that all efforts will be made to keep your identity anonymous; as such, all identifying markers will be removed from your work if used for programmatic assessment. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Dunai.

Drop Policy

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a Drop Request Form, found through the Registrar's web page: <https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/business-office/droppolicy.php>

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the University Calendar for which the form must be completed, signed and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Incompletes

Incompletes are only assigned due to unexpected, life-altering emergency situations which occur after the final drop date (for example, a life-threatening medical situation experienced by the student or a member of his/her immediate family). If you simply find yourself overwhelmed by the semester's demands, you do not qualify for an incomplete. If you experience an emergency which you believe will prevent you from completing the semester's work before the final drop date, you are expected to drop. If you experience an unexpected emergency situation after the final drop date which you believe will prevent you from completing the semester's work, please contact me as soon as possible so that we can discuss whether you qualify for an incomplete. *Incompletes are a measure of last resort and will not be entered into in the absence of an unexpected, **documented** emergency situation.*

Technology Statement

Technology Requirements:

This course will use the TAMUCT Instructure Canvas learning management system.

Login to TAMUCT Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com>]

Username: Your MyCT username

(xx123 or everything before the "@" in your MyCT e-mail address)

Password: Your MyCT password

Technology Support:

For technology issues, students should contact Help Desk Central.

24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

Web Chat: <http://hdc.tamu.edu>

When calling for support please let your support technician know you are a TAMUCT student.

For issues with **Canvas**, select “chat with Canvas support,” submit a support request to Canvas Tier 1, or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953, links to all are found inside of Canvas using the “Help” link.

For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Academic Integrity

Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student’s academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student’s work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university’s Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university’s standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person’s work as if it were your own. This might be done by quoting a source without indicating that you are quoting (if you neglect to include quotation marks and/or a citation); paraphrasing without making significant changes to the source text; and/or *intentionally or unintentionally* taking part or all of another text and presenting it as your own. Self-plagiarism means submitting part or all of an assignment that you previously submitted to another class for credit; submitting work done for previous courses is not permitted. You are responsible for understanding how to use sources correctly and ethically. You are also responsible for understanding the difference between quoting and paraphrasing, and understanding how to cite a source which you have quoted, paraphrased, or summarized. *Even if a student is ignorant of what constitutes plagiarism, s/he is not exempt from the consequences for plagiarizing.*

If you have questions about using and citing sources, please ask. Any assignments that fail to attribute sources properly, were written in part or in whole by someone other than the student who submitted it, and/or were previously submitted for credit to another course will receive a grade of zero and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. All major writing assignments will be checked for plagiarism via a plagiarism detection service such as Turnitin.com.

Academic Accommodations

At Texas A&M-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier free education. The Department of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the University's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Department of Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit our [Access & Inclusion webpage](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html):
<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html>.

TAMUCT supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. For more information, please visit <https://www.tamuct.departments/index.php>. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines](#), please visit: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>

The University Writing Center

Located in 416 Warrior Hall, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University-Central Texas is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10am-5pm Monday-Thursday with satellite hours in the University Library on Mondays from 6:00-9:00pm. Students may arrange a one-on-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by visiting the UWC during normal operating hours (both half-hour and hour sessions are available) or by making an appointment via [WConline](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/) [<https://tamuct.mywconline.com/>]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu to schedule an online tutoring session. Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance

and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the University Writing Center is here to help!

If you have any questions about the University Writing Center, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu.

Tutoring

Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both on-campus and online. On-campus subjects tutored include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Suite 111.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at 254-519-5796, or by emailing Larry Davis at lldavis@tamuct.edu.

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log-in and receive FREE online tutoring and writing support. This tool provides tutoring in over forty subject areas. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

Library Services

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 72,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at TAMUCT are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On-campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available twenty-four hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the TAMUCT main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our homepage: <https://tamuct.libguides.com/>

911 Cellular

Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University – Central Texas

911Cellular is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in 911 Cellular through their myCT email account.

Connect at [911Cellular](https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management) [<https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management>] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in 911Cellular, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.