ENGL 5388
Politics of Literature:
J.R.R. Tolkien
Section 110 - Fall 2018
6 PM – 9 PM Tuesdays in FH 304

Dr. Amber Dunai

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Office Hours: 5 PM – 6 PM Tuesday or by appointment

Course Description

This graduate special-topics seminar examines the politics of literature through a single author or genre as a method of introducing and critically evaluating normative political theories. Special attention is paid to the political uses of genre conventions and the political power of shared myths.

Course Overview

This graduate seminar, team-taught with Dr. Jeffrey Dixon of the Political Science program, examines the politics of literature through the lens of J.R.R. Tolkien's popular and influential works, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Special attention is paid to the political uses of fiction and myths, the political views of Tolkien, the politics described within the fantasy world of Middle Earth, and the relationship of the work to political theory, including theories of religion, gender, race, just war, and rulership.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

This is an interdisciplinary course with seven main objectives. These objectives and their associated learning outcomes are ultimately the focus of the course. Course objectives (numbered) and learning outcomes (lower case letters) are listed below.

1. Students should understand how fiction and myths are used for political purposes (a).
2. Students should be able to closely read *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* in their narrative (b), historical (c), and political (d) contexts.
3. Students should be able to formulate and express political-literary analyses effectively, both verbally (e) and in writing (f).
4. Students should be able to summarize the relationship between the text of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* and theories of the politics of religion (g), feminist political thought (h), critical race theory (i), just war theory (j), and ecopolitics (k).
5. Students should be able to identify and compare the working of the political institutions of J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth and those of the real world, including parallels and any differences that are severe enough to break the politically-informed reader's suspension of disbelief (l).

6. Students should be able to perform primary and secondary research on an original research topic related to the politics of (or in) Tolkien's fictional Middle Earth (m).

7. Students should be able to both produce (n) and present (o) an analytical research paper on some particular political aspect of Tolkien's tales of Middle Earth's Third Age.

Learning outcomes a, e, f, m, n, and o are assessed using the research paper and presentation. Outcomes f, g, h, i, j, k, and l are assessed from the daily memos in the second half of the course. Outcomes b, c, d, and f will be assessed using in-class writing prompts in the first half of the course and class participation. Finally, Outcome e is also assessed using the class participation rubric.

Course Format

This course meets face-to-face, with supplemental materials made available online through the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System [https://tamuct.instructure.com].

Required Texts

The following texts are required and available for purchase at the Warrior Bookstore. Be sure to get the right editions of each, since page numbers don't match up between different editions of these books. You are under no obligation to purchase a textbook from a university-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

> Humphrey Carpenter (ed). 2000. *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*. NY: Mariner Books (Houghton Mifflin). ISBN-13: 978-0618056996.
>
> J.R.R. Tolkien. 2005. *The Lord of the Rings.* 50th Anniversary One Volume Edition. NY: Mariner Books (Houghton Mifflin). ISBN-13: 978-0618640157.
>
> J.R.R. Tolkien. 2012. *The Hobbit*. 75th Anniversary Paperback Edition. NY: Houghton Mifflin. ISBN-13: 978-0547928227

All other required readings are available on Canvas.

Technology Requirements and Support

This course will use the Texas A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system for course readings (posted in Adobe pdf format, which can be opened by Adobe Reader and most modern web browsers), the Academic Integrity Exercise, and some writing advice and PowerPoint slides (for the first day of class).

- Logon to Texas A&M-Central Texas Canvas [https://tamuct.instructure.com].
  Username: Your MyCT username (xx123 or everything before the "@" in your MyCT email address)
  Password: Your MyCT password
- *For log-in problems*, 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]
  Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas 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.

Grading

Course grades are assigned using the standard 90/80/70/60 division, rounding to the nearest percent, using the following rubric:

Item	Points	Percent
Academic Integrity Exercise	0 (but required to pass)	0% *
Weekly Memos (14)	1400 (100 per memo)	≈42%
Participation	700 (50 per session)	≈21%
Research Paper	1000	≈30%
Research Presentation	200	≈6%
TOTAL POSSIBLE	**3300**	**100%**
2954+=A 2624-2953=B 2294-2623=C 1964-2293=D 1963 or lower=F		

- Academic Integrity Exercise: This consists of watching a brief lecture, taking a quiz, seeing where any mistakes on the quiz came from, and signing a statement. Once you successfully complete this exercise, you will no longer need to do so in future political science courses. If you have previously completed this exercise for me, you need not do so for this course.
   *** *Having completed the Academic Integrity Exercise is a prerequisite to passing this course. It must be completed before you hand in any homework or* **the due date on the course schedule**, *whichever comes first.****
   - *Rubric:* **You will automatically fail the course if you have not completed the Academic Integrity exercise on or before the due date on the course schedule.**

- Memos: At the beginning of each class session, you should submit a typed, two page (about 400-600 words) essay on the day's readings. If you want to refer to it in class, just make two copies – one to hand in at the beginning of class and one for you to use throughout class.
   - The first half should summarize the relevant material from each reading. Its goal is simply to show you did the required readings.
      - For the days when we read Tolkien's fiction: Just outline the main points of who did what in the first page of the memo.
      - For the days when we read other people's work about Tolkien: Before writing, be sure that you understand each author's argument – the thesis of the reading and what evidence the author produces to support the thesis. All of our authors have arguments to make, and some of the Letters contain more than one argument. In principle, about one sentence per letter or encyclopedia entry is sufficient, while full essays require a few sentences to detail their arguments.
   - The second half of the memo should focus on one or more related political arguments. Its goal is to further your understanding of the politics of Tolkien's work through application of political theory to Middle Earth and/or application of what we see in Middle Earth to contemporary political thought.
      - For the days when we read Tolkien's fiction: Explore the political implications of some aspect of the parts that were assigned for the day. For example, here are some sample topics for the first two sets of assigned readings (*The Hobbit*).
         - Where is the diversity we see in our world found in Middle Earth? How is it portrayed?
         - What are the political and economic systems of the Shire?

- There is tension between Elves and Dwarves. What are some examples of this tension, and what hints do they give about its underlying source?
- Why aren't there any active female characters in *The Hobbit*? What type of attitudes about gender roles might this represent?
- What is Tolkien's attitude towards the natural environment in *The Hobbit*?
- Is Bilbo's acquisition of the Ring just and/or legitimate? How does it change his behavior, if at all? (If you've read Plato's *Republic*, you might compare it to the effects the Ring of Gyges has on its wearer's behavior).
- To what extent is Bilbo a truth-teller? Provide examples of his (dis)honesty drawn from throughout the assigned readings and how it affects political outcomes in the work.
- Is the Battle of Five Armies a just war?
- What virtues and vices are displayed by the Dwarves and Bilbo? Are they applicable to political life?
    - For the days when we read other people's work about Tolkien: Detail at least one weakness in the evidence or argumentation of one or more connected pieces we read, and suggest how this weakness might be addressed by scholars. Look for weaknesses in one or more arguments you summarized in the first half of the paper, especially if they are common to all of the arguments on one side of an issue. Do not forget to suggest how scholars might address or further investigate this weakness.
  - These memos shouldn't require outside research but if you do some, be sure to cite it properly using the MLA system (see the Purdue OWL site linked on Canvas). If you only cite from the assigned readings, you don't need a works cited page; otherwise, you do.
  - Rubric:
    - Each half of the memo is worth half of the credit.
      - The first half is graded for clarity and descriptive accuracy. It should show that you read and understood the material.
      - The second half is graded as an argument. That is, it should have a thesis (claim), evidence drawn from the readings, and express or implied connections between the two. Moreover, you should say what we can do with this information – either by application of Tolkien's work to politics or application of politics to Tolkien's work. This is an opportunity to practice coming up with researchable paper topics.
    - Spelling/grammar errors can reduce the grade on the memo by up to 20% (1% deduction per error). Check the link on Canvas to at least address my personal pet peeves. If this is a consistent source of lost points, you may wish to seek guidance from the University Writing Center (described below).

- Participation: Students should professionally and constructively participate throughout each class session.
  - Professionalism: Students are to maintain a high level of collegiality and respect when interacting with one another and the professors. Please refrain from using profanity or slurs in interactions related to this course, and use "Dr. Dunai" or "Professor Dunai" instead of "Amber" or "Ms. Dunai." This pattern of professionalism should also extend to your email interactions, i.e. proper address and use of full sentences and words ("you" rather than "u"). If you have a preferred name other than the one listed in the roster ("Nick" rather than "Nicholas," for

example), please indicate this during first-day introductions so that your classmates and I can use it.

- o Rubric: This will be graded on a simple system. A student who attends and does little else will receive 40% credit for that session. A student who constructively and professionally participates in about half of the class will receive 70% credit. A student who constructively participates throughout class will receive the full 100% (50 points). A good rule of thumb is to be sure to contribute something relevant (even just a question that shows engagement with the course material) at least twice an hour (i.e. six times per class session) if there is no lecture or in-class exercise.
    - Constructive participation means making comments or asking questions that demonstrate familiarity with the assigned readings for the week. It also means actively engaging in any in-class exercises. On the final day of class, it means asking questions about others' research projects.
    - As the amount of class time devoted to lecture increases, the amount of participation expected from students decreases proportionally.
    - Students who are late or leave early without a legitimate excuse (see the rules for excused absences below) will have an amount equal to the proportion of time they missed deducted from their participation score.

- Research Paper: Students will construct an original research paper during the course that addresses some aspect of the politics of *The Hobbit* and/or *The Lord of the Rings*. ENGL 5388 students should use the MLA citation system. The main body of the paper -- excluding the cover page, abstract, works cited, and any endnotes, tables or figures -- may be anywhere from 6000 to 10,000 words long (about 20 double-spaced pages using standard fonts and margins).
    - o Elements (adapted from Andrew Enterline, 2007, "A Guide to Writing Research Projects in Graduate Political Science Courses," Version 2.0):
        - Research Question/Puzzle (a page or two which will be subsequently linked to your Introduction and ultimately guide every part of the paper, from your literature review to your theory and argument/analysis)
            - Select a research area and look for unanswered or incompletely answered questions in that area. Write down as many as possible while brainstorming, although only one will make it into your paper (until the conclusion, when you may wish to introduce others as potential follow-on projects). Then select and write down a specific research question of interest from the set of questions that you identified in your research area.
            - Consider the potential academic and societal implications of your study of said question, so that the project is not an isolated event, but part of a broader body of scholarship.
            - After you have identified your research question, you should consider whether the question is clear and concise. That is, can the question be stated in a single, interrogative sentence of moderate length?
            - Ultimately, research questions are not "written in stone"—i.e., they can change and evolve as you read and explore. For example, you might find that, upon reading some of the literature, you discover that a great many scholars have explored your question previously, and you wish to explore a research question that is relatively unexplored. Alternatively, as you read the literature you might

find a particular sub-area or nuance of your original question that you find of interest and wish to explore as your research question.

- Research question evolution notwithstanding, the question that you do arrive at must be clearly and visibly stated in your research project. That is, there should be absolutely no uncertainty on the reader's part as to your research question and its validity as the focus of your research project.

- Literature Review (about eight pages)
  - General Purpose: It is necessary to thoroughly vet the scholarly literature (broadly defined) that is relevant to your research question. In doing so, you are engaged in the process of "reviewing the literature," or identifying and familiarizing yourself with prior efforts by scholars that bear in some way on your investigation of your research puzzle/question.
  - Ultimately, you should keep in mind that you have about 10 double-spaced pages to execute your literature review, so you need to be concise, while at the same time devoting sufficient space to the listed tasks. This 8-page limit is purposely constraining. Hallmarks of poor graduate seminar papers are long literature reviews that result in starvation of the remaining sections of the project, such as the theory and detailed examination of the evidence. As such, the page limit compels you to be succinct, identify the general attributes of the extant literature, and develop a transition to your theoretical section.
  - A literature review generally focuses on secondary sources, rather than primary or tertiary sources.
    - It would require unusual justification to have less than <u>ten</u> secondary sources (scholarly books or peer-reviewed journal articles) in a literature review.
    - Examples of primary sources include books, letters, and drafts by Tolkien himself. Secondary sources are written by scholars discussing the primary source material. Finally, tertiary sources like the *J.R.R. Tolkien Encyclopedia*, summarize material from secondary sources. Such sources should generally be avoided in the literature review, although they may serve as useful jumping-off points when discussing your research question in the beginning of the paper.
  - Reviewing the literature requires you to provide the reader with just enough information about prior efforts, without regurgitating the details of each and every study that is relevant to your inquiry. A good rule of thumb is that the literature review should be no more than half of your final paper, in order to leave room for development of your argument and presentation of your evidence.
  - In addition to reviewing how previous efforts have approached theoretical and empirical issues relevant to your study, you should also demonstrate to the reader the strengths and weaknesses in this work in an effort to set the stage for your own investigation.

- In sum, the purpose in writing a literature review is, broadly speaking, threefold:
    - To discuss the scholarly work relevant to your project;
    - To point out the strengths and weakness of this body of research (and, in doing so, keeping in mind a respectful, even-handed approach to evaluating this work); and
    - Identifying how this body of research as it currently stands has not addressed sufficiently the research puzzle/question that you've identified, or that this body of research might be helpful in addressing your question or puzzle. This task is indeed critical, because it informs the reader as to the reason(s) why further research (i.e., your paper) is warranted, and provides the setup for the theoretical portion of your project. It is very important that you devote some project space to elaborating the reasons why the current literature is inadequate for answering your research question in some way or ways.
        - As an exercise, you might consider yourself confronted by a very skeptical reader who is deciding whether or not to spend the time to read the remaining pages of your project. Ask yourself how well you are doing in convincing this reader to read on. Are you really providing a neat angle on the literature, something that will draw the reader in, or is the remainder of your paper likely to be a very small, incremental advance in previous work, or even worse, quibbling over very minor offenses in prior work?
- Theory (a few pages): Describe the theoretical lens that you will use to address your research question/solve the puzzle. Since most authors we read have access to the same primary sources that you do, it is important to select or devise a method that guides your interpretation of those sources. For example, if you are analyzing the political implications of all or some of the text, you might use a theoretical lens like just war theory, feminism, queer theory, critical race theory, Christian or other theology, Marxism or class analysis, environmentalism, critical theory, some strand of conservative or liberal political philosophy, democratic peace or selectorate theory, psychological theory, economic theory, etc. This theory will help you select and interpret the relevant primary source materials. You should include more than one source that details your theoretical perspective (avoiding tertiary sources, of course). Justify this theoretical perspective by showing how it has helped address political puzzles in past academic work.
- Argument (perhaps seven to ten pages): This is where you solve the puzzle or answer the research question. Each argument includes a claim (your thesis, or a point that supports your thesis), evidence (focusing on primary rather than secondary sources – your proof should come from the text rather than the mere authority of other scholars unmoored from their sources), and an express or implied connection between the two (often provided by your theoretical perspective).
- Introduction and Conclusion: These should generally be written last, since they constitute a preview and summary of your analysis, respectively.
    - The introduction should reveal the research question/puzzle, establish its importance, summarize how previous literature has dealt with it, preview your

theoretical perspective and thesis, and conclude with a "road map" to the rest of the paper. This can be done in 2-3 paragraphs.

- The conclusion should revisit the research question/puzzle in light of your arguments and analysis, demonstrating that the evidence, taken as a whole, does indeed support your thesis and that your argument constitutes an important advance in some respects from previous scholarship. It should conclude with a paragraph establishing next steps in your research agenda – in other words, where you or scholars reading your work should focus their energies next.

▪ Title Page and Abstract.

- Your title should make the subject of your paper plain. Some even use their underlying research question as a title or subtitle.

- Follow the title with your name, affiliation (presumably Texas A&M University – Central Texas), your professional contact information (e.g. your student email address), and the date or version of your paper. All of this should be centered on the upper half of the page.

- Follow this information with a single-spaced abstract (a summary of the paper that at a minimum lists the puzzle/question, the theoretical lens with which you approached the problem, any methods used (e.g. "analysis of the text of Tolkien's Lord of the Rings, Letters, and drafts from the History of Middle-Earth"), and the paper's conclusion and theoretical importance. The abstract is quite short – no more than 250 words – and should be entirely contained on the title page or placed on the second, unnumbered, page of the paper.

- Footer: At the bottom of the title page, one puts identification of the conference, date, and location where the paper was or is to be presented. This is also the place to thank anyone who contributed, e.g. by reviewing draft manuscripts or offering constructive ideas. Finally, it is customary but optional to request that readers contact you for the latest draft of the work prior to citation.

- Example:

Surge, Escalate, Withdraw & Shinseki:
Forecasting & Retro-casting American Force
Strategies & Insurgency in Iraq*

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Abstract

Central to the contemporary American foreign policy debate is the issue of reducing insurgency and promoting stability in Iraq, and the role of American military forces in achieving these outcomes. Military force-related proposals range from complete withdrawal to a moderate "surge" in troops to a massive escalation of the force commitment. Here, we draw upon an analysis of domestic political stability in 60 imposed political systems occurring during the period 1816-1994 to forecast the effectiveness of said force-related proposals. The analysis underscores, in part, that (a) a policy of surging American troops is unlikely to succeed, (b) a policy of belated massive escalation reduces insurgency, but much less so than an initial policy of massive invasion coupled with massive occupation, a strategy that preempts the development of a robust insurgency.

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*We are grateful to the Department of Political Science and the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of North Texas for research and intellectual support.

- Works Cited: Attach a works cited page using MLA specifications, ordered by the last name of the authors and formatted with a hanging indent. Include only works you have cited in the paper.
- Tables and Figures: Should you use tables, charts, images, or other figures in your work, they should either appear on the page they are mentioned, or (more common) be attached as separate pages following your works cited, with one page per such table or figure. Regardless of how you present them, each table or figure needs to be numbered and captioned.
- General Formatting: Just follow this checklist:
  - _____ The main body of the text is in proportional 12 point type and is double-spaced;
  - _____ Page numbers appear on every sheet but the first two or three (i.e., the title, abstract and first page are numberless);
  - _____ One-inch margins (left, right, bottom and top) are used through- out the text;
  - _____ Headings, sub-headings, and sub-sub-headings (consistently hierarchical) are employed to sub-divide the text; and
  - _____ The paper is no more than 40 sheets in length (everything included—title page, abstract page, main body of text, endnotes, references, tables, and figures).

- Rubric:

Points Possible	% of Grade	Description
100	10%	**Preliminary Research Puzzle/Theory Choice:** The student delivers his or her research question/puzzle, along with a brief statement on what theoretical approach he or she intends to use, by the relevant deadline on the syllabus. Students are not "locked in" to these choices, but rather should communicate any revisions to the professor in a timely manner in order to receive useful advice about how to proceed.
100	≈10%	**Preliminary Literature Review:** The student delivers the literature review portion of the paper by the stated deadline, so it can be revised based on the professor's comments before the final draft of the paper is due. The literature review should meet all requirements set forth in the "literature review" section of this syllabus and should include an MLA-formatted Works cited page, as per the "Works Cited" section.
50	5%	**Introduction and Research Question/Puzzle:** See the above requirements for each. The question/puzzle and thesis selected must be relevant to both political science and *The Lord of the Rings* and follow all established assignment guidelines.
150	15%	**Literature Review:** See the professor's comments on the draft and the above requirements.
150	15%	**Theory:** Be sure to not only select a theoretical lens to work with, but to defend that theoretical approach by demonstrating that it has been used successfully to solve other puzzles in previous scholarship (which may well have been on different topics or writings than yours).
200	20%	**Argumentation and Evidence:** Ideally, the final thesis will be supported by multiple line of argument (claim, evidence, connection between the two), each of which will itself be supported through argument construction. This is a research paper, and research into primary sources is required. Depending on your topic, you should include material from the assigned writings from Tolkien and trace their evolution in the *History of Middle Earth* (Tolkien's drafts of *The Lord of the Rings* and other writings).
75	≈8%	**Title Page, Abstract, and Conclusion:** See above for the requirements for each.
75	≈8%	**Works Cited:** You should have cited at least 16 works by the end of the paper – ten for the literature review, another three or four when discussing and defending your choice of theoretical perspective, and at least a few primary sources to provide evidence for your thesis and associated arguments. Everything should be in MLA format, alphabetically by author last name, etc.
100	10%	**Novelty of Findings:** The paper makes a novel contribution to political science rather than simply being a retread of earlier arguments. Your paper should approach the topic in a novel way, demonstrating creativity in the research endeavor.
Possibly negative	Up to -100%	**Word and Page Counts:** For every 300 words short of the minimum of 6000 for the <u>body</u> of the paper (see above), 5% of the remaining credit will be deducted from the paper. For every 300 words over the maximum of 10,000, or for every page above the maximum of 40, 3% credit will be deducted.
Possibly negative	Up to -20%.	**Writing Style and Tone:** Content should be written in Standard American English in complete, grammatically-correct sentences. Standard punctuation rules should also be observed. The project should be written in a formal tone suitable for a scholarly

		audience. Colloquialisms and slang should be avoided in favor of more professional diction. For each error over five, 1% will be deducted, to a maximum of 20%.

- Research Presentation: Prepare a 9-13 minute summary of your puzzle, thesis, and supporting evidence. ENGL 5388 students may present their papers **either** by reading a condensed version of the research paper (a double-spaced page will typically take about 2 minutes to read) **or** by giving an un-scripted talk using notes, as both of these approaches to conference presentations are permissible within the discipline of English studies. Some prepared visual aid (a handout for everyone in the class and the instructors or a PowerPoint presentation) is also required. You will be graded on preparation, professionalism, content, and how you address questions about your work from other students or the professors. (Your own questions of the other presenters form the participation grade for this portion of the session).
    - o Rubric: You will be scored on these five criteria. The first four are worth 50 points each, with the last one possibly subtracting from the sum of the first four.
        - ▪ Preparation (structure, notes, use of visual aids):   0   10   20   30   40   50
        - ▪ Professionalism (dress, conduct, language and syntax):   0   10   20   30   40   50
        - ▪ Content (puzzle, thesis, evidence):   0   10   20   30   40   50
        - ▪ Question handling (background knowledge, handling counter-arguments):   0 10 20 30 40 50
        - ▪ Over/under time limits: -10 per minute over/under
        - ▪ TOTAL = _____ /200

Course Policies

Regrade Policies
Mistakes happen. Don't be shy about checking everything twice. In order to prevent a last-minute search for points long after the original grading has been done, there are two policies for regrades or disputes over grades. Please remember the deadlines in each case. After this time, I am no longer confident that I will be able to remember enough to fairly regrade the material (i.e. using exactly the same standards as those applied to other students).

- Written Work: If you believe I have graded written work incorrectly, then you have up to **one week** from when I return the work to you to resubmit the work to me along with a *brief* explanation of the portion to be regraded.
- Participation: **At the end of any class period**, you may request to see your participation grade for that class. If you disagree with the grade, you need to explain your disagreement **then, while the discussion is still fresh in everyone's memory**. I advise you to write down a few words each time you participate so that you might be able to jog my memory after class if you believe I missed your effort.

Absences
Unexcused absences earn zero credit for the session.
- Excusing an Absence
    - o Scheduled Absences: Students must inform the instructor *prior to an absence*. Send me an email stating the dates(s) you will be missing and the reason(s). **Hand in your make-up work (see below) for each missed session before you leave.**
    - o Emergencies: Send me an email if possible. If all else fails, you or a friend may call my office and speak to me or my voicemail. There are very few situations in life that preclude making a

phone call or having a friend do so; failure to contact the instructor *prior to class* will normally rule out any sort of make-up. The standard is "ASAP" – that is, as soon as a reasonable person would have been able to contact me. **When you return, be sure to bring make-up work (see below) for any missed classes. This is due one week after you return. It is not the instructor's duty to remind you.**

- Make-up Work: For each **excused** absence, you will need to make up for the lost participation credit by expanding your memo from two pages to six. It should now contain about three pages of descriptive text about the assigned readings plus three pages containing and developing your own argument, as detailed above in the section on the memos.

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted, except in the case of emergencies described above. If you must email me something to prove you have it done on time, then you need to bring a hard copy for me to grade the next day (not session).

Incompletes

Grades of incomplete are not to be used when students simply fall behind. Instead, they are used when some event such as a hospitalization or deployment effectively takes the student out of the class after the drop deadline. By university policy, incompletes must be finished in the subsequent semester.

Academic Integrity

University Code of Academic Honesty: 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.

Specific guidelines for this course, which supplement and do not replace University policy:
- *Violations:* Some common violations of academic integrity that I have observed while teaching similar courses at TAMUCT are
    - Copying another student's homework. Study groups are fine, but copying must be avoided. Discuss the readings as long as you wish, but don't "share" your actual memos, which must be your own work. If you provide another student with a copy of your memo and they copy it, both you and the copier will be deemed to have violated the policy.
    - Using direct quotes without quotation marks. Even if you are just using three- or four-word phrases, you need to surround them with quotation marks if you didn't create them yourself. This is true even if you cite the source! Remember that changing a few words in a sentence does not transform a direct quote into a paraphrase; instead, it transforms one long direct quote into

several shorter direct quotes with a word of your own between each. A true paraphrase is the expression of the cited source's ideas in your own words.
- o Paraphrasing another person's words without citing the source.

- *Penalties:*
  - o The normal penalty for a violation of academic integrity (whether or not it is specifically listed above) in any of my classes is a grade of zero for the work or a deduction of 20% (two letter grades) from your course grade, whichever is **greater**. The infraction will be reported to the TAMUCT administration, with a recommendation for probation in the case of deliberate violation or no further action in the case of clearly inadvertent violation.
  - o The (a) outright purchase, download, or completion by others of an exam, or (b) second or subsequent violation of academic integrity (in this course or other courses) display such serious disregard for academic integrity that either one of them will result in course failure **and** recommendation for expulsion to the TAMUCT administration.

Drop Policy

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a [Drop Request Form](https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf) [https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf].

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the Academic 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.

Program Assessment

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 5388 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.

Student Resources

- **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] 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.
- **Academic Accommodations**: At Texas A&M University-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].

- o Texas A&M University-Central Texas 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 online, please visit the website [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf].
  - o Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender – including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Division of Student Affairs at 254-501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University's Title IX Coordinator.
- **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.
  - o 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 Dr. DeEadra Albert-Green at deeadra.albertgreen@tamuct.edu.
  - o 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.

University Writing Center: Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (TAMUCT) is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday with satellite hours in the University Library Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. This semester, the UWC is also offering online only hours from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

- 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 at [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.
  - o 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!

- o 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.
- **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 A&M-Central Texas 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.
    - o 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.
    - o Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas 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 Library website [https://tamuct.libguides.com/].

Amendments

Not all exigencies can be foreseen. I reserve the right to amend the syllabus at any time. Any such amendment will be provided to the students in writing.

Course Topics, Readings, and Due Dates

August 28: Introduction – The Politics of Myth and Literature

September 4: An Unexpected Adventure
J.R.R. Tolkien, <u>The Hobbit</u>, Chapters 1-4
J.R.R. Tolkien, <u>The Hobbit</u> (First Edition), Chapter 5 (Canvas)
J.R.R. Tolkien, <u>The Hobbit</u>, Chapters 5-9
Due Memo 1
Due: Academic Integrity Exercise

September 11: There and Back Again
J.R.R. Tolkien, <u>The Hobbit</u>, Chapters 10-19
Due: Memo 2

September 18: A New Journey Begins
J.R.R. Tolkien, <u>The Lord of the Rings</u>, Prologue and Book One
Due: Memo 3

September 25: Journey of the Nine Companions
J.R.R. Tolkien, <u>The Lord of the Rings</u>, Book Two
Due: Memo 4

October 2: The Treason of Isengard
J.R.R. Tolkien, <u>The Lord of the Rings</u>, Book Three
Due: Memo 5

October 9: The Journey of the Ringbearers
J.R.R. Tolkien, <u>The Lord of the Rings</u>, Book Four
Due: Memo 6

October 16: The War of the Ring
J.R.R. Tolkien, <u>The Lord of the Rings</u>, Book Five
Due: Memo 7

October 23: The End of the Third Age
J.R.R. Tolkien, <u>The Lord of the Rings</u>, Book Six and Appendix A (v): "Here Follows a Part of the Tale of Aragorn and Arwen"
Due: Memo 8

October 30: Myths, Power, and Values
Letters 144, 153, 181, 183
Jason Fisher, "'Mythology for England'" (Canvas)
Olga Markova, "When Philology Becomes Ideology: The Russian Perspective of J. R. R. Tolkien" (Canvas)
John Hunter, "The Evidence of Things Not Seen: Critical Mythology and *The Lord of the Rings*" (Canvas)
Bradley Birzer, "Middle Earth and Modernity" (Canvas)

Jeffrey Dixon, "Political Theory, Political Myth, Political Science? The Domestic Politics of *The Lord of the Rings*" (Canvas)
*Due: Memo 9 **and** Preliminary Research Question/Puzzle and Theoretical Approach*

November 6: Political and Religious Interpretations of *The Lord of the Rings*
J.R.R. Tolkien, "Mythopoeia" (Canvas)
Letters 52, 96 (pp. 109-111 only), 142, 186, 208, 246, 320
Hal Colebatch, "Politics" (Canvas)
Claudio Testi, "Tolkien's Work: Is it Christian or Pagan?" (Canvas)
Kundmueller, "Augustine, Shakespeare, and Tolkien on the Identification and Excellence of Humility in Politics" (Canvas)
Dominic Nardi, "Political Institutions in J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth: Or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying about the Lack of Democracy" (Canvas)
Due: Memo 10

November 13: Politics of Gender
Letters 43, 49, 177, 244
Adam Roberts, "Women" (Canvas)
Melanie Rawls, "The Feminine Principle in Tolkien" (Canvas)
Nancy Enright, "Tolkien's Females and the Defining of Power" (Canvas)
Due: Memo 11

November 20: Politics of Race and Culture
Letters 29, 30, 269
Niels Werber, "Geo- and Biopolitics of Middle-Earth: A German Reading of Tolkien's 'The Lord of the Rings'" (Canvas)
Margaret Sinex, "'Monsterized Saracens,' Tolkien's Haradrim, and Other Medieval 'Fantasy Products'" (Canvas)
Dmitra Fimi, "A Hierarchical World" (Canvas)
Helen Young, "Diversity and Difference: Cosmopolitanism and 'The Lord of the Rings'" (Canvas)
*Due: Memo 12 **and** Preliminary Literature Review*

November 27: Politics of War
Letters 40, 45, 64, 81, 96, 100, 101, 102
Steven Carter, "Faramir and the Heroic Ideal of the Twentieth Century; Or, How Aragorn Died at the Somme" (Canvas)
Michael Livingston, "The Shell-shocked Hobbit: The First World War and Tolkien's Trauma of the Ring" (Canvas)
Janet Brennan Croft, War and the Works of J.R.R. Tolkien, Excerpt (Canvas)
Matthew Dickerson, "On Hobbits, the Treatment of Prisoners, and the Ethics of War" (Canvas)
Jeffrey Dixon, "Revisiting the International Politics of *The Lord of the Rings*" (Canvas)
Due: Memo 13

December 4: Environmental Politics
Letters 50, 247, 339

Eleanor Simpson, "The Evolution of J.R.R. Tolkien's Portrayal of Nature: Foreshadowing Anti-speciesism" (Canvas)
Matthew Dickerson and Jonathan Evans, "Woods, Wildness, and the Feraculture of the Ents" (Canvas)
Verlyn Flieger, "Taking the Part of Trees: Eco-Conflict in Middle Earth" (Canvas)
Due: Memo 14

December 11: Conference – Politics and the Third Age of J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth
Due: Research Papers and Research Presentations