

Spring 2021
ENGLISH 4612/5612
INDIVIDUAL AUTHORS: J.R.R. TOLKIEN
 MWF 10:00 AM-10:50 AM
all online

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The last decade has seen the hundredth anniversary of J.R.R. Tolkien's earliest writings on Middle-Earth (*The Book of Lost Tales*, begun in 1917) alongside the completion of Peter Jackson's career-defining twenty-year project to adapt *The Lord of the Rings* for film (1995-2015). This course asks the question: Who is J.R.R. Tolkien, looking backward from the perspective of the twenty-first century? Why have his works, and the genre of heroic fantasy which he remade so completely in his image, remained so intensely popular, even as the world has transformed around them? Our study will primarily trace the history, development, and reception of Tolkien's incredible magnum opus, *The Lord of the Rings* (written 1937-1949, published 1954-1956)—but we will also take up Tolkien's contested place in the literary canon of the twentieth century, the uses and abuses of Tolkien in Jackson's blockbuster films, the special appeal of Tolkien in politically troubled times, and the ongoing critical interests and investments of Tolkien fandom today. As Tolkien scholars we will also have the privilege of drawing upon the remarkable J.R.R. Tolkien Collection at Raynor Library, which contains the original manuscripts for *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *Farmer Giles of Ham*.

Note: No prior knowledge of Tolkien is required. The course is designed for a mix of first-time readers, frequent re-readers, and people who are returning to the books for the first time as adults after many years away.

LEARNING GOALS

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the cultural, historical, political, and philosophical contexts in which Tolkien wrote;
- Identify and understand various formal characteristics both of the Tolkien legendarium and of contemporary fantasy literature more generally;
- Apply techniques of critical analysis as appropriate to diverse literary forms, genres, and media;
- Participate and intervene in contemporary debates over Tolkien's works and his literary/cultural legacy;
- Use literary and cultural study to develop skills for careful reading and clear writing;
- Read and discuss a variety of literary and nonliterary texts on the levels of both form and content.

DISCOVERY TIER: INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES

The nature of the relationship between the individual and the community remains a perennial question, at the heart of technological, political, religious and ecological thought. One cannot understand prominent human trends — like the tendency, both in history and in the present day, to cluster populations in urban environments — without attending to the longings of the individual for community and the reliance of the community on the individual. Yet the relationship between these two is fraught with ambiguity and tension. On the one hand, communities have amplified humanity’s potential to overcome injustice, suffering and human limitations. Communities have enabled individuals to mobilize, innovate and act collectively for the common good. On the other hand, communities have also identified, stigmatized and exterminated outsiders. By utilizing tools of oppression, such as prejudice and discrimination, communities have also stifled progress and catered to fears, bigotry and hatred.

This course explores these concepts through its sustained discussion of the imaginary communities in Tolkien’s legendarium, and their relationships to real-world racial and national boundaries and political conflicts.

FORMAT

Like many classes at Marquette this semester, the originally planned format for this course has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The course has been reconceived and rebuilt to make sense in an entirely online format, facilitated by asynchronous work on Marquette’s D2L learning platform and by synchronous meetings on the free video-conferencing platform Zoom.

On Mondays and Wednesdays, we will meet together on Zoom. If possible, we will have full-class meetings on these days; if that proves unwieldy, we will switch to a “flex” model in which half the class signs into the Zoom conference and the other half watches the recorded discussion afterwards. Attendance will not be required on these days; if you are unable to make the synchronous meeting, you can watch the recorded session and make a D2L response afterwards to receive full credit for attendance.

On most Fridays, I will ask you to post a freeform response in the designated “sandbox” forum for that week. This does not have to be a formal written post, but can also take the form of a podcast, short video, a work of art or music, a short story or fan fiction, a comic, or more; any response of any sort is fine, provided it is thoughtful and substantial. By the end of the weekend, I will ask you to respond to at least two other sandbox posts. The idea is to respond collectively to the material we are studying together in a way that is not stifling, anxious, or overstructured by academic expectations that cannot really apply to this odd and altered educational context; my hope is to strip away grading strictures that can only be dysfunctional in the current moment and foster instead more multifaceted, more generous, and hopefully richer intellectual encounters, driven by your interests.

These sandbox posts will replace much of the written assignments in the course. The remaining major assignment will be a final term paper or creative/curational project that responds to *The Lord of the Rings* as a cultural object in a way that is important to you.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND PERSONAL EMERGENCIES

Everyone at Marquette recognizes that this is an extremely difficult time which may be filled with different sorts of uncertainty as we move forward with the academic year. Your safety, health, and well-being are our primary concern and we want to be able to support you in any way that we can.

The university also understands that you may be facing personal obstacles that may make it difficult to meet your typical academic goals. Please refer to the Student Resources page on the Marquette COVID-19 Response webpage for information and resources on basic needs such as housing, food, financial aid, and medical and mental health; the webpage also offers information on official University communications, access to technology, and student services. Faculty and staff are also here for you.

If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your situation outside of class, please don't hesitate to talk with me. I want to be a resource for you. You are not alone.

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at the BookMarq on 16th Street)

The Hobbit (1937)

The Lord of the Rings (1954-1956)

The Silmarillion (1977)

Note: Any published edition of these texts will do.

Additional readings and course materials will occasionally be made available via D2L.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance, Participation, Possible Quizzes 25%

Asynchronous “Sandbox” Posts 20%

Final Paper (10-12 pages expected)

- Prospectus and Prospectus Workshop 10%
- Abstract 5%
- Final Paper 40%

Additional details on these assignments can be found as an appendix at the end of this document, as well as under CONTENT on D2L.

Grad students will have slightly different expectations; we can discuss this one-on-one.

GRADING

Grades will follow the following rubric:

- * To earn a **C**, you must clearly restate the meaning or project of a text in your own terms. A C essay may volunteer an original argument, but will likely lack evidence or analysis of its sources. C essays are clearly written, though they might display some grammatical weakness.
- * To earn a **B**, you must begin to raise important questions about the text under consideration and to use those questions to drive your own interpretive agenda. A B essay typically advances an original argument and provides solid analysis of the text(s) under consideration. B essays are clear, concise, and free of grammatical errors.
- * To earn an **A**, you must construct an essay that does more than simply comment on the work of others; you must forward, counter, or transform what they have to say. An A essay advances an original argument that builds toward a climax and makes a persuasive case for its own significance. A essays are clearly written, and often eloquent.
- * A **D** means that you have not written in clear prose or that you seem to have deeply misunderstood the text. An **F** means that you did not fully or seriously engage the assignment.
- * **A-, B+, B-, C+ (and so on) grades** fall in the gaps between the above categories.

UNGRADED ASSIGNMENTS

Your makeup posts and sandbox posts will be graded on an extra-credit / pass / low-pass / fail basis:

- Fulfilling all the requirements of the assignment will earn you full credit;
- Failing to do so will earn you half-credit (at best) or no credit (at worst);
- Going beyond the terms of the assignment in an especially ambitious or creative way can earn you extra credit.

QUIZZES

I do not like to give reading quizzes; I think they infantilize the college-level scholar. However, this is by necessity a very reading-intensive class; if it seems to me that people are not keeping up with the reading, pop quizzes may become necessary despite my philosophical objections. You have been warned.

FORMAT OF WRITTEN WORK

Your final paper should be typed in twelve-point font, double-spaced with one-inch margins, saved in a format Microsoft Word can open. Your filename should contain *your name* in it, for example, yourlastname-finalpaper.docx.

I expect you to *edit* and *proofread* all written work, even forum comments. Drafts that contain excessive typos or grammar mistakes may be returned to the author for correction before I offer comments.

Please give your final paper an original title, and include your name, assignment, and due date in a header on the first page.

All sources relied upon for the writing of your paper, including the primary text, must be appropriately cited.

PAPER SUBMISSION

The final paper should be submitted via D2L's Dropbox by class time on the due date, Tuesday, May 11, by 10 AM.

Your other written work (which will primarily take the form of forum posts) will be posted on the D2L forums in the designated "sandbox" forums.

Except in very unusual circumstances, work will not be accepted by email.

EXTENSIONS

Although the work in this course have a sufficiently long timetable to allow you to plan and complete all assignments in a timely manner, I nonetheless recognize that each of you has a unique schedule and that some of the due dates I have selected could occasionally prove problematic for individual students in the course, especially in the context of the pandemic. **If you find that you will need an extension on a particular assignment due to this kind of conflict, please contact me to arrange an alternative due date.** There is no need to concoct an elaborate story to justify this, or to lie to me; simply tell me the truth about what's going on and we can work out an alternative that works for you.

TECHNOLOGY IS TERRIBLE: PLAN AHEAD!

The Internet goes down. Files become corrupted. Computers crash. These are predictable facts of twenty-first century life, not emergencies. For this course, for all your courses, for the rest of your career and your life in this world you need to develop work habits and strategies that take into account the basic, inescapable unreliability of computers. Start your assignments well in advance of the due date; save them often; save backup copies of essential documents, including copies off-site using a service like Carbonite, Dropbox, or Google Drive.

ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class discussion is an essential component of this seminar; class discussion, not lecture, will be the primary means by which we will investigate these texts together. It is therefore crucial that you come to class every day having read the required material and prepared to discuss it, as well as having viewed any prefatory textual or audiovisual material I have posted on D2L.

As noted above, due to the circumstances of this semester I will not begin the semester requiring attendance in our Zoom meetings, provided you watch the recorded session and post on D2L afterwards. However, this policy will be subject to review; the Zoom sessions require a critical mass of students to be functional and if they become too empty I *will* need to start requiring attendance. This is a collective action problem and I trust that we will be able to figure it out together.

The course adheres to Marquette University's attendance policy, which can be found on the Internet at <http://bulletin.marquette.edu/undergrad/academicregulations/#attendance>.

You are allowed **three absences** (defined as neither attending the Zoom nor writing a D2L post before the next class period) over the course of the fall semester. **After that, your class participation will drop by a letter grade for each additional unexcused absence.** Upon the seventh unexcused absence, you will receive a WA (Withdrawn—Excessive Absences) for the semester.

As with a face-to-face class, each student is expected to *participate in* and *contribute to* our discussions. Just being in the room is not enough. If there is a reason you feel you cannot participate in a given session, please let me know before class begins so I do not call on you that day.

D2L FORUMS

This course will make extensive use of the D2L forums at <http://d2l.mu.edu>. In addition to being a place where you can find electronic copies of the syllabus and other course handouts, D2L also features an online forum where you can express your response to the material before class begins and where we can continue our discussions after class is over.

The D2L discussion forums are an excellent place for people who may feel inhibited by in-class discussion to share their opinions with the class. I will be reading the discussion forum regularly and I recommend you do the same. You may choose either to begin a discussion thread on a new topic or to respond to a post composed by one of your classmates—and you are of course always free to make a post for a Monday or Wednesday class even if you did attend the Zoom session. I will take note of any such posts for extra credit at the end of the course.

Before class time on Friday every student is required to take the following actions:

- * **upload a picture either of their face or a representative symbolic image to their D2L profile;**
- * **take the entrance survey on D2L;**
- * **craft a “sandbox” response to “Leaf by Niggle.”**

Students will post a sandbox post and two sandbox responses every week, missing any one week without penalty.

EMAIL

Students in this class are required to check their official Marquette email account—whatever account D2L sends its emails to—at least once a day, in case there are any last-minute announcements or disruptions.

I endeavor to respond to all emails within 24 hours, usually much less—but please do not send me urgent emails regarding your assignments on the night before they are due and expect an immediate reply.

CONFERENCES

All students are asked to meet with me in at least two short one-on-one conferences either via Zoom or at an appropriately socially distanced outdoor location, once before Spring Break and once after. Weekly signups will be available on D2L.

Please know I am very happy to meet with you individually to discuss either graded work or work-in-progress in excess of this requirement as many times as you like. Simply come to my weekly Zoom office hours, or email me to set up an appointment.

FLEXIBILITY

If it will benefit the class, changes may be made to the above.

WRITING CENTER

Students are strongly encouraged to make use of the Writing Center, located in Raynor Library Room 240, at any stage of the writing process.

Please visit the Writing Center website at <http://www.marquette.edu/english/writingcenter/> to find out how to schedule an appointment and to access the studio's online resources.

ACCOMODATIONS

Students with disabilities who believe they may require accommodations in this course should contact me early in the semester so your learning needs can be appropriately met.

I am of course more than happy to work with you to make sure you are successful in this course and to make this course most accessible for you. However, without documentation, I am limited in what I am able to do. Therefore, in order for me to help you most effectively, I need you to be proactive in contacting Marquette University's Office of Disability Services (located on the fifth floor of the 707 Building).

ODS can be reached by phone at (414) 288-1645 or by email at ods@marquette.edu.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students are expected to abide by the academic honesty policy outlined in your undergraduate bulletin. I urge you all to examine this material and consult me with any questions you may have about plagiarism or academic integrity *before* it becomes an issue.

Ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism is not an acceptable excuse for plagiarism. **Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade for the course.** No exceptions or special dispensations will be made.

Marquette students now sign an Honor Pledge, which states:

- *I recognize the importance of personal integrity in all aspects of life and work.*
- *I commit myself to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, by which I earn the respect of others.*
- *I support the development of good character, and commit myself to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity as an important aspect of personal integrity.*
- *My commitment obliges me to conduct myself according to the Marquette University Honor Code.*

Full details of Marquette’s academic integrity policy are available on the Internet at <http://www.marquette.edu/provost/academic-integrity.php>.

On a personal level, I (like everyone) hate being lied to. Please, do not feel you need to concoct elaborate stories. Simply be honest with me about whatever is going on and we will work it out.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

We all enter this classroom with preexisting political, ethical, philosophical, and intellectual commitments. You are all required to engage the material—but you are absolutely *not* required to agree either with any of the writers we will discuss, or with me, in whole or in part.

RESPECT

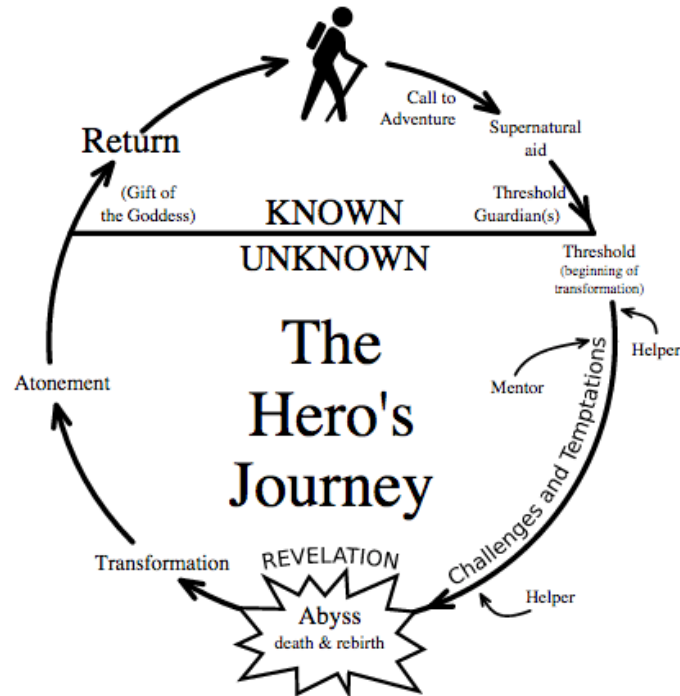
This classroom is a community. It is crucial that we treat each other with the appropriate level of courtesy and respect. No one should be made to feel unwelcome here.

Failure to treat other students with the respect they deserve will **severely** negatively impact your class participation grade.

A NOTE ON SUSPENSE

As noted at the top of the syllabus, absolutely no prior knowledge of or familiarity with Tolkien’s work is required for this class.

That said, in this class we will be discussing a set of texts that, taken together, constitute the most famous prose narrative of the twentieth century, a narrative nearly everyone in this Zoom knows (many of you quite intimately). Indeed, as we’ll see from Tolkien himself in his essay “On Fairy-Stories” on Wednesday, part of the power of this narrative comes precisely in the fact that you know its broad strokes already.



So it would be somewhat silly of us to attempt to enforce any sort of ironclad “no spoilers!” policy within our discussions.

At the same time, the bulk of the legendarium is constructed *as a narrative*—which necessarily includes, among other things, story pacing, character development, and the generation of suspense—and needs to be considered in those terms.

My vision therefore is that **we will endeavor to stick to the material assigned to a given day** with an understanding that, as scholars and critics, **it will occasionally behoove us to jump ahead in the story and *briefly* consider how our understanding of what we are reading might be challenged or transformed by later events we haven’t seen yet.**

If you are someone who is encountering this material for the first time or for the first time in a long while and this idea makes you nervous or uncomfortable—or if you ever begin to feel lost in our discussions—please feel free to let me know, up to and including interrupting me during class.

I MEAN THAT

I want this class to be a meaningful and valuable experience for you. If you have any concerns about the way things are going, my door is always open.

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

Any changes to this schedule will be announced in class as they become necessary.

Students should come to class prepared to discuss the listed texts or chapters.

GENERAL COURSE PLAN

WEEK 1: TOLKIEN'S CREATIVE PROJECT

WEEKS 2-3: *THE HOBBIT*

WEEKS 4-6: *THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING*

WEEKS 7-9: *THE TWO TOWERS*

WEEKS 10-12: *THE RETURN OF THE KING*

WEEKS 13-15: *THE SILMARILLION*

DAY-BY-DAY SCHEDULE

	M	1/25	FIRST DAY OF CLASS
	W	1/27	J.R.R. Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories" [D2L] <i>Tolkien biography</i>
A	F	1/29	J.R.R. Tolkien, "Leaf by Niggle" [D2L]
	M	2/1	<i>The Hobbit</i> , chapters 1-4 <i>Monomyth and the Hero's Journey</i>
	W	2/3	<i>The Hobbit</i> , chapters 5-6 original "Riddles in the Dark" chapter (D2L)
A	F	2/5	<i>The Hobbit</i> , chapters 7-9
	M	2/8	<i>The Hobbit</i> , chapters 10-14 J.R.R. Tolkien, "Letter 52"
	W	2/10	<i>The Hobbit</i> , chapters 15-19
A	F	2/12	<i>The Hobbit</i> (whole book, plus film adaptations) J.R.R. Tolkien, "The Quest for Erebor" [D2L] John D. Rateliff, "The 1960 Hobbit" [D2L]
	M	2/15	<i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Book One, foreword and prologue, and chapters 1-2
	W	2/17	<i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Book One, chapters 3-5
A	F	2/19	<i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Book One, chapters 6-7 <u><i>Tom Bombadil</i></u> The Encyclopedia of Arda: "Tom Bombadil" [Web] Lord of the Rings Wiki: "Theories about Tom Bombadil" and linked pages [Web] J.R.R. Tolkien, <i>Letters</i> [excerpts] [D2L]
	M	2/22	<i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Book One, chapters 8-12
	W	2/24	<i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Book Two, chapters 1-2
	F	2/26	ARCHIVES "VISIT" #1

	M	3/1	<i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Book Two, chapters 3-5
	W	3/3	<i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Book Two, chapters 6-8
A	F	3/5	<u>Galadriel</u> <i>Unfinished Tales</i> : “History of Galadriel and Celeborn” [D2L] Robert Tally, “Galadriel, Witch-Queen of Lórien” [Web]
	M	3/8	<i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Book Two, chapters 9-10 <i>The Two Towers</i> , Book Three, chapter 1
	W	3/10	UNIVERSITY MENTAL HEALTH DAY—NO CLASS
A	F	3/12	<i>The Two Towers</i> , Book Three, chapters 2-4
	M	3/15	<i>The Two Towers</i> , Book Three, chapters 5-7
	W	3/17	<i>The Two Towers</i> , Book Three, chapters 8-11 <u>Saruman</u> J.R.R. Tolkien, <i>Unfinished Tales</i> : “Saruman” [D2L] Robert Tally, “Song of Saruman” [Web]
A	F	3/19	<i>The Two Towers</i> , Book Four, chapters 1-4
	M	3/22	<i>The Two Towers</i> , Book Four, chapters 5-7 J.R.R. Tolkien, “Letter 246” [D2L]
	W	3/24	<i>The Two Towers</i> , Book Four, chapters 8-10 <u>Orcs</u> Robert Tally, “Let Us Now Praise Famous Orcs” [D2L] Richard K. Morgan, “The Real Fantastic Stuff” [Web] N.K. Jemisin, “The Unbearable Baggage of Orcing” [Web] <i>Lord of the Rings</i> video games
	F	3/26	ARCHIVES “VISIT” #2
	M	3/29	<i>The Return of the King</i> , Book Five, chapters 1-3
	W	3/31	<i>The Return of the King</i> , Book Five, chapters 4-6
	F	4/2	GOOD FRIDAY—NO CLASS
	M	4/5	<i>The Return of the King</i> , Book Five, chapters 7-10 Robin Reid, “Light (noun, 1) or Light (adjective, 14b)? Female Bodies and Femininities in <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> ”
	W	4/7	<i>The Return of the King</i> , Book Six, chapters 1-3 Sean Crist, “Could the Eagles Have Flown Frodo into Mordor?” and responses [Web]
A	F	4/9	<i>The Return of the King</i> , Book Six, chapters 4-7
	M	4/12	<i>The Return of the King</i> , Book Six, chapter 8 J.R.R. Tolkien, <i>Sauron Defeated</i> [excerpt] [D2L] Peter Jackson, <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> film trilogy

	W	4/14	<i>The Return of the King</i> , Book Six, chapter 9 J.R.R. Tolkien, “The Epilogue” [D2L] David M. Craig, “‘Queer Lodgings’: Gender and Sexuality in <i>Lord of the Rings</i> ” Anna Smol, “‘Oh. . . oh. . . Frodo!’: Readings of Male Intimacy in <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> ”
A	F	4/16	<i>The Return of the King</i> , appendices
	M	4/19	<i>The Return of the King</i> , appendices continued J.R.R. Tolkien, “The New Shadow” [D2L] FINAL PROJECT PROSPECTUS DUE PROSPECTUS WORKSHOP
	W	4/21	<i>The Silmarillion</i> : “Ainulindalë” and “Valaquenta” <i>The Silmarillion: Quenta Silmarillion</i> , chapters 1-5 J.R.R. Tolkien, “Letter 131” [D2L]
	F	4/23	<i>The Silmarillion: Quenta Silmarillion</i> , chapters 6-12 J.R.R. Tolkien, <i>Morgoth’s Ring</i> [excerpts] [D2L]
	M	4/26	<i>The Silmarillion: Quenta Silmarillion</i> , chapters 13-18
	W	4/28	<i>The Silmarillion: Quenta Silmarillion</i> , chapters 19
	F	4/30	<i>The Silmarillion: Quenta Silmarillion</i> , chapters 20-24 J.R.R. Tolkien, “Notes on Motives in <i>The Silmarillion</i> ” [Web]
	M	5/3	<i>The Silmarillion</i> : “Akallabêth” upcoming Amazon series
	W	5/5	UNIVERSITY MENTAL HEALTH DAY—NO CLASS
	F	5/7	<i>The Silmarillion</i> : “On the Rings of Power and the Third Age” FINAL PROJECT WORKSHOPS LAST DAY OF CLASS
	T	5/11	FINAL PROJECT DUE IN D2L DROPBOX BY 10 AM

FOLLOW FAME: FRIENDS AND ALUMNI/AE OF MARQUETTE ENGLISH

On Facebook (page): www.facebook.com/marquettefame

On Facebook (group): www.facebook.com/groups/496438583889194

(search for “Undergraduate English at Marquette”)

On Twitter: @MarquetteFAME

While our ability to see each other in person is necessarily constrained this semester, there will be opportunities for department events and virtual meetups that will be advertised through these outlets. I hope you can attend!

ENGLISH 4612 ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

Attendance and Class Participation in MW Zoom Seminars or Makeup Posts

Friday Asynchronous “Sandbox” Posts (can miss one and still get full credit)

- 1/29
- 2/5
- 2/12
- 2/19
- 3/5
- 3/12
- 3/19
- 4/9
- 4/16

These public discussion forum posts are intended to articulate some concrete, critical response to some element of the work under discussion on a given day of the course. They should be approximately 250-400 words long, and may overlap with your contributions to class discussion and/or your final project. Additional posts will count towards extra credit.

Final Project Prospectus (due on D2L Forums by April 19)

The prospectus is a half-page anticipation of the major thrust of your final project as you anticipate it taking shape. Generally speaking, it should lay out the aspect of Tolkien’s work that you plan to discuss, and articulate a *central claim* which clearly and succinctly describes your planned intervention into Tolkien studies.

Final Project (due to D2L Dropbox by May 11 by 10 AM; two options)

OPTION #1 A traditional 10-to-12-page scholarly paper (roughly 3000 words) on some aspect of Tolkien’s *legendarium* or related works. Possible topics might include:

- close readings of some component of the legendarium;
- literary interpretations of the legendarium in its totality;
- explorations of Tolkien’s letters, essays, other fictions, or alternate drafts;
- comparisons between Tolkien and other writers, or between Tolkien and the larger fantasy genre as a whole;
- interventions against or extensions of existing works of Tolkien criticism by established scholars, either those studied in class or found on your own.

OPTION #2 A creative or curational project related in some way to J.R.R. Tolkien or *The Lord of the Rings*, in a form of your choosing.

Abstract (due on D2L Forums by May 11 by 10 AM)

I cannot stress enough how open I am to your personal interests and approaches; I am genuinely open to any topic, any method, and any form that seems urgent and interesting to you (provided of course that it is the intellectual-labor equivalent of a 10-to-12-page scholarly paper, more or less). I sincerely want this paper to be something you are excited about and enjoy writing, *not* an unpleasant chore. I can’t wait to read them.

An archive of work produced in this course has itself become part of the Tolkien archive at Raynor. Exceptional papers may be selected for inclusion, with your permission.