Seminar on Tolkien  
IDH 3034 U35 Honors Seminar V: Aesthetics, Values, and Authority  
The Honors College, Florida International University  
Fall 2016

Meeting Times: Tuesdays: 2:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.  
Classroom: Engineering & Computer Science (ECS) building, room 136

Instructor’s Contact Information:  
Adam D. Gorelick  
agorelic@fiu.edu  
(305) 348-4100  
DM 233  
*The instructor welcomes and encourages students to utilize office hours by appointment.

Required Texts  
Students will be responsible for reading the following works by J.R.R. Tolkien:

- The poem, “Mythopoëia,” to be provided by the instructor.
- *The Silmarillion* (Del Rey, 1985) | ISBN 9780345325815
- *The Hobbit* (Del Rey, 2012) | ISBN 9780345538376  
  (This ISBN is for the four-book boxed edition containing *The Lord of the Rings*. Since students will need *The Lord of the Rings* for the spring semester, purchasing the boxed set now would be economical. However, in the instructor’s opinion, it is preferable to read a one-volume version of *The Lord of the Ring* than to read it in three separate volumes, which would mean buying a freestanding copy of *The Hobbit* for the fall.)
- PLEASE NOTE: any editions of these works by Tolkien are acceptable. The instructor does not recommend renting or selling back these gems. Students will be expected to reference them as needed during the spring semester.

Students will also be responsible for reading the following works of scholarship about Tolkien:

  (Students will also need this text during the spring semester)
- Other works as assigned
Course Description
This course explores the work and thought of J. R. R. Tolkien, philologist and professor of English language and literature, known to the world as the author of *The Lord of the Rings* and the father of fantasy fiction. Since Tolkien’s chief intellectual interest was the context and evolution of language, these fundamentally colored his creative writing as well as his theoretic ideas about myth and fairy-story. This course will (a) examine poems, essays, short stories, and novels by Tolkien himself, (b) consider his literary and spiritual influences, (3) explore the social dimension and worldview conveyed in his work, and (d) survey current scholarship in the field of Tolkien Studies. Students will employ both analytical and creative tools in completing the assignments, and they will participate in a seminar format, contributing and reporting on their individual research.

Attendance and Classroom Etiquette
Class attendance is a vital component in calculating a student’s grade. The class meets only once per week, covers a lot of material, and depends greatly on engaged participation from the students. Any unexcused absence or occurrence of tardiness will incur a 5-point penalty to the final grade, per occurrence. If students notify the instructor BEFORE class, these penalties may be excused for emergency situations at the discretion of the instructor.

The use of laptops, cellular phones, or any other device for voice or text communication is prohibited for the duration of the class, unless otherwise noted by the instructor.

Course Requirements
Students must take the time to read through the description of each course requirement and present any questions to the instructor early in the semester.

Class Participation (15%) Class participation means active participation. Merely showing up for attendance does not constitute an A in class participation. The seminar format requires that students have read the materials before class and thus are prepared to add their own insight to the discussion. **Points will be deducted if students are engaged in work for another class while this class is in session.**

Quizzes: (10 %)
There will be periodic pop quizzes throughout the semester at the beginning of class lasting approximately 10 -15 min. Students may use your class notes for the quizzes, but they may NOT use any electronic devices. Students may not speak to classmates during the duration of the quiz. Violation of these rules will result in a zero.

Literary Analysis Essay (25%)
Proposal Due 9/13 (hard copy)
Essay Due 10/4 (end of day, submit through turnitin.com)
This paper is intended to allow students to integrate the introductory material and to apply it in a creative way. They will choose a faërie story (not one assigned in the course) and write an analysis relying on the categories outlined by Tolkien in “On Faërie-Stories” and “Mythopoëia.” The analyzed story need not be limited to traditional stories. There are plenty of examples in contemporary literature and film.
The paper length should be 5-7 double-spaced pages, size 12, Times New Roman font. Students will cite all works consulted and provide a bibliography/work cited.

**Tolkien Studies Seminar Presentation (25%)**
Students will choose an instructor-approved work of scholarship about Tolkien, such as an academic article, a section of a book, or other essay. Students will research, read, analyze, summarize, and present the work to the class on his/her assigned class period. Presentations should be about 10 minutes and can be creative and interactive, e.g., leading a discussion or teaching the class. Students will provide a 1-page summary/outline to the class.

**Text as City: The Silmarillion Infographic (25%)**
**Proposal Due 10/15**
**Due Date 11/7**

You will work in groups of 3 to create a digital infographic illustrating *The Silmarillion*. An infographic is a detailed, visually attractive representation of information, data or knowledge intended to present information quickly and clearly. A proposal for your group’s infographic must be approved by the instructor. The proposal must outline an action plan of tasks to be completed by each group member. Each project must include the following components:

1. Cartography
2. Linguistics
3. Quantitative Data
4. Visual Artistry

We will go over examples of infographics in class, and topics can focus on regions, cities, journeys, or any other compelling theme that ties the components together.

**Guidelines for Written Work**
All written work must consistently adhere to Modern Language Association (MLA) guidelines. **Students are advised to carefully proofread all papers before submitting them.** All students are encouraged to take advantage of the University resources for writing to be found in the Center for Excellence in Writing, a full-service writing center providing writing assistance and feedback to university students, from first year students to PhD candidates. Thus Center is particularly helpful to those seeking to polish their writing skills. Center offices are located in GL 120 (MMC), Glen Hubert Library, First Floor (BBC), and EC 2780 at the Engineering Center. For more information, go to [http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/](http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/).

**Format**
All written work must include your name, Panther ID number, course number and the name of the professor on the first page. Written work should be double spaced with 1-inch margins (top, bottom, left and right) in 12-point font, Times New Roman.
Grading Scale
Grades are based on accumulated points, 100 in total

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Religious Observances: Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students whose religious practices coincide with class requirements scheduling. Please make sure to notify your instructor at the beginning of the semester of which dates you will be absent or any anticipated problems with completing coursework.

Physical, Mental and Sensory Challenges: Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students who are so challenged. Should you require accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC), if you have not done so already.” Please note that if you have a student who is registered with the DRC, you will receive notification about the student’s disability and a detailed description of accommodations the student will require.

Honors College Requirements
Registration in this course implies an acceptance of and compliance with the Honors College policies for students and the FIU Code of Academic Integrity.

Honors Citizenship Requirements
Beginning in Fall 2014, Honors College students are required to accumulate at least 20 citizenship points each academic year (Fall and Spring) by attending Honors College activities. Students attending only one semester (Fall or Spring) are required to accumulate 10 citizenship points.

Student Portfolios
The Honors College will be using a portfolio method to assess students’ learning outcomes. The portfolio allows for maximum flexibility in gauging student learning. Students decide (with instructor consultation) what “artifacts” or assignments to include for consideration in their portfolios to demonstrate successful achievement of each of five key student learning outcomes over the 4-year Honors experience.

Honors Education in the ARTS (HEARTS)
The HEARTS program is designed to give Honors College students opportunities to “explore and appreciate different artistic and cultural traditions and modes of artistic expression. HEARTS will also serve as a clearinghouse (and curatorial framework) for our students to experience the arts on campus and in the community by providing them with information about cultural activities and access to performances with free or discounted tickets.
Honors College Academic Misconduct Statement
In The Honors College, the term “honor” refers both to academic accomplishment and character. Students in Honors should therefore adhere to and be held to the highest standards of personal academic accountability. Academic dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, is antithetical to the very definition of being an Honors student at FIU. Consequently, an Honors College student found responsible for academic misconduct will be dismissed from the College.

Procedures and Penalties
An Honors faculty member may bring charges of academic misconduct against an Honors student if the faculty member suspects plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. The faculty member will decide whether to pursue informal resolution, file formal resolution charges, or take no further action, and will follow the procedures outlined in the Honors College website, and the Academic Misconduct Procedures.

Please refer to the following documents for additional information:
- FIU Code of Academic Integrity
- FIU Honors College Student Handbook
- FIU Honors College Plagiarism Policy

General Course Objectives

Analysis and Transference of Ideas: Through your engagement in group discussions, and the three major class assignments, you will demonstrate knowledge how an author’s ideological concerns from the Primary World are transferred into the Secondary World.

Evolution of Ideas: Throughout the semester, you will analyze the process regarding how ideas change, and evolve as they are transmitted through language, time and space in Tolkien’s secondary world.

Evolution of Language: Through your engagement in the Infographic assignment, you will demonstrate an understanding of how language evolves focusing on Tolkien’s constructed linguistics.

Global Learning Objectives
This course has been certified as meeting the university’s Global Learning requirement. Each of this semester’s three main assignments will contribute to the satisfaction of the Honors College Global Learning Objectives.

Global Awareness: Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues, trends, and systems. In particular, students will demonstrate awareness of the cultural transmission of stories and storytelling, define the type of folktale which Tolkien called fairy-story, and explore the literary effect of encountering otherness. Tolkien described three aspects of the storytelling process: inheritance (borrowing through time), diffusion (borrowing through space), and most importantly, individual authorial invention. His theories of myth and story open a door into global awareness not only by retracing cultural transmissions but also by highlighting the psychological effect of encountering
otherness in literature. By way of a Literary Analysis Essay, students will demonstrate their understanding of Tolkien’s ideas and their ability to apply his theories of myth and tale in an analytical way to works by other artists.

**Global Perspective:** Through engagement in the Tolkien Studies Seminar Presentation, students will analyze the multiple global forces that shape understandings of aesthetics, values, and authority — economic, political, sociological, technological, cultural, etc. This includes in-class discussions and analysis of Tolkien’s contribution to our perspective of these forces.

**Global Engagement:** Students will demonstrate willingness to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural exchange by entering the space of the fictional or secondary world created by Tolkien in *The Silmarillion*. They will accomplish this by way of primary or real-world analogues and materials and by utilizing the text to employ cartographic, linguistic, quantitative, and artistic data to produce a compelling and professional digital infographic.

**Last day to DROP class without a penalty: 8/29**

**Class Schedule**

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| 8/23  | Class Overview and Introduction  
        “On Faerie Stories,” “Mythopoëia,” Tolkien Biography |
| 8/30  | “On Faerie Stories” and “Leaf by Niggle” |
| 9/6   | “On Faerie Stories” and “Smith of Wooten Major” |
| 9/13  | “Ainulindalë,” “Valaquenta,” and “Quenta Silmarillion,” Chapters 1-2  
        Due: Literary Analysis Essay Proposal |
| 9/20  | “Quenta Silmarillion,” Chapters 3-6  
        Flieger Prefaces and Introduction |
| 9/27  | “Quenta Silmarillion,” Chapters 7-11  
        Flieger Chapter 1  
        Due: Literary Analysis Essay |
| 10/4  | “Quenta Silmarillion,” Chapters 12-14  
        Flieger Chapters 2-3 |
| 10/11 | “Quenta Silmarillion,” Chapters 15-18  
        Flieger Chapter 4 |
| 10/18 | “Quenta Silmarillion,” Chapters 19-20 |
Flieger Chapter 5

Due: Silmarillion Infographic Proposal

10/25  “Quenta Silmarillion,” Chapters 21-24
Flieger Chapter 6

11/1   “Akalabeth” and “On the Rings of Power and the Third Age”
Flieger Chapter 7

11/8   The Hobbit, Chapter 1-6
Flieger Chapter 8

Due: Silmarillion Infographic

11/15  The Hobbit, Chapters 7-10
Flieger Chapter 9

11/22  The Hobbit, Chapters 11-14
Flieger Chapters 10-11

11/29  The Hobbit, Chapters 15-19
Flieger Chapter 12

Final Exam Week TBA