

ENGLISH 256 : Tolkien and his Worlds

Arts

Course Prescription

Examines Tolkien's primary fictional texts, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, in relation to the author's ideas about fantasy and world-building, his use of Celtic, German and Christian mythology, and the adaptation of the novels into film.

Course Overview

J.R.R. Tolkien is widely regarded as the father of modern fantasy literature. This course asks why, in offering students the opportunity to examine his major, seminal fantasy fictions, *The Hobbit* and the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, alongside theories he himself developed of fantasy world-building. At the same time, we discuss Tolkien's enduring popularity and 'read' some of the recent film adaptations of his texts by Peter Jackson.

The principal aim of this course is to give students an opportunity to analyse Tolkien's most notable works of fantasy within an academic framework, including his own theoretical ideas regarding fantasy as world building, but also taking into account a variety of other modern studies of how fantasy works as a genre. To what extent do Tolkien's major tales exemplify these critical and theoretical notions? Where and when are his works at odds with them? Does it matter?

In this discussion of text and contexts, we also attend to Tolkien's scholarly and critical writing on North-European, Germanic myth and legend, but especially his work on early English epic and romance. In particular we compare his own, modern fantasies with his work on the magnificent, early English, epic poem *Beowulf*, including his translation of the poem, recently published, but composed in the same period in which Tolkien was writing of heroic hobbits, fantastic elves and voracious dragons.

Course Requirements

Prerequisite: 60 points passed Restriction: ENGLISH 306

Capabilities Developed in this Course

Capability 1: Disciplinary Knowledge and Practice

Capability 2: Critical Thinking

Capability 4: Communication and Engagement

Graduate Profile: [Bachelor of Arts](#)

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. An ability to listen and form sound intellectual judgements (Capability 1.1 and 2.1)
2. An ability to think critically (Capability 1.3 and 2.3)
3. Improve your skill in writing a coherent and lucid essay (Capability 2.3 and 4.1)
4. Acquire sound reading skills (Capability 1.1 and 4.2)
5. Gain a firm acquaintance with the Fantasy Genre and Tolkien's texts in particular (Capability 1.1 and 1.2)

Assessments

Assessment Type	Percentage	Classification
Essay	25%	Individual Coursework
Tutorial Discussion	10%	Individual Coursework
Class test	50%	Individual Test
Class Test	15%	Individual Coursework
4 types	100%	

Workload Expectations

This course is a standard 15 point course and in Summer School format students are expected to spend about 20 hours per week involved in each 15 point course that they are enrolled in.

For this course, you can expect 3 hours of lectures and a 1 hour tutorial weekly, 6 hours of reading and thinking about the content, per week, and 40 hours of work on assignments and test preparation.

Delivery Mode

Campus Experience

This course is not available for delivery to students studying remotely outside NZ

Attendance is expected at scheduled activities including tutorials to complete components of the course.

Lectures will be available as recordings. Other learning activities including tutorials will not be available as recordings.

The course will not include live online events including group discussions/tutorials.

Attendance on campus is required for the tests.

The activities for the course are scheduled as a standard weekly timetable.

Learning Resources

Course materials are made available in a learning and collaboration tool called Canvas which also includes reading lists and lecture recordings (where available).

Please remember that the recording of any class on a personal device requires the permission of the instructor.

Student Feedback

At the end of every semester students will be invited to give feedback on the course and teaching through a tool called SET or Qualtrics. The lecturers and course co-ordinators will consider all feedback and respond with summaries and actions.

Your feedback helps teachers to improve the course and its delivery for future students.

Class Representatives in each class can take feedback to the department and faculty staff-student consultative committees.

Academic Integrity

The University of Auckland will not tolerate cheating, or assisting others to cheat, and views cheating in coursework as a serious academic offence. The work that a student submits for grading must be the student's own work, reflecting their learning. Where work from other sources is used, it must be properly acknowledged and referenced. This requirement also applies to sources on the internet. A student's assessed work may be reviewed against online source material using computerised detection mechanisms.

Class Representatives

Class representatives are students tasked with representing student issues to departments, faculties, and the wider university. If you have a complaint about this course, please contact your class rep who will know how to raise it in the right channels. See your departmental noticeboard for contact details for your class reps.

Inclusive Learning

All students are asked to discuss any impairment related requirements privately, face to face and/or in written form with the course coordinator, lecturer or tutor.

Student Disability Services also provides support for students with a wide range of impairments, both visible and invisible, to succeed and excel at the University. For more information and contact details, please visit the [Student Disability Services' website](http://disability.auckland.ac.nz) <http://disability.auckland.ac.nz>

Well-being always comes first

We all go through tough times during the semester, or see our friends struggling. There is lots of help out there - for more information, look at this [Canvas page](https://canvas.auckland.ac.nz/courses/33894) <https://canvas.auckland.ac.nz/courses/33894>, which has links to various support services in the University and the wider community.

Special Circumstances

If your ability to complete assessed coursework is affected by illness or other personal circumstances outside of your control, contact a member of teaching staff as soon as possible before the assessment is due.

If your personal circumstances significantly affect your performance, or preparation, for an exam or eligible written test, refer to the University's [aegrotat or compassionate consideration page](https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/students/academic-information/exams-and-final-results/during-exams/aegrotat-and-compassionate-consideration.html) <https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/students/academic-information/exams-and-final-results/during-exams/aegrotat-and-compassionate-consideration.html>.

This should be done as soon as possible and no later than seven days after the affected test or exam date.

Learning Continuity

In the event of an unexpected disruption, we undertake to maintain the continuity and standard of teaching and learning in all your courses throughout the year. If there are unexpected disruptions the University has contingency plans to ensure that access to your course continues and course assessment continues to meet the principles of the University's assessment policy. Some adjustments may need to be made in emergencies. You will be kept fully informed by your course co-ordinator/director, and if disruption occurs you should refer to the university website for information about how to proceed.

Student Charter and Responsibilities

The Student Charter assumes and acknowledges that students are active participants in the learning process and that they have responsibilities to the institution and the international community of scholars. The University expects that students will act at all times in a way that demonstrates respect for the rights of other

students and staff so that the learning environment is both safe and productive. For further information visit [Student Charter](https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/students/forms-policies-and-guidelines/student-policies-and-guidelines/student-charter.html) <https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/students/forms-policies-and-guidelines/student-policies-and-guidelines/student-charter.html>.

Disclaimer

Elements of this outline may be subject to change. The latest information about the course will be available for enrolled students in Canvas.

In this course students may be asked to submit coursework assessments digitally. The University reserves the right to conduct scheduled tests and examinations for this course online or through the use of computers or other electronic devices. Where tests or examinations are conducted online remote invigilation arrangements may be used. In exceptional circumstances changes to elements of this course may be necessary at short notice. Students enrolled in this course will be informed of any such changes and the reasons for them, as soon as possible, through Canvas.