

English 289
Popular Literature: Fantasy
Spring 2022

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Office hours: Monday, 1:30-3:00; Tuesday/Thursday, 12:45-1:45; and Friday 1:30-2
– in CCC 433, with Zoom option available on request
Other times available by appointment

I encourage you to drop in during office hours, or make an appointment, to ask questions, get extra help, or talk about whatever is on your mind. Contact me to make an appointment if my regular office hours don't fit your schedule.

You are also welcome to email at any time, but be aware that I may not receive evening/weekend messages until the next weekday morning. You can also use the "Inbox" in Canvas.

Description and Goals

"Why Are Americans Afraid of Dragons?" asked Ursula Le Guin in a 1974 essay on fantasy literature. Fantasy is often dismissed as un-literary, unsophisticated, or escapist. Yet it's enormously popular, and J. R. R. Tolkien (no slouch as a scholar himself) wrote that he "desired dragons with a profound desire."

How can we define the genre of fantasy? What accounts for its popularity with some, and the disdain it elicits from others? How does literature that by definition is not realistic relate to the world in which its authors and readers live? These are some of the questions we will have in mind as we read a selection of fantasy, both classic and contemporary.

As we discuss these works, we will focus also on the learning outcomes for the Humanities category of the General Education Program, which strives "to help students understand and critically engage a variety of worldviews and the ideas that give them meaning." By the time you complete this course, you should be able to

- Read closely, think critically, and write effectively about texts that reflect on perennial questions concerning the human condition; and
- Investigate and thoughtfully respond to a variety of ideas, beliefs or values held by persons in situations other than your own.

This course also counts as an elective toward the English major or minor, providing you with additional practice in the skills of literary analysis and writing.

Texts

All of these books are available for purchase through the University Store. If you buy your books anywhere else, searching for them using the ISBN will ensure that we all have the same edition and can be literally on the same page. If you already own other editions of any of these, or prefer to use e-books, you are welcome to use those, and there is no need to buy another. In case you need to spread out the expense of the books, they are listed in the other we will read them. Refer to the course schedule below to see when you will need to have each book.

Lewis, *Prince Caspian*, ISBN 9780064405003 (HarperCollins), \$9

Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, ISBN 9780345339706 (Del Rey / Random House), list price \$9

Le Guin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*, ISBN-13: 9780547773742 (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), \$9

Rothfuss, *The Name of the Wind*, ISBN-13: 978-0756404741 (DAW / Penguin), \$11

Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*, ISBN-13: 978-0316229296 (Orbit), \$17.99

Requirements Overview

Although some amount of lecture is necessary in this type of course, the active involvement of students is important and most of our time will be spent in discussion. Your work in this course will consist of

- **Daily reading assignments.**
- **Participation in discussions.**
- **Several low-stakes writing assignments to practice your critical thinking and close reading skills and work toward your paper.**
- **Two exams.**
- **One paper, submitted in draft for feedback before submitting a final draft.**

Grading

This is how each type of assignment will be weighted in your final course grade:

- Attendance, preparation, and participation: 10%
- Written exercises: 25%
- Paper: 25%
- Tests: 20% each

Grading criteria for the written assignments will be included with each assignment.

Grading scale for Attendance, preparation, and participation:

- Committed (90-100%): Attends class, prepared, and engages in class activities (attentive, mentally engaged even if not speaking), at least 95% of the time. Contributions to discussions show careful listening, thoughtfulness, or effort to connect to others' ideas. Treats other students and classroom community with respect. May make an extra effort to contribute or to hold back occasionally to make space for others, or encourage other students to contribute.
- Meets expectations (80-90%): Attends class, prepared, and engages in class activities (attentive, mentally engaged even if not speaking), at least 90% of the time. Treats other students and classroom community with respect.
- Partially meets expectations (60-80%): Attends class, prepared, and engages in class activities (attentive, mentally engaged even if not speaking), at least 70% of the time.
- Unsatisfactory (0-60%): Below the standards above due to excessive absence, lack of preparation, inattentiveness, disruptiveness, or lack of respect for others.

Note: Expectations for attendance can be “fudged” to reflect valid reasons for absence. Examples of valid reasons include illness that makes meaningful participation impossible, unsafe, or disruptive; family or personal emergencies; field experiences for other classes; and travel for athletic competition. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructor to have these circumstances taken into account.

How I calculate grades: Letter grades are converted to points, and points back to a letter grade for the course, using the following scale: D, 60-66.99%; D+, 67-69.99%; C- 70-72.99%; C, 73-76.99%; C+, 77-79.99%; B-, 80-82.99%; B, 83-86.99%, B+, 87-89.99%, A-, 90-92.99%, A, 93-100%. An assignment not turned in or test essay not attempted is a 0, but an F paper/essay will earn points in the F range.

Resources

In addition to the syllabus, assignments, and other course information, Canvas contains a number of resources to support your work in this course and your success as a student at UWSP more generally.

The **Tutoring-Learning Center** is located in the basement of Albertson Hall. They provide a variety of services to support your learning, including a Writing Lab. The Writing Lab consultants are successful UWSP students who can discuss any type of writing at any stage of the drafting process; including brainstorming, outlining, and research or citations. They work with experienced writers as well as struggling writers; we believe that everyone benefits from discussions about their writing.

- By appointment or short notice times available
- You are able to send your paper for review:
<https://www.uwsp.edu/tlc/Pages/online-writing-lab-request.aspx>
- All services in the Writing Lab are free

If you have questions or would like to make an appointment, please contact the TLC via email (tlctutor@uwsp.edu) or phone (715-346-3568). Visit the TLC website for more information: <https://www.uwsp.edu/tlc/Pages/default.aspx>

Word-processing software is a necessary tool for writing and revision. Be sure to save your papers (and back them up) so that you can revise without having to retype your work.

- As a UWSP student, you have access to Microsoft's OneDrive (cloud storage) and Office 365 (online versions of Word, Excel, etc.), and can download Office 2016 to your own devices. Get started here: <https://portal.office.com/Home>

Policies

Attendance: You should plan to attend class regularly. Absences and late arrivals will impact your grade directly through the Attendance/Participation/Preparation part of your grade, and will likely have a negative effect on your performance on graded assignments. If you are ever absent, let me know the reason, if it is something that you want me to take into account in grading. Documentation is helpful, especially for repeated or extended absences or if you will need to make up any graded work. If you are absent for any reason, it's a good idea to check Canvas for any handouts or powerpoints you missed and to ask a classmate to share their notes—but these are the next-best-thing, not a substitute for coming to class.

Late work: I accept late papers, but will lower the grade at the rate of one letter grade per week. This penalty may be waived if circumstances warrant. If legitimate problems interfere with getting your work in on time, talk with me about them, the earlier the better. Other writing assignments can be turned in up to one week late for partial credit. A make-up test will be permitted only under unavoidable circumstances.

Classroom Etiquette:

- Tablets and other devices can be used for taking or referring to notes, if you can resist their temptations. However,
 - Students may not make audio, video, or photographic recordings of lectures or other class activities without written permission from the instructor. Anyone violating this policy will be asked to turn off the device being used. Refusal to comply with the policy will result in the student being asked to leave the classroom, and possibly being reported to the Dean of Students. (English Department Policy)
- Diverse perspectives are an asset to class discussions. Please treat those whose ideas or experiences are different from yours with the same respect you want for yourself.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you have a condition requiring accommodations for this course, please contact the Disability and Assistive Technologies Center. Call 715 346-3365 or email DATC@uwsp.edu to make an appointment or get more information, or visit them on the 6th floor of Albertson Hall (a.k.a. Library). Visit their website at <http://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/default.aspx>

Academic honesty: It's normal and expected that the ideas in your papers will be influenced by our class discussions, but they should also demonstrate your own thinking and analytic skill through your support and explanation of the interpretation that you adopt. It's also appropriate to make use of the editors' introduction or similar resources, though the paper assignment will not require any research. Any ideas drawn from such sources should be acknowledged, and should assist you in developing your own interpretation, not substitute for it. Unacknowledged or inappropriate use of sources is unacceptable, as is any form of cheating on a test or any other academic dishonesty. Such behavior will be handled in accordance with the University policy on Academic Misconduct. Possible penalties include being required to redo the assignment in order to receive credit, a zero for the assignment, or an automatic F for the course. If you are ever unsure about whether or how to use sources or help appropriately, please ask. (Information about the Academic Misconduct policy is available at <http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/AcademicIntegrityBrochure.pdf>.)

Face Coverings: At all UW-Stevens Point campus locations, the wearing of face coverings is mandatory in all buildings, including classrooms, laboratories, studios, and other instructional spaces. Any student with a condition that impacts their use of a face covering should contact the [Disability and Assistive Technology Center](#) to discuss accommodations in classes. Please note that unless everyone is wearing a face covering, in-person classes cannot take place. This is university policy and not up to the discretion of individual instructors. Failure to adhere to this requirement could result in formal withdrawal from the course.

Other Guidance for COVID-19:

- Please monitor your own health each day using [this screening tool](#). (Students who have been vaccinated are exempt from screening). If you are not feeling well or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, do not come to class; contact Student Health Service (715-346-4646).
 - As with any type of absence, students are expected to communicate their need to be absent and complete the course requirements as outlined in the syllabus.
- Maintain a minimum of 6 feet of physical distance from others whenever possible.
- Do not congregate in groups before or after class; stagger your arrival and departure from the classroom, lab, or meeting room.
- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer regularly and avoid touching your face.
- Please maintain these same healthy practices outside the classroom.
- If you [test positive for COVID, please fill out this form](#). If you tell me that you have tested positive and have not reported, I am required to report.
- If another student in the class is infected, and you are considered at risk, you will be contacted by health officials. You are not necessarily at risk, depending on how close you sit to the infected student. If you are required to quarantine due to exposure to COVID, contact me to discuss the resources available to help you keep up with the class. You may have to quarantine longer than the student who was infected, due to the incubation period of the virus.

Email: Your UWSP email account is the university's standard method of communication with you, and you should check it regularly. I may at times use email to contact the class as a whole or individual students; I will routinely use Canvas for reminders and announcements.

Assessment: UWSP regularly assesses the General Education Program to ensure that we are providing you with the best education we can. As part of this effort, samples of student work may be shared, anonymously, with a small group of faculty members. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about how your work may be used in the assessment process.

Schedule

Jan. 25 First day of class	Jan. 27 C. S. Lewis, <i>Prince Caspian</i> , chapter 1-7
Feb. 1 <i>Prince Caspian</i> to end	Feb. 3 J. R. R. Tolkien, <i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Prologue and Book I, Chapters 1-2
Feb. 8 <i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Book I, Chapters 3-7 Writing exercise 1	Feb. 10 <i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Book I, Chapters 8-11
Feb. 15 <i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Book I, Chapter 12, and Book II, Chapters 1-2 Writing exercise 2	Feb. 17 <i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> , Book II, Chapters 3-5
Feb. 22 <i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> to the end	Feb. 24 Ursula K. Le Guin, <i>A Wizard of Earthsea</i> , Chapters 1-3 Writing exercise 3
Mar. 1 <i>A Wizard of Earthsea</i> , Chapters 4-7	Mar. 3 <i>A Wizard of Earthsea</i> , Chapters 8-10

Mar. 8 Midterm exam (in-class)	Mar. 10 Patrick Rothfuss, <i>The Name of the Wind</i> , chapters 1-8
Mar. 15 <i>The Name of the Wind</i> , chapters 9-19	Mar. 17 <i>The Name of the Wind</i> , chapters 20-28 Writing exercise 4
SPRING BREAK	
Mar. 29 <i>The Name of the Wind</i> , chapters 29-39	Mar. 31 <i>The Name of the Wind</i> , chapters 40-49
Apr. 5 <i>The Name of the Wind</i> , chapters 50-58 Writing exercise 5	Apr. 7 <i>The Name of the Wind</i> , chapters 59-67
Apr. 12 <i>The Name of the Wind</i> , chapters 68-72 Paper proposal/outline/partial draft due	Apr. 14 <i>The Name of the Wind</i> , chapters 73-81
Apr. 19 <i>The Name of the Wind</i> to end Draft of paper due	Apr. 21 N. K. Jemisin, <i>The Fifth Season</i> , Prologue and Chapters 1-3
Apr. 26 <i>The Fifth Season</i> , Chapters 4-7	Apr. 28 <i>The Fifth Season</i> , Chapters 8-10
May 3 <i>The Fifth Season</i> , Chapters 11-14 Draft of paper due	May 5 <i>The Fifth Season</i> , Chapters 15-17
May 10 <i>The Fifth Season</i> , Chapters 18-20	May 12 <i>The Fifth Season</i> to end
Thursday, May 19, 8:00-10:00 am: Final exam	