

Department of English & Writing Studies

English 2337F (001)**J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis and Friends**

Fall 2024

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Office Hours:
Mondays 12:30-2:00 pm
Thursdays 1:00-2:30 pm

This is an in-person course.

Important Note: while this is an in-person course, students must be able to access Owl Brightspace online for readings and some assignments.

Antirequisite: English 2023A/B

Prerequisites: At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E; or both English 1027F/G and English 1028F/G; or English 1022E or English 1024E or English 1035E or English 1036E or English 1901E, or permission of the department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

This course explores the popular fiction of J.R.R. Tolkien (*The Lord of the Rings*) and C.S. Lewis' *Narnia Chronicles* and *Out of the Silent Planet* in relation to the western literary tradition. Both Tolkien and Lewis were highly esteemed scholars and their knowledge of classical, medieval and renaissance themes and conventions deeply influenced their major works. At the same time, these works of fiction were very much of the twentieth century, and thus responded to such conflicts as the two world wars and the accelerated pace of technological, social and cultural change. Their works also draw on the conventions of genre fiction of the twentieth century (science fiction, fantasy and children's literature). The wider circle of Tolkien and Lewis (sometimes called 'The Inklings') also used genre fiction (the detective novel and thriller) to explore deeper issues, and the last weeks of the course will consider works by Charles Williams and Dorothy L. Sayers.

Objectives:

The successful student will be able to:

- Describe how the various primary works engage with and extend the norms of their genre.
- Discuss how a literary work reflects the historical context in which it was written.
- Recognize and explain how works of popular fiction build upon the traditions of classical and English literature.
- Discuss the shared -- and differing -- features of the works of these connected writers.
- Write clearly and concisely on complex topics.
- Analyse in well-written prose how the elements of fiction work together to achieve a cohesive effect.

- Research and respond to relevant scholarly and critical studies of the primary works.
- Develop well-organized, effective, and rich arguments on literary topics arising from the course texts.

Course Materials

Texts:

J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (Harper) ISBN 978-0-261-10357-3 or 978-0-261-10357-5

J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Two Towers* (Harper) ISBN 978-0-261-10358-0

J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King* (Harper) ISBN 978-0-261-10359-7

C.S. Lewis, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (Harper Collins) ISBN 978-0-064-40502-7

C.S. Lewis, *Out of the Silent Planet* (Scribner) ISBN 978-0-684-82380-5

Dorothy L. Sayers, *Strong Poison* (Hodder) 978-1473621336

Charles Williams, *Selected Poetry and Prose* (available through BrightSpace)

Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Term Tests (Oct. 8 and Nov. 5)	35%
Essay (preliminary bibliography: Thurs. Oct. 31 ; essay itself: Thurs. Nov. 28)	30%
Final Exam	<u>35%</u>
	100%

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>.

OWL Brightspace

Students are responsible for checking the course site on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. Students may access the OWL Brightspace Learner Support site for assistance: <https://brightspacehelp.uwo.ca/> For IT related issues, they may contact Western Technology Services Helpdesk directly: <https://wts.uwo.ca/helpdesk/>.

Electronic Devices

No aids are permitted for the tests and exam of this course. Electronic devices of any kind (including calculators, cell phones and smart watches) are not permitted.

Statements

Academic Consideration

Students may request academic consideration in cases of extenuating circumstances – that is, personal circumstances beyond the student’s control that have a **substantial but temporary** impact on the student’s ability to meet essential academic requirements.

1. Requests for academic consideration are made to the Academic Advising office of the

student's Faculty of Registration.

2. Requests for academic consideration include the following components:
 - a. Self-attestation signed by the student;
 - b. Indication of the course(s) and assessment(s) relevant to the request;
 - c. Supporting documentation as relevant.

Requests without supporting documentation are **limited to one per term per course**.

Please note that the term tests are central to the learning objectives for this course. Accordingly, students seeking academic consideration for these assessments will be required to provide formal supporting documentation. Students who are granted academic consideration for this as will be provided with the following opportunity to make up this work:

- either a make-up test written outside of class time soon after the scheduled test
- a reweighting of tests/exams

Please see the university policy for Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs at https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Documentation for medical illness, when required, includes the completion of a [Western Student Medical Certificate \(SMC\)](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation, by a health care practitioner.

Requests linked to examinations scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during official examination periods as well as practice laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled in the last week of term **always** require formal supporting documentation.

Absences at Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, please contact the Academic Advising office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/definitions.pdf

Policy on Late Assignments

Late essays that have not been approved for academic consideration will be penalized at a rate of three percent per day. Late essays will not be accepted after the end of term.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory in all classes and tutorials. In cases of excessive absenteeism (e.g. more than 9 unexcused hours for a half course, 18 for a full course), which are not accounted for by either academic consideration or accommodation, students may be debarred from taking the final examination, and will receive an official warning to this effect by or before the course drop date (see Senate policy). In classes with or without final exams, students who do not attend class will receive 0% for course participation grades. Unless other policies dictate a different set of penalties in specific English and Writing Studies programs, this will apply to all department programs.

Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these

traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Intellectual Property/Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course, and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar.

Western's Policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays can be found here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_religious.pdf.

In the case of mid-term tests, notification is to be "given in writing to the instructor as early as possible, but not later than one week prior to the writing of the test".

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support & Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the unacknowledged use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT and Google Translate, to create content that is submitted as one's own. In this course, the use of AI (automatic translation tools, grammar checkers, ChatGPT...) is prohibited. If AI use is suspected, the instructor will ask for research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. Students are expected to retain these materials until after final grades have been entered. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, students may be asked to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against them.

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism

Plagiarism of any kind is a serious academic offence. Be advised that electronic plagiarism-detection programmes will be used and essay banks checked, if the professor has any suspicion of plagiarism. Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing both in the body and at the end of the assignment. Any borrowings from secondary sources, whether wordings or ideas, must be acknowledged BOTH in the main body of your essay AND at the end in a bibliography or works cited! If you have any doubts about how to document your work correctly, check with your professor prior to handing in your essay. For further information, see the Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar and appended to this outline.

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, here: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Plagiarism is a major academic offence. All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

Week 1

Thurs. Sept. 5

Introduction to Course; C.S. Lewis, *Out of the Silent Planet*

Week 2 (Week of Sept. 8)

Out of the Silent Planet

Week 3 (Week of Sept. 15)

Out of the Silent Planet,

Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*¹

Week 4 (Week of Sept. 22)

The Fellowship of the Ring

Week 5 (Week of Sept. 29)

Tues. Oct. 8 Term-Test #1 (50 minutes, in-class; assumes complete reading of *Out of the Silent Planet* and *The Fellowship of the Ring*)

Tolkien, *The Two Towers*

Week 6 (Week of Oct. 6)

¹ Although I list the titles of the separate volumes to give a sense of how far you should read each week, I stress that *The Lord of the Rings* is not a “trilogy”, but a single unified work divided into volumes only because of the requirements of publication.

Tolkien, *The Two Towers*

Oct. 12-20 Fall Reading Week

Week 7 (Week of Oct. 20)

Tolkien, *The Return of the King*

Week 8 (Week of Oct. 27)

The Return of the King

Week 9 (Week of Nov. 3)

Tues. Nov. 5 Term Test #2 (50 minutes, in-class; assumes complete reading of *The Lord of the Rings*)

The Return of the King

Week 10 (Week of Nov. 10)

C. S. Lewis, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*

Week 11 (Week of Nov. 17)

C. S. Lewis, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*

Charles Williams, Selected Poetry and Short Prose [available through Owl]

Week 12 (Week of Nov. 24)

Dorothy L. Sayers, *Strong Poison*

Week 13 (Week of Dec. 1)

Strong Poison