

Writing 4880G (Winter 2019)
Writing Fantasy
UC 4401
Tuesdays 12:30-3:30

Instructor: Michael Fox
Office: UC 3429
Office Hours: TTh 3:30-4:30
Email: mfox52@uwo.ca

Course description and objectives

Character wants a good job, plenty of excitement, quest, possible assistance from mentors and companions. By working through language creation, motifs, and structure, this course will help you create and plan a full-length creative project of fantastic literature.

Required texts

Liuzza, R.M., trans. *Beowulf* (with facing page OE), 2nd edition. Peterborough: Broadview, 2013.
Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Hobbit or There and Back Again*. London: HarperCollins, 2006.

Course Requirements and Grade Allocations

Preliminary tale construction (ungraded; due January 8)

In the first class, students will complete a small-scale version of the course task as a whole, giving a sense of the arc of the project.

Language creation (15%; due January 29)

Students will “create” the language(s) necessary for their secondary worlds, using the linguistic principles outlined in class (maximum 1000 words).

Critical Reading (10%; due February 12)

Students will read and summarize the salient points of one assigned piece of secondary material (written summary handed in: maximum 500 words).

Character Biographies (20%; due February 26)

Students will submit at least three character biographies (maximum 500 words each).

Oral/Written Report (15%; oral February 26 or March 5; written version due March 12)

Students will present an oral report on an optional text (listed above), and submit a written version of the report in the next class (maximum 1000 words).

Final Project (40%; due in class, April 9)

The final project will consist of five parts: 1) a language document; 2) at least three character biographies; 3) an summary of a full-length work of fantasy; 4) an explanation of how that full-length work of fantasy deploys the motifs, movements, and structures we have learned in the course; and 5) an excerpt from the work, one “great” scene (if necessary with an introduction to contextualize the scene). The length of the final part will vary, but it should be in the vicinity of 2500 words.

Course Policies

Assignment Format

All assignments are to be typed and double-spaced, and must have your name, course name, section number, and instructor's name on the first page. Do not use a cover page; these are particularly unnecessary for online submissions. When using sources, you will be expected to follow MLA, APA, or Chicago citation practice.

Submitting Assignments

Assignments are due on the dates specified in the syllabus. Late work **will be penalized at 2.5% per day unless** I have permitted an extension of the due date. You must contact me ahead of time for an extension and provide a suitable reason (*see also the section "Medical Accommodation Policy" below*).

Attendance/Participation

This is a senior-level seminar course. Your attendance is expected at every session of the class.

Students may miss up to three hours (the equivalent of one week of class) of class meetings during the term without explanation. That means that the first three class hours you miss will be recorded as absences but excused provided you don't miss any more. However, if you miss a total of four to nine class hours (the equivalent of up to three full weeks of class), your final grade will be reduced by 10% (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 72). If you miss a total of more than nine hours of class meetings (the equivalent of more than three weeks of class meetings) your final grade will be reduced by 15% (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 68).

This policy will be waived only for medical or compassionate reasons. If you have good reasons for waiving an absence of one class meeting (e.g. if you've missed three hours, and need or want to miss another class meeting) discuss these reasons with your instructor within one week of that absence. If your absence is extended and prolonged (over one week of continuous non-attendance), then you should discuss it with your academic advisor in your home faculty, who may require documentation. That advisor may then contact all of your instructors. See also: "Medical Accommodation Policy" below.

Note: a class meeting missed in order to write a test, exam, or other form of 'make-up class' in another course will count as non-attendance, and will attract penalties as defined above if applicable. Instructors at the University of Western Ontario shall not require a student to write a make-up test or similar at times which conflict with that student's other scheduled class times. If you are asked or "required" to do this, you should immediately contact an academic counsellor in your Dean's office. If you elect to miss a class in order to write such a test, that is your choice; your absence will not be excused.

Medical Accommodation Policy

For UWO Policy on Accommodation For Medical Illness, see:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf>

(downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading)

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical or other grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth 10% or more of their final grade** must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation on medical grounds cannot be granted by the instructor or Writing Studies, and Writing Studies requires students in these circumstances to follow the same procedure when seeking academic accommodation on non-medical (i.e. non-medical compassionate or other) grounds.

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth less than 10% of their final grade** must also apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Where in these circumstances the accommodation is being sought on **non-medical grounds**, students should consult in the first instance with their instructor, who may elect to make a decision on the request directly, or refer the student to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive medical documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons (e.g. to explain an absence from class which may result in a grade penalty under an 'Attendance' policy in the course). **All** medical documentation **must** be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.

"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."

Special Requests: Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, Aegrotat Standing

Please refer to the "Information for All Students in a Writing Course" for more detailed information. Briefly, remember that I do not have the discretion to initiate, consider, or grant (or not) such requests; you must go directly to the Dean's office of your home faculty.

Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism

The University Senate requires the following statements, and Web site references, to appear on course outlines:

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>."

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy as above). Plagiarized work will receive an "F" (ranging from 0 to 49) and may result in failure in the course as a whole.

"All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)."

Prerequisites

The University Senate requires the following statement to appear on course outlines:

"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."

The prerequisite for this course is permission of the Department.