

Writing 3900F (Fall 2023)
Writing Fantasy**Course description and objectives**

Character wants a good job, plenty of excitement, quest, possible assistance from mentors and companions.

Students in this course will work on various aspects of a full-length fantasy novel, focusing on aspects of world-building, the use and transformation of common fantasy motifs, various ways to structure the narrative and tell the story, and how to devise the most affective and climactic scenes. We will read some primary and secondary material (including Tolkien and others on the genre), and students will also be required to read and report on a contemporary fantasy novel of their choice as we assess what makes fantasy successful. At the conclusion of the course, students will submit a portfolio of work that includes a language or myth that underpins their created world, character sketches, an outline of their novel, and an excerpt from it.

Required texts

None. However, I would like you to read *Beowulf* and *The Hobbit*, but you may do so in any translation or edition.

Course Requirements and Grade Allocations

- Fantastic tale construction (ungraded; due September 19)
- Critical Reading (10%; due September 26)
- Language/myth assignment (15%; due October 10)
- Character Biographies (20%; due October 24)
- Book Report (15%; November 7/14; written version due November 19)
- Final Project (40%; due Friday, December 8)

The final project will consist of seven parts: 1) a query letter; 2) a language/myth document; 3) three character biographies; 4) a one-page (single-spaced) synopsis of a full-length work of fantasy; 5) an explanation of how that full-length work of fantasy deploys the motifs, movements, and structures we have learned in the course; 6) a discussion of the mechanics of narration (this can be part of #5); and 7) 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 no more than 2000 words.