J. R. R. Tolkien:
Middle-earth and Beyond
Winter 2016

Instructor: Dr. Christopher "Chip" Crane
Office: Tawes 1204 (won’t be there during the course)
Office Hours: By appointment online or via phone
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Class Meeting times: Online with various synchronous and asynchronous discussions
Section: WB11

Welcome to Middle-earth and Beyond! I aim for our study of Tolkien these three
weeks to be invigorating, challenging, and fascinating. I never tire of his works, and I
look forward to introducing some of you to them perhaps for the first time. Others who
have read some Tolkien will also likely find themselves in new territory with some of the
texts, and no matter how familiar you are with them, I expect you will discover some
facets of Tolkien have explored before.

I have the following general goals for the semester, goals which involve (per the course
title) visiting Middle-earth but also going “beyond” those well-known shores:

- To expose (or re-expose) you to Tolkien’s most famous works, The Hobbit and
  The Lord of the Rings.

- To expose you to Tolkien’s wider mythology for Middle-earth, the world of the
  Valar and the elves of the first age geographically beyond the borders of the
  Shire, The Lonely Mountain, the Blue Mountains, and Gondor.

- To introduce you to some of Tolkien’s other fiction outside the works dealing with
  Middle-earth and Valinor.

- To explore Tolkien as a person and a scholar himself and the ways in which his
  major works are rooted deeply in his own beliefs and his academic field
  (medieval literature and mythology). We will look at some biographical material
  and study some of his own scholarly work.

- To introduce you to some of the current scholarly approaches to and
  conversations about Tolkien’s work though.

- To look at our contemporary pop-culture’s response to and interpretation of
  Tolkien, going “beyond” Middle-earth in ways he himself would probably never
  have anticipated.
Course Policies

I will expect from you a high level of engagement with the course material and participation in discussions. I will also expect top-notch writing and other work—whether discussion posts or your final paper—from each of you. I want to help you gain the maximum combination of learning and intellectual growth out of this course, so please seek me out for assistance at any point with reading or writing if you are having difficulty. To achieve these ends and the goals described above (and the best grade of which you are capable as you demonstrate that achievement), you should expect to invest several hours per day. With a semester’s work compressed into three weeks, each day equates to a week of work.

Online Attendance, Participation, and Professionalism

For this online venue, “attendance” equates to consistent participation in assigned discussion topics and taking reading quizzes. With few exceptions, attendance is required. No excuses. I will grade you on your participation in online discussions.

If you know in advance you will miss an assigned exercise or event for a religious observance, let me know at least a day in advance. For other expected (or potential) “absences” (in this online sense), let me know as far in advance as possible. Normally, you will just have to make up missed work by submitting a late posting. If the module is closed, you will have to email it to me and will normally receive a deduction in your grade unless your “absense” was excused.

In the event that you must miss course events that are the equivalent of attending a traditional course due to an illness, the policy in this class is as follows:

- You should make a reasonable effort to inform me in advance of the assignment or discussion. When you are back online (literally), you must send me an explanation identifying the date of and reason for the missing work and acknowledging that the information in the note is accurate.
- If you are “absent” in this sense more than once, I may require documentation signed by a health care professional.
- If you are “absent” on days when tests are scheduled or papers are due, you should notify me in advance if possible, and upon returning to class, bring documentation of the illness, signed by a health care professional.

Late work (discussion posts, quizzes, papers, exams) is also unacceptable. Assigned work must be turned in no later than the start of class on the due date. I will occasionally extend a deadline in special circumstances, but you should discuss your circumstances with me at least a week prior to the deadline. The penalty for late work submitted without prior arrangement is a letter grade (10 points) for each calendar day past the due date.

Attendance and timeliness (of your attendance and your assignments) are all really subsets of the overall high level professionalism I expect from you. I expect you to conduct yourselves both in class and with assignments like the professionals (in whatever field) you are studying at the university to become.
Office Hours / Contacting Me
I do not plan to be in my UMD office during the Winter Term. I expect to be online every week day (weekends and available to field questions or discuss any course material you have trouble with or questions about. I will normally respond within 24 hours to an email. I will be glad to arrange a phone conference with you if you would like to talk in person.

Academic Integrity
Another facet of your professionalism is Academic Integrity. The University has approved a Code of Academic Integrity that prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, facilitating academic dishonesty, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. Plagiarism policy: all quotations taken from other authors, including from the Internet, must be indicated by quotation marks and referenced. Paraphrasing (putting other’s ideas into your own words) must be referenced as well. In addition, the following University of Maryland Honor Pledge, approved by the University Senate, should be handwritten and signed on the front page of all papers (or submitted with your email for electronic paper submission), projects or other academic assignments submitted for evaluation in this course: "I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination."

Students with Disabilities
This course complies with University policy regarding students with disabilities as described in the current Undergraduate or Graduate Catalog. You should let me know at the start of the term (first day or two) if you have a disability which requires special accommodation on my part.

Religious Holidays
Any student's assertion of a religious observance will be taken at face value; advance warning of any classes, tests, etc., to be missed for religious observance should come to me in writing in the first two days of the term. (http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/iii510a.html)

Missing class or a deadline for a religious observance does not excuse a student from material taught in the class or any course assignments.

In Case of Inclement Weather or Emergency which closes the University …this class will continue on completely unaffected! (sorry)

IT System Disruption
What could shut us down, however, is a major disruption to IT/ELMS/Canvas. However, even if some such event disrupts our daily interaction (or if I should suffer some disaster that takes me offline for more than a day or two), I expect you to continue the readings listed below. I may have to change a couple of discussion posts, but you should expect to shoulder the same work load. If you finish all the readings early, start working on the final paper.
Graded Material

Your final grade will comprise the following, in approximately the proportions indicated. You are to read all assignments on the syllabus prior to each day’s class. Bring all assigned course texts to class, including class material read online or posted to Canvas, which you should print out beforehand.

- Daily Class Involvement: 30%
  (contribution to online discussions, exercises, and general professionalism)
- Quizzes and Exams: 30%
- Term Paper: 30%
- Artistic project: 10%

List of Required Texts

  **ISBN-10:** 0544442784  
  **ISBN-13:** 978-0544442788

  **ISBN-10:** 054792822X  
  **ISBN-13:** 978-0547928227

Tolkien, J.R.R., *Roverandom*, Mariner Books
  **ISBN-10:** 0395957990  
  **ISBN-13:** 978-0395957998

  **ISBN-10:** 0618126988  
  **ISBN-13:** 978-0618126989

  **ISBN-10:** 0739427369  
  **ISBN-13:** 978-0739427361  
  (this one may be out of print and only available used)

  **ISBN-10:** 0618640150  
  **ISBN-13:** 978-0618640157
Reading and Discussion Schedule

Week 1 Jan 4 – 9

Monday
- The Battle of Maldon: http://www.english.ox.ac.uk/oecoursepack/maldon/
- Beowulf part 1, Grendel and Grendel’s mother (Tolkien’s translation pp 13-77)

Tuesday
- Beowulf part 2, the dragon (Tolkien pp. 77-105)
- Beowulf commentary pp. 167-186 & 271-5
- Sellic Spel (in Beowulf pp. 355-386) and “The Lay of Beowulf” (pp. 415-425)
- J.R.R. Tolkien, “Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics” (pdf on ELMS), pp. 1-2, 7-15 (read the whole thing if you have time).

Wednesday
- The Hobbit, ch. 1-8
- The Silmarillion (Silm): “Ainulindalë” and “Valaquenta” (pp. 15-32)

Thursday
- The Hobbit ch. 9-19
- Roverandom

Friday
- The Lord of the Rings (LOTR) The Fellowship of the Ring, Book 1, ch. 1-6 (FR I.1-6)
- The Adventures of Tom Bombadil in A Tolkien Miscellany (TM): Poems 1,2,6,14,15,16 & skim the rest.
- Discuss Peter Jackson’s film trilogy, The Hobbit
Week 2  Jan 11 – 16

Monday
- *Silm* Ch. I-IX (skim ch X and XI if you have time)
- *LOTR, FR* I.7-12
- Discuss Peter Jackson’s “Flight to the Ford” scene from *The Fellowship of the Ring* film

Tuesday
- *Silm* XII-XIX (Read XIX, *Beren and Luthien*, especially carefully)
- *LOTR FR* II.1-5

Wednesday
- *LOTR FR* II.5-10

Thursday
- *LOTR The Two Towers (TT)* III.1-5
- *Smith of Wooton Major* & *Leaf by Niggle* (in *Tolkien Miscellany*, pp 5-35 & 147-162)

Friday
- Silm XX-XXI (esp Turin Turambar)
- *LOTR TT* III.6-11
- *LOTR TT* IV.1-2
**Week 3  Jan 18 – 23**

**Monday**
- *Silm* XXII-XXIII (Ruin of Doriath & Of Tuor and the Fall of Gondolin)
- *LOTR* TT IV.2-10
- Discuss moments in Peter Jackson’s *The Two Towers* film

**Tuesday**
- *Silm* XXIV (Eärendel), *Akallabeth*
- *LOTR*, *The Return of the King (RK)* V.1-6

**Wednesday**
- *LOTR*, *RK* V.7-10
- *LOTR* RK VI.1-4
- *Farmer Giles of Ham* (in *Tolkien Miscellany* pp 37-91)

**Thursday**
- Final paper due
- *LOTR*, *RK* VI.5-9

**Friday (last day of class)**
- *LOTR* RK Appendix A, Skim Appendices B-F
- *Silm*, “Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age”
- Discuss moments in Peter Jackson’s *The Return of the King* film
- **Final Exam**

**Final Paper Due: Thur 22 Jan**