English 208A considers the history and forms of fantasy written for adults, including related forms and sub-genres such as the fable, fairy tale, the quest romance, gothic horror, high fantasy, urban fantasy, etc. Using Tolkien’s "Essay on Fairy Stories" and discussion of the development and conventions of fantasy in a series of short fictions, we will create a common ground of critical terms and interests with which to consider a set of longer texts. Class work will include lecture, discussion, and "workshops" on readings. No marks are assigned for attendance, but participation is expected.

Reading Schedule:

September 13-15 Introduction
20-22 on reserve (see over)
27-29 on reserve (see over)

October 4-6 *The Hobbit*, J.R.R. Tolkien
11-13 *A Wizard of Earthsea*, Ursula Le Guin  FIRST ESSAY
18-20 *The Last Unicorn*, Peter S. Beagle
25-27 *Grendel*, John Gardner

November 1-3 review, essay-writing skills, and TERM TEST (Nov 3)
8-10 *The Princess Bride*, William Goldman
15-17 *Seventh Son*, Orson Scott Card
22-24 *A Song for Arbonne*, Guy Gavriel Kay  SECOND ESSAY
29-30 *Song for Arbonne*, review

Assignments

First Essay due October 13, 2-3 pages, typed (500-750 words) worth 15%
Midterm Test November 3 worth 15%
Second Essay due November 24, 5-6 pages typed (1250-1500 words) worth 30%
Final Exam in scheduled exam period, worth 40%

OR

Midterm Test November 3 worth 20%
Essay due November 24, 6-7 pages typed (1500 words) worth 35%
Final exam in scheduled exam period, worth 45%

Essays are due on the assigned dates; 3 marks will be deducted per each day of unarranged lateness. Be aware of the University of Waterloo’s policy regarding plagiarism, "the act of presenting the ideas, words, or other intellectual property of another as one’s own." Essay topics and use of external sources will be discussed in class and on hand-outs.
Tuesday September 20
Tolkien on fantasy
"Essay on Fairy Stories" in *Tree and Leaf*, Tolkien
myth and other godstories (symbols of community)
"The Myth of Narcissus," Ovid
"The Old Woman and the Storm," McKillip

Thursday September 22
folk/fairy tales, the gothic, and ghosts (community and symbols of perversity)
"Ashiepattle" and "Manypelts," Grimm, eds.
"The Oval Portrait" and "The Black Cat," Poe
"Call Me From the Valley," Wellman

Tuesday September 27
high/heroic fantasy (creating community by story, sword, and sorcery)
from *Beowulf*, trans. Thomas
from *Swords and Deviltry* and *Swords Against Death*, Leiber
"The Rule of Names," Le Guin

Thursday September 29
"modern" fantasy (the hazards of community)
"The Flight of the Horse," Niven
"The Believing Child," Henderson
from *Jack the Giant Killer: The Jack of Kinrowan: A Novel of Urban Faerie*, De Lint