ENGLISH 208A
FORMS OF FANTASY

Prof. K. McArthur
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HH 262, X3398
Office Hours: T/R 1-2

TEXTS
Beagle, P.S. The Last Unicorn
Gardner, John Grendel
Goldman, William The Princess Bride
Kay, Guy Tigana
LeGuin, Ursula The Left Hand of Darkness
Tolkien, J.R.R. The Hobbit
Tree and Leaf

Recommended: Aaron and McArthur, The Little Brown Compact Handbook (Second Canadian Edition) (Royalties from the purchase of this book go to an English Department Scholarship Fund)

LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENTS

January
10 Introduction
17 Course Readings, Tolkien, Tree and Leaf
24 cont’d, The Hobbit
31 Kay, Tigana

February
7 Kay, Tigana, LeGuin, Left Hand of Darkness
14 LeGuin, Left Hand of Darkness
21 Reading Week
28 Beagle, The Last Unicorn

March
7 Term Test
14 Gardner, Grendel
21 Gardner, Grendel, Goldman, The Princess Bride
28 Goldman, The Princess Bride

April
4 Review

ESSAY: 1500 words or 5-6 pages typed, due March 14, 2004, worth 40%.

EXAMS: Term Test, 1 1/2 hours, March 8, worth 20%.
Final Exam, 3 hours, worth 40%.
ENGLISH 208A

Course description/ policies:

English 208A is a course on the various forms of fantasy literature, and because it is a literature course we will use many tools for analysing the literary qualities of the works selected. Essays are due in class on the due date. If you do need an extension you must request it at least a week before the due date, no questions asked; late submissions without prior permission will be penalized 2 marks per day, including weekends. Essays submitted more than two weeks after the due date or with no supporting documentation may not be accepted at all. The formal essay will be marked for the quality of literary interpretation and of writing. The examinations will be marked for the knowledge of the texts displayed and for the ability to find connections between them. You are also asked to observe all the conventions of reasonable and professional behaviour (ie turning off all cell phones, not creating a disturbance in class, distracting your fellow students with talk or other matters).

The Dean of Arts office requires the inclusion of the following statement on all undergraduate course outlines:

"Note on avoidance of academic offenses: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline) which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1: 11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean."

Note: Undergraduate Calendar, p. 1: 11 is also available at http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infoucalUW/poUcy_71.html

A very useful link is available as well on the Arts Faculty Web page, "How to Avoid Plagiarism and Other Written Offences: A Guide for Students and Instructors" (http://watarts.uwaterloo.ca/~sager/plagiarism.html).
ESSAY TOPICS

ENGLISH 208A
FORMS OF FANTASY

Due Date: March 14, 2005
Length: 1500 words or 5-6 typed pages
Worth: 40%

1. Tolkien says that "To make a Secondary World inside which the green sun will be credible, commanding Secondary Belief, will probably require labour and thought, and will certainly demand a special skill, a kind of elvish craft.". Discuss the ways in which at least two authors on the reading list use their "elvish craft" to induce "Secondary Belief".

2. Discuss the ways in which at least two authors use and manipulate language.

3. Tolkien and Rabkin disagree on many issues, but they are in perfect agreement that a "story will be important in the measure that it engages in its Fantastic ways concerns of the real world"; Tolkien calls this 'engagement' "Recovery". Discuss some "real world" issues and how they are handled in at least two works.

4. Discuss the use or adaptation of the conventions of forms related to Fantasy or used by some of the authors on the course (at least two). Authors both follow and play against traditional patterns--you may choose to deal with "traditional" or "untraditional" approaches to conventions.

5. LeGuin says, in the introduction to Left Hand of Darkness, that "All fiction is metaphor". Discuss the use of "metaphor" in at least two works on the course.

6. A topic of your choice with permission.

7. A short story, in which you work with a form of fantasy or the fantastic and with patterns and themes or motifs discussed in the course - should you choose this option, you must include at least one page of analysis of your own work.