

HL 8030: “Fantasy and World Literature” Course Outline

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Course Description

Fantasy and World Literature provides an introduction to the literary genre of fantasy, with an emphasis on the twentieth century. The course will study how fantasy draws upon different cultural materials and generic tropes, as well as different literary genres. It will examine questions of entertainment and literary value, and model critical engagement with literary and popular culture. The most prominent and innovative literary achievements of the genre will be studied, along with supplementary texts in related genres.

Learning Objectives

The course will:

- Demonstrate the complex relationship between literary and popular culture
- Establish the main trends, concerns, and characteristics of the genre of fantasy
- Create links between texts in the course founded upon historical and cultural context and generic forms
- Introduce students to a critical means of engagement with literary and popular culture

Learning Outcomes

- To gain knowledge and understanding of key aspects of the genre of fantasy in the twentieth and twenty-first century
- To gain an awareness of the importance of the fantasy to world literature and modern literature
- To learn collaboration, delegation, planning, and shared responsibility with peers
- To develop independent thinking, develop planning skills, improve research capabilities
- To develop a critical approach to academic research, literary and cultural studies
- To gain experience of textual analysis and academic writing

Student Assessment

A) Mid-Term Project 50%

a. Group Presentation (15 minutes, 25%)

Each student will be assigned to a group, which will research a subject related to course content and develop a critical and creative presentation to the rest of the class.

b. Essay Response (750 words, 25%)

Each student will write an individual essay connecting the subject of their group presentation to course content, in response to an assigned essay prompt.

B) Final Exam (2 hours) 40%

Each student will sit an examination on the course themes and texts covered.

C) Class Participation 10%

Each student is expected to attend lectures, participate in class discussion and small group work, and contribute equally to the group presentation.

Content

- Novels, short fiction, film, and a graphic novel in the fantasy genre
- Canonical and foundational fantasy texts
- Essays and criticism on the genre of fantasy and specific texts
- Historical and cultural context – particularly mythology and folk tales from different cultures

Required Texts

Delany, Samuel R. *Tales of Nevèrjón*
Divakaruni, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni
Le Guin, Ursula K. *A Wizard of Earthsea*

Liu, Marjorie. *Monstress, Volume 1: Awakenings*
 Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Hobbit: Or, There and Back Again*

Films

Baahubali: The Beginning (dir. S.S. Rajamouli, 2015)
Princess Mononoke (dir. Hayao Miyazaki, 1997)
Game of Thrones, Season 1 (HBO)

Course Outline

S/N	Topic	Lecture Hours
1	Week One: Introduction Myths, Legends, and Fairy Tales	3
2	Week Two: Arabian Fantasy & "Orientalism" Selections from <i>The Thousand Nights and One Night</i> (aka <i>The Arabian Tales</i>) Short fiction by Saladin Ahmed	3
3	Week Three: High Fantasy J.R.R. Tolkien, <i>The Hobbit</i>	3
4	Week Four: High Fantasy J.R.R. Tolkien, <i>The Hobbit</i>	3
5	Week Five: Modern Fantasy Ursula Le Guin, <i>A Wizard of Earthsea</i>	3
6	Week Six: Modern Fantasy Ursula Le Guin, <i>A Wizard of Earthsea</i>	3
7	Week Seven: Weird Tales & Pulp Fiction Short fiction by Robert E. Howard, H.P. Lovecraft, Lord Dunsany	3
8	Week Eight: Postmodern Revisions Samuel R. Delany, <i>Tales of Nevèrÿon</i>	3
9	Week Nine: Postmodern Revisions	

	Samuel R. Delany, <i>Tales of Nevèrÿon</i>	3
10	Week Ten: Feminist Revisions Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, <i>The Palace of Illusions</i> Selections from the <i>Mahabarata</i>	3
11	Week Eleven: Feminist Revisions Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, <i>The Palace of Illusions</i> <i>Baahubali: The Beginning</i> (dir. S.S. Rajamouli, 2015)	3
12	Week Twelve: Other Media – Film & Graphic Novel Marjorie Liu, <i>Monstress</i> (Image Comics) <i>Princess Mononoke</i> (dir. Hiyao Miyazaki, 1997)	3
13	Week Thirteen: Other Media – Television <i>Game of Thrones</i> , Season 1 (HBO) Saladin Ahmed, “Is ‘Game of Thrones’ too white?”	3