

Fall 2024 ONLINE

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Office Hours: MW 11:00 AM – 1:30 PM; TR 11:15 AM – 12:15 PM. You may call me ANY time at 940-397-4246

Required books

The one volume LORD OF THE RINGS by J. R. R. Tolkien with Foreword for 2nd edition, appendices A-F, indexes 1-4. Houghton Mifflin. ISBN: 978-0-618-26025-0.

Course goals

Read and rhetorically analyze key passages in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (LOTR)

Demonstrate knowledge of Tolkien's larger history of Middle-earth.

Discuss theme, approach, and style in Tolkien.

Synthesize theme, approach, and style in Essays and the Research Project.

Students may also address scenes in Peter Jackson's LOTR movies (not required).

Students use MLA citation in-body and Works Cited

Due Dates at a Glance with percentage of semester grade

ESSAY 1: SIX description pars Bks 1 & 2 LOTR: The Fellowship of the Ring (20% of semester grade)

ESSAY 2: SIX description pars Bks 3 & 4 LOTR: The Two Towers (20%)

ESSAY 3: SIX description pars Bks 5 & 6 LOTR: The Return of the King (20%)

The RESEARCH PROJECT (11 pars): best two scenarios/six paragraphs from Essays for pars. 2-7; three analytical pars/one supporting source per paragraph for pars. 8-10; epilogue/coda for par. 11; par. 1 "mini-essay."

OR ESSAY 4: SIX description paragraphs from LOTR appendices and/or *The Silmarillion*. (40%)

Attendance: Roll is taken at first, fourth, and 12th day based on login history.

GRADING: ESSAYS 1, 2, and 3 are each worth 20 percent of semester grade; the RESEARCH PROJECT (or ESSAY 4), 40 percent. Grade values are as follows: 90-100 (A), 80-89 (B), 70-79 (C), 60-69 (D), and below 60 is F.

The **final calculated grade** in D2L is the actual semester grade. It is NOT rounded up: e.g., an 89.9 is a B (not an A); a 79.9 is a C (not a B); a 69.9 is a D (not a C); 59.9 is an F (not a D). The same is true for the Essays and the Research Project. They are not rounded up.

AVOIDING ACADEMIC DISHONETY: I am all the AI you need for this course.

Do not succumb to temptation by using AI or something you found on the internet. A document which relies on AI or borrows from sources I have not approved is a "0" (an F). Please think of ME (your instructor) as your AI. I am not even remotely all-knowing nor do I possess "machine knowledge." But I do know what you need for this course.

GETTING MY INPUT AHEAD OF TIME ON YOUR PARAGRAPHS

In CONTENT, click on the relevant GETTING MY INPUT module for getting my preliminary feedback on your writing; then click on the arrow beside the title of the discussion forum; click on VIEW TOPIC; type or copy-and-paste your paragraph into the text box and post to me (don't use the attachment function—I cannot directly reply to it). I can make your paragraph better with subtle, surgical changes in phrasing and/or word choice. If you have misunderstood or overlooked something important, I will tell you.

You then would use my edited version of your paragraph(s) for any final changes you still need to make. Then put the final version of your paragraph(s) in the PowerPoint or the Essay that you then submit to the drop box to count and be graded (even if I have given you input, you still need to submit the assignment to the drop box).

Getting my input on your work is OPTIONAL. It is not required. You may not need my help. If you prefer to do everything the night before or even the day it is due, you certainly do not have time for my input. **I am the ONLY person who can see your paragraph(s); you are the ONLY person who can see my reply.**

Reading Schedule & Due Dates for the Drop Box

Week 1 August 26-30

OBTAIN YOUR ONE-VOLUME LOTR

w. Foreword to 2nd edition and Appendices A-F w. indexes I-IV.

Week 2 September 2-6

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

Book I: Chapters I-VI

Week 3 September 9-13

Book I: Chapters VII-XII

Week 4 September 16-20

Book II: Chapters I-VI

Week 5 September 23-27

Book II: Chapters VII-X.

Week 6 September 30-Oct 4

ESSAY 1: DUE IN DROP BOX BEFORE 11:59 PM Friday October 4.

Late Penalty – 10 points even if less than a minute. 20 percent.

THE TWO TOWERS

Book III: Chapters I-VI

Week 7 October 7-11 [Dr. Fields is at Rocky Mountain MLA conference Oct. 9-12.]

Book III: Chapters VII-XI.

Week 8 October 14-18

Book IV: Chapters I-X

Week 9 October 21-25

ESSAY 2: DUE IN DROP BOX BEFORE 11:59 PM Friday October 25.

Late Penalty – 10 points even if less than a minute. 20 percent.

Book V Chapters I-VI

Week 10 October 28-November 1

THE RETURN OF THE KING

Book VI: Chapters VII-XI

Week 11 November 4-8

Book VI: Chapters I-IX

Week 12 November 11-15

ESSAY 3: DUE IN DROP BOX BEFORE 11:59 PM Friday November 15. 20 percent

Late Penalty – 10 points even if less than a minute.

Week 13 November 18-22

OPTION: GETTING MY INPUT – the RESEARCH PROJECT

Use only appendices in our book; articles, essays, chapters from *The Silmarillion* in module SUPPORTING SOURCES. For other supporting sources, you need my approval ahead of time.

OR

ESSAY 4 (alternative to Research Project, due same day in same drop box)

ESSAY 4 would be two scenarios from previous PowerPoints and three scenarios (three descriptions paragraphs for each) from appendices A-F or PDF chapters in *The Silmarillion*. **NO articles or essays. No introductory paragraph. No epilogue/coda.**

Week 14 November 25-29 – THANKSGIVING – No classes Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

OPTION: GETTING MY INPUT – the Essay (or Final PowerPoint)

Week 15 December 2-6. The RESEARCH PROJECT or ESSAY 4

OPTION: GETTING MY INPUT – the RESEARCH PROJECT or ESSAY 4

Finals Week: The RESEARCH PROJECT or ESSAY 4: due in the drop box before 11:59 PM Monday December 9. It is penalized 10 points even if it is less than a minute late. The drop box will close and lock permanently two hours after the due date. 40 percent.

Late Work – Must be in the drop box no later than 11:59 PM Monday December 9. The late penalty is 10 points out of 100. The drop boxes will be locked as of 2:00 AM December 10.

Students with disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guarantees reasonable accommodation. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Support Services in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, 397-4140.

ESSAYS 1, 2, 3:

Each ESSAY comprises TWO scenarios from *The Lord of the Rings*.

Each scenario requires THREE description paragraphs.

Therefore, each ESSAY is SIX paragraphs.

ESSAY 4 is an alternative to the RESEARCH PROJECT. Essay 4 comprises two scenarios from LOTR's appendices and/or *The Silmarillion*.

DESCRIPTION PARAGRAPHS - THREE needed for EACH scenario

Description paragraphs pivot from a scenario, that is, a key moment or brief sequence of events. You need THREE description paragraphs for a scenario. They do not try to summarize or outline the entirety of a chapter, adventure, or episode in Tolkien.

TOPIC IDEA: Start with a TOPIC IDEA about the metaphysics of Middle-earth: e.g., something about connectivity, transformation, destiny, prophecy, sundering, healing, despair, or the Shadow.

CONNECTION: Connect what is happening in the scenario you chose with related scenarios elsewhere in *The Lord of the Rings*.

DESCRIPTION: Describes with specific details the scenario you chose from *The Lord of the Rings*.

INSIGHT: Revisits your topic idea in light of description and connection. This revision is the INSIGHT.

QUOTE: The INSIGHT comes right before the optional QUOTE. A quote should come towards the end of your discussion--not at the beginning. You need ONE quote per scenario. You can have more than one quote if you wish.

For each scenario, you need THREE description paragraphs. All three do NOT need an INSIGHT and QUOTE. But all three DO need the TOPIC IDEA, CONNECTION, and DESCRIPTION pertaining the scenario.

THE MOVIES

You may freely bring in, or allude to, the movies. But let us know if you describing something in one of the movies versus the book.

Peter Jackson is the director of the movie adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings*. You are at liberty in your description paragraphs to compare the way Peter Jackson presents a scene to the way we find it in Tolkien—that is, to point out a difference.

You are NOT required to utilize or bring in the movies.

It's up to you.

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The Essay's paragraphs eight, nine, and 10 each address something in a supporting source. We call these paragraphs ANALYTICAL. They do not quote from LOTR. They quote from their supporting source.

ANALYTICAL PARAGRAPHS

You need THREE analytical paragraphs (paragraphs 8, 9, 10). Each paragraph pertains to ONE supporting source from our module SUPPORTING SOURCES. A supporting source may be an ESSAY by Tolkien, an ARTICLE about Tolkien, a scenario from Appendices A & B, or a chapter from *The Silmarillion* (see PDF's of selected chapters).

- TOPIC IDEA: An analytical paragraph starts with topic idea about Middle-earth or Tolkien.
- EXPLANATION: An analytical paragraph explains a thought or idea from the supporting source.
- DESCRIPTION: If the supporting source is a scenario from *The Silmarillion* or LOTR's appendices A-B, explanation may be more in the vein of descriptive details.
- INSIGHT: Precede the QUOTE from the Supporting Source with an insight.
- QUOTE: Be sure to quote from the Supporting Source, not LOTR.

The RESEARCH PROJECT

The Essay will have 11 paragraphs.

PARAGRAPH ONE (MINI-ESSAY)

Paragraph one of the Essay is your everything paragraph. It anticipates a number of your topic ideas and previews some of the specific details we will see in the description paragraphs. It will preview ideas from your supporting sources. It is your essay in miniature. It's an everything paragraph--a mini-essay.

PARAGRAPHS TWO - SEVEN

These are description paragraphs you have culled from the Essays. Paragraphs 2-4 pertain to one scenario; paragraphs 5-7 pertain to another. You already have written these paragraphs.

PARAGRAPHS EIGHT – TEN

These are ANALYTICAL paragraphs, each one focused on one of our supporting sources: an analytical paragraph can address and quote from any supporting source in our module for SUPPORTING SOURCES: an article about Tolkien, an Essay by Tolkien, or a scenario from appendices A & B in LOTR, or a chapter from *The Silmarillion*. It can be any chapter from *The Silmarillion*. I have PDF's of selected chapters from *The Silmarillion* in the module SUPPORTING SUORCES.

PAR 11 - CONCLUSION (EPILOGUE/CODA)

This paragraph is NOT a review of the ideas or scenarios in your essay. Instead, it is an epilogue of coda. It starts with descriptive details of something you have not mentioned heretofore in the course. This paragraph then closes with a relevant thought about THE LORD OF THE RINGS.

ALTERNATIVE:

ESSAY FOUR (alternative to Research Project) does not have an introductory paragraph or a conclusion. The Final PowerPoint does not address an article or essay in our Supporting Sources module. Essay 4 addresses TWO scenarios (three paragraphs each) from LOTR appendices A-B and/or *The Silmarillion* (the PDFs).

RUBRIC FOR ESSAYS

The rubric consists of five categories that are evaluated on a scale of five possible scores: 56 (failing), 66 (passing), 76 (satisfactory), 86 (good), and 96-100 (excellent). the average of the five scores for the five categories is the assignment's grade:

- Description paragraphs feature a thoughtful topic idea pertaining to the way fate and destiny work in Middle-earth.
- Description paragraphs feature dynamic description of a specific scenario or sequence of actions from LOTR.
- Description paragraphs indicate the significance of the scenario and its connection to other scenarios and dynamics in LOTR.
- Description paragraphs come back to the topic idea and refine it in light of the description of the scenario. We call this revised topic idea the insight. Only ONE quote is required per scenario/three paragraphs.
- Originality, creativity, thoughtfulness, and readability. The description paragraphs reflect the unique, original vision of the student.

RUBRIC FOR RESEARCH PROJECT

The rubric consists of five categories that are evaluated on a scale of five possible scores: 56 (failing), 66 (passing), 76 (satisfactory), 86 (good), and 96-100 (excellent). the average of the five scores for the five categories is the assignment's grade:

- Paragraph 1: this paragraph is a mini-essay--an "everything" paragraph--that previews topic ideas in paragraphs two through ten. This paragraph also previews some of the scenarios and specific details we will see in paragraphs two through ten.
- Paragraphs 2-7: these are pre-written description paragraphs representing two scenarios from the Essays. They feature topic idea, connection, description of a key scenario, insight (revisiting the topic idea in light of the description), and an optional quote from LOTR.
- Paragraphs 8-10: these are new analytical paragraphs written for the Essay. They feature a topic idea, explanation, insight, and optional quote from the supporting source (not LOTR). Explanation may require important description of a scenario especially if the supporting source features a scenario from the appendices or a chapter in *The Silmarillion*.
- Epilogue/coda: the conclusion is NOT a review of the essay. Instead, it begins with a scenario and specific details not as yet broached in the essay. It's something new. Then the paragraph closes with a relevant thought--an insight--about Middle-earth.
- Originality, creativity, insight, and readability. The Essay represents the unique and original point of view, style, and vision of the student. MLA Works Cited required.

QUICK REFERENCE

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 1 8/26 to 8/30	Please obtain your one volume LOTR	
Week 2 9/2 to 9/6	Read THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING	
Week 3 9/9 to 9/13	Read THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING	

Week 4 9/16 to 9/20	ESSAY 1: DESCRIPTION paragraphs feature topic idea, lots of description of a scenario, insight, and optional quote (three paragraphs per scenario; two scenarios are required – SIX pars. total). In Content in D2L click on MODEL PARAGRAPHS.	Option: click on GETTING MY HELP
Week 5 9/23 to 9/26	Option: draft DESCRIPTION paragraphs early and get my feedback on your writing-in-progress	Option: click on GETTING MY HELP
Week 6 9/30 to 10/04	ESSAY 1 requires three paragraphs per scenario (SIX pars. total)	ESSAY ONE Due Friday October 4
Week 7 10/7 to 10/11	Read THE TWO TOWERS	
Week 8 10/14 to 10/18	Option: draft DESCRIPTION paragraphs early and get my feedback on your writing-in-progress	Option: click on GETTING MY HELP
Week 9 10/21 to 10/25	ESSAY 2 requires three paragraphs per scenario (SIX pars. total)	ESSAY TWO Due Friday October 25
Week 10 10/28 to 11/1	Read THE RETURN OF THE KING	
Week 11 11/4 to 11/8	Option: draft paragraphs early and get my feedback on your writing-in-progress.	Option: click on GETTING MY HELP
Week 12 11/11 to 11/15	ESSAY 3 requires three paragraphs per scenario (SIX pars. total)	ESSAY THREE Due Friday Nov 15
Week 13 11/18 to 11/22	An ANALYTICAL paragraph acknowledges, explains/describes, and quotes from ONE supporting source (appendices, PDF chapters, articles, or essays from our Supporting Sources module); THREE analytical pars. total, pars. 8-10; in Content in D2L click on the module MODEL PARAGRAPHS	Option: click on GETTING MY HELP
Week 14 11/25 to 11/29	Option: draft analytical paragraphs early and get my feedback	Option: click on GETTING MY HELP
Week 15 12/2 to 12/6	Option: draft analytical paragraphs early and get my feedback	
Week 16 Finals Week 12/9-12/12	RESEARCH PROJECT (11 pars.): Mini-essay (Par. 1; six description (best of previously written description paragraphs in the ESSAYS) pars. 2-7; three analytical paragraphs (one supporting source each) pars. 8-10; epilogue par. 11 & MLA Works Cited	RESEARCH PROJECT Due Monday December 9
LATE PENALTY for our Assignments	The late penalty is 10 points even if D2L says by less than a minute; no late work accepted after 2:00 AM Tuesday December 10.	Drop boxes lock as of 2:00 AM Tuesday December 10