

## ENG 256: Fantasy Lit. Role-Playing Games & Fiction FALL 2015

Professor Edward Carmien, LA 120 (609) 570-3306

Office Hours: **M, T, W, R 11AM-NOON**

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Catalog Course Description: Explores fantasy literature through a study of genre elements and the challenge this genre presents to readers of mainstream literature. By examining works written in and translated to English, participants better appreciate and interpret such works and how they represent an increasingly important sub-section of literary expression.

### My expectations for you this semester are simple. Success will be found by those who:

- Are lively, interactive, vocal, and positive
- Have fun
- Are excellent students
- Approach the literature we read with an open mind
- Avoid use of electronic devices not related to the course, such as cell phones.
- The “JB” Rule: *no hiding behind laptops. Stay engaged in the flow of class.*

Structure of Course:	Grade %
3 Projects (See further description)	45
Mid Term Exam	10
Final Exam	10
Independent Reading Project	10
Class Endeavor: Critical Introductions	10
Attendance & Participation (WILL include quizzes on readings)	15

94-100 A, 91-93 A-, 88-90 B+, 84-87 B, 81-83 B-, 78-80 C+, 71-77 C, 70-65 D

### Attendance Policy:

We learn best as a group; this requires that each of us participate actively in class activities such as discussions, group work, presentations, and quizzes. The English Department faculty has adopted this policy on attendance: *Students are expected to attend all classes. A student who misses six class hours may be withdrawn from the course, or if after the withdrawal deadline, be failed in the course.* A class hour equals fifty minutes. I count the time you may be tardy as absence. Likewise, if you are unable to remain in the classroom (with reasonable exceptions) I will count the time you are out of the classroom against the absence limit.

### Academic Integrity Policy:

MCCC’s Academic Integrity Policy, found online and in the student handbook, is the law of the land. If you have any doubts, ask BEFORE you submit work.

### Required Texts (get these at or before start of term):

*The Sword & Sorcery Anthology*, David G. Hartwell & Jacob Weisman, eds.

*The Fellowship of the Ring*, J. R. R. Tolkien

*Dragons of Autumn Twilight*, Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman

*The Crystal Shard*, R. A Salvatore

*Dream Park*, Larry Niven and Steven Barnes

See also selected readings at [www.fantasyliterature.pbworks.com](http://www.fantasyliterature.pbworks.com), some of these will be assigned during the semester.

## 2 Research Papers (30% of course grade)

6-8 Page Paper

30%

Write a 6-8 page MLA format paper on an approved topic relating to the course subject. Use 4-6 appropriate sources. Employ critical terminology as necessary. An effective writing process involving an outline and several drafts is recommended. Many students write one paper with double the requirements.

## 1 Presentation Project (15% of course grade)

Presentation Project

15%

A special handout explains the complex process of completing an oral presentation effectively. While they are typically short (about three minutes) they require a lot of effort to do well and the source requirements are the same as above for a research paper (except 3-4 appropriate sources are required). NOTE: presentation opportunities are LIMITED. Schedule AHEAD. I will provide a handout with research tips and resources in week 1.

In addition, note the SPECIAL FANTASY SHELF in the library that holds a collection of useful texts! Be sure to thank our library staff for collecting these books for you! Look for the “class poster” in 11x17 size.

## Mid-Term & Final Exams (10% each)

20%

Emphasis on these evaluations will be on concepts and the ability to employ them, not on rote memorization. More review will be provided. These are *open-book exams*—expect short response questions, **not** multiple-choice or fill in the blank questions.

## Independent Reading Project (10%)

10%

Part of your reading this semester includes a text selected from our Fantasy Shelf in the library, or a text you find on your own (check out the Cranbury Book Worm, for example!) Get your book approved (fantasy literature, usually a novel), read the book, write a short, critically-informed review of the text that touches on critical ideas we’ve discussed in class. Handout with details provided.

## Class Endeavor (10%)

10%

We’ll work in small groups to complete critically informed introductions to stories in the *Sword and Sorcery Anthology* text.

## Attendance & Participation (15%)

15%

Successful students participate in every class!

Week 1	Aug 31 & Sept. 2	Intro to class, S&S “The Tower of the Elephant,” & “The Unholy Grail”
Week 2	September 7 & 9	Start <i>FOTR</i> , intro to Tolkien, S&S “Caravan of Forgotten Dreams”
Week 3	September 15 & 16	Discuss <i>FOTR</i> , nail down precursors to FRPG, IRP selections finalized
Week 4	September 21 & 23	Serious Research: TSR & D&D, “Looting the Dungeon,” (selection)
Week 5	September 28 & 30	<i>Dragons of Autumn Twilight</i>
Week 6	October 5 & 7	<i>The FRPG: A New Performing Art</i> (selection)
Week 7	October 12 & 14	Reprise discussion—Howard, Leiber, Moorcock, Tolkien, W&H
Week 8	October 19 & 21	Mid-Term, <i>AQ</i> , RP1, start <i>The Crystal Shard</i>
Week 9	October 26 & 28	<i>The Crystal Shard</i> , Forgotten Realms
Week 10	November 2 & 4	Finish <i>TCS</i> , Exploring genre, computers, gaming, narrative
Week 11	November 9 & 11	A little Campbell/path of the hero, start <i>Dream Park</i>
Week 12	November 16 & 18	<i>Dream Park</i> & Endeavor prep
Week 13	November 23	FRPG & the Screen? (Wed = Friday so no class Wed)
Week 14	Nov. 30 & Dec. 2	The slack, begin IRP sharing, S&S “The Year of the Three Monarchs”
Week 15	December 7 & 9	RP 2, Presentations, IRP, Media Text, Endeavor
Week 16	December 14 & 15	Endeavor, Presentations, IRP, Course Review and Evaluation
Last day	Final Exam Date TBA, Lit Dinner Info TBA	