Course Syllabus

Department: Humanities

Date: 2/10/12

I. Course Prefix and Number: ENG 230

Course Name: Perspectives on Tolkien

Credit Hours and Contact Hours: 3 Credit Hours and 3 Contact Hours

Catalog Description including pre- and co-requisites: The lasting influence and power of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* saga is undeniable - and seeing more mainstream success only with the release of a critically acclaimed series of films and an award-winning massively multiplayer online game. The purpose of this course is to look critically at such things as the books, the films, the game, and other 'versions' to explore how different media handle the same material. We will, as a class, discuss such issues as character and plot development, themes and literary elements, story-telling styles, cultural and historical contexts, benefits and limitations of various media, identity and role-playing games, and the role of audience in storytelling. Placing three different media into socio-cultural contexts will allow us to explore such issues as the role of story-teller, the importance of the visual, and the role of 'game' in today's society. Students in this class can expect to engage in activities such as reading the novels, watching the films, playing the game, writing, discussing and participating in individual and/or group projects that delve into the Tolkien's work and the power of translation.

Prerequisite: ENG 102

II. Course Outcomes and Objectives

Student Learning Outcomes:

• Students will demonstrate knowledge of the place that Tolkien's work occupies on a literary and popular level.

• Students will demonstrate knowledge of the significant characteristics of the works of JRR Tolkien and various media translations of said work.

• Students will develop knowledge of the challenges and opportunities afforded by multi-media translations of literature.

• Students will generate a research topic of interest related to course content and then present the results of that research to the rest of the class.

• Students will successfully use technology / online tools to engage in and submit coursework.

- Students will access the library's various sources of critical material and then draft and revise a research paper according to MLA guidelines.

Relationship to Academic Programs and Curriculum:

This course fulfills a Liberal Arts or General Elective in AA, AS, and AAS degree programs.

College Learning Outcomes Addressed by the Course:

☒ writing	☒ computer literacy
☒ oral communications	☐ ethics/values
☒ reading	☐ citizenship
☐ mathematics	☐ global concerns
☒ critical thinking	☒ information resources

III. Instructional Materials and Methods

Types of Course Materials:

Primary and secondary texts related to Tolkien's work, film adaptations, online gaming, the college's current learning management system, online discussion forums, and face to face class discussions

Methods of Instruction (e.g. Lecture, Lab, Seminar …):

Seminar, hybrid model, response papers, student-driven presentations, research-based writing project, guest lecture

IV. Assessment Measures (Summarize how the college and student learning outcomes will be assessed):

A research project, consisting of an oral presentation and a paper, will measure students' ability to use library databases to locate appropriate resources and engage critically with said material and course content. This project, along with response papers, online discussions, and face to face discussions, will be used to measure students' knowledge of the placement of Tolkien's work, the characteristics of said work, and the challenges of multimedia translations. The oral component of the research project will measure students' ability to communicate class concepts and research findings and the whole research project along with response papers and class discussions will measure student's ability to read college-level texts, engage critically with those texts, and develop logical arguments. Portions of the written work for the course will be submitted electronically and will demonstrate students' ability to use computer applications. All course activities will be graded according to rubrics appropriate to the type of activity.

V. General Outline of Topics Covered:

- Literary elements of Tolkien's work as a primary text
- Literary value and importance of Tolkien's work both in its socio-historical context
- The lasting influence and importance of Tolkien's work on modern storytelling
- Critical interpretations of, and reactions to, the primary texts
- Challenges, possibilities, and limitations of translations of Tolkien's work
- Storytelling concepts in relation to film, interactive media, and literary text
- The role of audience in a variety of storytelling modes
- Refreshers, as needed, on MLA documentation