

The Lord of the Rings

Course Policies and Information

Instructor: Martin Madsen

- Office: Goodrich 309
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- WWW: <http://www.iontrap.wabash.edu>
- Office Hours: MWF 10:00 a.m.–noon. Please feel free to stop by my office at other times to discuss the course, advising, or anything else. In addition, I'm always logged onto the computer so e-mail is the best way to contact me to ask a quick question or arrange an appointment. *Beware*: I go to bed around 9:30pm so don't expect a reply to a late night message.

Course Objectives:

- This course has several objectives:
 - Explore major themes of brotherhood, courage, and loyalty in the LOTR that will be an important part of your quest at Wabash.
 - Examine some of the many unanswered questions Tolkien left both in and about the book. What did Tolkien mean when he called his book a “fundamentally religious and Catholic work”? What is the role of fate in the book? What is the meaning of the One Ring? There have been many contributions to the lore of Middle Earth since Tolkien wrote the book, most notably Peter Jackson's film adaptation. How do the films and other scholarly essays enhance our understanding of the book?
 - To develop writing and oral communication skills, focusing on communicating clear and effective arguments.

Texts:

You'll need to go to the bookstore and purchase:

- *The Two Towers* by J.R.R. Tolkien, ISBN-10: 0618002235, ISBN-13: 9780618002238
- *The Return of the King* by J.R.R. Tolkien, ISBN-10: 0618002243, ISBN-13: 9780618002245
- **You should have this already:** *The Fellowship of the Ring* by J.R.R. Tolkien, ISBN-13: 9780618002221
- *Rules for Writers*, 6th edition, by Diana Hacker (**Also used in English 101.**)
- *A scheduler or planner*- A good one is available at the bookstore. A digital planner is acceptable.
- **Bring all the texts to class every day!** Failure to have the books with you every class period will result in a lowered participation grade.

Moodle:

- I will use Moodle to post course handouts and all assignments. You will be expected to check it frequently, and I will post announcements concerning things that need particular attention.
- You will also turn in assignments (e.g., uploading papers and short writing assignments) via Moodle.

Class:

- **Place and Times:** Detchon 212, TTh, 9:45–11:00.
- **Philosophy and Purpose:** The purpose of the class period will be to discuss the readings, work on writing, practice speaking, and anything else we need to do.
- **Attendance and Participation:** Attendance is required and is part of the class participation grade. The discussion will also be graded based primarily on the quality of the comments and questions, showing thoughtfulness and insightfulness rather than quantity. You should be on-time to class—tardiness will count against your participation grade.
 - **A Participation:** Almost perfect attendance, adding relevant comments every class. Clearly listens to others and often builds comments on what classmates have said. Demonstrates enthusiasm and engagement with assigned readings. Willing to inject new ideas into discussion. Asks questions of professor and classmates. Becomes leader in discussion groups. Frequently participates in on-line discussions.
 - **B Participation:** Solid attendance record. Contributes relevant comments nearly every class; shows strong interest in material. Occasionally asks questions. Listens to others. Good participant in discussion groups. Periodically participates in on-line discussions.
 - **C Participation:** Adequate attendance. Adds occasional comments; responds to teacher initiated questions; participates in group discussion. Rarely participates in on-line discussions.
 - **D/F Participation:** Poor class attendance. Adds comments only when requested; demonstrates limited engagement with readings; poor class attendance. Never participates in on-line discussions.
- **In-class computers:** There will be a number of days where it will be advantageous to bring a computer to class to work on writing, read on-line texts, etc. Computers will be allowed in the classroom, though I expect that you will stay on-task when using your machine. If you abuse this (by spending time on Facebook, checking email, surfing the web, etc.), I will revoke this privilege and you will be required to print everything and write by hand.
- **Emergency Procedures:** In case of a fire, we are to proceed from the classroom, out the nearest exit, and move at least 50 yards away from the building. You should join the instructor and class outside to make sure that everyone got out of the building ok. Then move as a group to the Chapel to report to the emergency personnel in charge. In the event of a severe weather storm, we are to proceed to the basement and shelter in the basement.

Assignments

- **Papers:** There will be four longer papers and a handful of shorter writing assignments this semester. The breakdown of the longer writing assignments is as follows:
 - *Paper 1:* due September 13. This paper will be a 4-5 page comparison between a scene in the book and the same scene in Jackson's film.
 - *Paper 2:* due November 3. This paper will be a 4-5 page argumentative essay based on an idea or quote from Tolkien's work.
 - *Paper 3:* due December 13. This paper will be a 7-8 page close textual analysis of one of the symbols used in the book.
 - *Paper 4:* due upon completion of your Ring Week. This paper will be a 4-5 page reflective writing assignment based on your experiences and observations during a one week period. During that week you will have the assignment to be our "ring bearer". The paper will be due a day or two after you finish your turn as ring bearer.
- **Paper Revisions:** There is the possibility of revising your writing. There will be mandatory drafts for most of the papers this semester, so I am expecting to have good final papers to begin with. However, if you are not happy with your final grade on a paper you can make a case to me for doing a re-write. If we agree that a re-write would be beneficial, I will average together your paper grade and the re-write grade.

- **Plagiarism:** All your work, Moodle writing assignments, and papers are expected to be your own work. If any ideas are taken from secondary sources, those must be acknowledged. Any incidents of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students in accordance with college policy.
- **Exams:** There will be three multiple-choice content exams that will be administered on-line (on Moodle). These exams will cover the content from each of the three parts of the book. The exams will be timed (one hour) and adaptive: if you get a question wrong, you can try again and recover some of the lost points. The exams will be closed-book and you will be under the Gentleman's Rule to keep to that. The exams will be available for about 3 days and you can take it at any time during the period it is open.
 - *Fellowship Exam:* August 25
 - *Two Towers Exam:* September 20
 - *Return of the King Exam:* October 6

Grades:

- Course grades will be determined as follows:

Attendance & Class Participation	20%
Book Exams	15%
Daily Assignments	15%
Longer Papers and Projects	50%
Total	100%

Academic Support Services

General Information:

- Director: Ms. Julia Rosenberg, Office: Armory 101B, Phone: 361-6024
- Email: rosenbej@wabash.edu

Writing Center

- Location: Armory 101A
- Phone: 361-6258
- Hours: Open Mondays 12-4; Tuesday 11-4 and 8-10 p.m.; Wednesdays 12-4 and 8-10 p.m.; Thursday 11-4; Fridays 1-4; Sundays 8-10 p.m.
- Writing fellows (tutors): Donovan Bisbee, Anton Crepinsek, Nick Curosh, Rob Dyer, Tim Markey, Wyatt Lewis, Peter Robbins, Zach Rohrbach, Patrick Stroud, Geoffrey Wright
- What they do: Peer tutoring for all aspects of writing, from topic selection to polishing the "final" version, is provided by faculty recommended juniors and seniors. Drop-ins are welcome, but we suggest calling (6258) to secure an appointment at busy times.

Study Skills:

- Assistance with study skills such as time management, test taking, and textbook reading is provided through individual conferences with Ms. Rosenberg, (ext.6024) and, in the fall, a workshop for freshmen.

Students with Disabilities:

- Students with disabilities are invited to confidentially discuss their situation with the professor and /or Ms. Rosenberg. It is important to note, however, that **if a student wishes an academic accommodation for the disability, his documentation of the disability must be on file with Ms. Rosenberg**, who can, in confidence, provide information and guidance. Early notification helps us all work together in the most effective ways.