



## **THE FIRST HOBBIT FILM**

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### **Course Description**

This course number is the Special Topics number for Literature and Languages: the number exists to provide faculty and students the chance to explore special topics not part of the regular curriculum. English 697 may be taken more than once for credit, as long as the topic changes. The topic for this winter mini-mester class is *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* (2012). The class will focus on the film as the primary text (previous knowledge of J. R. R. Tolkien's novel is not required!), with required reading and assignments designed to teach students how to understand apply four critical paradigms of film adaptation.

### **Required Texts**

*Picturing Tolkien: Essays on Peter Jackson's The Lord of the Rings Film Trilogy*. Edited by Janice M. Bogstad and Philip E. Kaveny. Print ISBN: 978-0-7864-4636-0. McFarland.

NOTE: While an essay that I co-wrote with Dr. Judy Ann Ford is in this anthology, neither she nor I will receive any money from the sales of this anthology. Royalties go to the two editors, not to the eighteen contributors. (In fact, given that our article is about endings of the film/book, we won't even be reading it this term!)

"*The Accidental Tourist On Page and on Screen; Interrogating Normative Theories About Film Adaptation*," Karen Kline. *Literature Film Quarterly* 24.1 (1996): 70-81.

NOTE: This academic article is available in our university's full-text database; you will not be buying a copy.

### **Winter Mini-Mester Schedule**

<b>English 497.01W</b>	<b>Online</b>
<b>English 697.01W</b>	<b>Online</b>

The courses are cross-listed in order to share an eCollege shell, but there are two syllabi, with different assignments for the different sections. Graduate students are assigned to do roughly twice as much work as undergraduates (which is a ratio consistent with my full term, separate, courses).

### Office Hours:

During the long semesters, I have face to face as well as online office hours since many students are on campus, and I have other duties on campus. However, for the winter mini-mester, given the shortness of the time, the presence of the holidays (during which campus will be closed), and the uncertainty of the weather, my office hours will be entirely online.

I will log on no later than 10:00 a.m. every weekday morning, and will be online, working, with my email open, until 3:00. I will also have eCollege open, reading and commenting, during that time.

### Course Learning Outcomes

1. Learners will demonstrate that they understand the basic elements of film terminology, film techniques, and the grammar of film well enough to use them in discussions and apply them to analysis of a film. This outcome will be assessed by evaluation of **selected worksheets** and the **final draft of the Proposal**. Related Materials: Viewing Log Assignment with Film Glossary and list of online resources.
2. Learners will demonstrate that they understand the four critical paradigms of film adaptation (translation, pluralist, transformation, materialist) well enough to identify them in scholarship, use them in discussions, and apply them to analysis of a film. This outcome will be assessed by evaluation of **selected online discussions** and the **final draft of the Proposal**. Related materials: Bogstad, Kline, assignment handouts.
3. Learners will demonstrate that they understand the basic elements of critical methodologies well enough to evaluate secondary scholarship in relation to a chosen topic and to identify main arguments as well as the theories and methodologies used in the relevant scholarship. This outcome will be assessed by evaluation of **selected online discussions** and the **final draft of the Proposal**. Related materials: Bogstad, Kline, Bibliographic handouts.
4. Learners will demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements of an academic proposal: a clearly stated thesis at the start which makes an original argument on the assigned topic; a summary which shows their understanding of the assigned scholarship on the text; a focus on specific elements of the primary text in a summary of evidence, and clear attribution in the text connected to the Working Bibliography. This outcome will be assessed by evaluation of the **final draft of the Proposal**. Related Materials: Assignment Handouts.
5. Learners will demonstrate that they are active and engaged members of our learning community. This outcome will be assessed by ongoing participation in **online discussions**. Related materials: Discussion prompts.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

These are the learning outcomes that I will be assessing for the Department of Literature and Languages' program review; assessing learning outcomes is not the same thing as grading your work. The assessment will be used in the program review that the department is doing for the university.

#### **Student Learning Outcome #1**

Learners will demonstrate that they understand the basic elements of film terminology, film techniques, and the grammar of film well enough to use them in discussions and apply them to analysis of a film. This outcome will be assessed by evaluation of selected worksheets and the final draft of the Proposal.

#### **Student Learning Outcome #2:**

Learners will demonstrate that they understand the four critical paradigms of film adaptation (translation, pluralist, transformation, materialist) well enough to identify them in scholarship, use them in discussions, and apply them to analysis of a film. This outcome will be assessed by evaluation of selected online discussions and the final draft of the Proposal.

#### **Student Learning Outcome #3**

Learners will demonstrate that they understand the basic elements of critical methodologies well enough to evaluate secondary scholarship in relation to a chosen topic and to identify main arguments as well as the theories and methodologies used in the relevant scholarship. This outcome will be assessed by evaluation of selected online discussions and the final draft of the Proposal.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- ✓ Students will access and follow all course instructions found in the content area (navigation bar) of the online course platform.
- ✓ Students will listen/read all online lectures.
- ✓ Students will use the online class platform's discussion tool to post to classmates in assigned discussions.
- ✓ Students will complete and submit assignments electronically using the online course platform's dropbox tool/tab or assigned discussions.
- ✓ Students will access their grades in the eCollege gradebook, including comments uploaded in eCollege as well as marked on drafts that have been uploaded.

## Course Assignment Assessment

This course is made up of a series of assignments and assessments to assist you in achieving the course learning objectives/outcomes.

Assignment handouts I have prepared contain detailed information on due dates, objectives, required content, format, structure, along with information on resources, and grading rubrics. I expect those handouts to be studied, whether online or via hard copy that is printed out, read, and annotated if necessary.

The assignment handouts are posted in the appropriate Unit (at the Unit Home Page, on the Dropbox or Discussion associated with the assignment. Please ask any questions you have about the assignment handouts in the Virtual Office.

Each assignment will be assessed according to the criteria on the assignment handouts, and in the context of the course outcomes, and you will receive a rubric, a grade, and information on revision and future work.

I expect students to prioritize their work based on the percentage of the grade each assignment is worth (the higher the percentage, the more time need be spent). Specific assignments (identified by rough drafts, revised drafts, etc.) may be revised for full credit, and revision is expected.

## GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

### **Film Notes (three viewings): 25% of grade.**

Complete and upload Viewing Log three times (the process is cumulative). This assignment will be evaluated based on effort and revision.

### **Formal Proposal: 25% of grade (includes graded rough draft).**

Write a formal proposal (**2 pages double-space**) that includes a **Working Bibliography of five sources** for a paper on the film. This assignment will be evaluated in two parts: the rough draft (effort), and the final draft (revision and quality).

### **Online Discussions: 50% of grade**

Post daily in response to my prompts; post responses to 2 classmates each day. This assignment will be evaluated on effort; revision is not allowed.

## Course Grading

The class grade is based on a 100 point system, with each assignment being assigned a specific weight (percentage) of the grade. I have set up the gradebook with the assignments weighted: your grades will be entered in percentages, which the program will translate to "points earned."

You will be able to access your grade--and the feedback on the work you've turned in--as soon as I grade it.

NOTE: Click on the blue hyperlink (grade) to access the Dropbox where I've uploaded drafts with comments. If all you look at for this course is the grade, you will not be able to use the comments in revision.

If at any time you have a question or concern about your grade (which only you and I can access), please contact me (by email). Please do not post about grades in the Virtual Office which is a public space.

90-100% = A  
80-89% = B  
70-79% = C  
60-69% = D  
59-lower = F

### **Student Contact**

I have regular office hours for face/face meetings and phone calls.

However, the official medium of communication for the university is email which is handled through our eCollege platform.

All email correspondence for this course will be sent to student myLeo email accounts.

An Adobe Presenter/Breeze presentation is available to demonstrate how to access your Leo email: <http://breeze.tamu-commerce.edu/myleomail/>. Please make it a habit to check email often and log in to the course daily to stay connected with the class.

Warning: Because this course is offered entirely online, the only way to verify that people emailing me are the students registered in the class is via their email accounts. Please use your official university email if you must email me, especially if you have questions about a grade.

I post information in the "Class Announcements" section of our online course and send it out via email to make sure students get the information in a timely manner.

### **Online Class Program Information**

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu).

Since this course will be offered partially online, special requirements must be considered. First, and perhaps most important, is that the student enrolled in this course must have access to a computer with the necessary software and services. The following information has been provided to assist you in preparing to use technology successfully in this course.

- Internet access/connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)
- Word Processor (i.e. MS Word or Word Perfect)

Additionally, the following hardware and software are necessary to use eCollege:

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Your courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the ‘myCourses’ tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

If your computer and internet services do not meet the minimum requirements for eCollege, you are welcome to use any of the computer labs on campus.

Secondly, it is also vital that the student have a working knowledge of the hardware and software they will be using. The Distance Education Department maintains a FAQ page for students taking online and web-enhanced courses. The web address for this information can be found at <http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/itde/FAQs.asp>.

### **eCollege Student Technical Support**

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chat Support: Click on 'Live Support' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.

Phone: 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

Email: [helpdesk@online.tamuc.org](mailto:helpdesk@online.tamuc.org) to initiate a support request with eCollege

Technical Support Representative.

Help: Click on the 'Help' button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc...)

If you run into problems accessing eCollege through the standard online class link, try this alternate College web address is: <http://online.tamuc.org>

### **Class Policies**

Take some time to read: university faculty have a good deal of latitude in some of their policy areas.

The first set of policy statements are mine.

The second set of policy statements are mandated by the University and Department of Literature and Languages.

By staying in the class after reading this syllabus, you are contractually obligated to meet class requirements and follow \*all\* class policies.

### **Instructor Policies**

**Late Work:** Late work will not be given any credit. In this class, "late" means any time after the No Penalty Zone (NPZ). The No Penalty Zone is 24 hours after the due date: since work is due every day, this opportunity can get out of hand if used too often. Always aim to complete your work the midnight deadline; then, if life intervenes, you have a safety net. If you aim to complete your work by the NPZ and life intervenes, which it will, there will be no safety net.

There is one exception: see Class Schedule for the flex time built in for Viewing Log due dates.

If you have a medical condition or emergency consistently which affects your ability to do the work for this class, please email me as soon as possible so I can work with you to help you complete the course requirements.

### **University & Department Policies**

**Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:** Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material. Academic dishonesty can also include writing assignments for someone else, turning in papers someone else wrote for you, and tests that you took for someone else or that someone else took for you. Turning in work written for another class is also dishonest.

A "Positive Learning Environment" is one which allows and encourages contemplation, thoughtful discourse and critical analysis of information. Since almost all contact will be take place via electronic means, it is important to be courteous and respectful in responding to ideas that may differ from yours. This is an educational environment, and therefore each student should exhibit a decorum that lends itself to the intellectual exchange of views and ideas.

### **Literature and Languages Policy on Plagiarism:**

**NOTE: This policy applies to all writing generated for this course: from discussions, to rough drafts, to final drafts.**

Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty such as collusion. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b [1, 2, 3])

The Department of Literature and Languages defines **plagiarism** as occurring when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. Simply having a list of sources at the end of the project does not sufficiently meet the academic standards for acknowledging sources. Simply putting quotation marks around quotes does not sufficiently meet the academic standard. You must acknowledge and document all sources (quoted and paraphrased) in your formal report. Documentation requires clear identification within the text (embedded in your sentences or in parentheses, endnotes, or footnotes) of the source for material that has been summarized, paraphrased in your own words, or quoted directly. Page numbers must be given for direct quotes.

Plagiarism is not excused by saying "I did not mean to do it!" Intentional and unintentional plagiarism will both result in a failing grade on an assignment, or, in repeated cases, in a failing grade for this class.

The Department defines collusion as selling or giving away academic products (any written or recorded or pictorial material intended to be submitted to satisfy an academic requirement) to other people or businesses or organizations.

Plagiarism or collusion will result in an automatic failing grade on the assignment. A second instance of plagiarism or collusion will result in an automatic F for the class. If you have declared a major, I will notify your Department Head and the Dean of your college of your plagiarism. A report of the incident will also be filed with the Office of the Dean of Students. This report may stay on your permanent collegiate record and you may also be subject to further disciplinary action being taken by the university.

Online resources on plagiarism: <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>



<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

**Courtesy:** All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, conduct).

**Drop Policy:** The university drop procedure has changed as of Summer 2012.

**Students who are eligible may now drop their classes with a “Q” drop grade without Instructor approval through their MyLeo.**

This procedure does not apply to students with advising holds (Athletes, International Students, Honor Students, UC College, etc.). Students with advising holds will have to complete a Drop/Add form and get approvals manually, and turn in to the Registrar's Office for processing.

The Drop/Add form is located online at: <http://web.tamu-commerce.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/2012AddDropForm.pdf>.

**The deadline to drop with a “Q” drop grade can be found on the Academic Calendar at:** <http://web.tamu-commerce.edu/admissions/registrar/academicCalendars/default.aspx>

The drop process steps are listed below.

- Go to MyLeo
- Go to Registration, Records & Grades
- Registration
- Register/Add or Drop Classes
- Select a Term
- Under “Action”, click on Course Drop
- Click on “Submit Changes” at bottom form

If you are only enrolled in one class or need to drop all your classes, you will not be able to drop through this procedure. The Withdrawal Form is available at:

<http://web.tamu-commerce.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/WithdrawalForm.pdf>.

These forms must be turned in to the Registrars' Office for processing.

**Incomplete Grades:** The Incomplete grade is reserved for those students who have been active in class and have maintained a passing grade until nearly the end of the course. If circumstances in the last few weeks make it impossible for a student to hand in the last assignments(s), then the Incomplete can be granted. The student must supply documentation concerning the circumstances that have made it impossible for course work to be completed.

Students who have failed to turn in assignments in earlier weeks are \*not\* eligible for an Incomplete and will not be granted one. Anyone who is unable to complete the work in the semester they are enrolled will not be able to do it alone in the following term.

If the missing work is not handed in by the end of the next long semester, the grade automatically goes to an F, by university policy. There is no appeal for that grade.

Since this class is an online class you should be aware of the following university policy: You will be required to complete the course outside of the eCollege platform. The class platform is available for student access for only two weeks after the close of each semester.

**Students with Disabilities:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities.

If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**  
**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Gee Library**  
**Room 132**  
**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**  
**Fax (903) 468-8148**  
**[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)**

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### UNIT I FOCUS: THE FILM

Assignments:

- Watch *The Hobbit* at least three times
- Upload a completed Viewing Log each time
- Post (daily) and Respond (daily) in Discussions
- Upload: Topic Paragraph

12-17 Monday (first day of class): Introduce yourselves!

12-18 Tuesday

- Post in discussions.
- Upload Viewing Log 1

12-19 Wednesday

- Post in discussions.

12-20 Thursday

- Post in discussions.
- Upload Viewing Log 2

12-21 Friday

- Post in discussions

12-22 Saturday

- Post in discussions.
- Upload Viewing Log 3
- Upload: Topic Paragraph

No class work of any sort due: 12-23, 24, 25

### UNIT II: FOCUS: ADAPTATION AND THE FILM

Assignments:

- Read: Kline: *The Accidental Tourist*: On Page and On Screen: Interrogating Normative Theories About Film Adaptation
- Read; Bogstad: Introduction, from *Picturing Tolkien: Essays on Peter Jackson's The Lord of the Rings Film Trilogy*
- Read: Thompson: Gollum Talks to Himself: Problems and Solutions in Peter Jackson's Film Adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings*
- Post (daily) and Respond (daily) in Discussions

12-26 Wednesday

- Kline
- Post in discussions

12-27 Thursday

- Bogstad
- Post in discussions

12-28 Friday

- Thompson

Post in discussions

- 12-29 Saturday  
Post in discussions  
12-30 Sunday  
Post in discussions

No class work due: 12-31, 1-1-13 ! (Happy New Year)

### **UNIT III FOCUS: PROPOSING A PROJECT**

Assignments:

Upload: First Draft, Proposal  
Final Draft, Proposal

Read: \*TWO\* essays from this list: select based on your interest and/or topic  
idea/focus

"Filming Folklore" by Dimitra Fimi

"It's Alive!" Tolkien's Monster by Sharin Schroeder

"The Matériel of Middle-earth" by Robert C. Woosnam-Savage

"The Grey Pilgrim" by Brian D Walter

Post twice in Discussions

Respond to classmates in two Discussions

- 1-2 Wednesday  
Upload First Draft, Proposal  
1-3 Thursday  
Fimi OR Schroeder  
Post in discussions  
1-4 Friday  
Woosnam-Savage OR Walter  
Post in discussions  
1-5 Saturday  
Post in discussions  
1-6 Sunday  
1-7 Monday (last day of class)  
Upload: Final Draft, Proposal