Course Description: 331-501 Spring 2019 (Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours).
An exploration of origins and development of fantasy literature, including representative writers, genres and texts.

Prerequisites: Junior or senior classification

This course explores motifs and strategies of the genre of fantasy literature. We will be tracking theories of fantasy and the fantastic, the narrative role of folklore, systems of magic, patterns of heroism and villainy, metaphysics, and the evolution of fantasy literature while also analyzing ambiguous elements of representation and multiple functions of fantasy. Part of our quest will be to pursue what defines the genre and subgenres. Our journey into worlds that aim to interrogate, distort, transcend, and transform realism includes novels, short stories, articles, and films.

Learning Objectives:

1. Survey fantasy evolution from influences to specific novels, short stories, and film.
2. Analyze fantasy’s impact on literary and popular culture.
3. Explore function of the supernatural—particularly magic—within fantasy narratives.
4. Compare and contrast fantasy intertextuality with narrative motifs, style, and archetypes.
5. Evaluate the criteria of fantasy—including subgenres—and its relationship to realism.
6. Investigate ethical, mythic, philosophical, and psychological dimensions of fantasy.
7. Evaluate critical perspectives on the fantasy genre and the meaning of specific texts.

Required Textbooks


*We’ll have additional online sources (Ecampus/Mediamatrix etc.), such as articles and videos.

Grading:
Besides quizzes, discussion board activities, and in-class participation, there are three papers.