

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

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SANTA BARBARA · SANTADEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
149 HUMANITIES BUILDING
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Muriel Mc Clendon, Chair
General Education Governance Committee
Attn: Myrna Dee C. Kikuchi, Program Representative
A265 Murphy Hall
Mail Code: 157101

October 17, 2016

Dear Dr. Mc Clendon,

Attached please find materials in support of a new GE lower division course in English, English 70: Medievalisms: Medieval Literature and Contemporary Culture. Included are course justification, a CIMS form, a GE course information sheet, two sample syllabi, a sample paper topics sheet, and a catalog course description. Thanks so much for your attention and please let me know if there are any questions.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine N. Chism".

Professor of English
University of California, Los Angeles
chism@ucla.edu

General Education Course Information Sheet

Please submit this sheet for each proposed course

<i>Department & Course Number</i>	English 70
<i>Course Title</i>	Medievalisms: Medieval literature and Contemporary Culture
<i>Indicate if Seminar and/or Writing II course</i>	No and no

1 Check the recommended GE foundation area(s) and subgroups(s) for this course

Foundations of the Arts and Humanities

- Literary and Cultural Analysis X
- Philosophic and Linguistic Analysis
- Visual and Performance Arts Analysis and Practice

Foundations of Society and Culture

- Historical Analysis
- Social Analysis

Foundations of Scientific Inquiry

- Physical Science
With Laboratory or Demonstration Component must be 5 units (or more)
- Life Science
With Laboratory or Demonstration Component must be 5 units (or more)

2. Briefly describe the rationale for assignment to foundation area(s) and subgroup(s) chosen.

This class juxtaposes medieval texts and modern texts and media, to analyze how and why the medieval (in the form of crusade, quest, romance, world-construction, magic, monsters, monarchy, etc.) is continually reproduced and transformed in large-scale popular productions, novels, film, and television. The textual focus on literary narrative and story across media justifies the Arts and Humanities focus and The Literary and Cultural Analysis subfield is the main because these texts and works are being compared across time and as indexes to the historical and cultural preoccupations they served and serve. There will also be subsidiary discussion of Visual and Performance arts implicit in movies, music videos, and cartographic art, insofar as they inform cultural analysis.

3. "List faculty member(s) who will serve as instructor (give academic rank):

Christine Chism (Full Professor) but Matthew Fisher (Associate Professor) has also expressed interest

Do you intend to use graduate student instructors (TAs) in this course? Yes X No

If yes, please indicate the number of TAs 2-4

4. Indicate when do you anticipate teaching this course over the next three years:

	2015-16	Fall		Winter		Spring	
		Enrollment		Enrollment		Enrollment	
	2016-17	Fall		Winter		Spring	X
		Enrollment		Enrollment		Enrollment	80-120
	2017-18	Fall		Winter		Spring	X
		Enrollment		Enrollment		Enrollment	80-120

5. GE Course Units

Is this an existing course that has been modified for inclusion in the new GE? Yes X No _____
If yes, provide a brief explanation of what has changed. We have an upper division version,

English 149, that I've taught over the last five years or so, but I have also taught a similar course
as a lower division course at another institution and wish to do so here. The reading load has been
lightened, the use of literary theory and secondary criticism somewhat curtailed, and the length of
writing assignments shortened as appropriate for an introductory course geared towards both
majors and non-majors. Exact texts change every time I teach the course, and the course can be
broadened to target other popular franchises, such as Harry Potter, Game of Thrones, Robin Hood,
and King Arthur, depending on the instructor.

Present Number of Units: 5 units

Proposed Number of Units: 5 units

6. Please present concise arguments for the GE principles applicable to this course.

xGeneral Knowledge	This course introduces the student to medieval literary texts, forms, and genres using modern medievalisms (a study in their own right) as interlocutors and entry points. The students also gain critical tools for contemporary cultural studies
xIntegrative Learning	The class integrates formal, informal, and oral responses to the readings and viewings, and offers pointed advice about argumentative writing, evidentiary tactics, and peer dialogue; the optional presentations allow students to teach students and respond to each other's work.
xEthical Implications	The class foregrounds ethical problems of the use and misuse of the past, the ways that imagination can enrich scholarship and vice versa; it can also analyze the ethics of fantasy as escapism, alternative reality, historical perspective, and moral allegory.
xCultural Diversity	This course foregrounds problems of race and cultural othering in its treatment of texts like Beowulf, the Song of Roland, and the euro-centric mythos of Tolkien's Middle-Earth. It also problematizes retrojection of contemporary configurations of race, culture, and gender by introducing students to premodern cultures that operated differently.
xCritical Thinking	Secondary readings and criticism are incorporated into mini-lectures, and critical thinking is fostered in class discussion, post-presentation discussion, response papers, and longer papers.
xRhetorical Effectiveness	Students are asked and guided toward argumentative strategies and critically helpful peer response during class discussions, paper conferences, presentation discussions, response paper comments, and comments on the longer papers.
Problem-solving	
Library & Information Literacy	

(A) STUDENT CONTACT PER WEEK (if not applicable write N/A)

1. Lecture:	<u>3</u>	(hours)
2. Discussion Section:	<u>1</u>	(hours)
3. Labs:	<u>0</u>	(hours)
4. Experiential (service learning, internships, other):	<u>0</u>	(hours)
5. Field Trips:	<u>0</u>	(hours)

(A) TOTAL Student Contact Per Week 4 **(HOURS)**

(B) OUT-OF-CLASS HOURS PER WEEK (if not applicable write N/A)

1. General Review & Preparation:	<u>N/A</u>	(hours)
2. Reading	<u>6</u>	(hours)
3. Group Projects:	<u>N/A or optional</u>	(hours)
4. Preparation for Quizzes & Exams:	<u>N/A</u>	(hours)
5. Information Literacy Exercises:	<u>N/A</u>	(hours)
6. Written Assignments:	<u>4</u>	(hours)
7. Research Activity:	<u>1</u>	(hours)

(B) TOTAL Out-of-class time per week

11
15

(HOURS)

GRAND TOTAL (A) + (B) must equal at least 15 hours/week

11
15

(HOURS)

Eng 70: Medievalisms: Medieval Literature and Contemporary Culture: Tolkien and Medieval literature.

Chris Chism: chism@ucla.edu

Description:

This course explores the medieval sources of Tolkien's mythologies, and puts the twentieth-century fantasist and medieval scholar into conversation with Anglo-Saxon elegy, medieval romance, and theories of language, linguistics, semiotics, and phenomenology. We will begin by reading excerpts from Tolkien's non-trilogy works: *The Hobbit*, *Lost Tales*, and *The Silmarillion* and three key scholarly essays. There will be a short introduction to the linguistic features of Anglo-Saxon and Middle English. Then we will proceed to survey several of the medieval texts that haunt Tolkien's works: particularly *Beowulf*, *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, *The Volsunga Saga*, *The Poetic Edda*, *The Song of Roland*, Chretien de Troyes' *Yvain*, Malory's *Morte Darthur*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. At the same time we are reading the medieval texts we will slowly be working our way through the trilogy: *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers*, and *The Return of the King*. Excerpts from the Peter Jackson movies will be screened and discussed, along with supplementary readings on temporality, imagination, fantasy, and nostalgia. Requirements: 2 short papers (60%), optional class presentation, and short weekly response papers (30%), and class participation (20%).

Goals:

- 1) Compare texts/productions from different historical and cultural areas to evolve methods of historicizing literary genres, tropes, and assumptions about character and world construction.
- 2) Explore the ways that literary and popular culture borrow and adapt from each other to innovate new forms.
- 3) Analyze the medieval past in its contemporary uses: as escapism, as alternative, as archive for reinvention.
- 4) Gain familiarity with medieval texts in their cultural difference and diversity by comparing them with contemporary counterparts.
- 5) Learn methodologies for analyzing different medias: medieval poetry, prose narrative, contemporary prose narrative, film, and television series.

Required Texts:

Chretien de Troyes, *Yvain, The Knight with the Lion*
 J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*
 Thomas Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, tr. Lumiansky
 Readings from the course website or linked to web.

Schedule of Readings:

Day 1: Introductions: Exeter Book Riddles: “Riddles in the Dark” screening from Peter Jackson’s *The Hobbit*: Doing medieval studies: scholarship and imagination; Intro to Middle English (in class).

Creation: Beauty as Achievement, Temptation, and Fall:

Week 1: Tolkien, “Ainulindalë,” “Valaquenta”(optional), and “Akallabeth” (*Silmarillion*): “The Sea Bell” (course webpage). York Play of “Creation of the Angels and Fall of Lucifer”: <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/davidson-play-1-the-creation-of-the-angels-and-the-fall-of-lucifer> (Screening in class from *Miimimangaliso*)

Quest: Encountering a Larger World:

Week 2: Chretien de Troyes, *Yvain: The Knight with the Lion* part 1; Tolkien, “Of Thingol and Melian,” (*Silmarillion*).

: Chretien de Troyes, *Yvain: The Knight with the Lion* part 2 “Beren and Lúthien,” (*Silmarillion*)

Week 3 : *LOTR*: Book I: (beginning through “The Old Forest”); Nicholas Tam, “Here be Cartographers: Reading the Fantasy Map: <http://www.nicholastam.ca/2011/04/18/here-be-cartographers-reading-the-fantasy-map/>

Week 4: *LOTR* “Strider” through “Flight to the Ford”; Tolkien, “On Fairy Stories” (especially p. 46-73).

: *LOTR*: Book 2: “The Breaking of the Fellowship”

Week 5: Thomas Malory, “The Coming of Arthur” in *Morte d’Arthur*: Thomas Malory, “The Book of Gareth,” in *Morte Darthur*.

Desire of the Past: Rohan: Anglo-Saxons on Horses

Week 6: *LOTR*: Book 3: “The King of the Golden Hall,” “Helm’s Deep,” “The Road to Isengard,” *The Battle of Maldon*; Screening of Helm’s Deep sequence from Peter Jackson’s *The Two Towers*

War and “war hypnotism”:

Week 7: *LOTR*: “Flotsam and Jetsam,” “The Voice of Saruman.” Malory, “The Death of Arthur.” in *Morte Darthur*.

Week 8: *LOTR*: Book IV: “The Taming of Smeagol,” through “The Window on the West”; Ursula Le Guin, “The Staring Eye,” and “The Child and the Shadow.”

Week 9: *LOTR*: “Book V: “The Siege of Gondor,” “The Pyre of Denethor,” “The Last Debate,” “The Black Gate Opens”; Diana Wynne Jones, “The Shape of the Narrative in *Lord of the Rings* (course webpage);

Saying goodbye:

Week 10: *LOTR*: Book VI; *Smith of Wootton Major* (course webpage); Umberto Eco, “Dreaming of the Middle Ages.”

Useful Tolkien Website: http://tolkiengateway.net/wiki/Main_Page

Course Requirements:

- **2 4-5-pp. papers (50%).** I will suggest paper topics, and you are invited to write on your own topic as long as you clear it with me first. Papers are to be posted on Turnitin by the beginning of class and **also** brought to class the day they are due. You may request up to a week’s extension on your first paper **as long as you ask at least 48 hours in advance.** Plan ahead, ask in advance if you think you might need one, and all will be well.
- **Weekly 1 p. response statements (30%);** these are to explore questions raised by the readings and are self-motivated. They can be quite short or can be the seeds of longer papers. You can respond to only one of the readings or use the paper to try to synthesize several. They perform 3 functions: 1) Prepare you for more sophisticated class discussion, 2) Reassure me that you are doing the reading so that I don’t have to terrorize you with quizzes, and 3) Bring up issues you might want to pursue in longer papers. **You must keep up with them.** They are due on the day that we discuss the reading to which you responded – this can be either Tuesday or Thursday – at class-time --, and if they are late, I will only give them half credit. Grading is informal: with a check (“hey – you did the reading!”), a check-plus (“hey – you thought about the reading! Cool!”), or a check-minus (“Huh. I can’t tell if you did the reading. Why are you telling me about this internet argument on an analogous issue?”). Post them to Turnitin by class time, and bring a hard copy to class
- **Optional class presentation on a topic useful to the class:** This will replace one of your papers. You need to choose a topic and meet with me by the second week of class so that we can schedule your presentation where it makes the most sense. Presentations can be creative, dramatic, or expository, single or involving a group -- **as long as they lead to an interesting discussion relevant to the concerns of the class.** These are sometimes scary and require a lot of work, but they are often the best thing about the class, at the end, so if you feel called to something, dare to do it!
- **Active Participation** – which means doing the reading, listening to your peers and responding to them, thinking about and framing interpretations of the texts, joining in discussion, asking obvious questions if they need to be asked, and bringing discussion questions to class. I will give you a separate sheet on the participation rubric (20%).

- **Plagiarism:** If you use anyone else's ideas, words, concepts, art, images, please include **full citation** of the source, even if you find it on the web. All papers should come with bibliographies – I'm not fussy about which style you use, but Chicago and MLA are good choices. Don't use a separate sheet for either title page or bibliographies – save paper. **If I find you have plagiarized at the minimum you will fail the paper, and, if it seems warranted, you will fail the course.**

Rewrites and end-of-term pleas: If you earn below a C- on your first paper, and you wish to argue for a rewrite so that you can work on your expository writing, I will be happy to meet with you, and discuss terms. However, your final grade will be an average of the two grades, and cannot go above a B-. If you earned above a C-, you are not eligible for a rewrite. The rewrite is due at least 1 week before the next paper. I will not grant second-paper rewrites and end-of-term extra-credit. The best thing you can do for a good grade in this course is participate steadily and thoughtfully in class discussions, and keep up with your response papers.

Tolkien and Medieval Literature: Topics and Advice

What I look for:

1. **There are three things I look for when I am reading your papers: 1) An argument about your topic that you make me aware of early in the paper 2) Enough close textual analysis and research to support your claims, and 3) logical connections between your points, so that your argument progresses rather than simply listing attributes or repeating itself. Length is not a problem if you attend to these things.**

2. Choose a question or topic that really interests you. If none on the suggestion sheet interest you, think of one that does and come to talk about it with me so that I can approve it. Work on a text that intrigued you or that you liked. Don't judge -- analyze instead. The most horrible thing in the world to read is a resentful disquisition on "Why I Hated *The Hobbit*." The second most horrible thing in the world to read is a glowing blurb on "Why *The Hobbit* is the Greatest Thing Since Sliced Bread." Avoid either extreme and choose questions that you genuinely have to think about so that you can pursue arguments that are worth the time and trouble you are taking to argue them.

3. **Think small.** Don't try to handle more than one or two texts. Don't try to make big generalizing arguments. You only have five or so pages -- you are not going to be able to make a convincing case for a big generalizing argument. These should be avoided in any case because they are unprovable without a huge amount of research, and a much larger sample size than any text will give you -- and no single text is representative of an entire culture or era of history. In addition, such arguments often rest on assumptions about their terms that need examining: The following are big generalizing arguments that **I really really hate** so consider this fair warning: "Women were oppressed in the Middle Ages -- here are x number of examples." Or, "Christianity ruined the pagan world -- alas." or "These guys weren't proper Christians, pagans, heroes, anyway." You get the idea . . .

4. **Support your argument with close analysis of textual passages.** This is the most convincing evidence you can control in a literary interpretive paper. It will also hone your interpretive skills and draw you into thinking more adventurously about textual complexities that paraphrases and plot summaries are blind to.

5. After you have figured out a cool thing happening in the text that you can analyze, **search out implications.** Ask (and at least to begin to answer) **why it matters, and what is at stake.**

What you might find it useful to do:

1. Start any necessary reading well in advance of the due date. In particular, reread early and carefully the primary texts you have chosen so that you really have time to digest and think about them. Use the online MLA bibliography to search out whether others have written on the same topic. If you find you need more historical background on a given topic, search the class bibliography for promising books, make a foray on the library, or ask me if I can suggest any.

2. Write by whatever methodology works for you. If you find a "slow-and-steady" strategy most effective, pursue one. If you work best under pressure, by all means wait till the last week and wait for the Muse to land. However, whatever methodology you adopt, try to allow a full day after finishing your first full draft for the project to cool off and then another full day for necessary revisions. The more you incorporate rethinking into the writing process, the better crafted your papers will be.

3. During revision, reexamine your main argument. Ask yourself if it is arguable and worth arguing; in other words, if a knowing audience might disagree with it (and therefore it requires some thought and evidential strategy to make it persuasive). **This is a good thing.** If, on the other hand, your argument seems too easy to prove, ask further questions (such as why it is so or how it comes about) to evolve a more ambitious argument.

4. Use your conclusion not simply to recapitulate your points but also to push at further implications of your argument -- even if they can't be treated in the same paper.

Note: You can use both papers to write on Tolkien and a given medieval text. The only thing I'd like you to avoid is writing both papers only on Tolkien. The medieval part of the class is important to me.

Suggested topics for paper 1:

1. Language and power: How does a text meditate on the powers (and discontents) of language/stories/narratives? *Beowulf* includes many inset stories and it stages storytelling as a crucial part of cultural memory and continuity. Tolkien does the same. Pick an instance and pursue its implications.

2. Desire and fantasy: how does a text treat the ethics and cultural impact of desire □ for fame, for treasure, for power, for war, for revenge, or for stories . . . Do fantastic texts seek to instill desire for the strange and magical?

3. Defamiliarization: both the medieval and the modern fantastic texts we are reading take trouble to lead their readers into alien territories □ sometimes even while they are still at home. How and why do these texts stage the uncanny?

4. Home and abroad: how and why does a given text analyze/interrogate/perplex what is homelike, domestic, and comfortable (Heorot, the Shire)

5. The past, loss and recuperation. Both the medieval and modern texts we are reading are haunted by antiquities. What purposes are served by mediation on or encounter with the past □ and why?

6. Friendship and death: There is a lot about camaraderie in the texts we are reading. Focus on the joys of friendship and fidelity, accompanied by an overwhelming sense of their endangerment. Pick an instance and explore why friendship is always staged on the brink of its possible loss.
7. Realism and magic: What does it mean to take a historical period and introduce a monster into it? Why do both Tolkien and these medieval texts weave together an intensely concrete and detailed constructed world along with the most unlikely, magical, and category-defying fantastic beings.
8. Heroism and Humanism: How are the heroes (and villains) of these tales humanized? Why would an abstract idea of a hero be less useful than a more flawed, inflected and continually self-remaking character? How can ethical quandaries be enriched by less abstract moral characterizations?
9. What are the Monsters doing? Take a given monster -- Grendel, the dragon, Smaug, Gollum, a Black Rider, etc. and analyze its characterization -- in terms of the narrative role it plays, or the kind of cultural/psychological exploration it invites.
10. Landscape, middle-earth, and world creation. How does a given text both perform and meditate on creativity through the creation/explorations of worlds? How do maps/place names/local histories play a role? Why do so many of these texts juxtapose human and divine creativity and craft?
11. Maturation and its difficulties: Many of these texts thematize the processes of growing up (which generally is seen as a good thing) and growing old (which is often not). Both processes are interwoven throughout *Beowulf*, and the *Hobbit* and *LOTR* indulge in it as well. How do these texts complicate maturation so that learning to act independently, as Bilbo does, is often accompanied by a sense of painful isolation? How/why does the evolution of an adult protagonist seem to link inevitably to shadows of senescence and death.
12. Poetry, Song, Story, Spell, and everyday speech. Why does a given text interweave these different kinds of speech acts and to what ends?
13. The ethics of craft and labor. How does a given text justify, rejoice in, or complicate the value of craftiness, creativity, and the laborious production of precious objects: You could take an object: the Ring, the Sampo, the Arkenstone, the dragon's treasure in *Beowulf* or *The Hobbit* and explore its textual and cultural implications.
14. Immortality and Mortality: Many of these texts seek to juxtapose characters/objects/creatures that cannot die (or live very long lives) with mortal ones. Why and with what effects?

15. Social satire and the familiar: Many of these texts stage the necessity (and longing) for the homelike, familiar, and comfortable and at the same time unfold the internal tensions, parochialism, and politics that complicate ideas of home/Heorot/the Shire. Why and with what results?

16. Tolkien and medieval literature. Pick an instance of clear influence of the medieval in Tolkien and explore its implications.



Approve or Deny a New Course Proposal

Required fields are marked with a red letter **R**.

English 70 Medievalisms: Medieval Literature and Contemporary Culture

Department **R** Enter 7-character Browse for name code

ENGL English

or

Requested Course Number **R** Enter 7-character code Subject Area - Browse for code

ENGL English

or

Course Number

70

prefix number suffix

Check if Multiple Listed

Multiple Listed Course

Check if Concurrent

Concurrent Course

Course Catalog Title **R** Medievalisms: Medieval Literature and Contemporary Culture

Short Title MEDIEVALISMS (19 character limit)

Units **R**

Fixed: 5
 Variable: Minimum Maximum
 Alternate: or

Grading Basis **R** Letter grade or Passed/Not Passed

Instructional Format **R**

Primary Format: Lecture
 Secondary Format: Discussion

Hours per week

4

Hours per week

1 [Next](#)

TIE Code **R** LECS - Lecture (Plus Supplementary Activity) [T]

GE Requirement **R**

Yes No
 If yes, submit a proposal to the GE Governance Committee.

Major or Minor Requirement

Yes No
 If yes, submit program change memo to College or School Faculty Executive Committee.

Requisites

Include enforcement level (enforcement, warning, none).
 Satisfaction of Entry-Level Writing requirement.

Course Description **R**

Lecture, three hours; discussion one hour. Enforced requisite: satisfaction of Entry-Level Writing requirement. Not open for credit to English majors or students with credit for any course in 140 series.

339 characters remaining

Justification **R**

Justify the need and state the objectives for this new course. Identify effects on other courses in your department or on courses or curriculum in other departments. List departments and chairs consulted and summarize responses.

This class places medieval period texts in conversation with contemporary medievalisms, including texts, movies, and television series such as Lord of the Rings, Game of Thrones, Harry Potter, and other myriad works in all

17 characters remaining

A syllabus and/or reading list is required for new courses.

Syllabus R File [English 70 Medievalisms sample syllabus.docx](#) was previously uploaded. You may view the file by clicking on the file name.

Choose File No file chosen

Upload syllabus file.
Read the [upload instructions](#) for help.

Supplemental Information

Grading Structure R Include midterm and final examination information.

Two 4 to 5 page papers: 50%
Weekly 1-page response statements: 30%
Active class participation: 20%

982 characters remaining

Effective Date R Spring 2017

Discontinue Date Select Term Select Year

Instructor R Name Title
Christine Chism Professor [Next](#)

Quarters Taught Fall Winter Spring Summer

Contact Name E-mail
JANEL MUNGUIA munguia@english.ucla.edu

Routing Help

ROUTING STATUS

Role: FEC School Coordinator - Castillo, Myrna Dee Figuracion (MKIKUCHI@COLLEGE.UCLA.EDU) - 45040

Status: Pending Action

Role: Department Chair or Designee - Munguia, Janel K Decker (MUNGUIA@ENGLISH.UCLA.EDU) - 51389

Status: Approved on 10/20/2016 3:07:36 PM

Changes: No Changes Made

Comments: Approved by Janel Munguia, designee of English department chair Lowell Gallagher.

Role: Initiator/Submitter - Munguia, Janel K Decker (MUNGUIA@ENGLISH.UCLA.EDU) - 51389

Status: Submitted on 10/20/2016 9:08:37 AM

Comments: Initiated a New Course Proposal

REVIEWER'S ACTION

For help with any element, click on its label link.

Action Approved Re-routed Denied

Required: If you are a staff member acting as designee for a chair or faculty coordinator, note the name and role of the person you are representing in the comment box.

Comment If approved with changes, this section must be completed. If approved with no changes, this section is optional. If denied or withdrawn, this section must be completed. Maximum 1080 characters.
1080 characters remaining

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