

# Vikings & Hobbits

## Or, Early Northern European Culture in History, Memory, and Myth

HNRS 1351.001/002: World, Text, and Image I  
Fall 2024  
Room: HPR 135  
TR 9:30–10:50am

### Professors:

Dr. [Mandy Link](#)

Office Hours (Virtual): M/W, 1-2:30pm or by appointment (Zoom link in Canvas Modules)

Email: [mmlink@uttyler.edu](mailto:mmlink@uttyler.edu)

Dr. [Matt Stith](#)

Office: CAS 127

Office Hours: T/R: 12:30-1:30; Tuesday: 3:30-4:30; Or by appointment

Email: [mstith@uttyler.edu](mailto:mstith@uttyler.edu) (Please use this email address instead of Canvas messenger.)

**Course Description (from catalog):** Comparative study in the humanities and social sciences from antiquity to the Renaissance. This seminar course takes an interdisciplinary approach to literature, history, and art of this period. This course is writing intensive. **Prerequisite:** Invitation by Honors Committee. Satisfies core requirement for Language, Philosophy, & Culture.

### Student Learning Outcomes:

- To develop and improve critical thinking and writing skills about ancient and modern versions of the self and the other. (papers and exams)
- To learn how to read critically, analyze, and interpret mythic and historical texts. (papers and exams)
- To define and study figures of selfhood and otherness as they were conceptualized by the peoples early Europe in history and myth. (papers and exams)
- To differentiate the characteristics of mythic, historic, and spiritual thought and world views. (papers and exams)

### Required Texts:

- Neil Gaiman, *Norse Mythology* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2018)
  - o ISBN: 978-0393356182
- J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ed. (1937; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995)
  - o ISBN: 978-0547928227
- All other readings available on Canvas.



Finest preserved Viking sword in all of Ireland. *National Museum of Ireland, Dublin.*

**Assignments:**

Analytical papers: (3 x 100 points each):	300 points
Modules/Reading Worksheets (4 x 25 points each):	100 points
Attendance/Participation:	100 points
<u>Final Project/Exam:</u>	<u>100 points</u>
Total:	600 points

**Grade Breakdown:**

600-540 = A
539-480 = B
479-420 = C
419-360 = D
359-000 = F

**Analytical Papers:**

Three times during the semester, students will turn in a 700-1,000-word, double-spaced, 12-point font, typed essay with 1-inch margins. In these papers, the student will be asked to discuss some aspect of the readings. These papers must have and support a thesis. All writing assignments will be evaluated according to the following rubric:

**Essay Rubric:**

Criterion	Good (90-100%)	Fair (80-90%)	Poor (<80%)
<b>Content and Development</b>  ____/5 <b>0 points</b>	Content is comprehensive, addresses itself to the issues raised by the assignment and the major points are clearly stated and well supported.	Content is not comprehensive or persuasive. Major points are identified but not well addressed. Content is inconsistent with regard to purpose and clarity of thought.	Content is incomplete. Paper demonstrates little or no understanding of the issues raised by the assignment. The content is confused or confusing and without apparent purpose.
<b>Organization and Structure</b>  ____/2 <b>5 points</b>	The <i>structure</i> of the paper is clear. The <i>Introduction/Thesis paragraph</i> demonstrates sufficient understanding of the issues and previews major points. <i>Paragraph transitions</i> are present, logical, and maintain the flow of thought throughout the paper. <i>The conclusion</i> is logical and flows from the body of the paper.	Structure of the paper is not easy to follow. The Introduction/Thesis is missing or, if provided, does not demonstrate an understanding of the issues or preview major points. Paragraph transitions need improvement. The conclusion is missing or, if provided, does not flow from the body of the paper. You should not use crutch phrases like "In conclusion..."	Poor or missing organization and structure detract from the writer's discussion. The Introduction/Thesis is missing. Paragraphs are disjointed and lack transition of thought—or they are merely missing.
<b>Format</b>  ____/5 points	Paper follows these guidelines and is of the appropriate length.	Paper follows most guidelines or is too long or too short.	Paper lacks many elements of proper formatting. Writer does not follow directions.
<b>Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation</b>  ____/2 <b>0 points</b>	Rules of grammar, usage, and punctuation are followed. Spelling is correct. Language is clear and precise. Sentences display consistently strong, varied structure.	Paper contains few grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors. Language lacks clarity or includes the use of some jargon or conversational tone.	Paper contains numerous grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors. Language uses jargon or is too conversational in tone.

**Reading Worksheets:** Students will complete four reading worksheets. Each worksheet consists of analytical questions about the readings. Please use your own reading of the texts and our class discussions (no outside sources!) to answer the worksheet questions. Unless otherwise stated, a thorough worksheet answer should be between 200-400 words.

**Attendance:**

Attendance in this class is not only mandatory but also very important. Your contributions will be invaluable, and you need to attend class every day. You will be allowed two unquestioned absences. After the second absence, each additional absence will result in a full letter-grade reduction (10%) of your attendance grade. Obviously, this is a serious matter, so try to plan ahead. Unquestioned absences include sickness, job interviews, personal matters, etc.

Therefore, if you anticipate having to miss class at any point during the semester, please plan accordingly. If a University activity will cause you to miss more than two classes please see your instructors. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform us by the second class meeting of such absences.



Original Book Cover for J.R.R. Tolkien's, *The Hobbit, Or There and Back Again* (1937)

**Participation:**

Reading assignments are clearly listed below. All students are expected to have read the assigned material by the beginning of class. Partial completion of an assignment is unacceptable; coming to class unprepared will result in a full letter-grade reduction (10%) of your participation grade. On the other hand, please understand that while we expect you to have read the assigned readings, we do not necessarily expect you to have mastered them. Like all readers, you will have questions and perhaps even occasional problems with these texts. That's part of the reading process. In such cases, please be sure to bring those problems and questions to class so that we can discuss them as a group. We strongly suggest that you take notes on each text while you read it, focusing on its central ideas, characters, and plot points. Such careful reading will prepare you for discussion, a vital part of this class. Also, be sure to plan ahead. Because of scheduling constraints, reading assignments are not always evenly divided. The participation grade also includes active participation in the group project at the end of the semester.

**Tardiness:**

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of the class period. If you come in late, it is your responsibility to make sure that your name has been recorded on the role. Repeated tardiness indicates a lack of respect for your colleagues and professors; to avoid showing such disrespect, please be on time or you may be denied entry.

**Academic Honesty [\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*]**

Cheating of any kind, including plagiarism or the use of AI, will result in immediate failure of the class and possibly further sanctions from the University of Texas at Tyler. Plagiarism, put simply, is using another's work as your own without proper citation or usage. This includes everything from copying and pasting from the Internet to failing to cite an idea from another source that you put in your own words. We strongly recommend reviewing the university policy for cheating and academic dishonesty at the following website: <http://www.uttyler.edu/judicialaffairs/scholasticdishonesty.php>.

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) is not permitted in this course. All work students submit for this course should be their own. Using ChatGPT or any other AI tools for any stage of the work process is expressly forbidden. Deviations from these guidelines will be considered a violation of UT Tyler's Honor Code and academic honesty values.

**University Writing Center:**

Located in CAS 202, the UT-Tyler Writing Center provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your learning—you will be expected write and/or discuss your work during your tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix your paper for you. Appointments: 565-5995. For more information: [www.uttyler.edu/writingcenter](http://www.uttyler.edu/writingcenter).

**Class Disturbances:**

Please silence and stay off your phones. Repeated phone offenses will result in the loss of participation points. And it should go without saying that when a classmate/professor is speaking, we give them our full attention.

**Religious Observance and Athletics:**

Any student who will miss any class days during the semester because of religious observance or participation in university athletics must inform the instructors of this course no later than the second day of class.

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## Schedule/Assignment List:

**(Note: This schedule is subject to revision)**

**Week 1: (8/27-29)**

T: Introduction to Course and Syllabus, etc.

R: *Norse Mythology* (NM)

**Week 2: (9/3-5)**

T: NM

R: NM

**Week 3: (9/10-12)**

T: NM

R: NM

Sun (9/15): **Worksheet** due by 11:59 pm on Canvas

**Week 4: (9/17-19)**

T: NM

R: NM

**Week 5: (9/24-26)**

T: NM

R: NM

**Week 6: (10/1-3)**

T: NM

R: NM

Sun (10/6): **Worksheet** due by 11:59 pm on Canvas

**Week 7: (10/8-10)**

T: NM

R: NM

Sunday (10/13): **First Essay** due by 11:59pm on Canvas

**Week 8: (10/15-17)**

T: *The Hobbit*

R: *The Hobbit*

**Week 9: (10/22-24)**

T: *The Hobbit*

R: *The Hobbit*

Sun (10/27): **Worksheet** due by 11:59 pm on Canvas

**Week 10: (10/29-31)**

T: *The Hobbit*

R: *The Hobbit*

**Week 11: (11/5-11/7)**

T: *The Hobbit*

R: *The Hobbit*

**Week 12: (11/12-14)**

T: *The Hobbit*

R: *The Hobbit*

Sun (11/17): **Worksheet** due by 11:59 pm on Canvas

**Week 13: (11/19-21)**

T: *The Hobbit*

R: *The Hobbit*

Sunday (11/24): **Second Essay** due at 11:59pm on Canvas

**Week 14: (11/26-28)**

T: No Class—Thanksgiving Day Break

R: No Class—Thanksgiving Day Break

**Week 15: (12/3-12/5)**

T: Group Presentations

R: Group Presentations

**Week 16: (12/12)**

Thursday, December 12: **Final Essay** Due at 11:59pm on Canvas