English 322 Studies in Early British Literature: What Is a Hero?

Spring 2023

"Unhappy the land that has no hero." "No. Happy the land that needs no hero."

Bertoldt Brecht, Life of Galileo

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Office hours: Monday/Wednesday, 1:30-2:30 (not all weeks – check Announcements in

Canvas for the current week) Tuesdays by appointment Thursdays 3:30-4:30

Texts

Rental: The Broadview Anthology of British Literature, vol. 1: The Medieval Period

The Broadview Anthology of British Literature, 2nd ed., vol. 2: The

Renaissance and Early Seventeenth Century

Purchase: Sir Gawain: Eleven Romances and Tales, ed. Thomas Hahn (Medieval

Institute Publications), ISBN 978-1-879288-59-1, \$39.95 new (needed

by Mar. 9)

Thomas Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, ed. Helen Cooper (Oxford World's Classics), ISBN 978-0-19-953734-1, \$16.95 new (needed by Apr. 4)

Description and Goals

Heroes exist in every culture's stories, popular and literary. What defines a hero? Heroic figures often share some common traits, but what is regarded as "heroic" can vary tremendously from place to place and over time, reflecting the worldview of a culture and the challenges a society faces. Sometimes the standards and expectations for a hero derive from a combination of traditions and values that fit uneasily together, creating tensions that can be difficult to resolve.

We will explore these issues in a selection of works from the seventh through the seventeenth centuries. You'll become familiar with the historical and cultural context of these works that inform the ways heroes are defined, as well as the literary forms and styles in which they are represented. Many of these works continue to interest and inspire modern readers and artists; you'll have an opportunity, if you are interested, to explore a modern adaptation of one of these works in your final project for the course.

Requirements and Grading

- Preparation for class. Read the material scheduled for each day, making note of your questions and observations. You may find some of this material difficult, but do what you can with it. I will post some suggestions for possible things to look for or think about as your read, as well as links to useful resources. Feel free to draw on these, or follow your own interests.
- Attendance and participation. Regular attendance and meaningful engagement during class is expected. This contributes 15% to your course grade, using the grading scale below.
- **Journals.** These are informal written reflections on recent reading. Four journals collectively make up **20%** of your grade.
- A midterm exam, covering the material read through March 7, contributes 20%.
- A Career Exploration project will contribute 15%.
- A final paper and presentation is worth 30%.

Details of the written assignments and exam, including grading criteria, will be provided in class and posted in Canvas.

How I calculate grades: Letter grades are converted to points, and points back to a letter grade for the course, using the following scale: D, 60-66.99%; D+, 67-69.99%; C- 70-72.99%; C, 73-76.99%; C+, 77-79.99%; B-, 80-82.99%; B, 83-86.99%, B+, 87-89.99%, A-, 90-92.99%, A, 93-100%. An assignment not turned in or test essay not attempted is a 0, but an F paper/essay will earn points in the F range.

Grading Criteria for Attendance and Participation

A:

- Attends class, prepared, and engages in class activities (attentive, mentally engaged even if not speaking), at least 95% of the time.
- Treats other students and classroom community with respect.
- Contributions to discussions show careful listening, thoughtfulness, or effort to connect to others' ideas. May make an extra effort to contribute or to hold back occasionally to make space for others, or encourage other students to contribute.

B:

- Attends class, prepared, and engages in class activities (attentive, mentally engaged even if not speaking), at least 90% of the time.
- Treats other students and classroom community with respect.

C:

 Attends class, prepared, and engages in class activities (attentive, mentally engaged even if not speaking), at least 75% of the time.

D:

 Attends class, prepared, and engages in class activities (attentive, mentally engaged even if not speaking), at least 60% of the time.

Note: Expectations for attendance can be "fudged" to reflect valid reasons for absence. Examples of valid reasons include illness that makes meaningful participation impossible, unsafe, or disruptive; family or personal emergencies; field experiences for other classes; and travel for athletic competition. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor to have these circumstances taken into account.

Policies

Attendance: You should plan to attend class regularly. If you unable to attend, let me know what is going on so that I can take your particular situation into account when I assign a grade for attendance and participation.

Late work:

- Journals can be turned in up to one week late for partial credit.
- The midterm exam can be made up only in the case of an extraordinary situation that makes taking it as scheduled impossible or unsafe.
- The Career Exploration assignment, due in the last week of class, can also be turned in during finals week with a deduction of one letter grade.
- The final paper can be turned in later during finals week with a deduction of one-third letter grade.
- All work must be turned in by the end of finals week.
- These rules <u>may</u> be modified in extraordinary situations. If legitimate problems interfere with getting your work in on time, please discuss your situation with me.

Classroom Etiquette:

- During in-person meetings, tablets and other devices can be used for taking or referring to notes, if you can resist their temptations. However,
 - Students may not make audio, video, or photographic recordings of lectures or other class activities without written permission from the instructor. Anyone violating this policy will be asked to turn off the device being used. Refusal to comply with the policy will result in the student being asked to leave the classroom, and possibly being reported to the Dean of Students. (English Department Policy)
- Diverse perspectives are an asset to class discussions. Please treat those whose ideas or experiences are different from yours with the same respect you want for yourself.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you have a condition requiring accommodations for this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center. Call 715 346-3365 or email DRC@uwsp.edu to make an appointment or get more information, or visit them in Room 108 of the Collins Classroom Center. Visit their website at https://www.uwsp.edu/disability-resource-center/

Email: Your UWSP email account is the university's standard method of communication with you, and you should check it regularly. I may at times use email to contact the class as a whole or individual students; I will routinely use the course home page in Canvas for reminders and announcements.

Academic honesty: Building the skills this course is intended to foster requires effort and practice. The point of assignments is to help you develop your skills, which can only happen if you do the work yourself. Except where an assignment indicates otherwise, all work should be done without collaboration with other students or anyone else, and without any assistance except for peer feedback, support from the Tutoring-Learning Center, and any accommodation appropriate to a documented disability. These principles don't change just because technology changes, so in case it needs to be said, having AI write for you constitutes plagiarism.

Students enrolled in a 300-level course should understand the difference between appropriate and inappropriate forms of help in writing papers and know how to cite sources properly, but if you have questions or feel unsure about any use of help or sources, please ask. The university policy on Academic Misconduct will be followed when applicable and includes the possibility of an F for the assignment or for the course. For more information about UWSP's policies regarding Academic Misconduct, see http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/AcademicIntegrityBrochure.pdf.

COVID-19 Guidelines:

Face coverings are no longer required in most locations on UWSP campuses. However, bear in mind that some students may be in high-risk populations or have close contact with people who are. If a classmate asks you to wear a mask, I hope you will give that serious consideration.

If you have symptoms consistent with COVID, it's best not to come to class (or any other place where you have close contact with others) until you get tested.

You can find more information and guidelines, as well as the latest communications from the university here: https://www3.uwsp.edu/coronavirus/Pages/default.aspx

Schedule

See Canvas for resources and suggestions for things to think about as you read.

Jan. 24	Jan. 26
First day of class	Skim "The Hero's Journey" (posted in Canvas) Read pp. 16-28 of J. R. R. Tolkien, "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics" (posted in Canvas) Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for years 449-495 and 755, Broadview vol. 1, pages 110-112
Jan. 31	Feb. 2
Begin <i>Beowulf</i> , Broadview vol. 1, pages 39-55 (through line 1250)	Beowulf, pages 55-67 (through line 2199)
Feb. 7	Feb. 9
Beowulf to end (p. 80)	"The Battle of Maldon," Broadview vol. 1, 95-
Journal 1 due	Judith, Broadview vol. 1, pages 85-94
Feb. 14	Feb. 16
Selections from Bede, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> , selections #3 and 4, Broadview vol. 1, pp. 6-15 "The Dream of the Rood," Broadview vol. 1, 23-25 Alcuin, Epistle to a Mercian Bishop (posted in Canvas)	A-S Chronicle 871-878, Broadview vol. 1, pages 112-114 Selection from Asser, <i>Life of Alfred</i> (posted in Canvas) Alfred, "Preface to <i>Pastoral Care</i> ," 120-121 Ælfric, <i>Passion of St. Edmund</i> , 124-126 Journal 2 due
Feb. 21	Feb. 23
Selections from Geoffrey of Monmouth, History of the Kings of Britain, Broadview vol. 1, pages 136-157 (OK to skip from bottom of 141, left column, to 144, middle of left column)	Larry D. Benson, "Courtly Love and Chivalry in the Later Middle Ages" https://chaucer.fas.harvard.edu/pages/courtly-love-and-chivalry-later-middle-ages Selections from Andreas Capellanus, <i>The Art of Courtly Love</i> , Broadview vol. 1, pages 310-312 Chrétien des Troyes, <i>The Knight of the Cart</i> (posted in Canvas) to line 1840

Feb. 28	Mar. 2
Finish The Knight of the Cart	Marie de France, "Lanval," Broadview vol. 1, 166-181 Chrétien, <i>Eric and Enide</i> (posted in Canvas) to line 2292
	Journal 3 due
Mar. 7	Mar. 9
Finish <i>Eric and Enide</i>	Career exploration project check-in
	"The Turke and Sir Gawain," Sir Gawain: Eleven Romances and Tales pp. 340-51 "The Carle of Carlisle," pp. 375-88
Mar. 14	Mar. 16
Midterm exam (in-class)	"The Marriage of Sir Gawain," Sir Gawain: Eleven Romances and Tales (purchase text) pp. 363-69 "The Jeaste of Sir Gawain," pp. 397-413
SPRING BREAK	
Mar. 28	Mar. 30
SGGK Sir Gawain and the Green Knight Parts (or Fitts) One - Three, Broadview vol. 1, pages 236-287	SGGK part Four, pages 287-300
Apr. 4	Apr. 6
Malory, <i>The Noble Tale of Lancelot du Lake</i> , from <i>Le Morte Darthur</i> (purchase text), pp. 95-119.	Malory, <i>The Tale of Sir Gareth of Orkney</i> , pp. 120-168
Journal 4 due	
Apr. 11	Apr. 13
Start Malory, The Tale of Sir Lancelot and Queen Guenivere, pp. 403-437	Finish The Tale of Sir Lancelot and Queen Guenivere, pp. 437-468
	Proposal for final paper

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Apr. 18	Apr. 20
Spenser, <i>The Faerie Queene</i> Book 1, cantos 1-2, Broadview vol. 2 , pp 141-155) Also read the "In Context" section in Broadview, 244-246	Faerie Queene 1.3-6, pages 155-182
Apr. 25	Apr. 27
Faerie Queene 1.7-9, pages 183-203	Faerie Queene 1.10-12, pages 203-225
May 2	May 4
Presentations	Presentations
May 9	May 11
Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> , Book 1, Broadview vol. 2, pp. 827-39	Wrap-up discussion
	Career exploration project due
Tuesday, May 16, 10 am: Final draft of paper due (submit in Canvas or drop hard copy off at my office)	