

**First-Year Seminar 101**  
**Sections 3 & 6**  
***The Lord of the Rings: Three Journeys***  
**Fall 2016**

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Tuesdays/Thursdays 1:00-1:50  
Wednesdays 1-1:50  
Fridays 10-10:50, and by appointment

**Description and Goals**

As you begin your journey through college, why not draw inspiration from the characters in *The Lord of the Rings*, or from their creator? There is no university in Middle-earth, but there is plenty of decision-making, planning, learning, and growing (and problems caused by not doing those things), as well as dealing with unexpected obstacles and opportunities. Much of that is true for the writing of the book as well; Tolkien didn't have everything figured out at the beginning either. In this First-Year Seminar you'll learn about J. R. R. Tolkien's personal life and professional career, how those shaped his fiction, and how *The Lord of the Rings* came to be.

This First-Year Seminar shares with all other FYS sections the important goal of helping you make the transition from high school to college successfully and to give you a good start on your college career. By the end of the course you should be able to

- Describe the key components and purpose of a liberal education and explain how a liberal education will shape your college studies, career, and life.
- Identify key components of critical thinking and information literacy and apply the associated skills within course assignments.
- Identify and apply appropriate skills for college success, as well as appropriate UW-Stevens Point programs, resources, and services designed to support your academic studies.
- Develop an educational plan that demonstrates the responsibility you will take for your own education, including co-curricular experiences.

As much as possible, we will connect these goals to *The Lord of the Rings*. For example, you will practice study skills and critical thinking through reading, lectures, and discussions of the novel and Tolkien's life and works.

Class activities will consist primarily of discussion and other hands-on activities, with occasional lectures. Expect to have some kind of assignment—reading, writing, research, etc.—to do for almost every class.

**Text**

Required purchase: *The Lord of the Rings*. The University Bookstore has stocked the one-volume 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition, ISBN 978-0-618-64015, \$20

## Assignments and Grading

You'll be doing a number of different things in order to accomplish all the goals of the course.

Regular **attendance**, **preparation** for class and **participation** in class activities contributes 15% of your course grade. This portion of your grade includes these ongoing assignments:

### Reading

Reading assignments are listed on the course schedule below and should be completed before the scheduled day. Read thoughtfully and take notes. Some suggestions of what to think about as/after you read (and the topics for the related journal assignments) will be provided on a separate handout.

### Exploration of Campus Resources and Co-curricular Activities

Participate in activities on campus over the course of the semester, and be ready to report to the class on what you did, what it was like, and what value it had for you (or might have for others). Dates of the reports are on the class schedule; you should have at least one new activity to report on for each of those (three) days. A list of possible activities will be provided.

A grading rubric for this portion of your grade appears on the next page. I will post a tentative version of this grade after a few weeks and update it periodically through the semester.

The rest of your course grade will come from several graded assignments. The due dates are included on the class schedule; details about assignments will be provided during the course of the semester:

- Journals – 15%
- Quizzes on reading, lecture, and discussion – 5% each, 10% total
- Test on reading, lecture, and discussion – 20%
- Career Exploration – 10%
- Believing and Doubting paper – 20%
- Final Reflection – 10%

## Grading Rubric for Attendance, Preparation, and Participation

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|                              | <b>Plusses – at least a few things here needed for an A</b>   | <b>Expectation – meeting this in all categories necessary for a B</b>   | <b>Minuses – these will lead to grades lower than B</b>  |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Attendance                   | Is present for all of every class meeting, or (rarely) is absent for a compelling reason, which is shared with the instructor promptly.   | Attends consistently (at least 90% of the time). May miss class occasionally (or arrive late / leave early), but always or almost always has a good reason and shares this with the instructor. | Missing class, arriving late, or leaving early, more than 10% of the time, or less often but without explanation.  |
| Attentiveness and engagement | Consistently comes equipped (book, notebook, etc.) to class. Is always listening actively when not speaking.                              | Usually comes equipped and is listening actively when not speaking.   | Attends to something other than class activities (e.g. texting, Facebook, studying for another class).   |
| Quality of participation     | Makes comments that stand out for the level of careful thought they demonstrate: about the material and about the unfolding conversation. |   | Makes comments that reflect inattentiveness to others' contributions or lack of preparation, are irrelevant, or otherwise tend to derail the conversation.       |
| Classroom community          | Improves the conversation in a significant way. (E.g. helps draw others out, makes extra effort to contribute if shy, etc.)               |   | Impairs the conversation in a significant way. (E.g. dominates discussion, talks while others are talking, treats other students or their ideas with disrespect) |
| Activity Reports             | Reports on activities stand out for thoughtful reflection on the experience.  | Reports a different activity on each of three reporting days.   |  |

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 is recorded as 0, but an F paper gets points in the F range.

## Policies

**Attendance:** Attendance is included in your course grade (as described above) because discussion and hands-on activities are a large part of the course; getting notes from someone is not the same as hearing the whole conversation or participating in an activity yourself. If you ever do miss class,

- Let me know the reason, if it is something that you want me to take into account when I assign a grade for attendance and participation. Documentation is helpful, especially for repeated or extended absences or if you will be asking to make up any in-class work or turn in a major assignment late. (Please have this conversation with me after class or during office hours, rather than before class.)
- Make sure to turn in any assignments that may be due that day, either electronically or as soon as possible after you return to campus.
- Check D2L for any announcements and handouts you may have missed. Contacting a classmate to get their notes on what was discussed may also be useful. If you have any questions after that, feel free to ask me.

### Late/make-up work:

- Journals **must** be completed before class; no late submissions will be accepted.
- Activity reports can be made up if you are unavoidably absent from class on the reporting day, and should be made up at the next class.
- The quizzes and test can be made up **only** in the case of an extraordinarily compelling reason for missing class.
- The Career Exploration assignment will lose 1/3 letter grade for each class meeting late.
- Either the Paper or Reflection, due at the end of the semester, will lose one letter grade if it is late but turned in during finals week.
- Thursday, December 21, at 5 pm is the absolute deadline for submitting work.

**Academic honesty:** All submitted work—including journals—must be written by the student alone. Any sources used in a paper, including internet sources, must be used in appropriate ways and must be cited. (Any citation system you are familiar with is acceptable.) *Please* see me if you are unclear or uncertain about citations, source use, or acceptable forms of help with your papers. Any instance of plagiarism, collaboration beyond appropriate feedback, or other misrepresentation of a student's work will be dealt with according to the University policy on Academic Misconduct. For more information about UWSP's policies regarding Academic Misconduct, see <http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/AcademicIntegrityBrochure.pdf>.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** If you have a disability and may need accommodations for this course, please contact the Office of Disability Services. Call 715 346-3365, email [dissv@uwsp.edu](mailto:dissv@uwsp.edu), or visit the office in room 609 of the Learning Resource Center (Library).

**Classroom Etiquette:**

- 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.

**Assessment:** UWSP regularly assesses the General Education Program (including the First-Year Seminars) to ensure that we are providing you with the best education we can. As part of this effort, samples of student work may be shared, anonymously, with a small group of faculty members. If you have any questions about the assessment process or concerns about how your work may be used, please come talk to me.

**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 D2L for reminders and announcements.

Any change to the syllabus will be announced in class and posted in D2L.

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| <b>Other Useful Information</b> |
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Copies of all course documents and additional resources will be available in **Desire2Learn** (<http://www.uwsp.edu/d2l/Pages/default.aspx>) and on my **website** ([www4.uwsp.edu/english/mbowman/fys/](http://www4.uwsp.edu/english/mbowman/fys/)).

As a UWSP student, you have access to Microsoft's OneDrive (cloud storage) and Office 365 (online versions of Word, Excel, etc.), and can download Office 2016 to your own devices. Get started here: <https://portal.office.com/Home>

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| <b>Schedule</b> |
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| For Sept. 9:<br><b>Read</b> "College Should Be an Intellectual Workout" (Xerox, also posted in D2L) |  |   |
| Sept. 12<br><b>Read</b> the Prologue & chapter 1 of <i>LotR</i> (pages 1-41)                        | Sept. 14<br>Presentation by SIEO<br>Bring the syllabi for all of your courses (for an in-class activity)<br>Consider attending the Involvement Fair on Thursday, Sept. 15, 6-8 pm, DUC | Sept. 16<br><b>Read</b> chs. 2-3 of <i>LotR</i> (42-85)<br>Also <b>read</b> "Only Connect...": The Goals of a Liberal Education" (Xerox/posted) |
| Sept. 19<br>Lecture: introduction to the <i>Silmarillion</i>  | Sept. 21<br><b>Read</b> Book 1, chs. 4-9 (86-162)<br><b>Journal 1</b> (see handout for assignment)   | Sept. 23<br>(No assignment – continuation of Monday/Wednesday material)   |
| Sept. 26<br>"Advising 101" Presentation (Academic and Career Advising Center staff)                 | Sept. 28<br><b>Read</b> Book 1, chs. 10-12, Book 2, ch. 1, and Appendix A.I.v (163-238 and 1057-1063)<br><b>Journal 2</b>  | Sept. 30<br><b>Open-note quiz</b> on lecture material and reading   |
| Oct. 3<br>Lecture: introduction to Tolkien's life and work  | Oct. 5<br><b>Read</b> Book 2, chs. 2-5 (239-332)<br><b>Journal 3</b>   | Oct. 7<br><b>Report</b> to class on co-curricular activities / resources  |
| Oct. 10<br><b>Open-note quiz</b><br>Lecture: composing <i>LOTR</i>                                  | Oct. 12<br><b>Read</b> Book 2, chs. 6-10 (333-407)<br><b>Make-up opportunity for journals 1-3</b>  | Oct. 14<br>(No assignment – continuation of Monday/Wednesday material)  |
| Oct. 17<br><b>TEST</b>  | Oct. 19<br>Class meets in <b>TNR 356</b> (computer lab) for introduction to CareerLocker.  | Oct. 21<br><b>Read</b> Book III, Chs. 1-4 (413-487)   |
| Oct. 24<br>Lecture: <i>LotR</i> in the 60s  | Oct. 26<br><b>Read</b> Book III, chs. 5-8 (488-559)<br><b>Journal 4</b>  | Oct. 28<br><b>Due: Career exploration assignment</b>  |

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| Oct. 31<br>Introduction to Critical Thinking and Information Literacy   | Nov. 2<br><b>Read</b> Book III, chs. 9-11 and Book IV, chs. 1-3 (560-647)<br><b>Journal 5</b>   | Nov. 4<br><b>Report</b> to class on co-curricular activities / resources          |
| Nov. 7<br>(No assignment – continuing work with Critical Thinking and Information Literacy)   | Nov. 9<br><b>Read</b> Book IV, chs. 4-10 (648-742)<br><b>Journal 6</b>  | Nov. 11<br>(No assignment – continuation of Monday/Wednesday material)            |
| Nov. 14<br>(No assignment)  | Nov. 16<br><b>Read</b> Book V, chs. 1-3 (747-805). Also read or skim Appendix A.I.iv (1044-1057); focus on 1049-53 and 1055-top of 1056.<br><b>Make-up opportunity for journals 4-6</b> | Nov. 18<br><b>Read</b> Verlyn Flieger, “Taking the Part of Trees,” posted in D2L. |
| Nov. 21<br><b>Read</b> Book V, chs. 4-8 (806-871)<br><b>Paper topic due</b>   | Nov. 23<br>(No assignment – continuation of Monday material)  | Nov. 25<br>HOLIDAY  |
| Nov. 28<br>(No assignment)  | Nov. 30<br><b>Read</b> Book V, chs. 9-10, Book VI, chs. 1-3 (872-947) and Appendix A.III, beginning at the bottom of page 1077 to the end (p. 1081)                                     | Dec. 2<br>(No assignment)   |
| Dec. 5<br>(No assignment)   | Dec. 7<br><b>Read</b> Book VI, chs. 4-9 (948-1031)  | Dec. 9<br><b>Due: Draft of “Believing and Doubting” paper</b>                     |
| Dec. 12<br><b>Report</b> to class on co-curricular activities / resources<br><br><b>Read</b> paper drafts and give feedback (guidelines to be provided) | Dec. 14<br><b>Due: “Believing and Doubting” paper</b>   | No class meeting Dec. 16 – finals begin   |
| Dec. 19, Monday. <b>Final Reflection due</b> for section 3 (11:00 class) by 12:15.  | Dec. 20, Tuesday. <b>Final Reflection due</b> for section 6 (12:00 class) by 4:45.  |   |

