For this course we have three main goals: 1) to understand the cultural significance of stories and storytelling; 2) to understand how literature represents human experience; and 3) to demonstrate the ability to interpret literary texts. We will focus our discussion and writing on both traditional fairy tales and modern stories of fantasy. There is a wealth of traditional tales from many cultures from which we can draw material for discussion. We have tried to pull together a sampling from several of these cultural backgrounds. Additionally, we will examine the changes that have occurred within the genre as contemporary authors have adapted its characteristics to the newer form of literature known as fantasy. Despite the magical settings, we will see that the characters must rely on everything but magic to survive the fantastic events in which they find themselves.

Course Texts

In this class, we will draw our primary reading material from:

*Spells of Enchantment*—Ed. Jack Zipes  
*The Last Unicorn*—Peter Beagle  
*The Hobbit*—J.R.R. Tolkien

Course Content

For the purposes of this course, we have chosen story-telling, fairy tale and fantasy, subjects of great interest in today's society. We
will begin with the earliest evidence of tale-telling, consider the place and role of folklore, myth, legend and fable, hopefully ending up by examining the recent phenomenal growth in the field of fantasy literature. If you have read such works outside of this class, such material may be used for paper topics when appropriate. As part of this consideration, we will have several movie nights later in the term which then will serve as the basis of class discussion.

Course Requirements

Two 4-5 page Exploratory Papers - 30%
Two in-class Essays - 20%
Eleven Reading Quizzes - 15%
Two 5-7 minute individual oral report - 10%
One 30 minute group oral presentation - 15%
Class Participation - 10%

Course Expectations

Composition is a two-part skill which requires both aspects of a competent writer. The Content WHAT you write about. In many cases, you will not have a choice about this, but rather will be expected to write on a topic assigned by an instructor in school or a supervisor at work. The material must be organized, developed, supported and presented in a clear and concise manner so as to transmit to your reader. The Form is HOW you say what is to be communicated, that is the grammar, spelling, and punctuation used in conveying your material. If these elements are faulty and incorrect, they can seriously impair the composition process and even prevent rather than facilitate communication.

Parallel to the process of written communication is that of oral communication which has become an increasingly important part of most careers. You must, in this day and age, be able to think on your feet.