INTRODUCTION: Perspectives are variously defined as the ways in which we look at things and beliefs or the positions from which we do so. No matter which meaning you prefer, it should be obvious that perceptions can differ depending on whatever influences or affects them. In this course, we will be examining the various ways in which people look at modern fantasy and the earlier forms which influenced it—fairy tales. The other aspect of this class is enquiry or investigation which can likewise vary depending on what position you begin your enquiry from. Both of these activities require communication (oral and written) to be really effective and so that will be the ongoing activity of this course.

REQUIRED TEXTS:
Thomas Shippey, The Oxford Book of Fantasy Stories, OUP.
Peter Beagle, The Last Unicorn, ROC.

COURSE CONTENT: Enquiry must be about something and perspectives must be on something so, for the purposes of this course, we have chosen story-telling, fairy tales and fantasy, subjects of great interest in today’s society. We will begin with the earliest evidence of tale-telling, consider the 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 any 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 this semester which will serve as the basis of more class discussion.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Since this is a course about communication, there will be many opportunities to utilize it in both its spoken and printed forms. The written work comprises the majority of the credit for this class. The papers will be of two kinds: reflection (or opinion) papers which are shorter efforts and four formal essays for which you will be given a variety of topics from which to choose. The fifth
major paper is the research project which you will be undertaking towards the end of the semester. ALL assignments are to be handed in or presented on time. Late papers are NEVER acceptable and failure to complete required assignments will result in a serious reduction of your grade. Quizzes are given at the beginning of class and will NOT be repeated. These will be of various lengths and weights depending on the reading assignment. Quizzes cannot be made up, but if you have an excused absence, they can be taken early. At the end of the semester, the two lowest regular quiz scores will be dropped. As you will notice from the list below, the oral reports are of two varieties. You will be assigned several impromptu speeches for which you cannot prepare ahead of time as well as a few for which you can. In addition, you shall likewise be presenting a group oral report for which more explicit directions will be given as the due dates draw near.

-Five major papers 30%
-Three shorter ‘reflection’ papers 15%
-Numerous Quizzes 20%
-Several short, solo, oral reports 15%
-One group oral report 10%
-Class participation 10%

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Office Hours: 10:00 – 11:00 MWF
1:00 – 2:30 MWF and by appointment
1100 – 12:00 TR

“. . .I wrote fairy tales because Fairy Tale seemed the ideal Form for the stuff I had to say—“ Clive Staples Lewis