The romance genre often conjures images of passionately embracing protagonists in stylized dishabille depicted on paperback covers—but for better or worse, *Fifty Shades of Grey* is not in this syllabus! While chivalry and courtly love were major themes of the kinds of early medieval literature covered in the first half of the course, we will be focusing on the concept of ‘romance’ in the literary critical sense as a category of narrative form. We can, however, bring in other types of pulp literature such as fantasy or the western in the post-medieval weeks.

The course will begin by building a foundation on Arthurian literature from the Middle Ages and then explore how the genre has been adapted for new contexts and other literary modes. In addition to the genres mentioned above, these departures can include religious allegory, satire, postmodern literature, and contemporary film. Familiarity with medieval literature through Arrivals will be helpful, but not necessary as texts in Middle English and foreign languages will be offered in translation. *Selections in the second half of the course can be adapted to student interests; see end of the syllabus for example suggestions.* Students will also be asked to lead discussion on a week of their choice, and present and respond to literary criticism throughout.

The focus of the course will be on the development and writing of a significant essay (around 20-25 pages in length). After a library visit in the second week, students will submit a proposed topic by the fourth week. An annotated bibliography of secondary works will be due in the sixth week, and a detailed proposal will be due in the eighth week. A complete draft of the final essay will be due in the tenth week.

In addition to our regular meetings, you are expected to attend three general meetings for the junior tutorial throughout the semester. All tutorial students are required to schedule individual meetings with the Departmental Writing Fellow at the beginning of the semester. You are encouraged to schedule further meetings both of us throughout the semester to discuss any concerns or questions about writing.

**Required Texts:**

Grade Breakdown:

Participation 40%

- Attendance and General Discussion 20%
- Critical Presentations and Responses 10%
- Student Led Discussion 10%

Preparatory Work 30%

- Annotated Bibliography 10%
- Prospectus 10%
- Essay draft 10%

Final Junior Paper 30%

Late Policy and Attendance
There will be a reduction in your grade for assignments turned in late: 5 points for the first 2 days, 5 points per day thereafter (exceptions made for documented illness or family emergencies). Please contact me at least 72 hours in advance for an extension, and 48 hours for excused absences.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Marie de France, Lais
+ Excerpts from “Origins” in the Arthurian Handbook

Week 2: Chretien de Troyes, Yvain
+ Auerbach, “The Knight Sets Forth” from Mimesis

Week 3: Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
+ J.A. Burrow, “Recognition and Confession in the Green Chapel”

Submit list of possible research interests in preparation for library visit, and select presentation topics.

Week 4: Library Visit
Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur (selections)
+ Helen Cooper, “Counter-Romance”

Week 5: Religious Allegory
Spenser, The Faerie Queene, Book I
+ Warton, Observations on the Faerie Queene (excerpts)
+ Andrew King, “The 'Reformation' of Native Romance in The Faerie Queene”
Week 6: Comedy and Satire
Cervantes, *Don Quixote* (The First Sally)
Auerbach, “The Enchanted Dulcinea” from *Mimesis*

Week 7: Mark Twain, *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*
+ Sam Halliday, “History, Civilization and *A Connecticut Yankee***

Annotated Bibliography due in class

Week 8: Gothic Romance
Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*
+ Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic* (selection)
+ Hurd's Letters on Chivalry and Romance (excerpts)

2-3 p. Prospectus of Final Essay Due

Week 9: The Western and Romance Nostalgia
Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses*
+ Northrop Frye, *The Secular Scripture* (selections)

Week 10: The Postmodern
Italo Calvino, *The Nonexistent Knight*
Borges, *Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote* (Short Story)
+ Frederic Jameson, “Magical Narratives: Romance as Genre”

Draft of Final Essay Due

Week 11: Modern Fantasy
T.H. White, *The Once and Future King* (The Sword in the Stone)
+ Elisabeth Brewer, *T.H. White's Once and Future King* (selections)

Week 12: Marion Zimmer Bradley, *The Mists of Avalon*, Book I
+ Jan Shaw, “Feminism and the Fantasy Tradition”

End of Reading Period: Final Essay (20-25 pp.) Due

Junior Tutorial Conference
Other Examples:

Tennyson, *Idylls of the King*
John Steinbeck, *Tortilla Flat*
Mary Stewart, *The Crystal Cave*
*Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975)
*The Fisher King* (1991)
*Tristan and Isolde* (2006)
*Game of Thrones* (2011)