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## HUM459 The Great Works of J.R.R. Tolkien

### Syllabus Highlights

*“It’s like in the great stories, Mr. Frodo. The ones that really mattered. Full of darkness and danger they were. And sometimes you didn’t want to know the end . . . because how could the end be happy? How could the world go back to the way it was when so much bad had happened? But in the end, it’s only a passing thing . . . this shadow. Even darkness must pass.”*

Fall 2021

Dr. Keith A. Mathison

### Course Description

An introduction to select great works of J.R.R. Tolkien.

### Learning Outcomes

This course is intended to bring students into constructive dialogue with one of the great authors of the twentieth century, and in doing so to equip them with an understanding of the way in which even fantasy literature can reflect truth, goodness, and beauty.

### Textbooks

1. Karen Wynn Fonstad, *The Atlas of Middle-earth*, rev. ed. (Houghton Mifflin, 1991).
2. J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit or There and Back Again* (Houghton Mifflin, 1966).
3. J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings* (Houghton Mifflin, 2004).
4. J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, ed. Christopher Tolkien (Houghton Mifflin, 2001).
5. J. R. R. Tolkien, *Tree and Leaf: Including Mythopoeia* (Harper Collins, 2001).
6. J. E. A. Tyler, *The Complete Tolkien Companion* (Macmillan, 2012).

### Course Requirements

1. Attend and participate in class.
2. Write and submit weekly reading response worksheets.
3. Write a senior level research paper (4000–4500 words) on a significant theme in the works of Tolkien.

\*This abbreviated syllabus is subject to revision. A full syllabus will be provided on the first day of class.