

# Course Syllabus

ML101: Harry Potter and Medieval Culture

Medieval and Medievalism Studies, Faculty of Arts, Waterloo Campus

Fall Semester | 2022

Instructor Contact InformationPeter Johnsson | [peterjohnsson@wlu.edu](mailto:peterjohnsson@wlu.edu)

Please use the above address to email me, rather than *MyLearningSpace* email.

Office HoursDrop-in Office hours: Tuesday 2-4pm.

Individual Zoom appointments are also available by arrangement through email.

## Course Information

Students will explore how the cultural phenomenon of Harry Potter, originating in the immensely popular novels of J. K. Rowling, draws upon, adapts, and/or represents medieval cultural artifacts, beliefs, and practices. Students will also examine how particular attitudes toward the Middle Ages are perpetuated by Harry Potter multi-media, such as film, video games, board games, theme parks, museum exhibits, fan communities, and fan fiction. No prior knowledge of Harry Potter is required.

Course Structure

Our scheduled class time is Tuesday 4:30pm-6:20pm in BA101. Lectures will be recorded and posted as Zoom recordings on the following Friday.

**Note on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic**

Currently the university has chosen to mandate in-person courses for the fall semester. This does not mean that the pandemic is over, please do take any precaution you can to avoid spreading this disease. I will not be requiring regular attendance for the lectures and will make them available online in case any of you have to miss class due to illness. Tutorials are bi-weekly and the tutorial reflections are based on 3 out of 5 attended tutorials, meaning you have flexibility if you have to miss tutorial. Anything with a set due date is also flexible - if you let me know by the due date at the latest (except in case of emergency). That said, anything handed in after a set due date will not receive detailed feedback, just a grade (although I will do my best to provide at least some comments on delayed blog pitches).

**In short: Please do not come to class if you or a family member falls ill**. Please try and let me know as soon as you can, and I will do my best to provide whatever accommodations you need.

If the university changes its policy, or if I become sick, the course will continue remotely.

## Tutorials and Instructional Assistants

Tutorials will be held on a biweekly basis, led by your instructional assistants, who are here as part of their participation in the Program’s pedagogy course, ML402 (*Teaching, Learning, and Thinking Through Medieval Studies*). While they will lead tutorial discussion, all marking, including tutorial reflections, will be done by me (I will be sitting in on all tutorials).

Please make a note of which schedule (A or B) includes your tutorial and ensure you attend on the correct week.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Biweekly Time Slot** | **Schedule A** | **Schedule B** |
| Wednesday 8:30-9:20am | T1 N/A | T5 N/A |
| Wednesday 9:30-10:20am | T2 Peter Johnsson | T6 Graydon Lee |
| Wednesday 10:30-11:20am | T3 – Grace Mills | T7 – Lana Mendez |
| Wednesday 2:30-3:20pm | T4 – Sofia Starkey | T8 – Tiffani Crant |

## Course Overview and Approach

This course will introduce you to the concept of *medievalism* (briefly, how popular culture uses the Middle Ages as subject matter and/or inspiration and utilizes the “medieval” as a way of reflecting on their own society). As we shall see, the Middle Ages are important in many ways (both subtle and overt) in the modern fantasy genre. The world of Harry Potter will be our entry into this complicated relationship and through examining themes found in J.K. Rowling’s text we will chart a course through its influences, both medieval and modern.

Topics covered will include:

* The influence of medieval literary forms on the narrative of the Harry Potter novels
* J.K. Rowling’s use of medieval ideas of magic, medicine, and prophecy
* Visual medievalism in the architecture of the Harry Potter universe
* Parallels with key aspects of medieval culture (including chivalry and knighthood, the medieval university, medieval feasting, and medieval book culture).
* Participatory and experiential medievalisms in Harry Potter tourism, merchandise, and fan cultures.

Clips from the movies and excerpts from the novels will occasionally be used in lectures and tutorials to explore the storyworld’s connections to medieval culture. Be aware that due to copyright restrictions, I will not be able to include clips in Zoom recordings. Laurier does have access to digital copies of all the Harry Potter movies available via the library, so I will assign clips by specific time stamps for you to watch before viewing lectures.

As Medieval and Medievalism Studies is an interdisciplinary program, we will be taking a range of disciplinary approaches to the material (literary studies, history, art history, archaeology, cultural studies, etc.). Lectures and tutorials may also include active learning exercises and group discussion, as appropriate.

## Course Texts

All readings for ML101 are available via ARES online reserves (accessed through the Course Reserves menu on MyLearningSpace) or linked on MLS itself. This includes relevant excerpts from the novels. You are not required to purchase any texts for this course. All seven Harry Potter films are also available via ARES; there will also be a handful of other relevant videos/clips assigned.

**MyLearningSpace**

In our brave new era of remote teaching/learning, our learning management system, MyLearningSpace (MLS) is perhaps our most important tool. You may want to download the PULSE app (linked on the front page of MLS in the right sidebar), which will allow you to receive real-time updates and notifications.

## Student Evaluation

| **Assessment** | **Weighting** | **Due Date** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Midterm | 20% | October 25th |
| Tutorial responses | 15% | Multiple/flexible |
| Question board participation | 10% | Multiple/flexible |
| Blog pitch | 5% | Nov 8th |
| Blog entry | 20% | Nov 25th |
| Final exam | 30% | Take-home; December exam period |
| **Total** | **100%** |  |

* **Midterm**: You will be given a take-home exam worth 20% of your final grade on October 18th. It will be due to the appropriate dropbox on MLS by 11:59pm on October 25th.
* **Tutorial responses**:You will be required to complete three tutorial responses over the course of the term, each worth 5% of your final grade. Each response must be 500-600 words in length and address the writing prompt provided in tutorial. You must submit each response to the appropriate dropbox (your first response to Tutorial Response #1, etc.). Prompts will be provided starting in Tutorial 1. You may complete them on whichever weeks you choose; the only restriction is that you must complete at least two responses by the end of week 6. Lecture responses for each week are due by 11:59pm on the appropriate Friday.
* **Question board participation**:Our MyLearningSpace website will have a dedicated “Question Board” for questions about lecture content and readings. 10% of your final grade is available to be earned by posting thoughtful questions, each worth 1 percent. 5% of your grade may be earned during weeks 1-6 and 5% during weeks 7-12 of the course. The only restriction is that you may post a maximum of two questions per week. An interim grade on this component will be released at the end of week 6, then updated at the end of the term. Selected questions will be covered in class, while others will be answered on the board itself. Questions for each week must be posted by Thursday at 11:59pm, or they will not count.
* **Blog pitch and blog entry**:Your major written assignment for this course will be a blog entry (1000-1200 words) on a selected aspect of medievalism in Harry Potter. You will be required to submit a blog “pitch” (5%) on November 8th for feedback on your ideas. The blog entry itself will be due on November 25th.
* **Final exam**:A take-home final exam worth 20% of your final grade will be due during the December exam period. Format TBA.

**Detailed Plan of Course**

The topics on the schedule below are subject to change. Readings or video clips found on the ARES online reserves are marked (ARES), while readings hosted or linked on MyLearningSpace are marked (MLS). All assigned readings/clips should be completed prior to the lectures/tutorials and you should come prepared to discuss them. Zoom lecture recordings are available on MLS and will be viewable by Friday of each week.

The names of Harry Potter books/movies are abbreviated on the schedule (i.e., HP: PS is *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*, HP: OotP is *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, and so forth.)

Most of the readings are quite short, but keep in mind that many are actual medieval documents. You may find their word choice or writing style strange. Allow yourself enough time to go over each excerpt carefully and make a note of any questions that you have.

**Module 1: Medievalism and the Potterverse**

**Week 1: September 13th** **Lecture topic:**

Introduction to the course and “Defining Medievalisms”

## Lecture reading:

Umberto Eco, “Ten Little Middle Ages” (MLS)

David Matthews, “How Many Middle Ages?” (MLS)

**Tutorial:**

No Tutorial this week

**Week 2: September 20th****Lecture topic:**

19th century Romanticism and the birth of the British school system

**Lecture reading:**

Franziska Becker, “J.K Rowling’s Harry Potter: A Revival of the Arthurian Legend?” (ARES)

Carsten Kullmann, “‘Of Muggles and Men’: Identifying Racism in the Harry Potter Series” (ARES)

**Tutorial 1A: September 21st - Medieval knights, reality and fiction**

**Tutorial reading:**

“The Function of Knighthood,” (ARES) “The Decadence of Knights,” (ARES) “Becoming A Knight” (ARES) “The Rule of the Order of the Knights Templar” (ARES)

HP: OoP Chapter 18: "Dumbledore's Army" (332-351)

HP: DH Chapter 22: "Deathly Hallows", excerpt on Potterwatch (356-360)

**Module 2: The otherworldly Middle Ages**

**Week 3: September 27th Lecture topic:**

Saint Harry the monster slayer and beasts in the Middle Ages

**Lecture reading:**

Carol Clover, “Introduction: Carrie and the boys” (ARES)

Carol Dover, “From Maire de France to J.K Rowling: The Weasel” (ARES)

Fantastic Beasts & where to find them (excerpts) (ARES)

Bestiary: being an English version of the Bodleian Library, Oxford M.S. Bodley 764 (ARES)

**HP film clips:**

For “Saint Harry and the Basilisk”: CoS (2:08-2:16); DH part 2 (1:22:40-1:31:25); For “Pulling the sword out of a hat”: PS 38:00-39:30, 1:42:35-1:45:50, 55:00-59:00

**Tutorial 1B: September 28th - Medieval knights, reality and fiction**

**Tutorial reading:**

“The Function of Knighthood,” (ARES) “The Decadence of Knights,” (ARES) “Becoming A Knight” (ARES) “The Rule of the Order of the Knights Templar” (ARES)

HP: OoP: Chapter 18: "Dumbledore's Army" (332-351)

HP: DH Chapter 22: "Deathly Hallows", excerpt on Potterwatch (356-360)

**Week 4: October 4th Lecture topic:**

Medieval forms of magic and Harry Potter

**Lecture reading:**

“Hugh of St. Victor, Didascalicon (1130’s)” (ARES); “Gratian’s Decretum on Magic (12th century)” (ARES);

“Divination and the Court: the Policraticus” (ARES); “Astronomy: Natural Magic or Necromancy?” (ARES); “Clerical Magic: A Handbook” (ARES); “In praise of Natural Magic: Cornelius Agrippa (15th century)” (ARES)

**Tutorial 2A: October 5th - The medieval Saint’s life reflected in Harry Potter**

**Tutorial reading:**

Abbo of Fleury, excerpt from The Martyrdom of Saint Edmund ([link](https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/870abbo-edmund.asp))

Life of Saint George from the Golden Legend ([link](https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/goldenlegend/gl-vol3-george.asp))

HP: CoS Chapter 17: “The Heir of Slytherin” (226-240)

HP: DH Chapter 34: “Forest again (excerpt)” (555-564)

**October 10-14 – Fall Reading Week: No classes**

**Week 5: October 18th****Lecture topic:**

Gendered magic and Witches

**Lecture reading:**

Naemi Winter, “‘I read about it in Hogwarts a History:’ the reception and function of history in Harry Potter” (ARES); Adso's Letter on the Antichrist ([Link](http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/Chronologia/Lspost10/Adso/Letter%20of%20Adso%20to%20Queen%20Gerberga%20Concerning.htm))

HP: PoA Chapter 6: Talons and tea leaves (75-93)

HP: OoP Chapter 37: Lost Prophecy (741-744)

**HP film clips:**

For “The future is (sometimes)” in the stars”: PoA - 29:10-31:20, 1:19:10-1:22:15

**Tutorial 2B: October 19th - The medieval Saint’s life reflected in Harry Potter**

**Tutorial reading:**

Abbo of Fleury, excerpt from The Martyrdom of Saint Edmund ([link](https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/870abbo-edmund.asp))

Life of Saint George from the Golden Legend ([link](https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/goldenlegend/gl-vol3-george.asp))

HP: CoS Chapter 17: “The Heir of Slytherin” (226-240)

HP: DH Chapter 34: “Forest again (excerpt)” (555-564)

**Week 6: October 25th****Lecture topic:**

Medicine, Science, and Alchemy in the Middle Ages

**Lecture reading:**

Signe Cohen, “Two Alchemists in Harry Potter: Voldemort and Harry and their quest for immortality,” (ARES)

**HP film clips:**

CoS 31:10-33:15 MIDTERM DUE!

**Tutorial 3A October 26th – The persecution of witches**

**Tutorial reading:**

“St. Thomas Aquinas : Scholasticism and Magic” (ARES); “The Trial of Dame Alice Kyteler, 1324” (ARES); “The University of Paris condemnation of Magic 1398” (ARES); “Johannes Nieder’s ‘Formicarius’ (ARES); “Malleus Maleficarum: Directions for the Torture of a Witch” (ARES)

HP: PoA Chapter 1: "Owl Post (excerpt)" (7-17)

**Module 3: The aesthetics of the medieval in Harry potter**

**Week 7: November 1st Lecture topic:**

Influence of medieval Christianity in Harry Potter

**Lecture reading:**

Vera Bub, “‘The Last Enemy that shall be destroyed is Death:’ Christian elements in Harry Potter?” (ARES)

**Tutorial 3B November 2nd – The persecution of witches**

**Tutorial reading:**

“St. Thomas Aquinas : Scholasticism and Magic” (ARES); “The Trial of Dame Alice Kyteler, 1324” (ARES); “The University of Paris condemnation of Magic 1398” (ARES); “Johannes Nieder’s ‘Formicarius’ (ARES); “Malleus Maleficarum: Directions for the Torture of a Witch” (ARES)

HP: PoA Chapter 1: "Owl Post (excerpt)" (7-17)

**Week 8: November 8th Lecture topic:**

Feasting and games in the Middle Ages

**Lecture reading:**

I, A Wandering Scholar Lad / Some Are Gaming ([Link](https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/medievalstudentsongs.asp))

Scholar in Paris / Sports in London (MLS)

Merton College Statutes (MLS)

HP: PS Chapter 11: "Quidditch" (133-142)

**HP film clips:**

For “Making merry”: PS 46:20-47:10, 1:07:47-1:08:10

Additional clips from Heston Blumenthal’s Medieval Feast (linked on MLS) BLOG PITCH DUE!

**Tutorial 4A November 9th – Medieval medicine: between magic and science?**

**Tutorial reading:**

“The Trotula” (ARES); “A Late Antique Estate-Holder’s Manual of Home Remedies”(ARES); “A Regional Case Study: Medicine in Anglo-Saxon England” (ARES); “Penitentials” and “Herbs” (ARES)

PS Chapter 8: "The Potions Master" (101-106)

HP: CoS Chapter 6: "Excerpt" on Mandrake (72-74)

**Week 9: November 15th Lecture topic:**

The magical scriptorium and medieval books

**Lecture reading:**

Watch “A World Inscribed: Illustrated Manuscripts” (linked on MLS)

**Tutorial 4B November 16th – Medieval medicine: between magic and science?**

**Tutorial reading:**

“The Trotula” (ARES); “A Late Antique Estate-Holder’s Manual of Home Remedies”(ARES); “A Regional Case Study: Medicine in Anglo-Saxon England” (ARES); “Penitentials” and “Herbs” (ARES)

HP: PS Chapter 8: "The Potions Master" (101-106)

HP: CoS Chapter 6: "Excerpt" on Mandrake (72-74)

**Week 10: November 22nd Lecture topic:**

Architectural and spatial medievalism

**Lecture reading:**

Denise Burkhard and Julia Stibane, “Darkness, Danger and Death: Exploring Gothic Places in Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets.” (ARES

**HP film clips:**

For “A fortress of learning”: DH part 2 40:30-1:07

**Tutorial 5A November 23rd – Harry Potter, medievalism and fan fiction**

**Tutorial reading:**

"Helga, Not Just Hufflepuff" ([Link](https://archiveofourown.org/works/10836501))

"The Many Names of Rowena Ravenclaw" ([Link](https://archiveofourown.org/works/12226101/chapters/27773550))

"Bold Gryffindor, Bravest of the Four" ([Link](https://archiveofourown.org/works/11145513/chapters/24866262))

"The Defence of Hogwarts" ([Link](https://archiveofourown.org/works/1122266))

"The Bringer of Hope" ([Link](https://archiveofourown.org/works/1541027))

NOVEMBER 25th - BLOG POST DUE!

**Module 4: The Malleable Middle Ages**

**Week 11: November 29th Lecture topic:**

Pilgrimage along the Via Harrius Potter

**Lecture reading:**

Take a look at the Harry Potter Shop online (linked on MLS)

Take a look at some of the clips on the Harry Potter Studio Tour channel on Youtube (linked on MLS).

“Behind the Bricks: A Tour of Diagon Alley” (Youtube link on MLS)

**Tutorial 5B November 30th – Harry Potter, medievalism and fan fiction**

**Tutorial reading:**

"Helga, Not Just Hufflepuff" ([Link](https://archiveofourown.org/works/10836501))

"The Many Names of Rowena Ravenclaw" ([Link](https://archiveofourown.org/works/12226101/chapters/27773550))

"Bold Gryffindor, Bravest of the Four" ([Link](https://archiveofourown.org/works/11145513/chapters/24866262))

"The Defence of Hogwarts" ([Link](https://archiveofourown.org/works/1122266))

"The Bringer of Hope" ([Link](https://archiveofourown.org/works/1541027))

**Week 12: December 6th Lecture topic:**

Fandom and the evolving legacy of Harry Potter

**Lecture reading:**

"I didn't read Harry Potter when I was growing up. And I wasn't alone" ([Link](https://www.vox.com/culture/2018/8/31/17607988/harry-potter-boycott-evangelical-dobson-focus-peretti-satanic-panic)); Anna Madill, Yao Zhao and Liheng Fan, “Male‒male marriage in Sinophone and Anglophone Harry Potter *danmei* and *slash*,” (ARES)

## University and Course Policy

Please note that you are responsible for reading and fully adhering to all of the policies in this section. Failure to read these policies will not be considered a legitimate reason for not following them. If anything is unclear, contact me for clarification.

1. **Academic Integrity and TurnItIn.Com:** Wilfrid Laurier University uses software that can check for plagiarism. All essays in this course will be submitted to the MLS dropbox, which will use TurnItIn.Com to generate an originality report. The University has a defined policy with respect to academic misconduct. As a Laurier student you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with this policy and the accompanying penalty guidelines, some of which may appear on your transcript if there is a finding of misconduct. The relevant policy can be found at Laurier's [academic integrity](https://students.wlu.ca/academics/academic-integrity/index.html) website along with resources to educate and support you in upholding a culture of integrity.
2. **Copyright and intellectual property statement:** The educational materials developed for this course, including, but not limited to, lecture notes and slides, handout materials, examinations and assignments, and any materials posted to MyLearningSpace, are the intellectual property of the course instructor. These materials have been developed for student use only and they are not intended for wider dissemination and/or communication outside of a given course. Posting or providing unauthorized audio, video, or textual material of lecture content to third-party websites violates an instructor’s intellectual property rights, and the Canadian Copyright Act. Recording lectures in any way is prohibited in this course unless specific permission has been granted by the instructor. Failure to follow these instructions may be in contravention of the university’s Student Non-Academic Code of Conduct and/or Code of Academic Conduct and will result in appropriate penalties. Participation in this course constitutes an agreement by all parties to abide by the relevant University Policies, and to respect the intellectual property of others during and after their association with Wilfrid Laurier University.
3. **Synchronous recordings and privacy:** Synchronous (live) class sessions will be delivered in this course through a video conferencing platform (Zoom) supported by the university.  Steps have been taken to protect the security of the information shared. For more information about Zoom, please visit ICT’s [Tech Support and Services page](https://students.wlu.ca/services-and-spaces/tech-services/index.html). Class lectures will be recorded with the video and audio (and in some cases transcription) made available to students in the course in MyLearningSpace for the duration of the term. ​The recordings may capture your name, or voice through the video and audio recordings. By attending in these lectures, you are consenting to the collection of this information for the purposes of administering the class and associated course work. If you are concerned about the use or collection of your name and other personal information in the class, please contact the course instructor to identify possible alternatives. To learn more about how your personal information is collected, used and disclosed by the University, please see Laurier’s [Notice of Collection, Use and Disclosure of Personal Information](https://www.wlu.ca/about/public-accountability/privacy/notice-of-collection.html).
4. **Email policy:** Emails requiring a response will receive one within 48 hours (usually sooner) unless I have established that I will be out of town/otherwise away from the computer. Ensure that your question is not answered on the syllabus or other course documents before emailing and remember that detailed questions concerning assignments or course material are best left for office hours, email, or the Question Board. Please use only your Laurier email to contact me and include your name in the body of the email.
5. **Tutorial absences**: Attendance at tutorial is required. If you miss a tutorial for a legitimate reason (for example, personal or family illness or emergency), it may be excluded from your participation grade as long as you inform me of the situation as soon as possible. If you know in advance that you must miss a tutorial for a legitimate but non-emergency reason (for example, a required academic commitment that cannot be rescheduled or a medical appointment), speak to me as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for you to attend a different tutorial. Please note that in most cases this will be a one-time accommodation.
6. **Late assignments and extensions:** Late penalties are 2% a day, including weekends. No assignments will be accepted after the last day of classes unless a formal petition has been made and granted by the Faculty of Arts. Given current circumstances, I will be fairly lenient re: extensions as long as you ask no later than the due date. Any work handed in after the due date (whether late or due to an extension) will receive a grade, but no written feedback.
7. **Grade Reassessment:** I am very happy to discuss any questions or concerns you might have about your grades, but only in person and only if 24 hours have passed since you received the grade (this will give you a chance to consider the feedback you received in more detail). Once we have met, you may request that I officially reassess the grade, but I will require a written explanation of why you felt the grade did not adequately reflect how you met the requirements of the assignment.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

* [Waterloo Student Food Bank](http://yourstudentsunion.ca/service/food-bank/) - All students are eligible to use this service to ensure they’re eating healthy when overwhelmed, stressed or financially strained. Anonymously request a package online 24-7. All dietary restrictions accommodated.
* [Waterloo Foot Patrol](http://yourstudentsunion.ca/service/foot-patrol/) - 519.886.FOOT (3668) - A volunteer operated safe-walk program, available Fall and Winter daily from 6:30 pm to 3 am. Teams of two are assigned to escort students to and from campus by foot or by van.
* [Waterloo Student Wellness Centre](https://students.wlu.ca/wellness-and-recreation/health-and-wellness/index.html) | 519-884-0710, x3146 - The Centre supports the physical, emotional, and mental health needs of students. Located on the 2nd floor of the Student Services Building, booked and same-day appointments are available Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:30 am to 7:30 pm, and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 8:30 am to 4:15 pm. Contact the Centre at x3146, [wellness@wlu.ca](mailto:wellness@wlu.ca) or @LaurierWellness. After hours crisis support available 24/7. Call 1-844-437-3247 (HERE247).