**English 1011-026: Seminar in Writing through Literature**

**Little Red Writing Hood:**

**Composition in/through Fairy Tales**

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Classroom/Hours: Hall 104, Tu/Th 2:00-3:45

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**Overview**

This course is rooted in the lived practice of academic writing. In it, we will explore how reading and writing transform ways of thinking about and engaging with communities and the world. As a way of engaging in academic work, you will put your experiences and ideas into conversation with texts, your peers, and broader contexts through language. This course is a seminar—consequently, we will be spending the semester collaboratively inquiring about and discovering new locations for thinking, discussion, and writing. You will be contributing to the intellectual work of the university, and in doing so, you will have the opportunity to investigate your own interests through shared readings and materials.

**Course Inquiry**

In this course, we’ll consider composition in and through fairy tales in three main ways:

# You’ll compose essays using a fairy-tale model, as outlined by Kate Turabian. In particular, you’ll learn how the four main elements of a successful essay correspond to the four main elements of a fairy tale. Using this method, you will strengthen composition skills that can be used in classes throughout the university as well as in other areas of life, such as the workplace.

1. We’ll also consider how fairy tales embody the social and ongoing process of composition. Fairy tales began as an oral medium in which communities gathered and told stories to transmit ideas and pass time. These tales changed as they passed from person to person, and were largely casual forms of communication, much like Facebook or Tumblr. In this class, you’ll consider how fairy tales continue to circulate today and how composition in general can pass in and out of different mediums and genres, rewritten and revised as they pass from person to person.
2. Finally, you’ll write about fairy tales as pieces of composition. In so doing, you’ll consider such questions as: what is composition and what does composing mean for you as a student? How do cultures compose identities (such as gender, class, religion, nationality, race, etc.) through language, especially through fairy tales? How can authors work to recompose identities? And can these re-compositions ultimately affect culture?

# **Texts**

* *The Classic Fairy Tales (Norton Critical Edition)*, second edition edited by Maria Tatar (Norton, 2016).

**Useful Websites:**

* SurLaLune (<http://www.surlalunefairytales.com/>)-brings together versions, adaptations, and scholarship about fairy tales, a good place to get a grasp of the general history of fairy tales.
* Purdue OWL (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>)-explains how to correctly cite sources in MLA, APA, or Chicago styles.

# **Course Rationale**

All UConn First-Year Writing courses are a part of a larger curricular ecosystem. The FYW courses provide a key component of UConn’s [general education requirements](http://geoc.uconn.edu/student-guide-to-gen-ed/), [preparing you for your writing-intensive (“W”) courses and other academic work,](http://geoc.uconn.edu/student-guide-to-gen-ed/) and reflect goals and practices common to national standards for college writing. You can learn more about UConn’s FYW courses at the [program website](http://fyw.uconn.edu/) and read the program’s letter on our HuskyCT page.

# **Habits of Mind**

A publication called the [Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing](http://wpacouncil.org/framework), written and adopted by three national organizations dedicated to the teaching of writing, suggests that the following habits of mind are “critical for college success”:

* Curiosity – the desire to know about the world.
* Openness – the willingness to consider new ways of being and thinking in the world.
* Engagement – a sense of investment and involvement in learning.
* Creativity – the ability to use novel approaches for generating, investigating, and representing ideas.
* Persistence – the ability to sustain interest in and attention to short- and long-term projects.
* Responsibility – the ability to take ownership of one’s actions and understand the consequences of those actions for oneself and others.
* Flexibility – the ability to adapt to situations, expectations, or demands.
* Metacognition – the ability to reflect on one’s own thinking as well as on the individual and cultural processes used to structure knowledge.

Our English 1011 course is designed to foster these habits of mind through what the document describes as “writing, reading, and critical analysis experiences.”

**Course Goals**

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Consider how culture composes language and language composes identity.
2. Develop and ask thoughtful questions that encourage inquiry and genuine curiosity, not only in school but in day-to-day life.
3. Read thoughtfully, graciously, and critically, not only understanding a writer’s content and intent but also engaging with the writer and his/her content.
4. Understand that the circumstances of a text’s origins will impact the characteristics of that text.
5. Work with different modes of communication, both separately and in tandem.
6. Research a given topic, using both scholarly and popular sources, understand the differences between those two kinds of sources, and determine which sources are most appropriate for a given context.
7. Demonstrate basic competency with [Information Literacy](http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency).
8. Recognize the connections between day-to-day writing and the writing they do in class.
9. Reflect on and practice various writing processes (including drafting and revision).
10. See yourself as a writer who can enter and contribute to an academic conversation.

**Course Components**

*Participation*: This is a seminar rather than a lecture course. Therefore, the class is driven by and centered on your work. Thoughtful discourse is an essential part of this class, and you will frequently work in groups of various sizes, which means you will need to be considerate of and attentive to others. It is your responsibility to keep up with the reading, to contribute to class conversation in the form of analytical comments or questions, to participate thoughtfully in peer review activities, and to attend class regularly and on time (see attendance policy below). You should also expect that your work, along with your peers’, will be circulated and shared regularly in class. To ensure that you take participation seriously, ten percent of your grade will come from participation. At the middle and end of the semester, you and I will grade your participation according to the Community Standards created on the first day of class. I do recognize that not everyone participates in the same way, so we will use your Community Standards as a basis for what participation looks like in our class.

*Reading*: Although English 1011 is a writing course, the writing you do here has a very close relationship to reading. In fact, the process of writing begins with careful reading of a situation, a written text, or other media. You will be reading to find ways into the conversation in which an author or text is participating. Assume that all texts are multi-layered and will yield complex readings, even if they’re “just” fairy tales. You should expect to read most texts more than once. You will need to read carefully, reread often, and take notes, however you take notes (even if that’s only highlighting important sections). Come to class prepared to share your thoughts and questions.

*Writing*: In this course, you will complete one major written project (totaling 30 pages) that is broken into four distinct parts. The first part will consist of a fairy tale adaptation written by yourself and starring…yourself. This creative piece will not be graded on artistic brilliance but rather how well you incorporate ideas from your research into the piece and then analyze themes of identity, culture, and adaptation. In order to accomplish this, you will be doing ample writing along the way, including in-class writing, homework assignments, and drafts of these major projects. Only the final project will be assigned an individual grade that will impact your final grade, but all of your written work matters here.

*Revision*: Each section of the major writing project will go through a drafting process in which you shape your ideas and experiment with ways to best communicate your work. You should expect to put significant time and effort into the revision process and for projects to shift, change, and develop as you revise. An essay must go through a drafting and revision process in order to be considered for a grade. Because you are only required to turn in one rough draft of each section and the final essay with all the sections revised, I will gladly read multiple drafts of any and all sections you choose to revise. However, I reserve the right to refuse to comment on more than three drafts beyond the required amount if I feel the section no longer needs my help.

*Conferences and Peer Review*: Conferences and peer review are integral to the goals of this course. Through the drafting process of each part of the major writing project, we will use small group or individual conferences during, in addition to, or in place of regular class meetings. The quality of your involvement in these processes will constitute ten percent of your overall grade. This grade will be determined each time you go through peer review by those you review and myself, and, like with participation, you will be graded using a set of class-generated guidelines.

*Group Project*: Along with the group work and peer review that you do in and out of class, you will complete one multimodal group project in which you and your group will choose a medium in which fairy tales are adapted and discuss 1) basic conventions for that medium; 2) guidelines for that medium; 3) examples of fairy-tale adaptations using that medium. As a group, you will do research for this project, but you will also create your own ideas of how you think scholars should handle this medium. Your examples may also be helpful for you and your classmates in the fourth part of the final project, so it is important that you take this project seriously. Your final presentation to the class should be 5-10 minutes long and should walk us through this information using a multimodal presentation. You will then each be responsible for a personal response to your group’s presentation.

*Information Literacy*: English 1011 provides the first stage of the University’s Information Literacy Competency, including attention to university research and digital literacy. You should expect to use outside sources and scholarly research to inform your work throughout the semester. While all assignments will provide opportunities for developing Information Literacy skills, we will have at least one assignment built with this specific purpose in mind.

*Reflective Component*: The reflective portion of the course includes any time spent on characterizing, reconsidering, or qualifying one’s work. Often less evaluative than descriptive, reflective writing turns the critical, analytical activity that typifies academic writing back on the writing project itself, addressing questions such as:

* How does this project work?
* What characterizes the approach of this project and the “moves” that it makes?
* What work was entailed in getting to this point?

We will practice reflective writing (and reflective work more generally) throughout the semester, usually in ways that complement formal writing projects by providing opportunities for you to imagine alternatives or trace lines of thought or activity.

*Google Classroom*: For this course, we will use Google Classroom as our online platform for communication and the distribution of class materials. This class will use Google Classroom for sharing all types of writing and collaborating with each other. It is your responsibility to be familiar with in Google Classroom, though we will spend some time in class learning basic navigation.

**Grading and Evaluation**

Your final grade will depend on two things: your successful completion of the day-to-day work of the course (including drafts of all major writing assignments and peer review) and the quality of your work.

As for the first—your successful completion of the day-to-day work of the course—you will be awarded credit for your contributions to class, your submissions of essay drafts and other work that is satisfactory, on time, and complete, as well as your regular engagement with others’ work. If you submit passing-level and on-time work throughout the semester, you will receive at least a B for the course. If there is missing or insufficient work, your grade may fall below a B. Substantial amounts of missing work—or simply a failure to turn in all major essays—will result in a failure of the course.

The second component is entirely about the quality of your completed major writing project. Your major assignment will be given a grade. Generally an A paper will

* respond energetically and creatively to the readings and the assignment;
* engage meaningfully with texts in a sustained manner;
* form a cohesive final project;
* contribute new formulations that successfully enter into conversation with others’ work; and
* demonstrate rhetorical awareness, including knowledge of and facility with genre conventions.

In short, while your consistent and successful completion of the day-to-day work of the course will suffice for a B, it is through the quality of your writing project that you will be able to raise your grade above the B level. If at any point you have questions or concerns about how you’re doing in the course, please don’t hesitate to ask.

Your final grade will break down thus:

Class Participation 10%

Peer Review 10%

Group Project 10%

Final Essay 70%

While that 70% can seem daunting, to say the least, I will assign each rough draft a grade for where it stands when I see it. That grade is not likely to be your final grade because you will go through revisions which will strengthen your paper, and thus your grade. But these grades will give you an idea of where you stand. Any time you give me a revision, I will give you a grade along with my comments so that, at any given time, you have a rough approximation of how you are doing in the class. Your rough draft grades do not figure into your final grade because a rough draft is just that: rough. That grade does not reflect the work that will eventually be done on your paper, so it does not belong in the final grade. So, while that 70% may seem unnerving, it is there so that only your very best work shows up in your GPA.

To break that 70% down into less frightening chunks and to acknowledge that your writing at the end of the semester will most likely be better than that at the beginning of the semester, your Final Essay grade will be broken into four increasing chunks. You should note that these four grade chunks should not correspond to four different sections of your final essay, as we will discuss in class, but rather I will grade your writing on these four different topics individually:

Your adaptation: 15 pts.

Identity: 20 pts.

Culture: 30 pts.

Adaptation: 35 pts.

**Course Policies**

*Integrity and Respect*: In this class you may come into contact, and perhaps conflict, with com-munities whose ideals and perspectives differ radically from your own. This will be interesting and productive, but it may also be uncomfortable, and we will seek to find meaning in those un-comfortable moments. As a class, we will maintain a sympathetic and compassionate outlook and keep an open mind throughout the course.

In accordance with UConn policies and Title IX, this course is a designated safe space for all students, regardless of background, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, socioec-onomic status, race, or ethnicity. If you feel you have experienced discrimination or harassment at UConn, you can find support and resources at the UConn Office of Diversity and Equity. You may also contact Health Services, Counseling & Mental Health Services, and/or the Women’s Center. Please note that I am a mandatory reporter to the Office of Diversity & Equity if I be-come aware of issues that may pose a danger to a student’s health or safety. Our conversations can be private, but some information cannot be kept confidential.

*Disabilities*: The First-Year Writing Program is committed to making educational opportunities available to all students. If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact the Center for Students with Disabilities (Wilbur Cross 204, 860-486-2020). They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate, and provide me with a letter describing those accommodations. All information and documentation is confidential. Please speak with me if you have any concerns.

*The Writing Center*: The Writing Center employs tutors who work with students on their papers at any stage of the writing process—from brainstorming to reviewing final drafts to helping with specific difficulties. This service is free, and highly recommended for all students. You can sign up for an appointment on the Writing Center website.

*Ethical Scholarship*: While it is central to our work to study and make use of the ideas and texts of others, this must be done in an ethical and appropriate way. Please review and abide by the University’s code on academic misconduct (including plagiarism and misuse of sources), which can be found on the [UConn Community Standards website](http://community.uconn.edu/); you will be held responsible for understanding these materials. Plagiarizing the work of others—passing off someone else’s work as your own—is a very serious offense, and anyone found plagiarizing will fail the essay or the course. Please let me know if you have questions about what constitutes appropriate use and citation of other people’s work, or visit the First Year Writing Program’s website on [Ethical Scholarship for Students](http://fyw.uconn.edu/resources-for-students-2/ethical-scholarship-for-students-2/).

*Multilingual Scholarship*: This classroom is a multilingual and translingual space, and we speak and write across languages. I encourage you to speak to me about any concerns you have with language use (reading, speaking, and/or writing) in this course, and I encourage you to be respectful of your colleagues in this multilingual space.

*Attendance*: Class attendance is important and can affect your grade. You are responsible for work missed as a result of an absence. Allowances will be made for religious observances, medical or family emergencies, and mandatory athletic commitments with advanced notice.

*Late Papers*: It is crucial that you turn assignments in on time. Failing to do so will affect your grade and limit your ability to participate in class. All formal and informal assignments must be ready to turn in at the beginning of the class they are due and/or uploaded to Google Classroom no later than the stated deadline. If you have a serious need for an extension, you must contact me and receive approval at least 48 hours before the due date. There are no retroactive extensions. In the event of a crisis, contact me as soon as possible, and we will work out a solution.

*Digital and Paper Copies*: You are expected to back up your digital documents. Late papers due to computer crashes or other electronic issues will not be accepted. Google Drive, Dropbox, Microsoft OneDrive, or an external hard drive are all excellent options for saving your work. If you encounter technical difficulties in the writing process, or if you would like to take advantage of some of the complementary software provided by the university, please visit the Information Technology Department online.

*Phones, Tablets, and Other Electronics*: Please do not use electronic devices in class unless they are in the service of your note taking or in-class writing. Let’s do our best to speak directly to one another and support a collegial environment. If I think that your electronic device is distracting you from the here and now, you will lose electronic privileges for the day. If this loss happens often, you will lose electronic privileges for the remainder of the course. That being said, we will be doing a lot of in-class writing, so you may want to bring a computer or tablet regularly in order to facilitate long writing periods.

*Communication*: Please feel free to contact me at any time by email or come to my office hours. If for some reason you cannot make my office hours for a legitimate reason (like you have class during that time, not like you don’t feel like waking up of bed), contact me and we can set up another time. You may want to contact me prior to coming in to talk to me to let me know what you want to talk about so that I have adequate time to prepare materials for our conversation. However, I will not respond to emails that do not have a subject, greeting, and salutation/signature. These are vital parts of any professional email, and you would do well to start using them now.

*Course Concerns*: If you have any questions about the course or your final course grade, please see me as soon as possible. If that conversation is not productive, please see or contact an Assistant Director of First-Year Writing to further discuss the issues: fyw@uconn.edu.