ENG 4905-001: Children's Literature into Film

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Course description and objectives: This course considers what happens to both traditional and contemporary children's literature when it is adapted from written word into another medium. We will read several traditional fairy tales, a picture book, and several novels, viewing their movie or TV counterparts as well. Our objectives, working in the context of children's literature, include 1) understanding the stresses that adaptation to a different medium places on any work of art, 2) interpreting the role of film as a transmitter and shaper of culture, 3) understanding film and literature as a culture's responses to their times, and 3) sharpening our critical/analytical skills by placing what we learn into some context or theoretical framework. Because movies are essentially a communal experience, it will be a course requirement that you view them during one of the scheduled lab sessions. There will be one session on Tuesday evening from 6 to roughly 8, and another scheduled after I have examined the schedules of all students in the class. If neither of these is possible for you, you may make arrangements with me to view the films when I preview them, usually but not always on Monday mornings. The course will also necessitate your being on campus for research in the university library and for small group work, as group presentations will constitute the final third of the semester's work.

Prerequisites: Successful completion of English 1001C and 1002C or the equivalents, and at least Junior standing. It is useful but not necessary to have taken English 3405.

Grading: Unless otherwise specified in class, your grade will be based upon

- Attendance and substantive participation - 30 points
- A weekly 2-page typed journal entry - 60 points
- A mid-term exam - 30 points
- A final exam - 60 points
- An individual paper or project - 30 points
- A group film/book presentation project - 60 points
- Other (May include quizzes, shorter in-class writings, small group work other than project) - 30 points

Total 300 points: 275-300 = A, 249-274 = B, 215-248 = C, 190-215 = D, below 190 = F

Note: Students taking the course for graduate credit are expected to produce more substantial research and writing.

(See next page for more on grading.)
Other policies:

Since the course will be conducted as a seminar (i.e. the students bear a greater share of the responsibility for the teaching/learning experience) everyone is required to be at every meeting. Each student is allowed one absence without its affecting the final grade. You may expect any further absences to be reflected in the final grade.

All assignments are due on the dates specified. Only work turned in on time is eligible for full points.

All major assignments (readings, mid-term, final, journal, paper, group project) must be completed, regardless of point total, to receive a passing grade. If changes occur, as sometimes happens, in the major assignments, point totals will be redistributed as necessary. Such redistribution will be announced in class and will apply to all members of the class.

Obviously, you need to be here and to participate to receive attendance and participation points. Quizzes and discussion-prep writing, if assigned, are meant to check readiness for the discussion. Taking them after the discussion is pointless, so--no make-ups on quizzes.

On plagiarism: using the thoughts or words of another without giving proper credit is a serious offense. Any plagiarism or other academic dishonesty will result in an F for the assignment, will most likely result in an F for the course and will be reported to Judicial Board. If you are, at this stage in your academic career, learned what plagiarism and academic dishonesty are, learn at once.

Some ground rules for class discussion:
-We agree to share our thoughts and experiences freely. When someone else is speaking, we agree to listen.
-We may not necessarily agree with a person, but we will respect that person's right to their own thoughts and experiences.
-We recognize that each of us speaks out of our own experiences, and that what we think is sometimes based on incomplete or mistaken information. Each of us will probably be wrong about some things, and misinformed about others. We accept responsibility for obtaining the most accurate and complete information we can and revising our judgments when necessary.
-We agree to familiarize ourselves with basic reference sources in children's literature and film, and to use them carefully in both discussion and writing.
-We accept responsibility for teaching each other.
-We agree to read carefully, think critically, and discuss thoughtfully, and to pass our insights on as we can.
-We agree that if any member of the class wishes to contribute something to discussion, but wishes it to remain within the group, it will.

Assignments: You will receive your first assignments verbally at the first class meeting, and will subsequently receive a schedule of assignments. Please keep up with it unless you are given specific instructions to alter it.
Students with disabilities: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodation, please contact the coordinator of disability services (581 - 6583) as soon as possible.

Please note: Every effort has been made to spell out policies and expectations clearly. If you don't understand something, please ask. Some changes will occur in the normal course of the semester, including possible changes in assignments or point distribution. If these occur, they will apply equally to everyone, and an announcement in class will be considered sufficient notification. Any additional handouts you receive should be considered part of this policy statement. Remaining in the course after these policies have been discussed and clarified signals that you have accepted them and agree to abide by them.

Texts:
Griffiths and Frey, Classics of Children's Literature
Burnett, The Little Princess
Burnford, The Incredible Journey
Clemens (Twain), Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
Dahl, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
Fitzhugh, Harriet the Spy
Banks, The Indian in the Cupboard
Lewis, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe
Paterson, Bridge to Terabithia
Taylor, Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry
Tolkien, The Hobbit