

LIT 4322 (1D09)
Turlington 2346

Instructor: John Cech (√)
Tues. 7th, Thurs. 7 - 8th

The Folktale

“If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales.
If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.”
-- Albert Einstein

One of the oldest of all narrative forms -- perhaps THE oldest -- is the folktale, a story told by a group of people. Some of these ancient tales have provided foundations for our most profound beliefs -- our myths, our stories of origin, our sacred texts. Others have been preserved in the ever-shifting, always renewing, and now hugely lucrative form of the fairy tale, that container of some of the key tropes that are part of our basic cultural literacy. Despite our reliance on digital and electronic media for much of our entertainment, we are still, fundamentally, storytelling creatures. And despite the media and its mediations, we still rely on and find most powerful the stories that are told to us, in person, by another, actual person. The roots of our fascination with the living story, the folktale that is passed along to us by another human being, run deep in our collective psyches and cultural DNA. This course will explore these roots through an examination of the kinds of stories that we tell one another -- from fables and parables to fairy tales and tall tales, from hilarious family anecdotes to treasured local legends. This exploration will be wide-ranging, archeological, archetypal, and, above all, creative.

Readings and viewings

In the interests of cost, many of the works that we will read and view in the course will be available online in print or digital form. The following texts provide an entry to this rich world of the folktale, and will serve as a starting point for our discussions.

Cole, Joanna. *Best-Loved Folktales from Around the World*.
Burrison, J. A. *Storytellers: Folktales and Legends from the South*.

Course Requirements

Active, engaged, enthusiastic, punctual participation in the course	(10 points).
You will lose a point for every absence more than three.	
Weekly writing projects and in-class presentations.	
You will need to do 7 projects of the 10 that are assigned.	
A final project, a collection of folktales	(35 points)
A final exam	(30 points).
	(25 points).

Office Hours

Tuesdays 12:00 - 1:30, Thursdays 12:45 - 1:30, and by appointment
Office: 4364 Turlington Hall
Telephone: (352) 294-2861
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January Schedule of Readings and Writing Projects

- January 6 Introductions to the course.
 8 Introductions to each other.
 13 Beginning in the Cave: Folktale Roots.
 Read (in Cole): "Introduction" (xvii-xxiv)
 "The Baba Yaga" (411-414).
 Read: Wikipedia entries for "Songline," "The Sorcerer," and "Griot."
 See "Cave of Forgotten Dreams" on Netflix.
- Jessica Oreck screening of "The Vanquishing of the Witch Baba Yaga."
 4 p.m., Judaica Room, Special Collections, Smathers Library East.
- 15 Beginnings: The Oral Tradition and the Folktale.
 Read (in Burrison): "Introduction" (1-25)
 Watch on Youtube: "Cockabooddy"
 Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Kubla Kahn"
- 20 First Tales: How Things Came to Be.
 Read (in Burrison): Cherokee Myths and Legends (83-91)
 Read (in Cole): 599-602;
 Other readings in Cole TBA.
- 22 Creators and Tricksters
 Readings in Cole and Burrison TBA.
- 27 Cautionary and Teaching Tales
 Aesop, selections TBA.
 Parables of Jesus and Buddha, selections TBA.
 Perrault, "Little Red Riding Hood" (online)
 James Thurber, "The Little Girl and the Wolf" (online)
- 29 Visit to the Baldwin Library, Special Collections, Smathers Library East

Writing Projects for January

Over the course of the semester, you will receive 10 project assignments. Most of these are short writings, 1-2 pages, typed, double-spaced. They are due in class on the deadline day, in hard copy. Please DO NOT send them as digital files.

- January 20 Project #1 Collect a local/family myth or legend.
 OR
 Collect or write an original story about how something came to be. One caveat: no Gators.
- January 27 Project #3 Write an original (short!) fable, drawn from personal experience, Include an original illustration.

February	3	
	5	
	10	
	12	
	17	
	19	
	24	
	26	
March	3/5	SPRING BREAK
	10	
	12	
	17	
	19	
	24	
	26	
	31	
April	2	
	7	
	9	
	14	
	16	Term Projects due in class.
	21	Final Exam.

Any additions to or changes in these assignments, as well as specific project, reading, viewing, and presentation assignments will be announced in class and posted on the class listserv. Be sure to check your email regularly for these messages. Please note: you should create a network of contacts with others in the class -- this is especially important for getting an assignment you may have missed, since I will not (except in cases of emergency) repeat the assignments via phone or email.

Grading Rubric

This is a 100-point course based on the total scores of your quizzes and exams. There will be a one-point deduction for each unexcused absence after the three allowed for the course. Each absence after three will be a one-point deduction.

A = 92 - 100	B+ = 88 - 89	C+ = 78 - 79	D + = 68 - 69	E = 59 and below
A- = 90 - 91	B = 82 - 87	C = 72 - 77	D = 62 - 67	
	B - = 80 - 81	C- = 70 - 71	D - = 60 - 61	

Final Grade appeals.

1000- and 2000- level courses: students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant in the English Department

Composition and Humanities credit

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see: [\[L\]
\[SEP\]](https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx)

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx>

Disability Services

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Statement on Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>

Academic Honesty

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

This is a General Education course providing student learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. For more information, see:

[http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx#learning."](http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx#learning.)