

ENGL 491: *The Faerie Queene*
Assessment and Classroom Plan

assessment structure suggested values:

Summative assessment: 30% of final grade

Formative assessment: 60% of final grade

 Reading Journal: 30%

 Discussion questions: 30%

Course Feedback/Reflection: 10%

A/ **Summative Assessment:** suggested value: 30% of final grade

This assessment is intended to provide an overall sense of the student's learning at the end of the course. This is where the student will demonstrate the application of the skills and concepts accrued during the course and their capacity to integrate research into that knowledge. Students may complete this assignment individually or in collaboration with other students. Collaborative projects must be authorized by the instructor and must include a mechanism for assessment signed by all participants in the collaboration.

Students may choose from one of the three options for their summative assessment:

Research Paper: 10 pages, double-spaced, Times new Roman, 12 point font

Using their reading journals and drawing from course lectures, class discussions, contextual materials and readings, and substantive research, students will design a paper topic and compose a well-researched, cogent comparison of at least two Books of *The Faerie Queene*. All topics must be cleared with the instructor. To that end, each student will submit a two-page paper proposal **in week 8** of the course. The paper proposal will consist of the following: a detailed and well-articulated research question, a preliminary bibliography (min. 6 critical sources, not included in the page count of the proposal), an indication of which books, passages, or themes will be the focus of the paper, and a brief discussion of the argument.

Remix: While this assignment may take many forms, it must nevertheless include both a written analysis and substantive research. The artifact can take any form that can be transported, photographed or delivered electronically (for example, in the case of music or video). In effect, the remix fulfills the expectations of a research paper in terms of its analytical content, dedication of time, and integration of research. Each artifact must be accompanied by a discussion of the artifact and how it is used as an analytical tool to increase our understanding of the text. The

length of this written piece will be negotiated with the instructor depending upon the kind of artifact produced, but will generally be in the area of 5 pages in length. As in the case of the research paper, a proposal must be submitted in week 8. The proposal must include the following: a detailed and well-articulated research question, a preliminary bibliography (min. 6 critical sources, not included in the page count of the proposal), an indication of which books, passages, or themes will be the focus of the paper, a brief discussion of the argument, and a rationale for the choice of remix artifact.

Portfolio: Like the remix and the research paper, the portfolio is intended to produce a summative view of your learning in the course. To that end, it must include some of the aspects of the research paper or remix. For instance, there must be evidence of a concerted effort to integrate research into your work across the course of the semester, and it must include some form of analytical statement regarding an important theme or learning outcome. Materials included in the portfolio may vary, but must indicate concerted and detailed attention to at least 2 Books of the primary text. Therefore, you will need to plan over the course of the semester to produce and include artifacts that will meet these expectations. Each portfolio will also include a summative statement contextualizing all of the materials and explaining how they demonstrate the student's transformation and learning. Students interested in this option will be required to meet with the instructor before week 5 in order to discuss the compilation and curation of their portfolio.

B/ Formative Assessment: suggested value: 60% of final grade

This assessment is intended to track students' transformation over time, to provide incentive for sustained commitment to the work of the class, and to provide opportunities for periodic interaction with the instructor for the purposes of feedback.

Reading Journal: suggested value, 30% of final grade

Each student will complete a weekly Reading Journal in which they will record the insights and questions that come up while reading the texts and the contextual materials, keep track of the insights and questions raised during lectures and classroom activities, reflect on their learning experience, include secondary research findings and anything else that is relevant to their growth and thought processes week to week. The Reading Journal will be a place for recording results of classroom experiences and of bringing new material to the classroom space. It will also be the ground from which the research/remix/portfolio summative assessment project will be built. While you are welcome to keep your journal in either hand-written or electronic form, only hard copies will be collected and assessed. The reading journals will be collected 3 times over the course of the semester for assessment and feedback.

The particular format and content of the journals will be determined by each student, but should reflect a sustained engagement with both the text and the life of the class. At some point over the course of the semester, each student will be expected to produce at least one journal entry in each of the following categories: learning reflection, close textual analysis of a passage, discussion question and response (not the ones you hand in for grade; see below), commentary on secondary research.

Discussion Question, Moderation and Response: suggested value, $2 \times 15\% = 30\%$ or choose the best of 2 for 30%

Each student will sign up for 2 weeks/Books and Cantos and will produce 2 discussion questions for that week that will be the basis of class activities. Each student will lead a discussion group focusing on one of their questions. The following week the student will hand in a 3-page response to the discussion question. Depending on class interest and time, it may be possible for the student to lead a discussion on their 2nd discussion question in the 2nd class that week. In this case, the student may choose which discussion to hand in for grade.

Course Feedback/Reflection: suggested value, 10% of final grade

Each student will compose a 3-page reflection on the course, its structure, its assessment model, its content, and classroom activities. This short reflection paper will be due after the last day of classes (date to be negotiated).

C/ Daily Classroom Activities/Sustained Engagement: the overall themes that emerged from our class discussions were the following:

1. The importance of questions: there was strong consensus that our class discussions should be based on questions generated by the students. The discussion question assignment above is intended to formalize and provide assessment for that work;
2. The importance of small group engagement: while there was some diversity in our expectations for how group engagement should be structured, the idea of working together on questions found a very strong consensus.

Based on these 2 themes, the discussion we had in class, and comments I received by email, I suggest the following structure as a compromise between individual work and assessment and group engagement.

Tuesday's classes: During these classes those who have signed up for discussion questions for that week will lead the discussion in groups. It will be up to those group leaders to provide necessary context for the fruitful exploration of their discussion questions. Occasionally, I will be providing broader lectures in order to frame some of our discussions, either before we embark on them or as a summation. We will construct a "parking lot" for questions that arise from the discussions of that day. These questions will form the basis of Thursday's classes.

Thursday's classes: We will begin these classes with a brief summation (2 min. max) by each of Tuesday's moderators on what they learned about their discussion topic from the group activity on Tuesday. We will then have the option of using either the 2nd question composed by those group leaders or of taking up one of the questions put in the parking lot on Tuesday. We will then conduct a World Café-style discussion class with a round-up at the end.

Online options: I will consult with the CTLT to see if we can construct an online forum where people can submit questions, resources, and have additional conversation. Each week, 2 students will volunteer to look over the forum's discussions for that week and provide a brief summary of highlights. These summaries will then be posted on the class blog.