**Purpose:** The writings of Lewis and Tolkien shaped a critique of rationalistic materialism and the global wars of the early 20th century. Their writings continue to be sources of inspiration and deep thinking today, serving to influencing everything from apologetics to literature. The purpose of this course is to engage the writings and thinking in the writings of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien to gain a better understanding of their views. The course will focus on the primary readings of both authors and will train the students in how to compare and contrast competing ideas between two thinkers who seem to have similar ideas.

**Pre-requisite Reading:** The course is designed for those who have read little to none of the writings of Lewis or Tolkien (or who have not read them theologically). However, it will be assumed that the student has read *The Hobbit* in entirety. This book is short and easy, so if students have not read *The Hobbit* before it is advised that they read this before the class.

**Class Sessions:** June 20-21, July 25-26, August 22-23

**Textbooks:**

G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy.*

This book forms the foundational philosophy for our discussion of literature and the Christian faith, and it was a text that Lewis, Tolkien and the Inklings found inspirational. This book will not
be part of the paper assignment, so the student can find any edition (e-book or print) that they wish to use. The e-book edition is often free.

Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings* (*ie.* *Fellowship of the Ring, The Two Towers, Return of the King*)
Any edition of these books will be fine, so long as they are not abridged and not audiobook. E-book editions (such as Kindle) are often inexpensive, though they can be difficult to take notes on. The key is to get an unabridged edition and read the entirety of the books (including the stories found in the appendices).

Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia*
Any edition of these books will be fine, so long as they are not abridged and not audiobook. Read the entirety of the books.

Lewis, *The Space Trilogy*
Any edition of these books will be fine, so long as they are not abridged and not audiobook. Read the entirety of the books.

Lewis, *Til We Have Faces*
Any edition of this book will be fine, so long as it is not abridged and not audiobook. Read the entirety of the book.

Course Requirements:

Students will be required to attend all the lectures and read each of the assigned books. There will also be a major comparative paper. The grade breakdown is as follows:

Reading: 15%
Journal Analysis: 20%
Paper: 65%

Reading: to receive credit for the reading it is mandatory that students read all of the assigned books for the course. The grade will be assessed as an ‘all or nothing’ format: to get credit, students must complete the reading entirely. *The reading report will be entered on Sakai on or before September 6th by midnight.*
Journal Analysis: Students will complete each volume of the required reading and then write 1-2 pages summarizing (in prose, not outline form) the major themes, figures, narrative developments in the book. For example, after reading *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, the student will write 1-2 pages on the major ideas presented in the book (e.g. atonement, sin) and how Lewis presents the material in narrative form. The journal, then, will form the backbone to your analysis for the paper (see below). The analysis must be substantive and focused on the theological dimensions of the books. **The journal analysis will be submitted as one Word document combined in Sakai on September 6th by midnight.**

Paper: The paper will be a comparative paper in which students will explore a theme (or themes) in the writings of Lewis and Tolkien. **The paper will be 15+ pages** (not including title page, works cited or other nonessential elements of the paper). The paper will be required to be a fair analysis of both authors and a careful comparison of their ideas with supporting evidence from the primary source reading. **The paper will be submitted via Sakai on September 6th by midnight.**

Paper format: The paper must be in Word format, 1-inch margins, Times New Roman. Citations must be in Turabian format and students should consult the current edition of the Student Handbook for information regarding plagiarism.

Grading of Written Material: Both the Journal Analysis and the Paper will be graded 1/3 for your writing style/execution and 2/3 on the substance of your reflections.

Grade Scale: Students should consult the current edition of the Student Handbook for the grading scale.