Because children's literature, perhaps more than any other literary genre, operates directly in the process of interpellation, of inscribing gender roles, class consciousness, etc., I have designed this course as one which constructs children's literature as a cultural apparatus that creates for its readers representations of race, class, and gender that are often problematic, often laudable. Thus, in addition to attending to structural and aesthetic matters, we will investigate the historical moment in which the texts on this syllabus were produced as well as the implicit and explicit ideology within them. Furthermore, we will discuss how the reception to these texts may have changed over time. I will encourage oppositional reading strategies in order for you to cultivate how to read with and against canonized texts and the institutions that canonize these texts. As much pedagogical theory has shown, learning best takes place when students are active participants in knowledge making. So I will try to eschew long lectures. Instead, class time will largely consist of discussion, group-work, and in-class writing assignments. These activities will put the responsibility of creating knowledge largely on your shoulders.

WARNING/TEASER: Be aware that in this course we will be discussing race, class, sexuality, politics, violence, love and other touchy subjects, along with more conventional literary topics such as aesthetic value and form. If you believe that discussing these issues in a rigorous, intellectual fashion might be too much for you, then consider taking another course this semester. However, you might also consider staying in the course and confronting/interrogating these issues alongside your sensitivities and their ideological and cultural roots. Regardless, if you ever feel that our discussions are needlessly offensive and/or unsettling, please come to my office hours and voice your concerns, especially if you feel that your classmates or I are not treating the issues with the sensitivity they deserve.

Books

Carroll, Lewis. Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. [Online]
Colum, Padraic. Nordic Gods & Heroes
Creech, Sharon. Walk Two Moons
Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. Kinder und Hausmärchen [Online]
Lawson, JonArno. The Man In The Moon-fixer's Mask
Lester, Julius. Black Folktales
Mochizuki, Ken. Baseball Saved Us
Paterson, Katherine. Bridge To Terabithia
Perrault, Charles. Perrault's Fairy Tales
Rowling, J. K. Harry Potter & The Sorcerer's Stone
Ryan, Pam Muñoz. Esperanza Rising
Sendak, Maurice. Where The Wild Things Are
Taylor, Mildred D. Roll Of Thunder Hear My Cry
Tolkien, J.R.R. The Hobbit.
Attendance and Quizzes:

Because the success of the class depends upon your discussion and interpretations of the various texts we encounter, you should attend every class session. I will compose tests based on what we do in the classroom—from my lectures and your comments and ideas. This course is designed to facilitate your learning; thus, we will spend a large amount of our time discussing and interrogating what you find interesting and compelling about the works I assign. Of course, I will lead our analysis, playing, at times, devil's advocate, providing you with various and sometimes contentious readings of the literature. You will be evaluated on how actively you participate in and extend our classroom discussions, so please come to class with something to say. I may give reading quizzes if it seems that the class is consistently unprepared.

Late Work:

Work will be turned in on the date due or not at all. We all have schedules, and it is imperative that we keep to them. However, I am not completely draconian. In extreme cases I may accept late work, but don't count on it.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is taking someone else's words, idea, or argument and claiming it as your own. Don't do it unless you have a interesting and rigorous intellectual or aesthetical reason. Cite all your sources unless you discuss your appropriation with me first. Instances of plagiarism designed to avoid intellectual work will earn you an F for the course, and, in egregious cases, may result in expulsion from the university. Please familiarize yourself with SDSU plagiarism policies, discussed in your handbook. Throughout the syllabus and my links page are links to many useful web sources. Do not take the words or ideas from any of these sources without providing the appropriate citations unless, again, you discuss your aims with me first. This goes for oral presentations as well as written work.

GRADES:

Tweets: 15%
Daily Grades & Attendance: 20%
Group Author/Book Presentation: 20%
Mid-Term: 20%
Final Exam: 25%

Tweets (15%):

You need to write (at least) two (2) tweets every week. (Remember: these are just 140 characters—including any hashtags—so I'm not asking too much.) They should end with the hashtag

#CL501

Don't tag ME in your tweet unless you're specifically asking me something. Typically, you'll just use the #CL501 hashtag (or tag another classmate if you want to tweet to them). I'll see what you've tweeted; I'll visit your Twitter page every week and count your class-related tweets.
You should have tweeted at least twenty eight (28) times by the end of the semester.

Your Tweets for class should comment on or relate to the readings. Try to make each Tweet individual, so it can stand by itself (that is, avoid multiple tweets that add up to one LONG, serialized tweet: the point is to craft concise, interesting commentary.)

Again: you can engage with your classmates, tweet to me, post links to relevant online commentary or whatever. Retweets don't count as one of your weekly tweets. But please, do retweet. They're not “for credit,” but they’re fun. (And if I retweet one of yours, you know it’s especially good. ;-) Have fun with this part! Be imaginative and playful (or imaginative and serious). But don’t stress out about it. Mostly, it’s just a way for us to all interact on Twitter—like informal chatting before or after class. It’s a way for me to get to know you. Follow me as soon as you get your account up and running. You might want to create a special account especially for this class.

Make sure the Twitter account you use for this class is PUBLIC: if you have your account set as “private” no one will be able to see what you tweet (and you won’t get credit).

My Twitter handle is: @josephsdsu (And, yes, feel free to unfollow me as soon as the semester is over. There’s no harm in that.)

And remember: this is a large class. I’ve added this social media assignment to my courses to build community, to get you all talking to one another. So read each other’s tweets; follow each other; interact (if our class is full, every student in this class should have at least 35 followers).

Daily Grades & Attendance (20%):

If the class seems consistently unprepared (if our discussions aren’t lively and engaged with specifics from the readings and films) I may give you short (usually five question) quizzes. I might also give you short, in-class writing assignments before or after we begin discussing each work. These assignments count as quiz grades, and will be graded pass/fail. To earn a passing grade, you have to show a familiarity with the assigned text and some degree of critical engagement. In-class work cannot be made up.

Group Author/Book Presentation (20%):

In a group of five or six, you will select a book from our reading list and prepare a 15-minute report on it and the author. You will also prepare a one-page handout outlining important information. The form of your presentation and of your handout is up to you. Ideally, your presentation will help us segue into our discussion of the work at hand. Remember, you need to have fifteen minutes of discussion planned. You can go over, but I'd like you to be as close to fifteen minutes as possible. So rehearse and plan. These should be tight, well planned, and to the point. Important: this is a group presentation, yes, but it’s one presentation. That is, it’s not a collection of five or six mini presentations that don’t have much to do with one another. So work together so that your presentation works as a coherent statement about the work.
In your presentation you’ll want to:
Discuss biographical information about the author (be selective, choosing details relevant to your overarching argument or position on the work)
Engage the historical moment in which the book was produced (again, be selective: talk about history and context when it relates to your overarching position on the work)
Use terms and concepts from the course
Relate the piece to other works we’ve read and discussed so far in the semester (make connections to previous discussions, yes, but when talking about previous works we’ve read or watched for class, consider how your work relates to themes or scenes or techniques that we didn’t discuss in class)
Give us a sense of how the book was received when it was first published (that is, find book reviews written when the book was originally released). Compare those original reviews to the reception the book currently enjoys.

(For your presentation—though especially for the last item—you will want to check out Children’s Literature Review and Something about the Author, two references available in the library [online and print])

Children’s Literature Review: Call#: Internet ; Z1037.A1
http://libpac.sdsu.edu/search/?tchildren%27s+literature+review/tchildrens+literature+review/1%2C387%2C387%2CB/frame
tset&FF=tchildrens+literature+review&2%2C2%2C/indexsort=t

Something about the Author: Call#: Reference; PN451 .S6
http://libpac.sdsu.edu/search/?tsomething+about+the+author/tsomething+about+the+author/1%2C881%2C881%2CB/frame
tset&FF=tsomething+about+the+author&2%2C2%2C/indexsort=t

Mid-Term: (20%):
Your mid-term will be composed of a short answer section and an essay section. If you read and actively engage in class discussion you should do fine. This exam is an occasion for you to discuss the knowledge you’ve produced—so don’t expect it to dwell on minutiae. It cannot be made up.

Final Exam (25%):
As with the mid-term, your final will be composed of a short answer section and an essay section. Again, if you read and actively engage in class discussion you should do fine. This exam is an occasion for you to discuss the knowledge you’ve produced—so don’t expect it to dwell on minutiae. It cannot be made up.

Note:
If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.
Final Comments:

This class should be challenging, but it should also be fun. Remember, I want you to do well. I don’t lecture too much; mostly I like to chat with you, to get your impressions, to help you to understand some of the complexities and subtleties that might not be obvious. I’m here to give you biographical and historical data that will enable you to make your interpretations and conceptions of children’s literature more convincing, to show you how other critics interpret the literature, and maybe to tell you how I interpret it. I look forward to working with each of you.
Weekly Syllabus
**Tentative**
This schedule can change. However, all changes will be announced in class

Week One:

Thursday, Jan. 22
Introductions Ideology and Childhood

Week Two:
Tuesday, Jan. 27
All of Perrault's Fairytales (except "Little Red Riding Hood"); Determine Book
Presentation Groups

Thursday, Jan. 29
Perrault cont.

Week Three:
Tuesday, Feb. 3
Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm: Kinder und Hausmärchen (see on-line reading below)

On-line READING (REQUIRED BY TUESDAY):
The Frog King or Iron Heinrich
http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm001.html

Rapunzel
http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm012.html

Hansel and Gretel
http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm015.html

Rumpelstiltskin
http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm055.html

Thursday, Feb. 5
"Little Red Riding Hood" Bring into class picture book version of Little Red Riding Hood. And remember to bring Perrault's Fairy Tales to class as well.

On-line READING (REQUIRED BY THURSDAY)
Little Red Riding Hood
http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0333.html

Read these tales: 1. Perrault (or use the Perrault book you bought for class), 2. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, 3. Germany/Poland, 4. Italy/Austria, and 5. France
**Week Four:**
Tuesday, Feb. 10
Colum, *Nordic Gods and Heroes*
All of Parts I, II, & III, and Chapter 11 of IV

Thursday, Feb. 12
*Nordic Gods and Heroes* cont.

**Week Five:**
Tuesday, Feb. 17
Lester, *Black Folktales*

Thursday, Feb. 19
*Black Folktales*, cont.

**Week Six:**
Tuesday, Feb. 24

Thursday, Feb. 26
Lawson, *The Man in the Moon-fixer’s Mask*

**Week Seven:**
Tuesday, Mar. 3
Carroll, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*

**Wednesday, March 4th: Extra Credit**
Leon Williams Room, Love Library (LL 430-431); 5:00PM-5:50PM
Lecture on Alice, Carroll, and Nonsense, by Michael Heyman

Thursday, Mar. 5
Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*

**Week Eight:**
Tuesday, Mar. 10
Maurice Sendak, *Where the Wild Things Are*

Thursday, Mar. 12
Mochizuki, *Baseball Saved Us*

**Week Nine:**
Tuesday, Mar. 17
Picture Books (Mochizuki & Sendak & others)
And REVIEW

Thursday, Mar. 19
MIDTERM EXAM!!!!
Week Ten:
Tuesday, Mar. 24
Paterson, *Bridge to Terabithia*

Thursday, Mar. 26
*Bridge to Terabithia* cont.

Week Eleven:

**NO CLASS: SPRING RECESS**

Week Twelve:
Tuesday, Apr. 7
Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*

Thursday, Apr. 9
*Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, cont.

Week Thirteen:
Tuesday, Apr. 14
Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Hobbit*

Thursday, Apr. 16
*The Hobbit* cont.

Week Fourteen:
Tuesday, Apr. 21
Pam Muñoz Ryan, *Esperanza Rising*

Thursday, Apr. 23
*Esperanza Rising*

Week Fifteen:
Tuesday, Apr. 28
Mildred D. Taylor, *Roll Of Thunder Hear My Cry*

Thursday, Apr. 30
*Roll Of Thunder Hear My Cry* cont.

Week Sixteen:
Tuesday, May 5
Sharon Creech, *Walk Two Moons*

Thursday, May 7
*Walk Two Moons* cont.

*May 8-14: Final Exam Week*