



Course Code & Title:	Discovering Narnia: Religion and Imagination in C.S. Lewis's Fantasy World
Day, time, location:	TBA, ZOOM
Course Supervisor:	Dr. Jason Lepojärvi Former President of the Oxford University C.S. Lewis Society
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Course Description

This course examines C.S. Lewis's (1898–1963) classic *The Chronicles of Narnia* from theological, philosophical, and literary perspectives in close dialogue with Michael Ward's revolutionary and controversial *Planet Narnia* (Oxford University Press, 2008). Through weekly lectures, guided discussions of assigned texts, two Oxford-style interactive tutorials and essays, and two guest lectures by Dr. Kirstin Jeffrey Johnson and Dr. Michael Ward, we explore religiously charged themes, such as myth, conversion, power, freedom, language, love, and death.

The course instructor Dr. Jason Lepojärvi is a former President of the Oxford University C.S. Lewis Society and Junior Research Fellow in Theology at St. Benet's Hall, Oxford, and the author of "*Worship, Veneration, Idolatry: Observations from C.S. Lewis*" (2015).

Course Texts

1. C.S. Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia* (HarperCollins, 2004, hardcover) ISBN: 9780060598242
2. Michael Ward, *The Narnia Code* (Tyndale House, 2010) ISBN: 9781414339658
3. Additional readings will be posted on Google Classroom, the web platform for this course

Course Schedule and Readings

UNIT 1 MYTH, CONVERSION, AND FREEDOM

- Week 1 Introduction: Lewis, Logic, and Logistics
Reading: "Reason Like A Champion" by Paul Blaschko and Meghan Sullivan
- Week 2 Jupiter: Power
Reading: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*; and *The Narnia Code*, pp. 1–56
- Week 3 Mars: War
Reading: *Prince Caspian*; and *The Narnia Code*, pp. 57–68
- Week 4 Sol: Light and Liberality
Reading: *The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"*; and *The Narnia Code*, pp. 69–80
- Week 5 *Tutorial 1: Myth and Conversion*
Essay-specific readings TBD

UNIT 2 LOVE, LANGUAGE, AND DEATH

- Week 6 Luna: Equality and Hierarchy
Reading: *The Silver Chair*; and *The Narnia Code*, pp. 81–92
- Week 7 Mercury: Language
Reading: *Horse and His Boy*; and *The Narnia Code*, pp. 93–104; and for guest TBD
Guest: Dr. Kirstin Jeffrey Johnson, Director of the Linlathen Center, Ottawa
- Week 8 Venus and Saturn: Love and Death
Reading: *The Magician's Nephew*; and *The Narnia Code*, pp. 105–116
Reading: *The Last Battle*; and *The Narnia Code*, pp. 117–128
- Week 9 Recapitulation
Reading: *The Narnia Code*, pp. 129–147
Guest: Dr. Michael Ward, Senior Research Fellow, Blackfriars Hall, Oxford University
- Week 10 *Tutorial 2: Planet Narnia*
Essay-specific readings TBD

Course Objectives

After successful completion of this course students will have:

1. Acquired a comprehensive understanding of the influential fiction (e.g. *Narnia Chronicles*) by C.S. Lewis.
2. Analyzed the literary and rhetorical strategies and methodologies he employs to engage theological themes.
3. Assessed some contributions of his fiction to the study of religion, imagination, literature, and culture.
4. Connected Lewis's literary fiction to central problems and ideas of religious thought and experience.
5. Practiced research, writing, and argumentation skills through interactive tutorial essays.

Course Requirements

Assignment	Value	Due Date
Participation	20%	Ongoing
Tutorial Essays	80% (2 x 40%)	Weeks 5 and 10
Total	100%	

1. **Participation (20%):** Most weeks there will be a synchronous lecture and a guided discussion on Zoom (120 mins). Come prepared to contribute to discussion in constructive ways based on your home-made notes on the **DRAW assignments (DRAW: “Do This,” “Read This,” and “Watch This”)**. All students are requested and for-credit students are *required* to read all readings prior to class; complete the given assignments promptly; attend class regularly; participate in class discussion; and provide constructive feedback on one another's tutorial essays. More details given in class.
2. **Tutorial Essays (80%):** Two short tutorial essays (1,500–2,000 words) will be assigned over the course of the term. Students will have a chance to incorporate peer feedback from Oxford-style group tutorials before submitting the final versions for evaluation. The two essays are weighted at 40% each. Detailed essay and tutorial instructions and tips given in class and the DRAW document.

Course Attendance Policies

Attentive and sustained participation in class is the primary requirement. For-credit students may have one excused absence. Repeated late attendance or unexcused absences may result in a diminished course grade and could result in a failing grade. Please submit all work on time to avoid a 10-point grade reduction. Missing a tutorial session is subjected to an additional 10-point essay grade reduction.

Freedom of Discussion, Viewpoint Diversity, and Constructive Disagreement

In order to create a classroom environment that supports respectful, critical inquiry through the free exchange of ideas, the following principles will guide our work:

1. Treat every member of the class with respect, even if you disagree with their opinion.
2. Reasonable minds can differ on any number of perspectives, opinions, and conclusions.
3. Because constructive disagreement sharpens thinking, deepens understanding, and reveals novel insights, it is not just encouraged, it is expected.
4. All related viewpoints are welcome.
5. No ideas are immune from scrutiny and debate.
6. You will not be graded on your opinions.

Style Guide

Tutorial essays will follow the Chicago Manual Style guidelines. More details in class.