ENGLISH 392 Myth, Magic, and the Heroic Life: Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene*

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**Course Description:**

Before Game of Thrones, before The Lord of the Rings, before Harry Potter and The Narnia Chronicles, before Stranger Things, there was Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene*. A hugely influential and richly imaginative work of chivalric romance, Spenser’s major poem lies at the very foundation of the Anglo-American literary tradition alongside Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton. To study Spenser is to study the emergence of the English renaissance literary and cultural imagination. In this course, we will examine Edmund Spenser’s major poem *The Faerie Queene* in its literary, mythological, religious, socio-cultural, and critical contexts. In studying Spenser’s epic, students will have an opportunity to deepen their understanding of classical and Christian mythographic traditions while exploring a variety of critical approaches including myth criticism (analytical psychology), historical contextualization, genre theory, and more.

**Proposed Assignments:**

1. Research Essay #1 (1,000-1,200 words). 15%
2. Reading Journal and/or Creative Project. 20%. (All Satisfactory Journals-Projects receive 100%)
3. Final Research Essay: (1,500-2,000 words). 30%
4. Final Exam. Essay Question Given in Advance. 25%
5. Participation. 10%.
Readings:

The Faerie Queene Book 1 (ed. Kaske) (Hackett, 2006)
The Faerie Queene Book 2 (ed. Gray) (Hackett, 2006)
The Faerie Queene Books 3-4 (eds. Stephen and Stoll) (Hackett, 2006)
The Faerie Queene Book 5 (ed. Stoll) (Hackett, 2006)