

ENGL 423A.101/524G.101: Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*
Credits: 3

Instructor: Marie H. Loughlin, PhD

Course Description:

As Catherine Nicholson has recently pointed out, Edmund Spenser's epic romance *The Faerie Queene* (1590/1596) is a peculiar literary classic: "Few works have a greater capacity to inspire pleasure, few do more to tax readers' patience, and none, perhaps, has a stronger propensity to fill them with self-doubt" (*Reading and Not Reading The Faerie Queene* 2). In this course, we will explore *The Faerie Queene* as a work that centres reading and the reader, and interrogates early modern England's definition of "right reading" and its freight of assumptions related to power, imperialism, colonialism, gender, race, sexuality, and agency.

Reading List:

Although Edmund Spenser wrote other major works, we will only be reading *The Faerie Queene*. However, since *The Faerie Queene* is among the longest poems in the English language (it clocks in at over 36,000 lines), I would recommend getting started with your reading as soon as you have decided to register.

We will be reading the entire poem: all six books and the fragmentary seventh book (known as the 'Mutabilitie Cantos').

Required Text:

I am not usually restrictive about which academic edition of a text you wish to purchase, but the following is both complete and the standard edition of the work. If you have another complete edition of *The Faerie Queene* that you wish to use, you may do so, but check that your edition also contains Spenser's "Letter to Raleigh."

Spenser, Edmund. *Spenser: The Faerie Queene*, edited by A. C. Hamilton with Hiroshi Yamashita, Toshiyuki Suzuki, and Shohachi Fukuda, revised 2nd edition. Pearson/Longman, 2001, 2007. ISBN-10: 1-4058-3281-9; ISBN-13: 978-1-4058-3281-6

Other: Assignments: 1 seminar paper (20%); 1 research paper (25%); 6 reading quizzes (25%); 1 public scholarship project (25%); participation (5%). There is NO final exam. **Public Scholarship Project:** The theme for the public scholarship project is 'Reinventing *The Faerie Queene* for Modern Readers,' and it involves using any available digital tools to interest, lure and intrigue readers to dive into a poem that has gained the unenviable reputation of being "famously unreadable" (Nicholson 3). To read more about the possible options, visit my UBCblog site before or after June 10th: *Reinventing Edmund Spenser's The Faerie Queene*: <https://blogs.ubc.ca/reinventingfaeriequeene/>