AT&T FACULTY-STAFF AWARDS IN INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY
2011-2012 Faculty-Staff Competition
Course APPLICATION FORM

Course Identifier: (e.g. TLC801) **AL 491.730**

Course Name: **UN-Happily Ever After: The Real Household Tales of Europe**

Department: na College: Arts and Letters

Primary contact name, phone number, and email *(normally this will be the lead instructor)*

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Faculty and Staff Involved in Developing and Offering the Course *please list full name, position at MSU, email address, and project role for each person*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>MSU Affiliation</th>
<th>PROJECT ROLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angelika Kraemer</td>
<td>Academic Specialist, Arts and Letters</td>
<td>Lead instructor, lead developer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott Schopieray</td>
<td>Academic Specialist, Arts and Letters</td>
<td>Assistant developer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian Adams</td>
<td>Visiting Specialist, Arts and Letters</td>
<td>Technology developer</td>
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Which Competition Are You Entering (select one):

- [x] FULLY ONLINE COURSE (no required face to face component)
- [ ] BLENDED/HYBRID COURSE (some face to face learning is replaced by online learning)
- [ ] TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED LEARNING INNOVATION (one specific technology innovation in a face-to-face or online course)

Semester(s) offered in 2011-2012 and number of students enrolled:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMESTER</th>
<th># STUDENTS</th>
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<td>US 11 (session one)</td>
<td>40</td>
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“Who knew that Cinderella’s stepsisters chopped off their heel and toe... I didn’t realize how violent fairy tales are.” (Senior, Education)

AL 491 - The Real Household Tales of Europe

AL 491.730 – The Real Household Tales of Europe was taught online for the first time in summer 2011 and reached a broad variety of MSU students. 40 students were enrolled; 1 freshman, 3 sophomores, 10 juniors, 25 seniors, and 1 graduate certificate student. The students not only represented all levels but also 18 different majors from 8 Colleges.

I. Course Description

In AL 491, students learned how the genre of fairy tales developed and evolved over time throughout European history. They learned that fairy tales are cultural documents that reveal a great deal about the fabric of communities: they offer insights into the changing nature of family relationships, describe differences in male and female socialization, document the development of mass pedagogy, and portray different ways cultures express individual and collective identities. The course traced the circulation of these archetypal stories through socio-cultural history from the Italian Renaissance, to early courtly fairy tales in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century France, and the bourgeois refashioning of the genre by the Grimm Brothers in early Nineteenth-Century Germany. The course also explored the cultural effects of the global circulation of the tales and the possible ramifications of the Disney-effect to imagine the world as a single, global space linked by a wide array of technological, economic, social, and cultural forces and at the same time, the threat posed by such global formations of culture to local cultures and traditions.

The course was designed as a self-paced online course in order to allow students the greatest extent of flexibility. Based on student feedback from blended courses (GRM 202, GRM 435, and GRM 455), flexibility was the most important feature for online assignments. In order to engage students with each other and create interaction among and between students, the instructor, and course materials, a variety of features were implemented and specifically designed for this course, which will be discussed in more detail below. Even though these interactive features were asynchronous (i.e., the students did not have to be online at the same time), they created a dynamic learning experience.

The course was developed in Angel and consisted of 6 major units and a short introductory and concluding unit. Students had 7 weeks to complete all requirements. It was suggested that students work through one unit per week and automatic emails were sent every day when students had not logged on for 5 days. Assignments included 21 online activities (such as discussion forums, simulated conversations with the instructor, and web quests, accounting for
45% of the final grade), 8 quizzes (30% of final grade), 2 reaction papers and a multimedia project (15%), and a final paper (10%). Quizzes and other assignments were graded on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week.

II. Learning and Interaction Goals of the Course or Technology-enhanced Innovation

The main goal of the course was to explore the European fairy tale tradition through multiple disciplines within arts and letters, such as literary and cultural studies, history, psychology, and visual and performing arts. In the process of that exploration, students examined carefully and critically the materials and issues they encountered, and developed their understanding through writing, discussions, and other online assignments.

The course offered an opportunity to
- gain an understanding of the literary genre of fairy tales and the developments it underwent throughout European cultural history.
- develop a critical understanding of how people live in a culture not as an “add-on” but as a medium in which we act.
- learn to analyze significant social and cultural processes in the social history of Europe.
- develop critical reading and writing skills.
- utilize technology for learning.

Liberal learning goals were addressed through reading some of the important non-fictional accounts theorizing the fairy tale. The course explored traditional cultural theories of the fairy tale (Lüthi), semiotic perspectives (Propp), and psychoanalytic and pedagogical approaches (Bettelheim) and contextualized this genre in cultural and social history (Zipes). The focus was on the role that the literary fairy tale by male and female writers assumes in the civilizing process (Elias). Engagement with these texts fostered analytical thinking and cultural understanding. A central concern of this course was the intertextual relationship between the different versions of fairy tales – both chronological and geographical. Comparisons of different versions (in their original languages and English translations) allowed students to connect the topic with their own society, history, and culture. The online assignments challenged students to think critically, communicate effectively, and integrate reasoning.

Given the self-paced nature of the course, we felt it was very important to implement features that would allow students to meet each other and to interact with one another. We expected students to log into the course at least once per week until they completed all units, however, we already knew at the beginning of the course that some students would only be able to work on weekends because they completed internships out of state during the week or that some would join one week into the course because they studied abroad. Our goal was to create an open and engaging, albeit virtual, classroom atmosphere where students could learn with and from each other. To this end, our design team developed two widgets, small applications that can be used with Angel and can be integrated into any MSU course free of charge. These will be discussed along with other applications that made this course not only highly interactive but also innovative.

III. Points of Interest and Innovation

When we first started developing this course, we decided to provide students with a self-paced learning experience even though it meant we would sacrifice synchronous learning opportunities. Each new unit in the course was unlocked as students progressed through the materials. Within each unit, assignments also automatically unlocked as students worked through them, allowing them to work at their own pace. Throughout the course, we referred back to earlier assignments to foster deeper interaction with materials and peers and incorporated a number of innovative approaches that simulated face-to-face learning and teaching styles.

Because students were not expected to interact with their instructor in real time (unless they skyped or chatted in for office hours), the course structure was a crucial, guiding element. Each unit followed the same structure so students would know what to expect. Units started with a unit overview outlining objectives, the schedule (including a time estimate of how long it would take them to work through the materials), and a content overview, followed by the actual content. The first activity in each major unit was a pre-quiz in which students could test their knowledge of the unit content. These quizzes also gave students an idea of what would be covered in the unit. They were not graded. Each unit ended with a graded quiz that tested unit content. Each unit also included additional readings students could draw on for unit assignments. Early on and reminded
throughout the course, students were given detailed information for the two major final assignments, a multimedia (team) project and a final paper. We did not want to put students who did not finish all units at a disadvantage. Everyone was able to submit these major assignments, which accounted for 15% of the final grade.

Each unit contained at least one video lecture, which introduced students to the topic at hand. These lectures were narrated Prezis, cloud-based presentations on a zoomable canvas, which are visually captivating (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xplzruA8mus). Additional viewing opportunities were included as well to vary content delivery and retain students’ interest. Starting in Unit 2, each unit also contained a short narrated video lecture that reviewed the content of the prior unit (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=All2t_WywAM).

Unit 1 - History of Folk and Fairy Tales

Unit Overview
In this unit, we will learn about the ancient history of folk and fairy tales. The unit will also introduce you to some of the better known collectors of fairy tales. In addition, we will talk about classifications of tales and we will slowly realize the importance these tales continue to have throughout the social and cultural history of Europe.

Unit Objectives
1. Understand the origin of modern-day tales
2. Differentiate tale types
3. Read secondary materials and select folk tales
4. Understand how tales were shared and collected throughout different cultures
5. Know how people lived during the times these tales were told and recorded
6. Identify online materials pertinent to the topic in different European cultures

Unit Schedule
As a reminder, the course is designed as a self-paced course. Therefore, there are no fixed due dates for assignments. You need to keep in mind that you need to complete all units by Thursday, June 30. I expect you to log into our course at least once per week until you have completed all units. Quizzes and other assignments will be graded on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week. You may not be able to progress beyond a quiz until it has been graded.

Due to the self-paced nature of the course, there will be minimal contact with other students who are enrolled. In order to foster interaction and engagement and make this a dynamic learning experience for you, the course does include a variety of interactive features that will allow you to learn with and from your peers in an asynchronous manner (i.e., you do not need to be online at the same time).

Units 1 and 2 contain more background materials than the remaining units and are therefore more heavy on readings and theory. You should be able to progress through the assignments and activities in Unit 1 in 5-10 hours (that does not include the readings). In terms of assignments, this unit contains only the pre- and post-quiz and a web quest, each of which shouldn’t take you longer than 30 minutes to complete. The unit also contains a number of videos you need to watch and a variety of reading assignments.

Unit Content
Quiz 1 - Unit 1 pre-unit quiz (not graded)
Video lecture - Introduction to topic
Viewing opportunity - Time line
Viewing opportunity - Interview with Maria Tatar
Reading assignments
Video lecture - Fairy tale collectors
Viewing opportunity - Rothenburg ob der Tauber: Germany's medieval fairy tale city
Story hour
Activity 1 - Web quest
Quiz 2 - Unit 1 post-unit quiz
Naturally, each unit contained reading assignments as well. There was a “story hour” in each unit, where students listened to or read multiple versions of fairy tales. All tales are easily accessible online. Students were encouraged to read or listen to tales in different languages as applicable.
Given the history and development of these tales, we wanted to expose the students to the original tales as much as possible. Scholarly articles on fairy tales were included as well in each unit, along with guided reading questions.

The introductory unit started out with a short video of the instructor, introducing herself (http://bit.ly/AL491intro). It was important to us to create a way for the students to meet their instructor. The unit also explained the overall format of the course and expectations.

As indicated earlier, we felt it was very important to implement features that would allow students to meet each other and to interact with one another, despite the asynchronous online character of the course. Our design team developed a widget called *Introductions* (http://widgets.cal.msu.edu/intros.html), which is a community-building tool that allows instructors to provide a place for students to introduce themselves including a picture upload and optional video profile. Profiles are then displayed in a grid-based page allowing for all students in the course to browse other profiles. This tool allowed the students to meet each other and created a sense of community. It also gave students the opportunity to look for peers in their area for some of the collaborative assignments.
Students also engaged in virtual video conversations with their instructor, using an application called Conversations (http://clear.msu.edu/teaching/online/ria/conversations2/).

Conversations was developed by the Center for Language Education and Research (CLEAR) at MSU and allows teachers to create a series of audio/video prompts for their students. After the
first instructor prompt or question is played, the program automatically starts recording the student’s response. After a preset time, the next instructor prompt plays, followed by automatic recording of the student response etc. Students’ responses are automatically saved onto a central server so that teachers can monitor their work. The program runs entirely from within a web browser. No downloading or uploading of files is needed. This application allowed the students to interact (albeit asynchronously) with the instructor and allowed the instructor to meet her students face to face. It greatly decreased the anonymity that is so often a negative aspect of online courses. For the same reason, the instructor was available on Skype for virtual office hours, in addition to the online office hour feature available on Angel.

To get students to interact with each other and comment on their ideas and thoughts, most units contained Angel discussion forums. Students were required to post first and then comment on at least one of their peers’ comments. We also referred back to these discussion forums in later units to get students to review their own positions and those of their peers.

A second widget that was specifically developed for this course is Lists (http://widgets.cal.msu.edu/lists.html). It allows instructors to place a dynamic list of links or statements into a course page. Students can add their own entries as well as vote other entries “up” or “down” the list. This tool allowed the students to share their multimedia projects and vote on the best class project. We also used it throughout the course to find information about specific themes and topics. Similarly to the Angel discussion forums, we referred back to these lists throughout the course.

Cinderella motifs

Two additional widgets are in beta version and will be implemented the next time this course is taught: a gallery tool, which allows instructors to create javascript image galleries including descriptive text (http://widgets.cal.msu.edu/gallery.html) and a timeline tool, which creates interactive timelines including descriptive text, images, and event video (http://widgets.cal.msu.edu/timeline.html).

To provide students with yet a different way to brainstorm and share ideas on certain course content, some units featured Wallwishers (http://www.wallwisher.com), online bulletin boards where students can post brief notes.
As the course centered on fairy tales, we felt it would be fun for the students to write a fairy tale together. We used the never ending story script by CGISpy (http://www.cgispy.com/scripts/stories.html). It provided the students with a fun way to put their newly learned knowledge of typical fairy tale characteristics and features into practice and add new twists and turns throughout the semester.
In Unit 6 (on fairy tales and media), students had the opportunity to create their own, modern rendition of a fairy tale. They were given a variety of options for this assignment, including making and editing their own videos, narrating PowerPoint presentations, creating animated comics, or coming up with their own ideas. Software suggestions were made for all options and all suggested online programs and resources were available free of charge (e.g., http://www.jingproject.com/, http://prezi.com/, http://www.xtranormal.com, http://www.bitstripsforschools.com). Students were also referred to the Language Learning Center on campus (http://llc.msu.edu/), where Mac labs are fully equipped with video editing software. In addition to creating their own modern fairy tale version, students had to submit a short annotation with rationales for the various adaptations they made to the tale, linking them to the discussed materials. Examples were provided.

Students were encouraged to collaborate on this project with their peers and were asked to refer to the personal profiles they created using the Introductions widget in the introductory unit. All projects were posted on Angel and students could vote for their favorite one, using the Lists widget. Some students chose to collaborate, while most students submitted individual assignments. The fairy tale adaptation that received the most “likes” was titled “The MSU Cinderella” (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gz3cjPc2hkE), a narrated comic strip.

IV. Accessibility

The first iteration of our online course did not focus on accessibility. This is, however, something our team is working on for this coming summer.
V. Evidence of Effectiveness with Students

At the end of the course, students were asked for their feedback regarding their experience with this new online course. They were asked to rate their enjoyment of the course on a scale from 1 (strongly dislike) to 5 (strongly like). 31 students completed the survey and the mean score was a 4.3. 38.7% strongly liked the course, 51.6% liked the course, and 9.7% were neutral; no students disliked or strongly disliked the course. When asked what contributed to their ratings, students mentioned the content, the self-paced nature, and the class structure and organization. The following are representative comments from students:

“I found all of the subject matter to be really interesting and I was excited every time I logged onto this class about what I was going to be learning.” (Senior, Advertising)
“I really enjoyed the subject matter and the interaction available in the course. I also liked how I was able to work at my own pace.” (Junior, Criminal Justice)
“I liked the variety of different activities and I also liked that every module had “Required Reading” and “Story Hour”. It was a good mix of new and routine.” (Junior, Advertising)
“I really liked the technology and the extensiveness of resources available to us. Each section not only had readings for us by more than one author/view point, but there were also additional readings if we wanted more information.” (Senior, Advertising)
“I enjoyed the online course, it was very organized, the activities were interesting and challenging and I think that Angelika did a nice job of making it feel as personal as possible for being an online class.” (Senior, Education)

Students were also asked to rate the effectiveness of the different assignment and activity types in improving their content knowledge (1 = not effective to 5 = most effective). The lowest average score on all assignment and activity types was a 3.0 (effective). The video lectures received the highest effectiveness score (4.1 average), followed by post-unit quizzes (4.0) and discussion forums (3.9).

Overall, students seemed to enjoy the online course and they learned a lot, which was also evident in the average score of those students who completed the final survey (90.76%). The following are a few final comments from students:

“I’ve taken online courses before and I think that this was the most well run and informative online class that I've take so far at Michigan State.” (Junior, Criminal Justice)
“I enjoyed this course and thought it was well organized, challenging and intriguing!” (Senior, Education)
“Thank you for a great class. I learned a lot and really enjoyed the set up and online atmosphere of the course.” (Senior, Advertising)

VI. Plans for Sustainability

Due to the positive feedback from students, the course will be opened to 60 students in the future. We are currently working on a few modifications and enhancements to make AL 491 an even better online learning experience for students at Michigan State University.