

Department of English & Writing Studies

English 3227E (650) - Shakespeare
Fall/Winter 2015-16

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Course Outline

This course is a comprehensive introduction to the dramatic works of one of the most influential writers and dramatists who has ever lived: William Shakespeare. Students will read twelve plays that exemplify the full range of Shakespeare's dramatic genres - History, Comedy, Tragedy, and Romance/Tragicomedy - from the beginnings of Shakespeare's dramatic career through to its conclusion. Emphasis throughout is placed on understanding the generic and formal aspects of the plays; attention is also paid to the play's literary and other sources, as well as to some of the historical and political contexts in which Shakespeare operated as a dramatist. The course furthermore engages with elements of stage-craft and performance history, and also touches upon psychoanalytic, feminist, post-colonial, and some other literary-theoretical approaches to Shakespeare's dramatic works.

Course Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will:

- learn to analyze many of the prominent formal features of twelve representative plays by Shakespeare
- become familiar with the defining features of the major generic divisions within Shakespeare's body of dramatic work
- learn about the sources of Shakespeare's plays in prior literary works and early modern English history, and about the performance history of the plays
- acquaint themselves with some of the prominent theoretical approaches to Shakespeare's work
- become acquainted with the historical, political and cultural back-drop within which Shakespeare plied his craft
- learn to effectively communicate their ideas about Shakespeare's plays in writing through discussion posts and persuasive essays

Required Texts

Shakespeare, William. As You Like It.

---, Hamlet.

---, King Lear.

---, The Merchant of Venice.

---, A Midsummer Night's Dream.

---, Richard II.

---, Richard III.

---, Romeo and Juliet.

---, The Taming of the Shrew.

---, Measure for Measure.

---, The Tempest

---, Twelfth Night.

Preferred Edition: In order to follow line references to the plays in the lecture notes, it is strongly recommended that students use the New Folger (New York: Washington Square Press) editions of the plays, edited by Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine and ordered into UWO Bookstore for this section of the course. See bibliographical details for each text in the relevant units.

Course Requirements

1. Paper #1 (1250 word) Due the End of Unit 4 10%
2. Performance Report (1250 words) Due the End of Unit 8 10%
3. Paper #2 (2500 words) Due the End of Unit 12 25%
4. Quizzes 10% (all 6 in total)
5. Forum Participation 10%
6. Final Exam 35%

Papers

Further information about these assignments will be posted to the course website at the beginning of the course. However, Paper 1 will be 1250 words in length; Paper 2, 2500 words in length. Paper 1 will require you to write on one play, while paper 2 will require you to compare and contrast at least 2 plays from the course readings. Paper 1 will be worth 10% of your final grade for the course; paper 2, 25%.

Performance Report

More detailed information about this assignment will be posted to the course website at the beginning of the course. However, it will be 1250 words in length, and you will be asked to give an account of a performance of one of the plays we are studying in the course – that performance can either be theatrical, or a film or televised version of the play. The Performance Report will be worthy 10% of your final grade for the course.

Quizzes

These will be available to be taken online following the units which they cover (each quiz covers two units of the course). Each quiz will take no more than 10 minutes; they will consist of ten multiple choice questions on the plays you have read for the units in question. You may consult your readings over the course of taking a quiz. They are designed to help keep you on track with your readings – if you have done the readings, you should have little to no difficulty with them. The total cumulative grade for all of the quizzes is 10% of the final grade for the course.

Forum Participation

Each unit will be accompanied by a corresponding discussion forum which addresses your reading of the play and the lecture materials for that unit; you will be expected to contribute to these forums on a regular basis. The exact manner in which you will be graded on your contributions to these forums will be published to the course website at the beginning of the course. The total grade for your participation in the forums will consist of 10% of the final grade for the course.

Exam

The final exam for the course will be held during the exam period. The exam will be cumulative. It will consist of a section of identifications of passages from the plays, in which you will also be asked to comment on the significance of a number of those passages, a section of short essays on individual plays, and a section wherein you will

choose three plays from the readings and compare and contrast them on an assigned topic. More specific information about the exam will be posted to the course website as we approach the end of the course and the exam period. The final exam is worth 35% of the final grade for the course.

******Final Grades******

STUDENTS MUST PASS BOTH TERM WORK AND THE FINAL EXAMINATION (IN COURSES WITH FINAL EXAMINATIONS) IN ORDER TO PASS THE COURSE. STUDENTS WHO FAIL THE FINAL EXAMINATION (REGARDLESS OF THEIR TERM MARK) AUTOMATICALLY FAIL THE COURSE.

Late Policy

All written assignments are due no later than 11:55 p.m. on the date in question; any assignment received after that time will be marked late, and will be deducted 5% per business and week-end day. No written assignment will be allowed to be submitted later than one week after the original due date for the assignment. Late assignments will receive a grade but no comments.

Plagiarism

The following statement on plagiarism is from the UWO Senate:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in Western Academic Calendar). Plagiarism checking: The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.

Be aware that if you are caught engaging in plagiarism, it will result, at the very least, in a zero for the assignment.

Prerequisites

This statement is also from the UWO Senate:

Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded and that all course prerequisites have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any anti-requisite course(s) that they have taken. If the student does not have the requisites for a course, the University reserves the right to remove the student from the course and to delete it from the student's record. This decision may not be appealed. A student will receive no adjustment to his or her fees in the event that he or she is dropped from a course failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Academic Accommodation and Emotional/Mental Distress

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being

requested. The Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found at
<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medicalform.pdf>.

The full policy is set out here:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation%20medical.pdf)

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western
<http://www.uwo.ca/uwo/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Course Schedule/Readings

Unit One: Shakespeare's History Plays: Richard III

Unit Two: Early Comedy: The Taming of the Shrew Quiz #1

Unit Three: Early Tragedy: Romeo and Juliet

Unit Four: History Plays Revisited: Richard II Quiz #2; Essay # 1 Due

Unit Five: Middle Comedy: A Midsummer Night's Dream

Unit Six: Problem Play: The Merchant of Venice Quiz #3

Unit Seven: Festive Comedy: Twelfth Night

Unit Eight: Pastoral Comedy: As You Like It Quiz #4; Performance Report Due

Unit Nine: Tragedy and Subjectivity: Hamlet

Unit Ten: Later Problem Play: Measure for Measure Quiz#5

Unit Eleven: The Tragedy of Words: King Lear

Unit Twelve: Romance/Tragicomedy: The Tempest Quiz #6; Essay #2 Due