

Department of English & Writing Studies

Shakespeare and the Drama of his Age
English 3337E (001)
Fall/Winter 2017-18

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Course Date/Time: Mondays 10:30-12:30 pm
and Wednesdays 10:30-11:30 am

Course Location: AHB 2R21

Prerequisite(s): At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E or 1022E or 1024E or 1035E or 1036E or both English 1027F/G and 1028F/G, or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

Shakespeare wrote at the birth of the English-language professional theatre. With the advent of paying customers, it was suddenly possible to earn a living as a professional actor or professional playwright – or in Shakespeare’s case, both. But Shakespeare didn’t write his plays in a vacuum. He was one of a constantly-evolving group of playwrights – friends and rivals – who learned from each other even as they competed for audiences. This year-long course sets Shakespeare’s drama alongside the drama of his fellow playwrights.

Objectives:

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Engage creatively with the drama as texts for performance, showing a basic familiarity with the constraints and opportunities provided by specific performance spaces (past and present) in which the plays are, or have been, performed;
- Demonstrate an introductory knowledge of historical circumstances shaping the drama written for the professional stage in early modern England;
- Formulate interpretive arguments that incorporate close readings of the plays;
- Locate and build into their own arguments well-chosen secondary criticism;
- Communicate their ideas effectively in both oral and written forms.

Course Materials (all required, all available at the bookstore)

- *Hamlet*
- *Romeo and Juliet*
- *Measure for Measure*
- *As You Like It*
- *Woman Killed with Kindness*
- *The Tamer Tamed*
- *Roaring Girl*
- *Four Revenge Tragedies: Spanish Tragedy, Revenger's Tragedy, Tis Pity She's a Whore, and White Devil*

Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

- Performance Analysis (10%)
- First Essay, 2000 words (15%)
- Director's Notebook (15%)
- Commonplace Book (10%). It will be returned to you at the final exam, and you may consult it during the exam. *You will submit this project as a work in progress on 2 December. On 7 April you submit the entire project for final grading (revised first term and second term commonplaces included).*
- Second Essay, 2000 words (15%)
- 3 Hour Exam (35%)

A student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. Please note: The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>.

Due Dates:

- Performance Analysis – 2 October
- First Essay, 2000 words – 6 December
- Director's Notebook – 26 February
- Commonplace Book – 28 March
- Second Essay – 11 April
- 3 Hour Exam – in exam timetable

Submission of Assignments:

- Apart from the Director's Notebook, these may be handed in at class, given to me in person, sent to me (at the Department) by post or courier, or may be submitted to the essay box outside the Department of English office, where they will be date/time-stamped.
- *Your Director's Notebook must be submitted to me in person, either during class or office hours* (it will include handwritten material, and I can't risk it getting lost)
- Do *not* put assignments under my office door
- Essays submitted before 8:30 a.m. in the essay box are stamped with the previous day's date, and I accept those datings. (This means you can get a Friday date, up to 8:30 a.m. Monday.)
- Assignments posted to me will be counted as submitted on the postmark date; so, obtain and carefully keep proof of posting (ie., priority post receipt, recorded delivery receipt, etc).
- The Department will not accept assignments by fax or e-mail.
- Because of the prevalence of viruses, etc., on the internet, I will not open attachments to e-mails whose authenticity has not been independently verified.
- ***Be sure to keep a copy of all assignments submitted.***

Laptops:

I do not permit the use of laptops in the classroom. Phone use in class is also prohibited. Please turn off your phones before class begins. Students may tape-record lectures if they have difficulty taking notes by hand.

Additional information about the Stratford trip:

Booking Tickets

There are two available price ranges: \$31.64 and \$22.60 (tax inc), and tickets are first come, first served. To book your Stratford ticket to *Romeo and Juliet* follow the steps below:

- Login to www.stratfordfestival.ca with promotion code **75543** (or create an account and then log in with the same code).
- Choose September 27 from the performance calendar.
- When selecting your seats, choose "**Western University Offer**" as the price type
- Pay and check out
- You can choose to have your tickets emailed right to your inbox by selecting the "**Deliver by Email**" delivery option

Or you can phone the Festival's box office. Choose the Groups and Schools option when prompted and quote promotion code **75543** to the call centre agent. A handling fee of \$10 will be added to your order if you call the box office to book your tickets (the handling fee does not apply if you book online).

NOTE: Globe ring seating is excluded from this offer. Please be advised that \$2.50 will be added to your order for a post-performance Q&A with company actors. This promotional code will be active until September 26, 2017. Offer may not be combined with any other offer and is not redeemable on previously purchased tickets. Offer is subject to availability.

Transportation

Two buses will take students to the Stratford Festival and return after the show and post-performance Q&A. We will leave from outside the Arts and Humanities building at 11am, and you will be dropped off at the same place at approximately 6:30pm. Return transportation is \$15. Please confirm a place with me with payment of the fee.

Workshops

There are TWO WORKSHOPS on offer at Stratford the same day, in which you can participate. They run simultaneously from 12:30-1:30 on the day, and students can opt to participate in one of them. Cost is \$8/person, and each workshop is capped at 30. One is a performance workshop, and the other is a combat workshop. First come, first served, and you confirm your place with payment of the fee to me.

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 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 UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Late Policy:

If you submit a paper after the due date (plus whatever grace days you have remaining, see below) but within two weeks of it, the paper will be counted as late and the following procedures will apply:

- The paper will not be read until all the assignments handed in on time have been read and returned (all papers are read in order of receipt).
- The paper will be read and a grade given, but NO COMMENTS OR CORRECTIONS will be made on it.
- The grade will be reduced by a penalty of two marks (2%) for each calendar day that it is late. Note that when a paper is late, every day counts (including weekends); however the arrangements for date-stamping essays in the Department of English essay box are accepted for late essays.

PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED IF SUBMITTED MORE THAN TWO WEEKS AFTER THE DUE DATE UNLESS PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE.

Grace Days:

- You are each given six "grace days" in a full-year course which you can use all at once, or allocate them between your various term assignments (first essay, second essay, or whatever).
- These "grace days" are intended to accommodate the accidents that commonly happen (got writer's block, had computer problems, ran out of toner, couldn't get books, etc.).
- Grace days are not transferable, nor do they have any value if unused.
- Grace days include only "academic days" – that means that Saturdays and Sundays are free. A wise course is to save your grace days until you really need them, particularly in second term when you will probably be under a lot more pressure than in first term.
- When your Grace Days are gone, they're gone, and you're faced with a late assignment (see above).
- Students requiring further extensions based on medical or compassionate grounds must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty (see above)

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage 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.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Timetable

SEPTEMBER

11	Introduction
13	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
18	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
20	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
25	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
27	Stratford trip

OCTOBER

2	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> , and moving on to <i>Tis Pity She's a Whore</i>
4	<i>Tis Pity She's a Whore</i>
9-13	Reading Week
16	<i>Tis Pity She's a Whore</i>
18	<i>Tis Pity She's a Whore</i>
23-7	Self-directed reading
30	<i>Spanish Tragedy</i>

NOVEMBER

1	<i>Spanish Tragedy</i>
6	<i>Spanish Tragedy</i>
8	<i>Spanish Tragedy</i>
13	<i>Hamlet</i>
15	<i>Hamlet</i>
20	<i>Hamlet</i>
22	<i>Hamlet</i>
27	<i>Revenger's Tragedy</i>
29	<i>Revenger's Tragedy</i>

DECEMBER

4 *Revenger's Tragedy*
6 *Revenger's Tragedy*

JANUARY

8 *The Taming of the Shrew*
10 *The Taming of the Shrew*
15 *The Taming of the Shrew*
17 *The Taming of the Shrew*
22 *The Tamer Tamed*
24 *The Tamer Tamed*
29 *The Tamer Tamed*
31 *The Tamer Tamed*

FEBRUARY

5 *A Woman Killed with Kindness*
7 *A Woman Killed with Kindness*
12 *A Woman Killed with Kindness*
14 *A Woman Killed with Kindness*
19-23 **Reading week**
26 *Measure for Measure*
28 *Measure for Measure*

MARCH

5 *Measure for Measure*
7 *Measure for Measure*
12 *As You Like It*
14 *As You Like It*
19 *As You Like It*
21 *As You Like It*
26 *Roaring Girl*
28 *Roaring Girl*

APRIL

2 *Roaring Girl*
4 *Roaring Girl*
9 Review of First Term
11 Review of First Term

Performance Analysis:

[Live performance is] an event for that moment in time, for that [audience] in that place – and it's gone. Gone without a trace. There was no journalist; there was no photographer; the only witnesses were the people present; the only record is what they retained.

—Peter Brook

We will be seeing *Romeo and Juliet* at Stratford this season. The purpose of this assignment is to strengthen your critical analysis of Shakespeare in performance. Write an essay of 1,000 words that analyzes the Stratford production. If you're unable to attend the R&J trip, please contact the instructor to discuss an alternative performance-oriented assignment.

Whether or not you liked the production is not especially relevant. This sort of evaluative judgement will probably emerge over the course of your essay, but the primary emphasis must be on *analysis*. In particular, focus on one or two production choices that you consider especially important in terms of how the Stratford company interpreted the play. You might be struck by costuming decisions, lighting and sound effects, striking gestures or unexpected

emphases introduced by actors that introduced a reading of the play that hadn't occurred to you – the list of production choices to which you might attend is endless. In your essay, describe the production choice(s) concisely, and then analyse how it or they shaped a certain interpretation of the action, either in terms of the overall action, or in that particular scene. You might analyze the choices in terms of the tone of the production (happy, melancholy), power dynamics between characters on stage, individual characterisations, homoerotic tensions, the treatment of revenge – again, the potential interpretive significances are endless.

Your essay will be graded according to the following criteria:

- An ability to notice and build into your analysis significant production details;
- An ability to construct an argument that analyses how these staging choices shaped a particular interpretation of the play;
- An ability to communicate your insights effectively: I will be looking for grammatically correct sentences, coherent essay structure, and careful presentation (no typos, titles italicized, pages numbered, essay titled, footnotes and bibliography presented according to MLA guidelines, etc).

I would recommend taking a notepad and pen into the theatre with you, so you can jot down striking details as they occur: you might otherwise have trouble remembering how exactly a scene or moment was played. You should also keep the theatre programme that you'll be given when you enter, as it will tell you who played which parts, who directed the show and wrote the music for it, and perhaps also provide some insight into what the company was trying to achieve. We'll discuss the production in class the following Monday.

Director's Notebook:

I think theater ought to be theatrical ... you know, shuffling the pack in different ways so that it's - there's always some kind of ambush involved in the experience. You're being ambushed by an unexpected word, or by an elephant falling out of the cupboard, whatever it is.

—Tom Stoppard

This assessment pushes further your ability to imagine and analyse these plays as texts for performance. It builds on the performance analysis you'll submit in October and tests the critical skills you'll develop during the "performance choices and interpretation" sessions. From any of the plays on the syllabus, choose a scene of about 125 lines (you may take more, but 200 lines is the upper limit) on which to base your Director's Notebook. Think about how you would stage this scene if you were directing it. Start this project as soon as possible and update your ideas as you go along with notes from class, reflections on current affairs or modern political debates that resonate with the scene you've chosen, comments about past productions (not necessarily Shakespearean stagings) that incorporate similar moments, ideas that arise in the performance choices sessions that you could adapt for your own purposes, etc.

Your project will be in three parts, with an optional fourth part:

Photocopy or scan the section of text you're presenting, and then prepare a set of marginal directorial annotations for it, keyed to the text by numbers. Think about such features as lighting, set changes, music cues, props, movement by actors across or around the stage, significant (not incidental) gestures. You should feel free to cut or rearrange the text, even add lines to it: the *final* number of "spoken" lines should not exceed 200.

Supplement this promptbook with a diagram of the stage on which you imagine your production being performed (you can photocopy a plan of an existing stage, or design your own). Your staging must not ignore, and ideally should make creative use of, the constraints and opportunities imposed by the space.

Write a 1,000 word essay that briefly describes and then analyses your production choices. Begin by situating your staging of this scene in terms of the scene's relation to the rest of the production. What is your directorial "take" on the play? What are the central themes, images, and/or concepts that this staging is designed to explore? Then describe the particular staging choices you're introducing to this passage, and analyse how they contribute to the overall production goals. Where you make use of secondary sources, document your research thoroughly.

Optional: Feel free to add other materials such as photographs, illustrations of props, an illustration of the set (if there is one), costume sketches and swatches of material, music suggestions, dance choreography, a diary of ideas tracking your work in progress, and/or anything else that seems relevant to the impact of your staging in performance.

Your Director's Notebook is worth 10% of the final grade, and will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- The extent to which your production choices are appropriate to and make use of the specific theatrical space in which you propose to stage the imagined production;
- The extent to which your production choices offer an insightful interpretive reading of the passage, especially in relation to the rest of the play;
- The extent to which your thinking about the staging you devise is in dialogue with past productions and/or with scholarly examinations of the play;
- The creativity of your production choices;
- An ability to articulate effectively the interpretive significances of the choices you make, to document your secondary reading in a scholarly manner, and to present your argument without errors of presentation.

Commonplace Book:

[T]here scarcely can be a thing more useful, even to ancient, and popular sciences, than a solid and good aid to memory; that is a substantial and learned digest of common places...because it is a counterfeit thing in knowledge, to be forward and pregnant, unless you be withal deep and full; I hold that the diligence and pains in collecting common-places, is of great use and certainty in studying; as that which subministers copy to invention; and contracts the sight of judgement to a strength.

—Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*

The Commonplace book was a central Renaissance method of gathering and organizing material from reading for use in composition at a later date. While there were many variations in methods of commonplacing, they all involved the consistent practice of collecting excerpts while reading—either by marking the margins of text for later copying or by copying as one read. These quotations were then transferred to a commonplace book in which they were organized by topic. Indeed, the English word "topic" derives from the Greek term for place, *topos*.

The use of commonplaces, or in Latin, *loci communes*, is derived from the rhetorical practice of invention: the process of finding arguments to support your case in a formal speech. This method became generalized to include the collection of quotations, or *sententiae*, drawn from important authors which might be used for illustration or ornament. There are two important metaphors used to describe the process: bees gathering nectar from flowers and transforming it into honey; and the process of consuming and digesting books (thus *Reader's Digest*). As this

tradition evolved during the Renaissance, the aim was to produce a style of writing marked by *copia*—a varied style, with frequent and subtle allusion to classical and scriptural authority, displaying the writer’s familiarity with and command of learned and literary culture.

The Commonplace Book Assignment:

Use of the commonplace book is intended to be a central part of the course, and of each student’s reading. During the course you should compile a collection of quotations from the plays read which you find interesting or pleasing. You should aim to gather ten quotations from each play, for a total of 120 for the whole year. Each quotation should be assigned to an appropriate topical heading.

The practice of assigning quotations to different headings is an important part of the exercise, because it accustoms you to think in terms of the categories which organized knowledge in the Early Modern period, and, in doing so, guides your reading in the future. You should make your collection either in an exercise book, with separate pages assigned to each topic, or electronically, with a printout handed in on the due dates. In either case, you should cite for each commonplace the play from which it comes with relevant act, scene, line numbers. No individual commonplace should be longer than four lines.

Commonplace Topics:

Here are some possible topics for your commonplace book. Feel free to add to or change the list that you use in order to reflect your own interests.

Faith; Kingship; Virtue; Vice; Love; Nature; Science; Time, Conscience; Reading and Writing; Marriage; Beauty; Fortune; Costume/Disguise; Reason; Truth; Travel; Liberty; Nobility; Family; Marriage & Single Life; Education; Discipline; Desire; the Body; Doubt; Justice; Empire; Colonialism.

It is appropriate to list the same quotation under different topical headings if it is relevant to more than one, but that quotation does not count twice towards the total number of quotations.

Evaluation:

The commonplace exercise is worth 10% of your final grade. You will be assessed based upon the number and variety of your quotations and their appropriateness to their assigned topic. I will return your commonplace book at the final exam, where you may use it as a memory aid, quotation reference, etc.

Two Important Notes:

- No individual commonplace should be longer than four lines.
- Do not include the name of the speaker(s) in individual entries. The exam will include a passage identification section in which you are asked to identify the speaker. Character names that appear within the dialogue may be included as part of your entry. *Books that includes the name of the speaker(s) as part of an individual entry will not be returned to the student for use during the exam.*

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

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