

Department of English & Writing Studies

Hamlet Then and Now

English 4321G (001)

Winter 2023

COVID Statement

Students will be expected to wear triple layer non-medical masks at all times in the classroom as per Western policy and public health directives. Students who are unable to wear a mask for medical or religious reasons must seek formal accommodation through Accessible Education at aew@uwo.ca.

Students are expected not to eat or drink while in class to ensure masks stay in place. Students will be able to eat and drink outside of the classroom during scheduled breaks.

Students unwilling to wear a mask as stipulated by Western policy and public health directives will be referred to the Department, and such actions will be considered a violation of the student Code of Conduct.

Instructor: Dr M. J. Kidnie (I prefer M.J., but you can also call me Dr or Prof Kidnie)
Pronouns: she/her
Email: mjkidnie@uwo.ca
Office: UC 4420
Office hours: TH 3:30-4:30 and by arrangement

Course Date/Time: TH 12:30-3:30

Course Location: UC 4401

Prerequisites: At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020-1999 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.

Land Acknowledgement:

Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples, who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

Course Description

"The world's longest 'knock-knock' joke" (Geoffrey Tennant, *Slings and Arrows*). "After all, all [Shakespeare] did was string together a lot of old, well-known quotations" (H. L. Mencken). *Hamlet* is one of the greatest dramatic achievements in the English language and a play that is rarely out of the international theatrical repertory. Premised on revenge and preoccupied with friendship, family and betrayal, *Hamlet* has been performed and adapted for over four hundred years. This fourth-year seminar will give students the opportunity to do a deep dive into this tragedy, its criticism, and its stage and film legacy.

Hamlet, and this course, explore issues of death, grieving, gendered violence, and suicide. My goal is to provide a safe space in which to explore some of the difficult topics raised by Shakespeare's drama, and I am always free to talk to students in office hours or by appointment. If you or someone you know on the course is feeling distressed, you can contact the Mental Health Helpline, which is confidential and open 24/7: they can be reached at 1-866-531-2600 or at mentalhealthhelpline.ca. The Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (suicideprevention.ca) can be contacted at 613-702-4446 or by email at CASP@suicideprevention.ca.

Objectives:

By the end of the course, successful students will have attained:

- an advanced understanding of Shakespeare's drama
- proficiency with the essential tools of literary scholarship (library catalogues, citation and content databases)
- proficiency in analyzing a piece of literature within its specific cultural context
- a proficient ability to apply a variety of scholarly or theoretical approaches to the analysis of texts
- the opportunity to develop a clear, concise and compelling prose style, free of technical errors
- the opportunity to develop an ability to structure a complex and engaging argument
- the opportunity to develop the capacity to engage in class discussions and respond meaningfully to lecture material and peer discussion while using textual evidence as support

Course Materials for purchase (texts are available at the bookstore)
Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor

Methods of Evaluation (assignment descriptions are below)

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

- “Cutting for Performance” group podcast (due February 16) – 15%
- Pecha Kucha presentation (staggered through term) – 10%
- 2000-word essay (due March 16) – 25%
- Commonplace book (due April 6) – 10%
- 2-hour final exam (in exam period) – 30%
- Participation – 10%

Course Expectations:

Attendance at every class is mandatory, but please do not come to in-person class if you are feeling ill.

Submission of Assignments:

All submission dates are listed below. Submit written coursework on the due date through our OWL website.

Late Paper Policy:

If you submit a paper after the due date, the paper will be counted as late. The grade will be reduced by a penalty of two marks (2%) for each calendar day that it is late. Extensions on any assignment will only be considered if supported by a request for accommodation sent by students' Academic Counsellors in their home faculty (see below, “Accommodation”).

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. 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.

Please note: The department of English and 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>.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory in all classes and tutorials. In cases of excessive absenteeism (e.g. more than 9 unexcused hours for a half course, 18 for a full course), which are not accounted for by either academic consideration or accommodation, students may be debarred from taking the final examination, and will receive an official warning to this effect by or before the course drop date (see Senate policy). In classes with or without final exams, students who do not attend class will receive 0% for course participation grades. Unless other policies dictate a different set of penalties in specific English and Writing Studies programs, this will apply to all department programs.

Intellectual Property/Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course, and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

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

The full policy is set out here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Religious Accommodation:

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

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

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.

Teaching Programme

This class outline is subject to change. Students are expected to stay abreast of coursework through regular attendance at class.

JANUARY

12 Introduction

19 *Hamlet* (and Hamlet's) Place at the Heart of the Canon

26 The Texts of *Hamlet*

FEBRUARY

2 *Hamlet*, Shakespeare's Race Play

9 Spaces and Places

16 Shakespeare's Sources, *Hamlet's* Enigma

READING WEEK – February 18-26

MARCH

2 Memory

9 Surveillance and Story-telling

16 "To be or not to be": Interiority, Performativity, and Narratives of Resistance

23 Ophelia

30 Worms

APRIL

6 Exam review

DRAFT