



English 329-01, Spring 2016, TTh 12:30–1:45 in Smith 210

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Office hours: T 2–3, W 1–2:15, Th 11–11:45, & by appointment, in Fenwick 224

Description:

This course provides an introduction to Shakespeare's drama, tracing its development across his career. We will be closely reading plays from the four major genres: history, comedy, tragedy, and romance. As we do, we will investigate the influence of the new playhouses, the Elizabethan and Jacobean courts, the rising middle class, and contemporary notions of gender, identity, and authorship. To appreciate the creative decisions involved in transforming a written text into an acted drama, we will analyze scenes from recent film versions of many of our plays. We will also attend the HC Theatre Department's production of *Hamlet* and, if interest and scheduling allow, a professional performance of *Richard II* by the Actors' Shakespeare Project in Cambridge.

Goals:

- ☛ To gain a sense of Shakespeare's range and development as a playwright
- ☛ To hone close reading skills by learning to ask and answer interesting questions
- ☛ To experience the dynamic relationship between written word and acted drama
- ☛ To explore how Renaissance drama interacted with its cultural contexts
- ☛ To engage with other critics' analyses of Shakespeare's plays
- ☛ To discover why Shakespeare's plays continue to move audiences today

Texts:

- ☛ There are many modern editions of Shakespeare's plays, and for reasons we'll be exploring, each presents a different version of the text. Because in class we need to refer to passages quickly and easily, I ask that everyone use the Bantam paperback editions of nine of our plays, edited by David Bevington and David Scott Kastan, all available in the Holy Cross bookstore: *Richard II*, *1 Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Twelfth Night*, *Measure for Measure*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *The*

Tempest. The only exception is *Othello*, for which I've ordered the Bedford Texts & Contexts volume that includes the Bevington edition of the play alongside some contextual readings we'll be considering.

- ☛ Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers, *A Pocket Style Manual*, 7th Edition (Bedford).
- ☛ A number of shorter texts available on Moodle

Expectations:

Class participation (10%): This course is designed to help you develop your thinking about Shakespeare's plays both independently and collaboratively. To take full advantage of the opportunities it offers, the most important thing you can do is to read all material closely, more than once, and always in hard copy, filling your margins with questions and observations. This will prepare you to advance your thinking even further by engaging in thoughtful class discussion. If you aren't yet comfortable participating in class discussion, please stop by to see me so that we can work on strategies for developing that skill. You need not be adept at it at first, only willing to improve through preparation, practice, and patience with yourself.

Since regular attendance is essential in a discussion-centered course, more than three absences will lower your final grade. That's a full week and a half of class – an ample allowance for most illnesses, although not if you've allowed yourself to be flaky about attendance earlier in the semester. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to borrow the notes from another student, acquire any materials that were handed out, and learn if changes have been made to the syllabus. I do not need to know why you have been absent unless you need my help with a crisis.

Short assignments (15%): To help you develop your thinking about our texts, for many sessions I will assign questions or ask you to write on questions of your own. Sometimes I will collect the responses, sometimes not. Since the writing in these brief exercises is informal and exploratory, collected exercises will receive general marks (✓, ✓-, or ✓+) based on how thorough and thoughtful they are. For legibility's sake, I ask that exercises be typed. Exercises must be on time to receive credit.

In the process of preparing your final paper you will be submitting a prospectus and a bibliography. As important but unpolished components of the writing/researching process, these assignments will likewise receive general marks to indicate whether the project seems to be on track.

Papers (50%): one 5–7pp paper (20%) and one 9–10pp paper (30%), each due *at the beginning of class* on the dates specified in the Schedule. We will discuss paper topics in advance. For papers we workshop in class, grades will be based on completion of first drafts, thoughtfulness of peer reviews, and quality of revision work as well as final drafts.

I am delighted to meet with you to discuss your papers as you develop them. For me, email is not an effective medium for substantive discussion, so I ask that you come to talk with me in person, either in office hours or by appointment. To ensure that I can be helpful to you, please come in well before a paper is due. I will gladly sit down with you anytime prior to the day before a final due date.

Late papers lose 1/3 of a grade (e.g. from A to A-) for each class period or part of a class period they are overdue. Last-minute extensions will not be granted; if you foresee any problem with the due date for a final draft, please speak to me well in advance. We can usually work out a solution.

I do my best to return papers no more than two weeks after they come in. If you have any questions about my comments (or my handwriting!) never hesitate to stop by office hours or make an appointment.

Papers should be printed in a conventional twelve-point text font (like Times), and double-spaced, with one-inch margins all around. In the upper left corner of the first page, list your name, my name, the course number, and the date on separate lines. At the center of the next line, please provide a title designed to prepare your reader for your argument. Remember to proofread carefully for spelling and mechanical errors before you print. To preserve your instructor's sanity and good humor, always number and staple your pages.

Final exam (25%): a cumulative final exam will be given during exam period. Part I will ask you to identify and analyze passages from our texts; Part II will request short essays.

Academic Honesty: Your work must be your own and must be prepared exclusively for this class. Whenever you make use of language **or ideas** from outside sources (**including web sites**, books, high school classes, roommates, etc.), you must acknowledge the sources in formal citations, formatted according to MLA guidelines. You'll find an overview of MLA format in *A Pocket Style Manual*. For issues the overview doesn't address, consult the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (call number LB2369.M53) in Dinand's main reading room.

Failure to acknowledge sources constitutes plagiarism, a serious violation of academic honesty. Other violations include cheating and collusion. Just as you need to be able to trust that I will evaluate your work fairly, I must be able to trust that the work you present as your own is, in fact, your own. Therefore any violation of academic honesty will incur a zero on the assignment and academic probation, suspension, or dismissal from the College, as determined by the college-wide academic honesty policy described on pages 17–19 of the College Catalog (<http://www.holycross.edu/catalog/>).

The process of learning which sources need to be cited and how takes time. I am always happy to field questions about acknowledging sources before you submit an assignment. Afterwards is too late. Always err on the side of giving credit where credit may be due.

Schedule:

This schedule offers a tentative outline of the course; it may change as the course progresses. It does not include all of the short exercises that will be assigned during the term.

Tues. 1/26: Introductions, Sonnet 35

Thurs. 1/28: Sonnets 1–10, 23, 24, 46, 79, 80, 129, 130, 135, 138 (Moodle)
David Bevington, selections from the general introduction to *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*: “Reading Shakespeare in the Twenty-First Century,” pp. ix–xi; “The Early Years, 1564–c.1594,” pp. liv–lxv; “Learning,” p. xxix; and “The Nature of Humankind,” pp. xxix–xxxi. All readings from Bevington’s introduction to *The Complete Works* are available on Moodle.

Literalizing and analysis
Scansion

Tues. 2/2: *Romeo and Juliet* (1594–1596). For each of our plays, please begin by reading the editors’ introductory essay, underlining key ideas and issues you intend to trace as you read. Always read the full play in preparation for our first day of discussion. **Reread and further annotate** for the second day. Novel as this way of proceeding may seem, in an upper-division Shakespeare course it’s not merely an ideal. It’s a necessity.

☛ **Exercise: Close Reading** (please type):

In no more than two double-spaced pages of concise analysis, explicate Sonnet 15 (Moodle), examining the poem’s form and language closely to show how they develop the poem’s theme. As you “unfold” the poem, consider words’ denotations and connotations, figurative language (metaphors, similes, personification, etc.), imagery, allusion, meter, syntax, and tone. Since structure and form are normally so closely linked in sonnets, I recommend organizing your analysis according to the sonnet’s formal divisions.

This exercise has a dual purpose: to help you hone your close reading skills as we embark on our first play, and to give me a sense of how those skills are developing so I can meet you where you are in class discussion. To allow the exercise to accomplish both aims, do not consult any secondary sources except the OED.

Thurs. 2/4: *Romeo and Juliet* cont’d

Bevington, “London Theaters and Dramatic Companies,” pp. xlv–lii.

Recommended: Bevington, “Life in Shakespeare’s England: The Social and Economic Background,” pp. xi–xvi, xviii–xix.

Page to stage

- Tues. 2/9: *Richard II* (c. 1595–1596)
- Thurs. 2/11: *Richard II* cont'd.
 Bevington, “The Political and Religious Background,” “Queen Elizabeth and Tudor Absolutism,” “The Doctrine of Passive Obedience,” and “The Political Ideas of Machiavelli,” pp. xix–xxii and xxiv–xxv; also “Social Change,” pp. xvi–xviii.
 Discussion of Paper 1
- Tues. 2/16: *1 Henry IV* (1596–1597)
 Hacker and Sommers, “Integrating literary quotations,” “Using the ellipsis mark,” “Using brackets,” and “MLA in-text citations: Verse play or poem,” *A Pocket Style Manual*, pp. 121–124, 114–115, 132. Please also look at “MLA list of works cited” pp. 133–141 and “MLA manuscript format; sample pages” pp. 167–173. For those using a different style manual, these readings are available on Moodle. Please bring either the full *Manual* or the Moodle print-outs to class today.
 Quick review of thesis and paragraph points
- Thurs. 2/18: *1 Henry IV* cont'd
 Recommended: Bevington, “Shakespeare in the Theater, c. 1594–1601,” pp. lxiv–lxx
c. 5:00 p.m.: trip to Cambridge to see 7:30 Actors' Shakespeare Project performance of Richard II?
- Tues. 2/23: *Henry V* (1599)
- Thurs. 2/25: *Henry V* cont'd
PAPER 1 DUE
7:30 p.m.: Performance and Discussion by James Keegan, actor at the American Shakespeare Center. Rehm Library. *Required event.*
 ☛ Sometime before next Tuesday, please watch two recent film versions of *Much Ado About Nothing*: Kenneth Branagh’s (1993) and Joss Whedon’s (2013). Both are available for streaming on Amazon or YouTube for a few dollars. Both are also on reserve in the MRC.
- Tues. 3/1: *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598–1599)
 Discussion of Paper 2
- Thurs. 3/3: *Much Ado About Nothing* cont'd
 ☛ **Exercise: Film Review** (please type):
 Which film version of *Much Ado About Nothing* more effectively develops the play’s theme(s)? In no more than two double-spaced pages, support your

claim by analyzing how each film portrays one key scene.

Consider the effects of all the elements a director has at his/her disposal beyond the printed text. What do the actors' voices add to Shakespeare's words? How do the actors' bodies convey meaning? How does the set contribute to the scene? Are props significant? Costumes? Do the techniques the director uses to manipulate your gaze influence how you understand the scene (close ups, long shots, views from above or from other unusual perspectives, cuts between speakers, etc.)?

Tues. 3/8 &

Thurs. 3/10: Spring break. Enjoy!

Fri. 3/11:

For anyone interested in presenting a paper at the 15th Annual Undergraduate Shakespeare Conference, on Shakespeare and Time, abstract is due today (300 words max.). Paper may be work in progress and will not be due until the day of the conference, Sat. April 2nd. Max. presentation time 15 minutes (approx. 7 double-spaced pages).

Tues. 3/15: *Twelfth Night* (1600–1602)

Thurs. 3/17: *Twelfth Night* cont'd

Recommended: Bevington, "Shakespeare in the Theater, c. 1601–1608," pp. lxx–lxxvi.

Tues. 3/22: Peer reviews

PROSPECTUS FOR PAPER 2 DUE

Thurs. 3/24: Easter break. Happy spring!

Tues. 3/29: *Hamlet* (c. 1599–1601)

Thurs. 3/31: *Hamlet* cont'd

Bevington, "The Drama Before Shakespeare," pp. xxix–xliii.

Tues. 4/5: *Hamlet* cont'd

James Calderwood, "Hamlet: The Name of Action" (Moodle)
Howard Felperin, chapter from *Shakespearean Representation* (Moodle)
Hacker and Sommers, "Avoiding plagiarism" and "Integrating sources," *A Pocket Style Manual*, pp. 110–119. Please also skim through "MLA documentation style," especially pages 142–161. For those using a different style manual, these readings are also available on Moodle. Please bring either the full *Manual* or the Moodle print-outs to class today.

Working with the MLA bibliography and secondary sources

Thurs. 4/7: Paper conferences

BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR PAPER 2 DUE

Tues. 4/12: *Othello* (1604)

Thurs. 4/14: *Othello* cont'd

7:30 p.m.: HC Theatre Department performance of *Hamlet*. Fenwick Theatre, O'Kane Hall. *Required event.*

Tues. 4/19: Discussion of *Hamlet* performance
Othello cont'd
Hall, pp. 171–203 of “Race and Religion” chapter in *Othello* volume

Thurs. 4/21: Writing workshop – peer review
FULL DRAFT OF PAPER 2 DUE
Draft must meet minimum page requirement to be eligible for peer review.

Tues. 4/26: *Measure for Measure* (1603–1604)

Thurs. 4/28: *Measure for Measure* cont'd

Tues. 5/3: *The Tempest* (c. 1611)
Recommended: Bevington, “The Late Years: 1608–1616,” pp. lxxvi–lxxix
Discussion of final exam

Thurs. 5/5: *The Tempest* cont'd
PAPER 2 DUE

Exam period: **Final exam**