

English 212

Shakespeare

Fall 2010



MWF 10:00AM – 10:50AM, Oddfellows 105b

Prof. Ryan S Paul (rpaul@allgeheny.edu)

Office: Oddfellows 213 (x2320)

Office Hours: MW 11:30AM – 1:00PM; Tu/Th 2:00PM – 4:00PM; By Appointment

William Shakespeare is considered by some critics to be the greatest author, poet, and playwright to have ever put pen to paper. Yet many of today's readers fear his works as almost insurmountably difficult. In this class we will learn how to read and write about Shakespeare, how his plays created meaning on the stage and in the imaginations of his time, and discover in what ways, if any, his works remain important.

Together we will read eight of William Shakespeare's plays, two from each of the major “genres” of his corpus. We will develop a sense of the breadth of Shakespeare's career and how he captured – and criticized – the world around him, studying such issues as political authority, gender roles, sexuality and desire, national identity, and racial conflict. However, we will never lose sight of the texts as works of art, specifically works for the stage, and we will learn to appreciate their power and beauty as such. This is not to say that this is a class in the uncritical worship of Shakespeare. We will be critical of the works and the culture that produced them, and we will also analyze our own interpretations and see what Shakespeare has to offer us today.

Some of you have never read Shakespeare and may never study him again. Part of this class, then, will be geared toward helping students broaden their cultural and personal horizons through the study of Shakespeare's plays. Class will be part lecture but mostly discussion. It is crucial that every student come to class prepared and ready to ask questions and express ideas. The work of the class will be both academic and personal, and I hope that you will leave the course with a deeper appreciation of Shakespeare, the theater, and your own relationship to art and literature.

Required Texts

The Norton Shakespeare, edited by Stephen Greenblatt, et al. W.W. Norton & Co, 2008 (ISBN: 9780393929911)

(The specific plays we will read are: *As You Like It*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Henry V*, *Richard III*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*. Alternate editions are acceptable.)

The Bedford Companion to Shakespeare, 2nd edition, by Russ McDonald. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001. (ISBN: 9780312248802). **Please note: The 2nd Edition of this text is required.**

Film Viewings:

During the course of the semester, we will watch a variety of film adaptations of Shakespearean works. Students are encouraged to attend as many group showings as possible, but copies will be on reserve at the library for those who cannot attend the out-of-class showings. Nine of the films on reserve will be required viewing for all students. See page 7 of the syllabus for more information.

Course Objectives

- Learn to read and interpret Shakespeare's language in close detail
- Understand and analyze the works as plays to be performed before an audience
- Analyze Shakespeare's plays in its historical and cultural context
- Develop a deep and intimate knowledge of eight of Shakespeare's plays and their thematic, poetic, and performance issues. In particular, learn how to analyze and discuss the plays through specific critical topics
- Analyze and appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of specific Shakespearean performances.
- Learn to craft thoughtful, complex, and intelligent arguments about Shakespeare's plays

Grades and Other Class Policies

- Essay 1: Close Reading (Due 9/15) – 15%
- In-Class Exam on the Comedies and Histories (10/8) – 10%
- Take-Home Essay on the Comedies and Histories (Due 10/13) – 10%
- Essay 2: Textual analysis of *Hamlet*, *Othello*, or *The Winter's Tale*; or analysis/comparison of two Shakespearean performances (Due 11/22) – 25%
- Final Exam (12/14, 9:00AM) – 30%
- In-class quizzes and other activities – 10%

These percentages are approximate and factors such as individual improvement will be taken into account.

The **Essays** will comprise the majority of your grade and will be based on your ability to read and interpret Shakespeare's language, your ability to construct a thoughtful, original, and well-organized essay, and your demonstration of a thorough knowledge of the text (or texts) to be analyzed.

The **Exams** will test your knowledge of both the texts and the historical/cultural contexts of Shakespeare's works.

You will be given **quizzes** regularly in class. They will not always be announced in advance. They are designed to test your knowledge of the course material, your ability to think critically, and your ability to read carefully and retain important information. They are **NOT** designed to test your ability to memorize minute details or to deceive you with trick questions, but your ability to understand and remember the plays and supplementary material is important. Any material read or discussed during the course of the semester could appear on these quizzes. You will also be assigned various in-class activities and writing assignments, individually and in groups.

Active participation in class discussion and activities is essential for your success and the success of the class as a whole. So, attendance and class participation are **Mandatory**. You should come to class every day prepared and excited to engage with the material and your fellow students. Each student is allowed 3 unexcused absences without penalty, with each additional unexcused absence incurring a 3% penalty to your final grade. Medical, college-related, and religious absences will be excused only with proper documentation, and advance notice is greatly preferred. And please, turn your cellphone ringers off, and no texting.

All students are responsible for making up any missed work; in-class assignments missed for unexcused absences cannot be made up. If you know in advance you will be absent on a day that a paper is due, turn it in early or make other arrangements with me. Late papers are penalized 1 letter grade per class-day late.

Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Disability Services at (814) 332-2898. Disability Services is part of the Learning Commons and is located in Pelletier Library. Please do this as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Daily Syllabus

This schedule is subject to change with reasonable notice.

Date	Topic -- Please complete reading assignments <i>BEFORE</i> the date assigned
F 8/27:	Intro to course: Contexts of Renaissance drama, Shakespeare's world, & issues of performance
M 8/30:	Comedy. <i>As You Like It</i> Act 1; Introduction pp.1-12, (<i>Norton</i>); Ch. 3, pp. 79-98 (<i>Bedford</i>)
W 9/1:	<i>AYLI</i> : The City vs. the Country, Pastoral contexts <i>AYLI</i> Act 2; Ch.7 pp. 219-236 (<i>Bedford</i>)
F 9/3:	<i>AYLI</i> : Gender, desire & cross-dressing <i>AYLI</i> Acts 3-4 Ch. 7 pp. 237-252 (<i>Bedford</i>)
M 9/6:	<i>AYLI</i> : Comic Endings <i>AYLI</i> 5; Sonnets 1, 18, 20, 129, 138; Valerie Traub, "Gender & Sexuality" (Sakai)

- W 9/8: *Midsummer Night's Dream: The Battle of the Sexes*
MND 1-2; Ch. 8 pp.253-277 (*Bedford*)
- F 9/10: MND: Transformation and Disorder
MND Act 3; Ch. 8 pp. 278-302 (*Bedford*)
- M 9/13: MND: Comic Structure
MND 4-5; Ch. 4 pp. 109-144 (*Bedford*)
- W 9/15: **Essay 1 Due**
MND: Love & Marriage
- F 9/17: *Henry V: Language and Kingship*
Henry V Act 1; Ch. 2 pp. 36-78 (*Bedford*)
- M 9/20: *Henry V: English Identities*
Henry V Act 2; Intro pp. 12-24 (*Norton*); Pamela Mason, “*Henry V*” (Sakai)
- W 9/22: *Henry V: History and/as Propaganda*
Henry V Act 3; Norman Rabkin, “Rabbits, Ducks, and *Henry V*” (Sakai)
- F 9/24: No Class
- M 9/27: *Henry V: Performing Heroism & Subverting Authority*
Henry V Acts 4-5
- W 9/29: *Richard III: Good and Bad Kings*
Richard III Act 1
- F 10/1: *Richard III: History & Propaganda redux*
Richard III Act 2; Janis Lull, “Plantagenets...” (Sakai)
- M 10/4: *Richard III: Politics & Order*
Richard III Acts 3-4; Ch. 9 pp. 303-352
- W 10/6: *Richard III vs. Henry V*
Richard III Act 5; Besnault & Bitot, “Historical Legacy and Fiction” (Sakai)
- F 10/8: **In-Class Exam (Take Home Essay Due 10/13)**
- 10/9-10/12: FALL BREAK – No Class.**
Read *Hamlet* Act 1; Ch. 3 pp. 99-108 (*Bedford*)

- W 10/13: **Take Home Essay Due**
 What is Tragedy? *Hamlet*
 Read *Hamlet* Act 1; Ch. 3 pp. 99-108 (*Bedford*)
- F 10/15: *Hamlet* & The Revenge Tradition
Hamlet Act 2; Francis Bacon, "On Revenge"
- M 10/18: *Hamlet*: Decision and Indecision
Hamlet Act 3; Stephen Booth, "On the Value of *Hamlet*" (Sakai)
- W 10/20: *Hamlet*: Religion, Death, & Decay
Hamlet Act 4
- F 10/22: *Hamlet*: The rest is silence
Hamlet Act 5
- M 10/25: *Othello*: "Blackness"
Othello Act 1; Ania Loomba, "Outsiders in Shakespeare's England" (Sakai)
- W 10/27: *Othello*: Language & Lies
Othello Act 2; William Empson, "Honest in *Othello*" (Sakai)
- F 10/29: *Othello*: The social role of sex
Othello Act 3; Gayle Greene, "Sexual and Social Tragedy" (Sakai)
- M 11/1: *Othello*: Sexual Identities
Othello Act 4; Ania Loomba, "Sexuality and Racial Difference" (Sakai)
- W 11/3: *Othello*: Speak of me as I am
Othello Act 5
- F 11/5: Race, Performance, and Sex
 Ch. 10 pp. 353-382 (*Bedford*)
- M 11/8: *The Winter's Tale*: Language & Mind
Winter's Tale Act 1; Russ McDonald, "Listening to the last plays" (Sakai)
- W 11/10: *The Winter's Tale*: Jealousy & Identity
Winter's Tale Act 2
- F 11/12: No Class
- M 11/15: *The Winter's Tale*: Female Authority
Winter's Tale Act 3
- W 11/17: *The Winter's Tale*: Art vs. Nature
Winter's Tale Act 4

- F 11/19: *The Winter's Tale*: Problematic Conclusions
Winter's Tale Act 5
- M 11/22: **Essay 2 Due**
- 11/24-28: THANKSGIVING BREAK – No Class.**
If you have time, begin reading *The Tempest*
- M 11/29: Introduction to *The Tempest*
- W 12/1: *The Tempest*: Rights of Rulership
Tempest Act 1; Karen Britland, “Politics, Religion ...” (Sakai)
- F 12/3: *The Tempest*: Renaissance Travelers
Tempest Act 2; Montaigne, “On Cannibals”; Sylvester Jourdan, “A Discovery of the Barmudas” (Sakai)
- M 12/6: *The Tempest*: Colonialism & Imperialism
Tempest Acts 3-5; Meredith Skura, “Discourse and the Individual” (Sakai)
- W 12/8: *The Tempest*: Magic, Stagecraft, and Realism
- Tu 12/14: 9:00AM – Final Exam**

Film Screening Schedule
All Showings at 7PM, Oddfellows 221*

All group film screenings are optional but highly recommended. Those films in bold are required viewing; if you do not attend the group screening, you must watch them on your own. They will be available to view on reserve at the Library.

F 9/3: <i>As You Like It</i> (Sharrock)	W 10/20: <i>S&A</i> episodes 3-4
F 9/10: <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> (Hoffman)	Th 10/21: <i>S&A</i> episodes 5-6 *(206)
M 9/27: <i>Henry V</i> (Branagh)	F 10/22: Hamlet (Kosintsev)
W 9/29: <i>Henry V</i> (Olivier)	M 10/25: <i>Hamlet</i> (MST3K)
W 10/6: <i>Richard III</i> (Loncraine)	F 10/29: Othello (Parker)
M 10/18: <i>Hamlet</i> (Zeffirelli)	W 11/3: Othello (Nunn)
Tu 10/19: <i>Slings & Arrows</i> episodes 1-2 *(Oddfellows 206)	M 11/15: <i>The Winter's Tale</i> (Doran)
	M 12/6: <i>The Tempest</i> (BBC)

Films On Reserve @ Library

As You Like It: BBC, **Sharrock**

A Midsummer Night's Dream: BBC, **Hoffman**, Noble

Henry V: BBC, Bogdanov, **Branagh**, **Olivier**

Richard III: BBC, Bogdanov, Olivier, **Loncraine**

Hamlet: BBC, Branagh, Almereyda, **Kosintsev**, **Zeffirelli**, Olivier, Doran

Othello: BBC, **Nunn**, Nelson ("O"), Suzman, **Parker**

The Winter's Tale: BBC, Doran

The Tempest: BBC

