

English 129: Shakespeare

Fall 2013

Instructor: Mr. Paul Zajac

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Course Texts

The Norton Shakespeare: Essential Plays & Sonnets, second edition, ed. Stephen Greenblatt et. al. (New York: Norton, 2009). [Available through the bookstore.]

Course Description and Objectives

In the First Folio of 1623, Ben Jonson, Shakespeare's friend and fellow playwright, wrote that Shakespeare was the "soul of the age! / The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage," but also that he was "not of an age, but for all time." Our approach to Shakespeare's works in this course will be similarly focused. We will explore Shakespeare's works with regard to Renaissance culture and the original appeal of the plays, but we will also consider what gives them their lasting quality throughout the centuries.

Students in the course can expect to:

- Read ten major works by William Shakespeare
- Identify and examine major themes, tropes, and issues in poetry and plays
- Identify poetic and dramatic techniques, including meter, enjambment, irony, and more
- Understand the expectations, constraints, and opportunities presented by particular dramatic genres, including comedy, history, and tragedy
- Become familiar with the relevant cultural, political, and religious issues of Elizabethan and Jacobean society
- Imagine how original theatrical and reading audiences might have reacted to these works
- Discuss how the plays can be staged or adapted for modern audiences, locating similarities (and differences) between early modern and contemporary concerns
- Develop and exercise the fundamental skills of literary analysis: close reading, interpretation, thesis construction, and persuasive argumentation
- Demonstrate the successful attainment of all of these objectives in the form of in-class discussions, reading quizzes, three short papers, and mid-term and final examinations

Grading Breakdown

Participation – 10%

Quizzes – 10%

Paper 1 – 10%

Paper 2 – 15%

Paper 3 – 15%

Midterm – 20%

Final Exam – 20%

Course Readings

As an English course, 129 is reading intensive. We will be reading ten major works over the course of the semester, in addition to select Shakespearean sonnets. The standard pace is to discuss a single play per week, though we will spend slightly more time on longer plays.

A schedule of readings for the entire semester is available at the end of the syllabus. However, the specific assignments are subject to change at my discretion. Unless otherwise stated, page numbers correspond to those in the assigned textbook. You are strongly encouraged to read the **Norton introductory essay** for each new play that we read, but it is not required. If you obtained the reading on ANGEL, you need to print it out for class. Students must have a print copy of each Shakespeare play; online versions are not allowed.

Attendance

You are expected to attend class every day and to have the required readings with you. Regular attendance is required because course instruction depends on your active participation. Your involvement in class discussions is a crucial component of the learning process both for you as an individual student and for your fellow classmates. Excused absences are permitted for illnesses and family emergencies, but you must be in contact with me and are fully accountable for missed work. Excessive lateness counts as absence.

After 2 unexcused absences, your grade will suffer, beginning with your participation grade. I will not allow a student to make up a missed quiz. If you miss more than 10 classes for ANY reason, you will not be able to pass the course.

Participation (10%)

English 129 is a discussion-based class, so you will be graded on your regular participation. Although your participation grade will be affected by excessive absences, participating is clearly about more than simply being present in the classroom. Everyone in the classroom must be respectful of others when voicing their opinions or responding to the comments of a fellow classmate. A student who is texting, checking his or her phone, or napping is clearly not participating, and this will be reflected in the student's grade.

Quizzes (10%)

We will have pop quizzes throughout the semester. The material covered will draw upon the assigned reading and/or the class discussion from the previous seminar (so it is essential to contact a fellow student swiftly to obtain notes for any days that you miss). The quizzes are my primary way of ensuring that students keep up with the reading. The quizzes will not be easy; the material will not include things a student could learn from reading Sparknotes or Cliffsnotes. However, there will be twelve quizzes over the course of the semester, and I will drop the lowest two grades. Therefore, each of the remaining ten quizzes will count for 1% of your final grade in the course.

Papers (1 for 10% + 2 for 15% each = 40% Total)

There will be three papers due over the course of the semester. These papers will test your close reading, argumentation, and original thinking skills. The papers should be written in formal, intelligent, correct English prose. All papers should have 1 inch margins on all sides, with text in 12 point Times New Roman font. In the top left corner of the first page, you must include your name, the course number, and the due date of the assignment. Pages should be attached with a staple or paperclip; do not turn in loose pages.

Grading Rubrics for Papers

- A** Factual accuracy, excellent analysis, and excellent presentation. Accurate use of grammar, syntax, and punctuation. Minimum writing problems.
- B** Factual accuracy, good analysis, and good presentation. Several writing problems on each page.
- C** Factual accuracy, minimum analysis, and satisfactory presentation. Many writing problems throughout.
- D** Spotty factual accuracy, unsatisfactory analysis, and unsatisfactory presentation. Multiple misuses of the language.
- F** Unacceptable as college level work in all three categories: factual accuracy, analysis, and use of the language.

Midterm and Exam (20% each = 40% Total)

Unlike the papers, which will encourage you to form your own original arguments in response to specific prompts about the course texts, the two examinations will draw entirely from in-class discussions. If you read all of the course texts, pay attention in class, take good notes, and study carefully, then you should readily succeed on these tests. Tests may consist of multiple choice questions, passage identifications and analyses, short essays focused on individual plays, and one longer essay asking you to discuss multiple works.

More information will be provided about the three papers and two exams in the coming weeks.

Plagiarism (Cheating)

Penn State defines academic integrity as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts (Faculty Senate Policy 49-20).

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University's Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction. These students risk failing not just the individual assignment, but the entire course.

Disability Policy

The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell me as soon as possible.

Course Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Assignments Due</i>
August 26	Course Introduction	Syllabus
August 28	Historical Context	P. 2-26 (also on ANGEL)
August 30	Shakespeare & Theatre	P. 30-43 (also on ANGEL)
September 2	Labor Day	NO CLASS
September 4	Renaissance Poetry & Versification	Readings on ANGEL
September 6	Shakespeare's Sonnets	Sonnets 1-18 (and P. 1659-65)
September 9	Taming of the Shrew	Induction 1 - Act 2
September 11	Taming of the Shrew	Acts 3-4
September 13	Taming of the Shrew	Act 5
September 16	Much Ado About Nothing	Acts 1-3
September 18	Much Ado About Nothing	Act 4
September 20	Much Ado About Nothing	Act 5
September 23	Twelfth Night	Acts 1-2
September 25	Twelfth Night	Acts 3-5
September 27	Twelfth Night	Paper 1 Due
September 30	1 Henry 4	Acts 1-2
October 2	1 Henry 4	Acts 3-4
October 4	1 Henry 4	Act 5
October 7	Henry 5	Act 1
October 9	Henry 5	Acts 2-3
October 11	Henry 5	Act 4
October 14	Henry 5	Act 5
October 16	Midterm Review	Study for Midterm Friday
October 18	Midterm	
October 21	Julius Caesar	Acts 1-2
October 23	Julius Caesar	Acts 3-4
October 25	Julius Caesar	Act 5
October 28	Hamlet	Act 1
October 30	Hamlet	Act 2
November 1	Hamlet	Act 3
November 4	Hamlet	Act 4
November 6	Hamlet	Act 5
November 8	Macbeth	Acts 1-2
November 11	Macbeth	Act 3 / Paper 2 Due
November 13	Macbeth	Act 4
November 15	Macbeth	Act 5

November 18	The Tempest	Acts 1-3.2
November 20	The Tempest	Acts 3.3-5
November 22	The Tempest	Discuss Whole Play
November 25, 26, 27	Thanksgiving Holiday	NO CLASS
December 2	[Student Choice]	TBD
December 4	[Student Choice]	TBD
December 6	Shakespeare on Film	Movie in Class
December 9	Shakespeare on Film	Movie in Class
December 11	Shakespeare on Film	Movie Discussion
December 13	Exam Review	Paper 3 Due

FINAL EXAM as scheduled by the registrar.