

Murray State University

Revised 7/28/15

DEPARTMENT: ENGLISH & PHILOSOPHY

COURSE PREFIX: ENG

COURSE NUMBER: 334

CREDIT HOURS: 3

I. **TITLE:** Shakespeare

II. **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PREREQUISITE(S):** A study of selected Shakespearean histories, comedies, and tragedies.

Prerequisite(s): ENG 105 or 150 or the equivalent, and ENG 221 or permission of instructor.

III. **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The purpose of this course is to aid students in an exploration of a representative - sample of the poetic and dramatic works of William Shakespeare.

Upon completion of this course, the successful student will achieve the following:

- A. deep familiarity with six plays by William Shakespeare (as well as a number of his sonnets): four Comedies (or two Comedies, one "Problem Play," and one "Romance"), one History, and one Tragedy;
- B. become more conversant and comfortable with Shakespeare's distinctive use of language (including his use of different poetic meters, his use of prose, his unique imagery, symbols, metaphors, etc.), his thematic interests, and his use of sources and poetic traditions;
- C. acquainted with the cultural conditions in Elizabethan and Jacobean England that influenced Shakespeare's works, including the role of the government, the public playhouse system, the influence of social ideology, and the conditions of book production;
- D. cognizant of the performance aspect of Shakespeare's plays by viewing and discussing a range of filmed versions of the plays selected for this semester; and
- E. conversant with a selection of important critical essays on the plays (on Canvas).

Academic Courtesy: Shakespeare's plays and poems can (and often do) raise controversial, even unsettling issues; it is our task to discuss such issues within an open and constructive intellectual environment. While disagreement is one of the core features of academic discourse, it is vital that students maintain respect for each other's perspectives in order to foster a safe and productive classroom experience. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior directed toward any member of the class will result in immediate removal from the course.

IV. **CONTENT OUTLINE:**

The plays will be studied in rough chronological order, and will be supported by readings on cultural context from The Bedford Companion, which is organized by topic ("Shakespeare's biography," "Playgoing in 1599," etc.). Most classes will begin with an analysis of a sonnet,

the theme of which is relevant to scenes to be discussed that day in class. A select number of secondary essays will be incorporated into our discussions.

V. INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Students are expected to complete **all** of the reading and written assignments satisfactorily in order to pass the course. Students are expected to have read the scenes and supplementary materials promptly and thoroughly on the days designated on the Assignment Schedule below. I will do my best to strike a balance between lecture and discussion, but I frequently rely on student input and even student performance to facilitate our investigations of these texts. So, please prepare the materials in advance, and be ready to offer your comments, concerns, interpretations, and questions.

VI. FIELD, CLINICAL, AND/OR LABORATORY EXPERIENCES:

Our class will have the opportunity to travel to Staunton, VA to participate in The American Shakespeare Center's "Little Academe" program, Oct. 17- 19 to see *The Comedy of Errors* and *Macbeth*. This trip would be voluntary and would have no effect on your final grade in the class. More information will be forthcoming.

VII. TEXT(S) AND RESOURCES:

McDonald, Russ. *The Bedford Companion to Shakespeare*, 2n' ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001.

Shakespeare, William. *Sonnets*, ed. Stephen Orgel, Penguin/Pelican Shakespeare, 2001.

The Comedy of Errors, ed. F. Dolan, Penguin/ Pelican, 1999 *Macbeth*, ed. S. Orgel, Penguin/Pelican, 2000 *Henry V*, ed. Claire McEachern, Penguin/ Pelican, 1999 *Twelfth Night*, ed. J. Crewe, Penguin/ Pelican , 2000 *Measure/or Measure*, ed. J. Crewe, Penguin/ Pelican, 2000 *The Tempest*, ed. P. Holland, Penguin/ Pelican, 1999.

Note: Please bring your play text, the *Companion*, and the *Sonnets* to EVERY meeting. Students who do not bring textbooks to every meeting will be asked to leave until they obtain the books.

The textbooks are available at the University Bookstore, but they are readily available for purchase through on-line sources as well. These editions have been selected for their textual clarity, affordability, and for the utility of their notes and introductory materials; *please plan to buy and use these editions only.* It is important that we all use the same editions so that we are on the same page (literally and figuratively), and to create the kind of consistency that will facilitate students' performance on essays and exams (less competent editions may contain textual variations and poor notes that could influence the interpretation of the plays, the critical consistency of lecture, and the information required for the exams). Outdated Collected Works and Shakespeare apps are **NOT** acceptable substitutions.

A select number of secondary essays are available on E-Reserve via the Library's website; film versions of each play are on reserve at the Waterfield Library's check-out area; *film versions of the plays should be viewed after, NOT before, students read the play text. Films will often take liberties with the text in ways that will affect your understanding of the original material.*

Please note: websites such as *SparkNotes* that feature both summaries and interpretations of the plays **are to be avoided**. Like you, I have visited such sites, and they are replete with inaccuracies and incomplete information (*Wikipedia* is the most pertinent example). Such sites also encourage plagiarism (see Section X on Academic Honesty); do not risk failing the course by using these sites! Furthermore, *No Fear Shakespeare* is also to be avoided; this series will introduce fundamental errors into your understanding of the texts.

VIII. EVALUATION AND GRADING PROCEDURES:

Final grades for this course will be based upon the following criteria: the intellectual quality and improvement of all written and course-related assignments, quality and quantity of class participation, and attendance record. Requests for extensions on essays must be submitted at least one full day before the assignment is due; no extension requests will be granted on the day the essay is due. No more than ONE extension will be granted in a semester, and all extensions will be limited to the next class meeting. No extensions on the final essay will be granted. All essays will be submitted electronically via Canvas. No make-up exams will be scheduled except for absences required for events representing the university. All students must take the Final Exam as scheduled.

Assignments:

- A. Two (closed book) exams (a Midterm and a Final Exam; see Assignment Schedule for dates) will be given throughout the semester. The exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and brief essay questions based on materials from the plays, McDonald's book, lectures, and film clips screened in class, and so completion of all reading assignments and regular attendance is vital if students wish to do well. 100 points possible on both the Midterm and the Final. The Midterm is worth 15% of the final grade, and the Final Exam is worth 20% of the final grade (35% total).
- B. Three formal analytical essays (typed, double-spaced, size 12 font, pages numbered, conforming to MLA guidelines for citation style, title page, and Works Cited page; see Assignment Schedule for due dates). All essays must be turned in via Canvas by 5 PM on the due dates. All essays must be saved as Word docs (doc & docx).
Failure to complete ALL of the essays satisfactorily and ON TIME can result in a failing mark for the course. No late essays will be accepted.

As this is an upper division course, the essays are expected to contain a clear and cogent thesis statement, a strong organizational structure, ample supporting evidence from the relevant texts (meaning quotes from the plays), and as few mechanical errors as possible. A word of warning: I will often return papers that contain too many proofreading errors.

Essay One (approximately four pages) will be in response to a prompt distributed in class on Aug. 29 (essay is due Sept. 12). Essay One will focus on one of Shakespeare's sonnets, and must include a "Translation" and Scansion of the chosen sonnet (translation/ scansion should not be factored into page number count). Essay One is worth 10% of the final grade.

Essay Two (approximately six pages; prompt issued Sept. 26; essay due Oct. 15): the topic is up to the student, but ideally, the essay should compare/contrast an issue, or a theme, or

characters, or events, etc. from Comedy of Errors and Twelfth Night. This is an ideal, NOT a requirement; you are free to focus on a single play if you wish. Use of two secondary critical works is required. Essay Two is worth 15% of the final grade.

Essay Three (approximately eight pages; NO PROMPT; use of three secondary critical works is required; essay due Dec. 3; essay proposals due via Canvas on Nov. 10: again, the topic will be of your choice, but the essay should engage with a play(s) covered after Twelfth Night. Essay Three is worth 20%. No extensions will be granted for this essay.

Quizzes, Scansion Exercises, and in-class writing assignments represent 10% of the final grade.

Attendance: 5% of the final grade; Participation: 5% of the final grade.

*Extra credit: I welcome extra credit work in the form of staged scenes, monologues, presentations, etc.

Note: please silence and **put away** all electronic devices before class begins. Unless you are asked to use your mobile device, **do not have it out during class**. Violations of this policy will result in, first offense, a verbal warning, second offense, a written email warning, third offense, removal from the class that day, fourth offense, a failing mark in the course. If you have an emergency that requires you to have your phone out, inform the professor before class begins. If you wish to use a computer to take notes, please secure instructor approval first, and do not have email or social media apps open during class.

IX. ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Students are expected to adhere to the MSU Attendance Policy outlined in the current *MSU Bulletin*.

X. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:

Murray State University takes seriously its moral and educational obligation to maintain high standards of academic honesty and ethical behavior. Instructors are expected to evaluate students' academic achievements accurately, as well as ascertain that work submitted by students is authentic and the result of their own efforts, and consistent with established academic standards. Students are obligated to respect and abide by the basic standards of personal and professional integrity.

Violations of Academic Honesty include:

Cheating - Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized information such as books, notes, study aids, or other electronic, online, or digital devices in any academic exercise; as well as unauthorized communication of information by any means to or from others during any academic exercise.

Fabrication and Falsification - Intentional alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves changing information whereas fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information.

Multiple Submission - The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work, including oral reports, for credit more than once without authorization from the instructor.

Plagiarism - Intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas, creative work, or data of someone else as one's own in any academic exercise, without due and proper acknowledgement.

Instructors should outline their expectations that may go beyond the scope of this policy at the beginning of each course and identify such expectations and restrictions in the course syllabus. When an instructor receives evidence, either directly or indirectly, of academic dishonesty, he or she should investigate the instance. The faculty member should then take appropriate disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to the following:

- 1) Requiring the student(s) to repeat the exercise or do additional related exercise(s).
- 2) Lowering the grade or failing the student(s) on the particular exercise(s) involved.
- 3) Lowering the grade or failing the student(s) in the course.

If the disciplinary action results in the awarding of a grade of E in the course, the student(s) may not drop the course.

Faculty reserve the right to invalidate any exercise or other evaluative measures if substantial evidence exists that the integrity of the exercise has been compromised. Faculty also reserve the right to document in the course syllabi further academic honesty policy elements related to the individual disciplines.

A student may appeal the decision of the faculty member with the department chair in writing within five working days. Note: If, at any point in this process, the student alleges that actions have taken place that may be in violation of the Murray State University Non-Discrimination Statement, this process must be suspended and the matter be directed to the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Access. Any appeal will be forwarded to the appropriate university committee as determined by the Provost.

XI. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Policy Statement

Murray State University endorses the intent of all federal and state laws created to prohibit discrimination. Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, veteran status, or disability in employment, admissions, or the provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal access to participate in all programs and activities. For more information, contact the Executive Director of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Access, 103 Wells Hall, (270) 809-3155 (voice), (270) 809-3361 (TDD).

Students with Disabilities

Students requiring special assistance due to a disability should visit the Office of Student Disability Services immediately for assistance with accommodations. For more information, students should contact the Office of Student Disability Services, 423 Wells Hall, Murray, KY 42071. 270-809-2018 (voice) 270-809-5889 (TDD).