

**English 144
Shakespeare
Fall 2016**

**Department of English and Comparative Literature
San Jose State University**

Instructor:	Professor Shannon Miller
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Office Hours:	Tuesday 1:30-2:30; Thursday 3-4; by appointment
Class Meeting Time:	T/Th 12:00 - 1:15 pm
Class Meeting Place:	HGH 124

Course Description:

William Shakespeare is indisputably one of the greatest writers in the English language. This class will introduce students to a range of Shakespeare's plays, including comedies, tragedies, romances, and history plays, teaching students how to grapple with Elizabethan English, how to understand the plays in the context of the English Renaissance, and how to appreciate the range of interpretations made possible by these works. We engage the plays' ability to produce meaning on the page, on the stage, and on the screen. Classroom activities will include analyzing Shakespeare's language, screening scenes from recent film versions of plays, and acting out scenes to see how meaning is produced through directorial decisions. We will consider the historical conditions of Renaissance England, and how the world of Queen Elizabeth and King James shaped elements of Shakespeare's plays. Central to our discussion will be the mode of staging of plays in the period and how spaces like the Globe Theater are central to understanding Shakespeare's works. Students will write two formal papers, complete a summary of a critical article, write a performance review, and take a final exam.

Program Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes:

Students shall:

- 1) demonstrate the ability to read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, or rhetoric.
- 2) show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature.
- 3) write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject.
- 4) develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively.
- 5) articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

Course Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes:

The class shall:

- 1) introduce you to Shakespeare's plays, poetry, and staging, and develop your ability to read Shakespeare's language in, first, a competent, and, later in the semester, a sophisticated manner
- 2) introduce you to the different forms (or genres) of plays in which Shakespeare wrote
- 3) further your ability to formulate a clear, focused paper argument that combines a sophisticated understanding of texts with close, textual readings
- 4) provide you with experience in assessing and summarizing critical essays on Shakespeare's plays
- 5) provide you with a background in Shakespeare's era and the performance of plays in the English Renaissance

Assignments: Weightings for Course Grade

Assignment	Learning Objectives	Weight
Paper #1 (4-5 pages)	1, 2, 3	20%
Paper #2 (7-8 pages)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	25%
Article Summary	1, 3, 4	5%
Performance Review	1, 3	15%
Final Exam	1, 2, 3, 5	15%
Participation/In-class work	1, 2, 5	20%
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	100%

Assignments:

The assignments in this class, from in-class writing (or quizzes) through papers and the final exam are designed to develop your ability to understand and interpret Shakespeare's plays and verse, as well as to understand them in the context of Shakespeare's own period and modes of staging the plays.

Most class days, we will begin with a small in-class writing assignment or quiz. The in-class writing assignment will ask you to consider a small segment of the play or piece of the verse or prose to draw out relevant themes. All students need to read the assigned material BEFORE class: these questions will draw upon the reading for the day. I prefer NOT to give quizzes, but if students are not doing the reading before class, I will be forced to give them.

You will write an initial short paper (4-5 pages) that will ask you to focus on the language of Shakespeare's plays: this will allow you to build upon class discussions and in-class writings that will focus on how language is contributing to and building meaning in the plays; you will engage language in this paper to produce a focus, thesis-driven essay.

In preparation for the final, longer paper, you will complete two shorter assignments that will support you in completing the longer paper. You will provide a summary of a critical article on one of the 8 plays we are reading this semester. You will select the essay, which will need to be substantive and published in a reputable academic journal. You will make use of appropriate library databases to make your selection, and you will distribute copies of your summary to all members of the class.

You will also do a performance review of a theatrical performance or film version of one of the plays we are reading this semester. Since we will be discussing how performance itself is a form of interpretation of a play, you will produce a 2-3 page analysis of how staging and production choices contribute to meaning in the performance you select. You can hand in this performance review at anytime during the semester, but it must be handed in no later than December 8th.

Your final paper, 7-8 pages in length, will incorporate all of the skills you will have developed through these projects: attention to language; development of a focused thesis; use of critical sources (at least two critical essays should be cited in the paper); role of historical performance and staging decisions in understanding a play or plays.

During the final exam, you will be asked to answer two essay questions; you will have received prompts for the questions ahead of time. One of these will be on how staging elements and conventions in the plays contribute to meaning in the plays, and the second will ask you to consider a theme that unifies a number of the plays we have read this semester.

Participation is expected in this small class and it will be key to helping you develop our understanding and interpretation of Shakespeare's plays. Consequently, class is meant to give you the intellectual tools necessary to complete the class assignments. In order to participate, you must be present. Absences, then, will have a direct effect on the grade you can receive for participation.

Reading and Assignment Schedule

Week	Date	Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	August 25	<p>Introduction: The World of Shakespeare and his Plays</p> <p>Selections from “Shakespeare in Love”; Introduction of Sonnets 18, 20</p>
2	August 30 September 1	<p>Representing the Staging of Shakespeare’s Plays: Screening of “Shakespeare in Love”</p> <p>Reading: <u>Shakespeare by Stages</u>, pp. 1-17; 33-44; 63-66; 75-86; 141-143</p> <p>Introduction to Shakespearean Comedy and Language: Reading: <u>Midsummer Night’s Dream</u>, Act 1 – Act 2, scene 1</p>
3	September 6 September 8	<p><u>Midsummer Night’s Dream</u>, Act 2, scene 2 – Act 3, scene 2 <u>Shakespeare by Stages</u>, pp. 66-68</p> <p><u>Midsummer Night’s Dream</u>, Acts 4-5 <u>Shakespeare by Stages</u>, pp. 90-92</p>
4	September 13 September 15	<p>Complicating the Comedic Form in the Two Worlds of <u>Merchant of Venice</u></p> <p><u>Merchant of Venice</u>, Act 1, scene 1 – Act 2, scene 5</p> <p><u>Merchant of Venice</u>, Act 2, scene 6 – Act 3, scene 4 <u>Shakespeare by Stages</u>, pp. 27-29</p>
5	September 20 September 22	<p><u>Merchant of Venice</u>, Act 3, scene 5 to end of Act 5</p> <p>Introduction to Shakespeare’s History Play and the Tudor Myth</p> <p><u>Richard II</u>, Act 1 <u>Shakespeare by Stages</u>, pp. 97-111</p>
6	September 27 September 29	<p><u>Richard II</u>, Act 2</p> <p><u>Richard II</u>, Act 3 <u>Shakespeare by Stages</u>, pp. 17-27; 143-150</p>

7	October 4 October 6	<p><u>Richard II</u>, Act 4-5 <u>Shakespeare by Stages</u>, pp. 115-124</p> <p>From History Play to Tragic Forms: Developing Character in <u>Richard III</u></p> <p><u>Richard III</u>, Act 1, scene 1 – Act 2, scene i <u>Shakespeare by Stages</u>, pp. 45-52</p>
8	October 11 October 13	<p><u>Richard III</u>, Act 2, scene 2 – Act 4, scene 3</p> <p>CLASS CANCELED</p>
9	October 18 October 20	<p><u>Richard III</u>, Act 4, scene 4 – end of Act 5</p> <p>Paper #1 Due</p> <p>Evolving the Tragic Hero of <u>Hamlet</u></p> <p><u>Hamlet</u>, Act 1, scene 1 – Acts 2, scene 1 <u>Shakespeare by Stages</u>, pp. 72-74</p>
10	October 25 October 27	<p><u>Hamlet</u>, Act 2, scene 2 – Act 3, scene 1 <u>Shakespeare by Stages</u>, pp. 52-63</p> <p><u>Hamlet</u>, Act 3, scene 2 – Act 4, scene 4</p>
11	November 1 November 3	<p><u>Hamlet</u>, Act 4, scene 4 – Act 5, scene 2</p> <p>Exploring Nihilism: The Apex of Tragedy in <u>King Lear</u></p> <p><u>King Lear</u>, Act 1</p>
12	November 8 November 10	<p><u>King Lear</u>, Act 2, scene 1 – Act 3, scene 2</p> <p><u>King Lear</u>, Act 3, scene 3 - Act 4, scene 3 <u>Shakespeare by Stages</u>, pp. 69-72; 111-115</p>
13	November 15 November 17	<p><u>King Lear</u>, Act 4, scene 5 to Act 5, scene 3</p> <p>Rethinking Tragedy through Romance: the Generic Play of <u>Antony and Cleopatra</u></p> <p><u>Antony and Cleopatra</u>, Act 1-Act 2, scene 5</p>

14	November 22 November 24	<u>Antony and Cleopatra</u> , Act 2, scene 6 - Act 3, scene 13 THANKSGIVING DAY (no class)
15	November 29 December 1	<u>Antony and Cleopatra</u> , Acts 4 - 5 Romance: Shakespeare's Generic Response to Tragedy <u>The Tempest</u> , Acts 1-2
16	December 6 December 8	<u>The Tempest</u> , Acts 3-4 Paper #2 Due <u>The Tempest</u> , Act 5
FINAL	EXAM	December 19, 9:45 - 12:00

Required Texts:

Antony and Cleopatra, Penguin (Signet), 9780451527134

Hamlet, Penguin (Signet), 9780451526922

King Lear, Penguin (Signet), 9780451527295 [also comes with Hamlet]

Merchant of Venice, Penguin (Signet), 9780451526809

Midsummer Night's Dream, Penguin (Signet), 9780451526960 [also comes with The Tempest]

Richard II, Penguin (Signet), 9780451527196

Richard III, Penguin (Signet), 9780451526953

The Tempest, Penguin (Signet), 9780451527318

Materials available on Canvas:

Selections from Arthur Kinney, Shakespeare by Stages: An Historical Introduction (Wiley-Blackwell, 2003).

Classroom Protocol:

All readings are to be completed before class time, and students are to come prepared to discuss. To facilitate discussion (in addition to assigned articles and class presentations), please read actively, using margins of your texts, a separate notebook, or even a computer tablets to mark interesting passages, confusions, inspirations about the text. Please silence cellphones before class; if an emergency situation requires that they remain on, consult with the professor.

Course Policies and Rules:

- Late work (NOT EXAMS) will be penalized 1/3 of a grade for each day that it is late. Each student will be allowed 2 days of a **grace period** on a late paper (this can be spread over 2 papers). I will accept a paper up to two weeks after the deadline.
- In order for you to pass the course, you must turn in all assignments and take the final exam.
- Attendance and participation in this course are expected. If you do not attend the class, you will not pass it because you will receive a zero for participation and for all other in-class related activities.
- All work that you hand in for this course must be your own. Any cheating or plagiarism in this course will result in IMMEDIATE failure of the course and charges of academic dishonesty brought against the student. See University Policy on Academic Integrity below.

Library Liaison

Contact Toby Matoush via email: Toby.Matoush@sjsu.edu, or phone: (408) 808-2096 if you have library research questions that have not been answered in class.

University Policies:

You may find all syllabus related University Policies and resources information listed on GUP's [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>