INTRODUCTION TO SHAKESPEARE

ENGLISH 020: Spring 2016
Lectures: COB 113 • Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-10:15
Instructor: Dr. Katherine Steele Brokaw, kbrokaw@ucmerced.edu
Office: COB 381 • Office hours: Tuesdays 10:15-11:15 and by appointment

Discussion sections: KOL 396, Fridays at 1:30 and 2:30
TA: Marilee Shaw, mshaw4@ucmerced.edu
Office: • Office hours:

In this course, you will be introduced to the plays and poetry of William Shakespeare. You will read sonnets as well as plays classified as comedy, tragedy, history, and romance. We will consider these texts slowly and in depth in order to develop the skills needed to read and understand this challenging but rewarding (for many even life changing!) literature. You will also read and learn about the historical contexts that shaped these works, and consider why they continue to be so popular throughout the world. You will learn about both historical and modern-day performances of Shakespeare's works by viewing several films and live performances, and by performing yourself.

COURSE GOALS:
After engaging with this course actively and thoughtfully, you will be able to:

1. **Identify** several of Shakespeare’s plays and poems, as well as the people, places, and events that shaped the world in which that literature was written.
2. **Appreciate** the aesthetic qualities and ethical complexities of these plays and poems, and consider why they continue to be popular.
3. **Empathize** with historical, geographic, and cultural diversity by reading plays and poems written in late 16th and early 17th century Britain, and also learn about global appropriations of Shakespeare over the last 400 years.
4. **Interpret** texts through both literary and dramatic lenses, with due sensitivity to both textual and contextual cues.
5. **Perform** scenes from these plays or recite Shakespeare’s poetry, enhancing your public speaking and interpretation skills.
6. **Practice close reading skills**, understanding how literary and rhetorical choices such as meter, rhyme, diction, irony, puns, and figurative language create meaning and ambiguity in poetry and drama.
7. **Articulate evaluations** of Shakespeare's writing and to performances of it, in speech and writing, cogently and with sensitivity to context.
8. **Apply** interpretive strategies and research skills developed in historical, literary, and theatrical study to other academic and professional contexts.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND PERFORMANCES:
*The Bedford Shakespeare*, edited by Russ McDonald and Lena Cowen Orlin.
*Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Folger Shakespeare Library.
Additional readings on CatCourses; First Folio on reserve in UCM library.
Assigned viewing includes at least two local live Shakespeare performances, and in-class videos (for which you are held responsible).
Requirements:
First Paper: 15% of grade
Second Paper: 20%
Recitation or Performance and Reflection: 15%
Theater Reviews (2): 10%
Book resource Review: 5%
Final: 20%
Quizzes and participation: 15%

Weekly Schedule:
Reading and assignments are to be completed by the day they appear on the syllabus. You should read all of the pages assigned, including Previews, side bars, and Views. It is recommended that you read the entire play before the first class, and re-read acts to prepare for subsequent classes.

Week 1: Julius Caesar
Thursday, January 21: Excerpt from The Bedford Companion to Shakespeare on CatCourses; Julius Caesar, Act 3 (pages 911-922).
Theater reviews assigned.
→ Merced College/Merced Shakes productions of Julius Caesar this weekend

Week 2: Julius Caesar
January 26: Julius Caesar, Acts 4-5.
Performance sign-ups; Book resource review assigned.
Section viewing: Caesar Must Die (2012)
→ Merced College/Merced Shakes productions of Julius Caesar this weekend

Week 3: As You Like It
February 2: “Families,” 400-406; As You Like It, Preview, Acts 1-2.
Performance Review 1 due on CatCourses.
February 4: “Genre,” 532-538; As You Like It, Act 3.

Week 4: As You Like It
February 9: As You Like It, Acts 4-5.
February 11: “Nature,” 880-885; As You Like It View.
Paper 1 assigned.
Section viewing: As You Like It dir. Sharrock (Shakespeare’s Globe, 2010) and dir. Dennis (Merced Shakespearefest, 2013).

Week 5: Richard III
February 16: “Genealogy,” 466-472; Richard III View and Act 1.
Book resource review due on CatCourses.
→ Romeo and Juliet at Playhouse Merced this weekend
WEEK 6: RICHARD III AND SONNETS
February 23: Richard III Acts 4-5 and View.
February 25: Helen Vendler on Prosody, and on “Poems as Pleasure” on CatCourses;
Sonnets 1, 2, 13, 18, 23.

WEEK 7: SONNETS
March 1: Sonnets 29, 55, 65, 66, 73, 87, 106; Lynne Magnussen essay in Folger Sonnets book.
Paper 1 due.

WEEK 8: MACBETH
March 8: Macbeth Preview and Acts 1-2.

WEEK 9: MACBETH
March 15: Macbeth Acts 4-5.
Paper 2 assigned.
March 17: Macbeth View.
Section viewing: Macbeth dir. Nunn (RSC); Throne of Blood dir. Kurosawa (1957)
→ Performances of Merced Shakes’ Macbeth at Merced Theater this weekend.

WEEK 10: SPRING BREAK
→ Performances of Merced Shakes’ Macbeth in Mariposa this weekend.

WEEK 11: OTHELLO
March 29: “Race,” 1098-1104; Paul Prescott, “Shakespeare and Popular Culture” (on CatCourses); Othello Preview and Acts 1-2.
Guest lecturer: Dr. Paul Prescott, University of Warwick (UK)
March 31: “Empire,” 265-270; Othello Act 3.

WEEK 12: OTHELLO
April 7: Othello View; excerpts from Toni Morrison, Desdemona on CatCourses.
Paper proposal and bibliography due on CatCourses.

WEEK 13: MERCHANT OF VENICE
April 12: “Religion,” 1180-1186; Merchant of Venice, Preview and Acts 1-2.
April 14: Merchant of Venice, Act 3.
Draft of paper 2 due in section.

WEEK 14: MERCHANT OF VENICE
April 19: Merchant of Venice Acts 4-5.
April 21: “Law,” 669-673; Merchant of Venice View.
Section viewing: Merchant of Venice, dir. Michael Radford (2004)
ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW:

• First paper (close reading): You will write a 3-4 page paper closely analyzing how language and rhetoric create meaning in a selection from *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, or *Richard III*.

• Second paper (comparative analysis): You will produce a 6-8 page paper comparing two plays: you may approach them through a literary or performative lens (analyzing particular productions). You will select one text (a play or poem) assigned for this course and compare a particular aspect of it to another text that is not assigned for the class, which may be any of the following: a sonnet or two by Philip Sidney, Mary Wroth, or Edmund Spenser, *Twelfth Night*, *Measure for Measure*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Winter’s Tale*, or *Richard II*. Process will be a part of your final grade, as you will produce a proposal, a bibliography, and a draft.

• Three short papers: You will compose three short (1.5-2 page) papers that will hone your research skills and help you articulate your understanding of Shakespeare in performance. These papers are: a summary of and response to a Shakespeare resource (the facsimile of the First Folio or a book of criticism); and two reviews of live performances of Shakespeare plays.

• Final: Quotation identification, multiple choice, short answer, two long essays.

• Recitation: Working with a group, you will memorize and perform a scene from one of the plays we are reading this semester, or you may recite two memorized sonnets or a dramatic monologue. At a minimum, each of you will memorize and recite around 30 lines of text. Extra credit: alone or in pairs, sing the text, stage scenes with costumes or props, create a creative YouTube video. You will also write a one-page reflection on the experience, due three days after your performance.

• Quizzes and in-class writing: Lecture or section may begin with a reading quiz that includes a short freewrite to kickstart discussion of material. You will be unable to make up quizzes you missed throughout the semester.

• Extra Credit: You may receive bonus points towards your quiz and participation grades if you attend a live theater event, a literary event, or an academic or artistic lecture and write a one-page response. Playhouse Merced on Main Street offers many plays each semester, and there are also numerous excellent campus events you might attend. You may attend and write about up to two performances and/or lectures.

COURSE POLICIES:
Special Needs: I welcome all students into this class. If you have any special needs, please speak to me and to Student Services as soon as possible so that we can outline the best ways to promote your success in this course.

Writing Help: Students who would like help with their writing are encouraged to visit the Calvin E. Bright Center in Kolligian 222. Please check their website (learning.ucmerced.edu) for details on tutoring and other academic assistance.

Plagiarism Policy: As a simple guideline, if you submit your own work, you will avoid all serious types of plagiarism. Nevertheless, a responsible student should also consider the less obvious variants of plagiarism, especially when writing research papers that require citations.

For serious instances of plagiarism, such as submitting an essay obtained from an online “paper mill,” students in this course will automatically fail the assignment, receive a final grade of F, and be recommended for dismissal from the university. There is no excuse for serious plagiarism.

I will also regard unattributed citations – verbatim copying of another’s person’s work without some indication of the source – as a serious form of plagiarism. In other words, don’t insert any text in a paper that is not your own without also noting the source.

If you’re uncertain about how to use sources, ask me or your TA. It’s your responsibility to comply with principles of academic honesty; it’s my responsibility to see that every student receives a fair and accurate grade. Let’s work together in meeting these goals.

Technology: Laptops and tablets are not allowed in lecture. Cell phones must be turned off, and iPods and other recording devices are forbidden during class. The same applies to discussion sections. Taping, filming, and photography in class (by camera, cell phone, or any other means) are prohibited.

When emailing any instructor, you are expected to write as you would in any professional correspondence, with courtesy, respect, and clarity. Please refer to the “How to email your professor” handout, posted on CatCourses.

Participation: Arrive to class on time and do not leave early unless you have emailed the instructor in advance with regards to an urgent prior commitment. Try to use the restroom before coming to class. Please do not read other materials during class, or bring food into the classroom.

If you miss five or more classes (including section) without a valid medical excuse, you will forfeit your entire participation grade for the course, and are in danger of failing the course.

If you miss any class, you are responsible for speaking with a classmate about the class discussion to get caught up on the material. Missing class will also seriously affect your ability to do well on quizzes and exams, as well as papers.

Two significantly late arrivals (or early departures) equal one absence, and texting (or other phone activity) once during class also equals one absence.