



Term: Spring 2020 Shakespeare's Text

Course Number: THE 497

Instructor: Christian Casper

Office: 128

Classroom PAC 126

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Office Hours: MWF 1pm-3pm

TTH by appointment

Course Time: MWF 10am-10:50am

Text:

Separate copies of plays covered in class

The only acceptable on line version would be the Shakespeare Pro App.

Course Readings:

Your reading in this course will be both demanding and rewarding. Please read carefully and repeatedly. **THIS WILL BE TIME-CONSUMING.** Please plan ahead accordingly. We will be using the text during class regularly, so be sure to bring yours with you. Mark your text, keep track of questions that come to mind as you read, and be prepared to contribute your ideas and questions to the class.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

In order to fully participate, you must purchase your own copy of each play and you must bring it to class with you every day. We will use it **every day**. Failure to bring your text to class will result in the lowering of your participation grade. Further, you may be marked absent if you come to class without your text.

Course Description:

In this class we will explore five plays of Shakespeare with the goal of choosing one of the five plays for production. The class is designed to engage the students to realize how timeless Shakespeare's characters, how riveting his plots are, and how universal his themes are. It introduces students to his principal dramatic genres (history, comedy, tragedy, and romance. Through our study and research of the five plays we will also gauge the

programs current acting pool and we will attempt to fit the needs of what the department are and what play best suits those current needs.

Learning Outcomes/ Competencies:

1. To know the characters, plots, and themes of six Shakespearean plays.
2. To understand the nature of the dramatic genres in which Shakespeare wrote, including comedy, romance, tragedy, and history.
3. To understand the great ideas conveyed in Shakespeare's dramas and appreciate the rhetorical and poetic art through which those ideas are conveyed.
4. To analyze the way in which theatrical productions of Shakespeare's plays can enhance, change, and develop the meaning of what it is to be human.
5. To study the plays in a way which will guide the student to make informed decisions regarding play choice for upcoming season.
6. To interpret particular Shakespearean works in literary critical essays of one's own. **(Graduate Work)**

More learning outcomes

Know a variety of warm ups for rehearsal and performance of a Shakespearean play.

Analyze the text for meaning and character.

Apply analysis of text to create role and maintain character.

Interpret language for modern audiences.

Editing script and maintaining essence of story.

Demonstrate confidence with language.

Plays:

Twelfth Night

Hamlet

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Macbeth

Comedy of Errors

Richard III

Learning Methods:

I cannot make you learn. I am here to provide a setting for you to learn.

To understand Shakespeare you have to do three basic things.

1. Take Notes. My "lectures" and our discussions are designed to introduce the genre, characters, and plots of the plays, explain relevant literary-critical, political, and historical contexts, and generally aid your understanding of the weekly reading. You are required to listen actively and take good notes: clear, legible, and well organized.

2. Read the Script more than once. To get the full import of a Shakespeare play you have to read the script multiple times. The language is simply too rich and deep and the action too fast to "get it" with a one-time casual reading. To do this effectively, you must do your initial readings for homework.

3. Discuss the Issues. Once we understand the play we will circle up and discuss the issues it raises. This is the fun part, allowing us to share our responses, voice our opinions, and clarify and test our ideas with and against one another.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Discussion questions:

Each class we will start but discussing the previous days reading assignment. Each student should have at least 5 discussion questions to present. These should be thoughtful questions not basic plot questions that can be answered simply by reading the play.

Edit/cut script

Each student will be assigned an entire act to edit and cut for production. Editing and cutting is in itself an art form. The goal will be to trim the play down to a workable time but not lose the essence of the story and the dramatic questions that the play asks.

Character/Play Analysis

Choose one character from each play studied and imagine you have been cast to play his or her part. Use this assignment as your preliminary exploration of your approach to the character. Based entirely on what you find in the text, please note (with textual citations): What the character reveals about herself or himself. What other characters reveal about this character. What kinds of language patterns the character uses and what they might mean. What might be contextually significant about the character (gender, race, religion, social status, etc) and why. What the character seems to desire or want. What the character is willing to do in order to get it. Memorize 10 lines of this characters speech to be “performed in class. 5 plays, 10 points each = **50 points**.

Close-reading assignment

Close reading is an ability that is requisite to demonstrate in every short paper for this class. With this assignment, you will develop an argument about a monologue or short passage from a Shakespeare play, supporting that argument by explanation of such details in the passage as word choice, verbal repetition, figurative language, or patterns of imagery. 5 one page papers = **25 points**

Short research paper: You will randomly be assigned one of the following research topics and write a 3-5 page giving examples from the specific plays to make your argument. Proper MLA format is required. You should use at least three sources.

Research Topics

1. What do all of Shakespeare’s comedies have in common?
2. Talk about the supernatural aspects of Macbeth and Hamlet. Do they play a prominent or minor role?
3. Discuss the accuracy of Shakespeare’s history plays. How accurate are they? Give examples of liberties that Shakespeare has taken.
4. What were the advantages and disadvantages of being a professional actor in Shakespeare’s day?
5. Do you think Shakespeare is overrated or underrated? Provide evidence in support of your choice.

Presentation

With a partner or two, present a 10 minute presentation on why you think this play should be produced. It can be a power point presentation or any type of presentation with visuals and you need to provide the class with some sort of handout. **25 points**

Edit/cut script graduate assignment

Each graduate student will be assigned an entire play to edit and cut for production. Editing and cutting is in itself an art form. The goal will be to trim the play down to a workable time but not lose the essence of the story and the dramatic questions that the play asks.

WORKING EMAIL REQUIREMENT:

It is a course expectation that you have a working email address that you check daily. If you have not already acquired an email address through the university or otherwise, please make arrangements to do so before the next class meeting. There WILL be times that I need to contact you with important information and email is often the speediest and easiest way of doing so.

- *Additional Student Learning Outcome for Graduate Students: write critically using analytical thinking skills about Shakespearean play selections for specific theatre companies.*
- *Additional Student Learning Outcome for Graduate Students: synthesize information about choosing Shakespeare plays for production with graduate level scholarly writing.*
 - *Graduate Student Additional Requirement: In many class sessions, graduate students will be required to prepare and offer an alternative lesson plans that suits the specific lesson plan session. Graduate students will also have additional weekly writing assignments to complete. More information regarding what this entails will be offered at a later date.*

Late Work:

I do not accept late work.

Class schedule:

WEEK 1

January 13

Class expectations. Syllabus

15

Shakespeare changed everything

Assignment: What are the benefits of keeping Shakespeare alive? Spend two to five minutes in front of class expressing your views on this subject

17

Benefits debate

Read Twelfth Night

January 20

Twelfth Night Act I

Discussion Questions

22

Act II discussion and breakdown

24

Act III discussion and breakdown

January 27

Act IV discussion and breakdown

29

Act V discussion and breakdown

CLOSE READING ASSIGNMENT DUE

31

Twelfth Night discussion as a whole

Read Hamlet

February 3

Hamlet Act I discussion and breakdown

5

Hamlet Act II discussion and breakdown

7

Hamlet Act III discussion and breakdown

February 10

Hamlet Act IV discussion and breakdown

12

Hamlet Act V discussion and breakdown

CLOSE READING ASSIGNMENT DUE

14

Hamlet: putting it all together

Read A Midsummer Nights Dream

February 17

A Midsummer Nights Dream Act I

19

A Midsummer Nights Dream Act II

21

A Midsummer Nights Dream Act III

February 24

A Midsummer Nights Dream Act IV

26

A Midsummer Nights Dream Act V

CLOSE READING ASSIGNMENT DUE

Read Macbeth

Jan 28

Macbeth Act I

March 2

Macbeth Act II

4

Macbeth Act III

6

Macbeth Act IV & V

CLOSE-READING ASSIGNMENT DUE

READ The Comedy of Errors

March 9

SPRING BREAK

11

SPRING BREAK

13

SPRING BREAK

The Comedy of Errors

March 16

The Comedy of Errors Act I

March 18

The Comedy of Errors Act II

March 20

The Comedy of Errors Act III

March 23

The Comedy of Errors Act IV

March 25

The Comedy of Errors Act V

CLOSE-READING ASSIGNMENT DUE

March 27

Read Richard III

March 30

Richard III Act I

April 1

Richard III Act II

April 3

Richard III Act III

April 6

Richard III Act IV

April 8

Richard III Act V

CLOSE-READING ASSIGNMENT DUE

April 10

ASSIGN PRESENTATION GROUPS AND PLAYS

April 13

Presentation discussion/work

April 15

Presentation discussion/work

April 17

NO CLASS UIL FESTIVAL

April 20

Presentation discussion/work

April 22

Presentation discussion/work

April 24

Presentation discussion/work

April 27

OPEN DAY WORK ON PRESENTATIONS

April 29

Turn in edited script

May 1

Shakespeare Q & A

FINALS WEEK 5/2-5/8

Presentations: May 4 10:30am-12:30pm

University Specific Policies and Procedures:

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.