

English 230, section 1
Spring 2004
MWF 11:30-12:30
Clough 102

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Shakespeare's Major Plays

Many people celebrate the greatness of Shakespeare. In this course, we treat his greatness as an open question, reading several of the plays on which his reputation rests and asking what significance they might have for us now four hundred years after their first performance. The course has several goals: increasing your understanding and appreciation of the language of Shakespeare's plays, including its figures, rhythms, and ambiguities; teaching you how to analyze and critically evaluate arguments about what the plays might mean and how we can understand Shakespeare's characters and their actions; and helping you present your ideas about the plays in writing.

Required text: The Complete Pelican Shakespeare, ed. Stephen Orgel and A. R. Braunmuller (Penguin, 2002)

Recommended text: Writing with Style, John R. Trimble (2nd ed.)

Course requirements:

65% Essays: You will complete four essays of varying lengths. I will provide you with topics in advance. The value of the different essays will be

Essay 1 (3 pp.)	15%
Essay 2 (4 pp.)	10%
Essay 3 (4 pp.)	15%
Essay 4 (7 pp.)	25%

15% Scene: You and a small group of students will interpret and present a short scene from a play to the class. These performances will take the place of the final exam. You must also develop a rationale for your choices regarding elements such as staging, costume, and characterization, and as a group you must write a short paper explaining your decisions (2 pp.).

10% Quizzes: Your reading comprehension will be tested in frequent quizzes.

10% Participation: A class is a collaborative enterprise. You are expected to read assignments before class and to be ready to discuss them. You must also post responses to the web-based course discussion board at least five times over the course of the semester (twice by Feb. 9); one of these must be a question responding to the lecture by Professor Bruce Smith on Feb. 26. You and a partner must also take responsibility for starting the class discussion once.

Policies:

Absences: You are allowed two unexcused absences with no questions asked. After that, unless you can get an official excuse for your absence, your absences will affect your final grade. Missing more than six classes is grounds for failing the course. If you feel that you will not be able to satisfy this course requirement, you should schedule a meeting with me as soon as possible.

Late work: All papers must be turned in on time. Late papers will lose one-third of the grade for each day they are late. That is, a B becomes a B-, and so forth.

Tardiness: Repeatedly arriving late to class may harm your participation grade. Please come to class on time with your book. Also, if you come to class without your book, I reserve the right to dismiss you from class.

Disabilities: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services as soon as possible.

Also, please note the “Expectations and Policies” statement on the back page of the syllabus.

Schedule of assignments:

W	Jan. 14	Introduction
F	16	<u>A Midsummer Night’s Dream</u>
M	19	no class (Martin Luther King Day Observed)
W	21	<u>MSND</u>
F	23	<u>MSND</u>
M	26	<u>As You Like It</u>
W	28	<u>AYLI</u>
F	30	<u>AYLI</u>
M	Feb. 2	<u>AYLI</u>
W	4	<u>AYLI</u>
F	6	<u>The Merchant of Venice</u> ; essay 1 due (3 pp.)
M	9	<u>MV</u>
W	11	<u>MV</u>
F	13	<u>MV</u>
M	16	<u>Richard II</u>
W	18	<u>R2</u>
F	20	<u>R2</u>

M 23 R2
 W 25 Measure for Measure
 Th 26 Lecture, Bruce Smith
 F 27 MM; essay 2 due (4 pp.)

M Mar. 1 MM
 W 3 MM
 F 5 MM

Spring Break

M 15 Hamlet
 W 17 Haml.
 F 19 Haml

M 22 Haml
 W 24 Haml
 F 26 Othello; essay 3 due (4 pp.)

M 29 Oth.
 W 31 Oth.
 F Apr. 2 Oth.

M 5 King Lear
 W 7 KL
 F 9 no class (Easter Recess)

M 12 KL
 W 14 KL
 F 16 KL

M 19 KL; essay 4 due (7 pp.)
 W 21 The Tempest
 F 23 Temp.

M 26 Temp.
 W 28 no class (Awards Convocation Undergraduate Research & Creative Activity Symposium)
 F 30 Temp.

Final: scene presentation