
**VARIOUS HANDOUTS.**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:** Shakespeare is celebrated the world over for the poetry and the passion of his plays. He reformed the English language, enriching the vocabulary and increasing the flexibility of verse and prose. Supremely creative himself—he wrote two narrative poems, one hundred fifty four sonnets, and thirty-eight plays—he constantly inspired creativity in others. Above all, his profound humanity has enabled succeeding generations to rediscover within the dramatic intensity of his vision their individual concerns. In brief—as would any writer of “pith and moment” (*Hamlet*, 3.I)—he wrote in “universals” as is evidenced in the following: Aristotle claims that “Poetry (literature) is more philosophical and a higher thing than history in that poetry tends rather to express the universal, history rather the particular fact. A universal is: The sort of thing that (in the circumstances) a certain kind of person will say or do either probably or necessarily, which in fact is the universal that poetry aims for (with the addition of names for the persons such as Oedipus or Pentheus); a particular, on the other hand is: What Aleibiades (a brilliant but unscrupulous Athenian statesman of the fifth century B.C.) did or had done to him.” We will pay special attention to Shakespeare’s use of verse, noting the rich variety of his language and the rhythms that incorporate it. Tom Stoppard said that “(what) makes Shakespeare breathtaking and defines his poetry (is) the simultaneous compression of language and expansion of meaning.”

To many people, in many nations, Shakespeare is still our greatest “living” author. The writer, George Steiner, goes further: “Not only is he the greatest writer who ever lived, he is the greatest writer who ever will live.”

By **reading, discussing, watching films** and **writing about** our assigned plays, we should come close to appreciating the implications of Mr. Steiner’s statement. And through lectures, discussions, handouts, and films, we just might begin to see what all the fuss is about.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** The student can expect a test on each reading assignment. The student will write five essays, each essay applying the principles of formal criticism to the given play (sample to be handed out early in the semester). The student will write a “response” essay on each of the “extrinsic” plays. And, of course, the student will write a final exam.

While not required, office visits can provide help outside of the limits of class time, and you are invited to drop in or make an appointment.

**EVALUATION:** Tests: 10%. “Extrinsic” essays: 20%. Essays: 30%. Final Exam: 40%. To avoid the need for “make-up work,” a certain number of the lower test grades and the lowest essay grade will be dropped.
English 4319A Fall of 2018  Shakespeare: Planes, Trains, and Automobiles

TRAGEDY

January
18: Introduction: *Julius Caesar*, 1.1

23: *JC*: Act 1 through Act 3
25: *JC*: Acts 4 & 5

30: *JC*: (Con'd)  (EXTRINSIC PLAY #1: TBD)

February
1: *JC*: (Con'd)

6: *JC*  Essay #1 Due
8: *Hamlet,* Prince of Denmark: THE FIRST SIX SCENES

13: *Hamlet*: Through Act 3
15: *Hamlet*: Through end of play (Acts 4 & 5)

20: *Hamlet*
22: *Hamlet*  (EXTRINSIC PLAY #2: TBD)

27: *Hamlet*

March
1: *Hamlet*  Essay #2 Due

COMEDY

6: *As You Like It*
8: *AYLI*

March 12-16: SPRING BREAK

20: *AYLI*
22: *AYLI*

27: *AYLI*  Essay #3 Due

March 29-April 1: EASTER
HISTORY

April
3: Henry V: Acts 1, 2, and 3  FILM
5: Henry V: Acts 4 & 5  FILM

10: Henry V: FILM
12: Henry V: FILM  Essay #4 Due

"NEW" TRAGEDY
17: Antony and Cleopatra: Acts 1 & 2
19: A&C: Acts 3 & 4

24: A&C: Act 5
26: A&C  (EXTRINSIC PLAY #3: TBD)

May
1: A&C  Essay #5 Due
3: CODA  Final Prep

This syllabus is not Holy Writ and therefore, is subject to change.
THE FINAL EXAM IS IN THIS ROOM MAY 15TH: 8:30-11AM.