

ENG 367.101: Shakespeare's Principal Plays



This course provides an intensive survey of the dramatic works of renowned playwright William Shakespeare. Over the course of seven weeks, we will read and discuss six plays, spanning the four major Shakespearean genres: comedy, tragedy, history and romance. This course is designed to increase comprehension, foster appreciation, and spark insightful analyses of these plays. We will consider the social, historical, and theatrical contexts of the plays, as well as the ways in which Shakespeare's own identity shaped his perspective.

While we will pay close attention to language, and spend time thinking through textual variance and editorial history, we will ground our approach in the performative nature of these plays. This will include viewing contemporary performances and adaptations. Throughout the course we will treat the texts as living documents, which both provide a window into the past and a lens through which to view our own complicated lives as humans. As such, we will actively grapple with broad questions of identity that the plays raise, including issues of gender, class, sexuality, and race.

Through taking English 367, you will be able to

- Differentiate between and describe the four main dramatic genres
- Identify and discuss a representative set of plays
- Break down and interpret Shakespearean language
- Generate insightful arguments regarding the plays
- Assess performance choices in staged and filmed versions of the texts

Course Materials

We will be using the Norton Shakespeare, 3rd edition. Their [e-book option](#) is both the most convenient option given the current circumstances, and the most affordable. Other editions will lack the same introductory material and the intensive level of glossing and notes that the Norton offers. If you have an earlier edition of the Norton already, this is fine.

Course Requirements

In this course, you will have the opportunity to set your own assignment sequence-- you choose how you will demonstrate the knowledge and skills you gain in this course. Please choose your assignment options and email the attached assignment contract to me by Friday, May 8th. You may change your mind as the semester progresses.

30% of your grade will come from attendance, participation, and in-class responses.

Attendance:

This course relies heavily on synchronous video conferencing, both for your grade and for your learning experience. I expect you to attend video-lecture and breakout sections unless you have extenuating circumstances. If you are unable to do so, please be in contact with me as soon as possible and we will determine the best course of action. If you have enough internet, for example, to view video but not live-stream, I will be recording and posting our class sections. I will be able to see that you have watched the session, and, if you engage via the class discussion, can count this in lieu of attendance. You must view the lecture and post to the forum before the next class section for this to be counted. This is not ideal, either for you as a learner or for the rest of class, who will miss your presence. I ask, then, that you do not choose this option unless absolutely necessary.

Most days, I plan on breaking us up into smaller discussion sections to meet during the latter portions of our allotted class times (we will not be having 3-hour zoom meetings, don't worry!). Your attendance will be expected during both the full-group and your specific smaller group meeting.

As this is an accelerated course, it is crucial that you are present to participate in the conversation. You may miss one classes without a valid excuse and receive no penalty. After one absence, you will lose one letter grade from your final grade for each absence. Given the extenuating circumstances, I recognize that unexpected emergencies may occur. The best thing is to be in contact with me in these situations so that we can work together to find an appropriate and reasonable solution.

Participation:

We learn best when we are actively engaged in a classroom, when we are not just listening, but speaking. This class will be a space where we can try out new ideas and think through some issues together—in order for this to be the most effective, I expect every one of you to contribute to our conversation. Of course, in an online course, this will look different, but can include the chat feature. Class will include group work, which builds in avenues for participation. If you are unable to attend synchronous lectures, I ask that you post a substantive response to our online discussion forum (this will not count toward the “discussion post” assignment below).

Responses:

Once for every play, I will ask that you write a short response to a prompt during class. This might be at the beginning, middle, or end of a class session. This is meant mostly as a way for you to articulate your thoughts in writing, but will also serve as an accountability measure to make sure that you are keeping up with the reading.

The other 70% (70 points) can come from any combination of the following assignments. Please note that you must complete 70 points worth of work to pass this class. You cannot make the same play the object of study for more than one assignment (excepting discussion posts):

- 10 points: weekly engagement on Canvas Discussion forum
- 10 points: Response to a performance of a play not on our syllabus (2 pages)
- 15 points: Keyword Essay (can work across texts, 3 pages)
- 15 points: Close Reading Essay (3 pages)
- 20 points: Performance Review of a play on our syllabus (3 pages)*
- 20 points: Creative Adaptation of a scene (can be done as individual or as a group)
- 25 points: Comparative Analysis between two performances of a play on our syllabus (5 pages)*
- 35 points: Comparative Analysis of two plays from different genres (6-7 pages)
- 35 points: Literary Analysis of a Single Play (6-7 pages)

*you can do one of these, but not both!

Extra credit: You may complete a total of 110 points (110%). These will not be added into your total "point amount" but will replace 10 points of an equivalent assignment.

Daily Schedule

May 5: General Introduction, "Shakespeare's World," (p. 2-31)

May 7: Introduction to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
A Midsummer Night's Dream Acts 1-3

May 12: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Acts 4-5

- May 14: Introduction to *Twelfth Night*
Twelfth Night Acts 1-3
- May 19: *Twelfth Night* Acts 1-3
- May 21: Introduction to *Richard III*
Richard III Acts 1-3
- May 26: *Richard III* Acts 4-5
- May 28: Introduction to *Hamlet*
Hamlet (combined text) Acts 1-2
- June 2: *Hamlet* (combined text) Acts 3-4
- June 4: *Hamlet* (combined text) Act 5
Hamlet (Q1)
- June 9: Introduction to *Othello*
Othello Acts 1-3
- June 11: *Othello* Acts 4-5
- June 16: Introduction to *The Tempest*
The Tempest Acts 1-3
- June 18: *The Tempest* Acts 4-5

Office Hours

Office Hours are a great way to ask questions, seek help, or just talk more about things in the text which excite you! I will be holding virtual office hours Wednesdays and Fridays from 12-1pm. Please use the [Office Hours Queue](#), which can now accommodate group visits. If you wish make an appointment outside of this time, please send me an email to schedule a meeting.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism may be understood as any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community. If plagiarism occurs, you will be subject to one of the following consequences:

- You will fail the assignment and may fail the course.
- I will forward your case, with an explanatory letter and all pertinent materials, to the LSA Assistant Dean of Student Affairs. The Dean will determine an appropriate penalty, which may involve academic probation and/or community service.
- If you commit plagiarism while you are already on probation for plagiarism, you may be asked to leave the University.

Accommodations

If you have a disability and need an accommodation to participate in this class or to complete course requirements, please be in contact with me as soon as possible, preferably within the first week of class. I will treat as private and confidential any information that you share. If you suspect that you may have a disability and would like to be tested, [Services for Students with Disabilities](#) can provide free screenings and referrals to low-cost diagnostic services. They can also be reached by phone at 734-763-3000.

Diversity Resources

This classroom constitutes a community, and in order to have a successful community, it is essential that *all* members of the community feel respected. I'll do my best to run class in a way that allows all voices to equally participate and feel comfortable in our space. If there is ever an instance where you do not feel comfortable or welcome for any reason, I urge you to talk with me about it. You can also reach the [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) at odei-info@umich.edu and (734)-764-3982.

Resources for Learning Remotely

BlueCorps consultants are available Monday-Friday, 10:00am-4:00pm in [virtual office hours](#) to assist you with online learning technologies. You can also reach them at bluecorps@umich.edu. You can also find more information about using Canvas, BlueJeans, Zoom, and other tools at the [LSA Technology Services site](#),

Mental Health Resources

These are difficult times. UM has [a dedicated site to student wellbeing](#), which I encourage you to check out. Additionally, if you experience challenges that negatively affect your learning, the following several confidential services might be helpful:

- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS): 734-764-8312
- [Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center](#) (SAPAC) 24-Hour Crisis Line: 734-936-3333
- [Psychiatric Emergency Services](#): 734-996-4747

Writing Resources

The Sweetland Center for Writing an amazing, free resource! If you would like additional feedback or assistance as you're planning, drafting, or revising your writing assignments, you can [schedule a virtual appointment with a Sweetland tutor](#).