English 362/Drama 386--Shakespeare I

Section 2                                  Prof. Ken Graham
TuTh 2:30-3:50; ML 354                      HH 246; ex.32124
Fall 2013                                   k2graham@uwaterloo.ca

Office Hours: Wednesdays 12-1, Thursdays 12:30-1:30, or by appointment

Text: The Complete Pelican Shakespeare, ed. Stephen Orgel and A.R. Braunmuller

Aims of the Course

The principal aim of this class is to make us better – more careful, more perceptive, more knowledgeable – readers of Shakespeare's plays, and thereby to make us more alert and alive to the problems that the plays invite us to experience and contemplate and to the pleasures that they invite us to share. Although we cannot hope to “know” these plays with any finality, we can become more aware of their involvement with the issues of their time and of the challenges and opportunities they present to modern readers.

Methods and Requirements

The class will mix lecture, discussion, and performance. The first half of the semester will be devoted to the close scrutiny of four plays that blend comic and tragic elements in different ways; in the second half we'll read three English history plays. Graded work comprises:

1) Class participation. I will expect you to attend conscientiously and to participate in an informed and productive manner. Quality is generally more important than quantity, but I am impressed by a willingness to go out on a limb. I am also as interested in the courtesy and respect with which you listen and respond to what others say as in the sharpness of your own perceptions. Attendance and punctuality count. It is your responsibility to inform me promptly of the reasons for an absence if you wish it to be excused. Weight = 10%

2) Response papers. In these informal 2-page (~500 word) papers you will explore responses to a central thematic, formal, or theoretical question that interests you in your initial reading of each play. Your papers should be focussed and should refer to specific words and actions in the play, but they need not argue or take a position. Responses are due at the start of class on the day a play first appears on the syllabus. You will receive one point for each satisfactory response paper you turn in on time, and a bonus of three points if you turn six or more in by the last class period. Response papers falling significantly below the 500-word requirement may not receive full credit. Weight = 10%

3) A mid-term exam, eighty minutes in length. This will be a closed-book exam on the first four plays; it will include identification passages and an essay question. Weight = 20%

4) A formal essay, 1800-2700 words in length (typed, double-spaced), on a topic of your choice. The full assignment is on page 4. Weight = 30%
5) A closed-book final exam, two hours in length. Two-thirds will cover the second half of the course with the same format as the mid-term; the other third will review the course as a whole and comprise essay questions. Weight = 30%

Class Schedule

Sept.  10  Tu  Introduction to the class
      12  Th  Romeo and Juliet
      17  Tu  Romeo and Juliet
      19  Th  Romeo and Juliet
      24  Tu  A Midsummer Night's Dream
      26  Th  A Midsummer Night's Dream

Oct.   1  Tu  Merchant of Venice
      3  Th  Merchant of Venice
      8  Tu  Merchant of Venice
     10  Th  Much Ado About Nothing
     14  M  Thanksgiving Holiday
     15  Tu  Much Ado About Nothing
     17  Th  Much Ado About Nothing
     22  Tu  Mid-term examination
     24  Th  Introduction to the histories; Richard II
     29  Tu  Richard II
     31  Th  Richard II; last day for approval of essay topics

Nov.   5  Tu  Henry IV, Part One
      7  Th  Henry IV, Part One
     12  Tu  Henry IV, Part One; drafts due 2:30 p.m.
     14  Th  Henry IV, Part One; draft discussion day
     19  Tu  Henry V
     21  Th  Henry V; essays due 2:30 p.m.
     26  Tu  Henry V
     28  Th  Henry V

Final Exam TBA (exam period Dec. 5-20)
Class and University Policies

Although in rare cases an electronic submission may show that an assignment has been completed (e.g. a late essay completed on a Saturday), you must turn in a paper copy of all written assignments to receive credit. Late papers will be accepted without penalty only if prior permission has been granted. Otherwise, the penalty will be 2% per day, including weekends. Late assignments should be turned in either directly to me or to the English Department’s drop box on the second floor of Hagey Hall. If you do not turn in a completed draft of the essay on the draft due date you will receive a penalty of 5% on the paper. If you do not satisfactorily complete the group draft response assignment, you will likewise receive a penalty of 5% on your paper. (If you do neither your total penalty will be 10%). Missed exams may be made up only with a valid medical excuse. Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

I will normally reply to email messages within 24 hours, weekends excepted. In the case of emails requiring lengthy replies, I may indicate to you that you should see me in person. Laptop computers and other portable electronic devices may become distractions and so may not normally be used in class. E-book readers with limited connectivity may be used only if I grant permission.

Note for students with disabilities: The AccessAbility Services office, located in Needles Hall Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Academic Integrity: in order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. 

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline, http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70.

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72.

Academic Integrity website: https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/current-undergraduates/student-support/ethical-behavior

Academic Integrity Office (UW): https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/

All sources of information that you use in your written work in this class must be cited fully and scrupulously. If I suspect that you have committed an academic offense, including plagiarism, I will report it to the Associate Dean; if the offense is confirmed, the normal result is a failing grade on the assignment and a further five marks off the course grade.
Essay Assignment

Write about any topic of interest to you, provided that its focus is the class reading list. Your essay should be 1800-2700 words long (12-point type, double-spaced) and follow a consistent documentation format. It must argue a clear thesis, and it must take the form of a unified and well-structured defence of that thesis. It will be judged on the strength and originality of its thesis, on the quality, clarity, and coherence of its supporting arguments, and on the felicity and correctness of its expression. Late essays will be accepted without penalty only if prior permission has been granted. Otherwise, the penalty will be 2% per day, including weekends.

You must propose an essay topic to me, in writing, by October 31 and receive my approval. A full-length draft of the essay is due November 12. You will bring a copy for everyone in your writing group and a copy to hand in. In exchange you will receive copies of the drafts of your group’s other members. You will read these and write thoughtful comments on them by November 14. If you do not turn in and distribute a completed draft of your essay on time, you will receive a penalty of 5% on the paper. If you do not satisfactorily complete the group draft response assignment on time, you will likewise receive a penalty of 5% on your paper.

It is not necessary to consult secondary sources to write this essay, and doing so could hinder your creativity. If you do make use of such sources, however, be sure that they do not control or determine your argument; rather, your critical engagement with them, whether it takes the form of agreement or disagreement, must serve to advance, and must be clearly subordinate to, your own original thesis. Also be sure to cite all use of such sources fully and scrupulously.

The following list is meant to suggest the range of topics you might choose to explore.

1) Compare the construction of dramatic character or plot in one history and one comedy.

2) Read one or more of the sources of one of Shakespeare’s plays and make an argument about how knowledge of these sources can affect a reader’s understanding of the play.

3) Compare a written adaptation of one of Shakespeare’s plays to the original.

4) Examine the representation of one or more women in the history plays.

5) Choose a key word or pattern of imagery in one of the plays and pursue its significance as a way of opening up the play.

6) Investigate the performance history of one of the plays, making an argument about how this history illuminates one or more important features of the play.

7) Explore a political theme in one or more history plays.

8) Compare the representation of marriage in two of the comedies.

DUE DATE: NOVEMBER 21, 2:30 p.m.