ENGLISH 362  Shakespeare I  
Section 02, 11:30-1:00 TR, MC 4020  

Professor L. Magnusson, HH 264, phone ext. 2759  
Office hours: M 2:00-4:00, W 1:30-4:00, Th 2:30-4:00  

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION  

English 362 focuses on the plays Shakespeare wrote before 1600. The course provides intensive coverage of seven plays and the opportunity to see and discuss a live performance of an eighth. Close study of the plays is encouraged, with attention given to Shakespeare's techniques of plot construction, to his accomplishment in language, and to elements of his stage craft. The lectures also reflect on social and political themes, and they assess the intellectual contribution of Shakespeare's writings. They discuss the sixteenth-century cultural and theatrical contexts from which the plays arise, but they also reflect on the uses to which Shakespeare's works are put in the present day. The course introduces students to the current developments in Shakespeare studies.  

B. OBJECTIVES  

English 362 has four related objectives.  
1. It aims to make you fully conversant with seven or eight Shakespeare plays.  
2. It aims to give you a vocabulary and skills for the close reading and analysis of Shakespeare's plays, skills which you can transfer to other plays and texts.  
3. It aims to encourage interrogative thinking about the plays.  
4. It aims to help you improve your writing ability.  

C. TEXT  


D. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING  

1. Essay One--an essay of 4 to 5 double-spaced typed pages (1000-1250 words), followed up by a revision and peer editing exercise. This essay concerned with plot construction will be based closely on concepts discussed in the second lecture of the course (16 Sept.).  
Due date: 14 October. Grade value: 25% (essay 20%; revision editing 5%).  

2. Essay Two--an essay of 5 to 6 double-spaced typed pages (1250-1500 words). Topics will be distributed to the class.  
Due date: 25 November. Grade value: 25%.  

3. "Issue" Cards--6 issue cards and a summary issue sheet. An "issue" card is due at the first class in which we treat each play. Each card (except the first two) should succinctly delineate two issues: one concluding issue, relevant to the previous play considered; one initial issue, relevant to the play about to be considered. The cards due 21 Sept. on Taming and 28 Sept. on Coriolanus are exceptions: they should offer only an initial issue. There are 8 slots for submission of these issue cards; you must submit on at least 6 of these occasions. Late submissions will not be accepted. No issue card should exceed 1/3 of a typed single-space sheet of paper: this length should include both concluding and initial issues. The initial issue cards on The Taming of the Shrew and Coriolanus should not exceed 1/4 of a typed single-spaced sheet. You are required to keep copies of your issue cards and to submit your complete collection for grading as a neat and legible compilation on 11 November. These will be judged on 1) assignment completion, 2) quality of engagement with course texts and issues, and 3) critical thinking. Due date: 21 Sept., 28 Sept., 5 Oct., 14 Oct., 21 Oct., 2 Nov., 11 Nov. (issue sheet including those completed to date), 23 Nov. Grade value: 15%.

Note: These issue cards are an important vehicle for student input into the classes: I will distribute selected issues formulated about each play and, from time to time, make them the basis for class discussion.

4. Final Examination--scheduled in examination period. Covers all course work. Includes identification and discussion of selected passages (selected from those treated in class lectures) and essay questions. Grade value: 35%.

E. AQUILA PRODUCTION AND BBC SHOWINGS

Aquila Productions is presenting Coriolanus in the Theatre of the Arts, ML, on Mon., Sept. 27, at 2:00 pm and Wed., Sept. 29, at 8:00 pm. The student price is $8.00. Students should attend the production--the Monday performance if possible. The class on Tuesday, Sept. 28, will be a workshop on the Coriolanus production conducted by Aquila actors.

Showings of BBC Shakespeare Productions are scheduled for some Thursday evenings, from 7:00 pm, in Physics 150. You are strongly encouraged to attend these viewings. Class lectures and optional assignments may relate to them.

Dates of showings: 23 Sept.--The Taming of the Shrew; 7 Oct.--Much Ado About Nothing; 14 Oct.--Love's Labour's Lost; 4 Nov.--A Midsummer Night's Dream; 11 Nov.--1 Henry IV.
F. CLASS SCHEDULE


16 Sept.         Plot construction.

21, 23 Sept.    The Taming of the Shrew 1 and 2
For its age, or for all time? Marriage and family in early modern England. Regulation of women's speech.
Reminder: issue card due 21 Sept.

28 Sept.         Aquila Productions Workshop on Coriolanus.
Reminder: issue card due 28 Sept.

30 Sept.         The Taming of the Shrew 3

5, 7, 12 Oct.   Much Ado About Nothing 1, 2, and 3
Opening scene as microcosm. Patterns shared with Taming. Absent mothers. Language as theme.
Repetition, creativity, and social reproduction.
Reminder: issue card due 5 Oct.

14, 19 Oct.     Love's Labour's Lost 1 and 2
Beginning and ending. Rhetorical tradition.
Reminder: Essay One and issue card due 14 Oct.

21, 26, 28 Oct. Romeo and Juliet 1, 2, and 3
Reminder: issue card due 21 Oct.

2, 4, 9 Nov.     A Midsummer Night's Dream 1, 2, and 3
Reminder: issue card due 2 Nov.

11, 16, 18 Nov. King Richard II 1, 2, and 3
Representing history. The theatre of power; the power of the theatre. Indirection. Kingship.
Reminder: collected issue sheet due 11 Nov.

23, 25, 30 Nov. 1 Henry IV 1, 2, and 3
Subversion/containment. Mirror for a magistrate.
Reminder: issue card due 23 Nov.
Reminder: Essay Two due 25 Nov.

2 Dec.          Catch-up or sonnets
G. GENERAL ESSAY GUIDELINES

1. Each essay assignment requires a formal academic essay.

2. Essay assignments should not merely repeat lecture materials. They should involve your own definition and thinking through of issues. Lecture materials may serve as starting points for your thoughts, but where this occurs there should be a clear development of ideas beyond what was said in the lectures.

3. Once you have generated material for your essay, be sure to find a suitable way of organizing it. Give special attention to your opening paragraph, which should at least (a) introduce the main topic or argument, or the main set of issues and problems (take care to explain them clearly), (b) indicate the plan and direction of the essay, and (c) interest the reader, though not by gimmicks.

4. Make an effort to offer at least one strong idea, articulated in a topic sentence, in every paragraph. Use the remainder of the paragraph to develop, prove, or illustrate the main assertion. Aim for a clear and concise writing style.

5. Essay One does not require the use of secondary sources. Essay Two requires their use in specific ways. Where you consult secondary sources, be sure to cite them in a bibliography and use footnotes to clarify the extent of any indebtedness.


7. Before you submit a paper, be sure to proofread it carefully, checking for errors in typing, spelling, and grammar, and considering whether you have expressed your ideas as clearly as you would like to. You owe it to yourself to use the opportunity of a university course in English to improve your writing.

Plagiarism warning:

The Faculty of Arts requires instructors to remind students that plagiarism—the use of another's words or ideas as one's own—is a serious academic offence.