ENGLISH 362: SHAKESPEARE I

Section 02: 9:30 MWF
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Shakespeare I: A study of the plays written before 1599-1600, excluding Julius Caesar.

The aim of this course is to examine the development of Shakespeare during the first part of his career as a playwright: his social and political concerns, his use of dramatic dialogue, his use of the theatres in which his works were presented, his experimentation with various genres (history, tragedy, comedy), and the uses that have been made of Shakespeare (particularly in contemporary theatres) are among the more specific topics to be discussed.

After a couple of introductory lectures, the course deals with, on average, one play per week. The following will be considered in the order in which they are listed:

Taming of the Shrew
Titus Andronicus
Comedy of Errors
Richard III
Romeo and Juliet
A Midsummer Night's Dream
1 Henry IV
2 Henry IV
As You Like It

Individual copies of the plays or a complete works may be used; if one is planning to take English 363, the latter is the better investment. Copies of The Norton Shakespeare, ed. Stephen Greenblatt, et al. (Norton), have been ordered by the University bookstore.

A few copies of the following books have also been ordered: R. McDonald's Bedford Companion to Shakespeare (St. Martin's Press, 1996), and for writing basics, essay forms, and documentation, M. McArthur and J.E. Aaron, The Little, Brown Compact Handbook (Scott Foresman, c1997).

The final grade will be determined in one of two ways: either (1) on the basis of an essay (worth 40% of the final grade) and a final examination (worth 60%); or (2) on the basis of a mid-term test (worth 20%), an essay (40%), and a final examination (40%). Students who write the optional mid-term test will be evaluated according to the second option; those who do not, according to the first.

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The essay: 10-12 pages; typed, double-spaced; dealing closely with two plays or with one play as script and as performance; flawlessly written; based primarily upon a student's careful study of the play(s) chosen for consideration. Due dates: 17 November for a full commentary; 26 November for a brief commentary; 6 December for a sentence or two by way of evaluation. Suggested topics will be distributed at the end of the drop/add period; students are welcome to propose topics of their own designing but should have these approved by the instructor. Only plays written by Shakespeare before 1600 should be examined in this essay.

Optional mid-term: an in-class essay on **Monday 18 October**. At the end of the drop/add period, four topics will be distributed. Two of those four topics will appear on the test. Students will be asked to write an essay on one of those two topics. Closed-book; neither texts nor notes may be used during the test.

**Final Examination:** two parts, the first asking that specific moments in plays be contextualized and interpreted (five of seven questions are to be answered); the second asking for a short essay on one of four topics. Students who write the mid-term test will not have to write Part 2 of the final examination. The final examination will cover all the plays on the course. **Closed-book** (except for a dictionary). **Duration: two hours.** The final will be scheduled by the Registrar's Office for a slot during the official UW examination timetable. Please be sure to check the final examination timetable (not just the preliminary one) for the date and the time of the exam; the place where the exam will be written will be announced in class.