

**English 311: Shakespeare**

**Professor Gretchen Schulz**

**Office: 103 Humanities Hall**

**Office Hours: M and W afternoons and by appointment**

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Texts:

I have ordered the Signet editions of the plays identified on the syllabus below. Being small, they are easy to handle, of course, and they are full of good supplementary material. You may use other scholarly editions of the plays if you wish (after you check out their scholarly quality with me), but just be aware that if you do so, you may have some trouble finding the pages of passages we discuss in class and you also may have to borrow a Signet occasionally in order to read any supplementary material which I might assign. Neither is an insuperable problem.

Class Schedule:

Aug. 26 introduction to the course  
28 A Midsummer Night's Dream

31 MND

[pizza and dvd of A Midsummer Night's Dream on Monday evening, August 31; viewing required then or on your own]

Sept. 02 MND [debate]  
04 Much Ado About Nothing; student-facilitated discussion begins

07 Labor Day

[pizza and dvd of Much Ado About Nothing on Tuesday evening, September 8; viewing required then or on your own]

09 MAAN  
10 preparation for Scenes Day

14 The Merchant of Venice  
16 MOV [debate]

[pizza and fifty-minute video of professionals working with The Merchant of Venice on Wednesday evening, September 16; viewing required then or on your own]

18 SCENES DAY (MND, MAAN)

21 As You Like It  
23 AYLI; FIRST ESSAY DUE (MND, MAAN, MOV)

[live performance of As You Like It by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company on Thursday, September 24, at 7:30; attendance required; should you need to attend on an alternate date, the production is available throughout September]

25 AYLI [debate]

28 Measure for Measure  
30 MFM [debate]

Oct. 02 Julius Caesar

05 JC  
07 JC [debate]  
09 no class

12 FALL BREAK  
14 Hamlet [pizza and dvd of Hamlet at a time TBA; viewing optional]  
16 H

19 H [debate]  
21 preparation for Scenes Day  
23 SECOND ESSAY DUE (AYLI, MFM, JC, H)

26 Macbeth  
28 M  
30 SCENES DAY

[live performance of Macbeth by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company on Sunday, November 1, at 6:30; attendance required; should you need to attend on an alternate date, you'll find the play is only being done this weekend of Halloween]

Nov. 02 Othello  
04 O [pizza and dvd of Othello at a time TBA; viewing optional]  
06 O [debate]

09 Richard III  
11 RIII; MAKE-UP ESSAY DUE (ON PLAYS THUS FAR YOU'VE NOT WRITTEN ON)

[live performance of Richard III by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company on Thursday, November 12, at 7:30; attendance required; should you need to attend on an alternate date, the production is available throughout November]

13 practice in close analysis

16 The Tempest  
18 T

[live performance of The Tempest by the Oxford Ensemble of Shakespearean Artists, on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday evening, November 19, 20, or 21; attendance required]

20 T [debate]

[pizza and dvd of The Forbidden Planet on Sunday evening, November 22 or Monday evening, November 23; viewing optional]

23 preparation for Scenes Day

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Dec. 30 King Lear  
02 KL  
04 KL [debate]

07 last day of class; SCENES DAY

[pizza and dvd of either Throne of Blood or Ran, the wonderful Japanese versions of Macbeth and King Lear, your choice, on Monday evening, December 07; viewing optional]

09 reading day; THIRD ESSAY DUE (M, O, RIII, T, KL)

10 FINAL EXAM: THURSDAY, 7:00-10:00 p.m.

#### Course Requirements:

The successful completion of English 311 will require the following of each student enrolled in the course:

1. close reading of the plays assigned;
2. viewing of four live productions of the plays; viewing of three films of the plays or related work; viewing of other live or film productions of the plays or related work will be optional;
3. viewing of scenes from the plays assigned, archived on our Shakespeare website;
4. frequent intelligent contribution to class discussion of the plays;
5. facilitation of class discussion of the plays several times during the semester;
6. participation in debates about the play several times during the semester;
7. participation in presentation of scenes from the plays three times during the semester;
8. submission of three 1000-word critical and/or creative essays on the plays at intervals throughout the semester;
9. taking of a final exam to demonstrate the analytical skills developed during the semester and the attendant thorough-going familiarity with the plays assigned.

#### Course Objectives:

The primary objective of the course is enhanced appreciation of the work of the man who deserves his reputation as the greatest playwright in the world. By the end of the semester, each student will have studied up to a dozen of Shakespeare's comedies, histories, tragedies, and romances in a depth sufficient to reveal the wonders of their artistic achievement and their philosophical and psychological implications (for their own time and for all time). Each student also will have had a chance to discover how other students in the class have responded to the same material, through discussions evoking and modeling that rich variety of response which is one of the greatest pleasures of work with these plays, this playwright. Opportunities to write about the plays will further each student's understanding and enjoyment of them. And numerous opportunities to see full-length productions of the plays, both on stage and on film, along with scenes from the plays archived in our Shakespeare website, will do the same, as will three opportunities to stage (and act in) scenes from the plays before the members of the class.

Besides promoting enhanced appreciation of Shakespeare and his plays, the course will also promote the larger purposes of the liberal arts education, enabling each student enrolled to develop those skills deemed particularly important in such education, namely his or her ability to read closely and analytically, to think critically and creatively, and to write persuasively, selecting, organizing, and presenting evidence sufficient to support meaningful theses in clear, correct, and effective prose, acknowledging any sources used with appropriate documentation. Class discussion and debate will develop each student's ability to articulate his or her views aloud. And the opportunity to facilitate class discussion will develop each student's ability to encourage others to express their views, as well, so all may collaborate in a mutual effort to achieve their objectives or goals. All of these skills should prove enormously useful in the rest of the student's academic endeavors and in his or her career, and all of them should enrich the student's life immeasurably, too.

#### Policy on Attendance:

You may have two absences with no penalty (though you will be considered responsible for work done or due in class on any day you miss for any reason and responsible for informing yourself about any assignments or announcements made on days which you miss). Absences three and four will count one point each off of your final grade in the course. Absences five and six will count two points each off. Further absences will count three and one third points each off of your final grade. Only significant illness,

major emergency, or required religious observance will excuse an absence. You should inform me about the latter ahead of time.

#### Policy on Late or Missing Work:

Only significant illness or major emergency will excuse late written work. Work whose lateness is unexcused will lose one letter grade for each calendar day it is late. After four days, unexcused late work will not be accepted at all and will receive a zero. And note that such a zero may not be made up with a make-up essay. Only essays actually submitted and graded may be made up with a make-up essay.

A student who misses scheduled facilitation of class discussion or scheduled participation in a debate and who has a valid excuse for doing so will be allowed to make up that facilitation or debate at a later date. (Note, though, that a student who knows he or she will miss facilitation or debate should make every effort to recruit another facilitator or debater to take his or her place.) A student who lacks a valid excuse for a missed facilitation or debate will receive an F in that portion of the class participation grade (see below).

A student who misses scheduled preparation for or participation in a scene or scenes from one of the plays and who has a valid excuse for doing so will be required to write a short essay on the scene or scenes involved to make up for the missed day of preparation or presentation. A student who has no valid excuse for missing a Scenes Day (or preparation for it) may not write such an essay and will receive an F in that portion of the coursework (see below).

Note that students are expected to follow instructions asking them to meet outside of class with their partners to prepare for facilitation of class discussion, for debate, and for Scenes Days. Students will be asked to report (on their honor) whether they have met as required or not. Anyone who has missed such a meeting without a valid excuse for doing so will have his or her grade for that portion of the coursework penalized (see below).

#### Determination of Final Grade:

You will be graded (in part) on three essays (of a minimum of 1000 words each). You must submit these essays in accordance with the schedule of due dates indicated on the syllabus. Each of these essays will be worth 18% of your grade in the course.

Should you be dissatisfied with your performance on one of the first two essays, you may submit a make-up essay, on any play we've read about which you have not already written. This make-up essay will be due (as indicated) on Wednesday, November 11, by 4:30 p.m. I will count the best two of the resulting first three essays towards your final grade.

The course will conclude with a final exam which will be worth another 18% of your grade.

Another 18% of your grade will be based on the frequency and quality of your on-going class participation and the quality of your facilitation of class discussion and participation in debate upon the occasions when you are required to facilitate or debate. I will report on your performance in this area at the midterm.

A final 10% of your grade will reflect the enthusiasm and intelligence of your participation in the presentation of scenes from the plays to the rest of the class.

You may also earn up to two points of extra credit (to be added to your average in the course) by seeing live or film productions of Shakespeare plays or Shakespeare-related plays beyond those required for the course. Some live productions (beyond those required) will be available to you in the area, and film versions of most of the plays we do and of related material are available on campus or will be made available. You may also rent film versions on your own. You will earn 1/2 point for each production you see in any form. Just keep track of what you see (and when) and turn in a list at the end of the semester.

Note that throughout the semester and at the end I will be assigning grades based on the plus/minus grading system.

Note, too, that the Honor Code will apply to every assignment in this class as well as to your statements that you have or have not met with your partners to prepare for facilitation of class discussion and debate and Scenes Days as required and other statements in your self-evaluations of your work on those occasions. Your name on an assignment or evaluation statement will constitute acknowledgement that you have done that assignment or made that statement in accordance with the dictates of the Honor Code.