

English 311: Shakespeare

Professor Gretchen Schulz

Office: 103 Humanities Hall

Office Hours: 2:00 to 4:00 M, T, W, F and by appointment

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Texts:

I have ordered the Signet editions of the plays identified on the syllabus below. 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. 25 introduction to the course
27 A Midsummer Night's Dream

[live performance of A Midsummer Night's Dream by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company on Saturday evening, August 28, or on October 14, 17, 24, or 28]

30 MND

[pizza and video of A Midsummer Night's Dream on Monday evening, August 30, or Tuesday evening, August 31]

Sept. 01 MND
03 MND: work with production

06 Labor Day

[pizza and video of Romeo and Juliet on Monday evening, September 6, or Tuesday evening, September 7]

08 Romeo and Juliet
10 R & J

13 Much Ado About Nothing

[pizza and video of Much Ado About Nothing on Monday evening, September 13, or Tuesday evening, September 14]

15 MAAN

[live performance of Much Ado About Nothing by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company on Thursday evening, September 16]

17 MAAN: work with production

20 Measure for Measure

22 MFM; possible essay 1 due (MND, R & J, MAAN, MFM)

24 preparation for scenes day

27 SCENES DAY

29 Richard II

Oct. 01 RII

[live performance of Richard II by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company on Sunday evening, October 3]

04 Henry IV, Part 1

06 1HIV

08 1HIV; possible essay 1 due (MAAN, MFM, RII, 1HIV)

11 Fall Break

13 Julius Caesar

15 JC

18 Hamlet

[pizza and video of Hamlet on Monday evening, October 18, or Tuesday evening, October 19]

20 H

22 H; possible essay 2 due (RII, 1HIV, JC, H)

25 Othello

[pizza and video of Othello on Monday evening, October 25, or Tuesday evening, October 26)

27 O

29 O

[optional: live performance of Macbeth by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company on Sunday evening, October 31)

Nov. 01 Macbeth

03 M

[pizza and video of Macbeth on Wednesday evening, November 3, or Thursday evening, November 4]

05 M; possible essay 2 due (JC, H, O, M)

08 King Lear

[pizza and video of King Lear on Tuesday, November 9, or Wednesday, November 10]

10 KL; begin preparation for scenes day, outside of class time

12 KL

15 SCENES DAY

17 Antony and Cleopatra

19 A & C

[live performance of Romeo and Juliet by OESA on November 18, 19, 20, 21]

22 A & C

23 possible essay 3 due (H, O, M, KL, A & C)

24 – 26 Thanksgiving Break

29 The Winter's Tale

Dec. 01 WT

[live performance of The Winter's Tale by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company on Thursday evening, December 2]

03 The Tempest

06 T; last day of class

07 possible essay 3 due (M, KL, A & C, WT, T)

[pizza and video of The Forbidden Planet, Tuesday evening, December 7]

10 possible make-up essay due by 9:00 a.m. on Friday, December 10 (on any of the plays you have not yet written on)

10 final exam, 9:00 to 12:00, Friday

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 at least five full-length live productions of the plays assigned; viewing of others will be optional;
3. viewing of scenes from the plays assigned, archived on our Shakespeare website;
4. frequent intelligent contribution to discussion of the plays;
5. facilitation of class discussion of the plays several times during the semester;
6. participation in presentation of scenes from the plays twice during the semester;
7. submission of three 1000-word critical and/or creative essays on the plays at intervals throughout the semester;
8. submission of two 500-word critiques of productions of the plays, one in the first half of the semester, one in the second;
9. the taking of a final exam to demonstrate the reading and writing 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 at least 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 opportunities to see full-length productions of the plays, both on stage and on tape, along with scenes from the plays archived in our Shakespeare website, will do the same.

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 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 mutual 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, also.

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

A student who misses scheduled 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 presentation. A student who has no valid excuse for missing a presentation will receive an F in that portion of the coursework (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 possible due dates indicated on the syllabus. Each of these essays will be worth 15% of your grade in the course.

Should you be dissatisfied with your performance on any one of these essays, you may submit a fourth essay, a make-up essay, on any play (we have read) which you have not already written upon. This make-up essay will be due (as indicated) on Friday, December 10, by 9:00 a.m. I will count your best three essays towards your final grade.

Another 15% of your grade will reflect your work on the two shorter essays (of 500 words minimum) in which I am asking you to offer a critique on some aspect of a production of one of the plays. Each critique will be worth 7.5% of your grade.

The course will conclude with a final exam which will be worth another 15% of your grade.

Another 5% 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.

A final 20% 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 upon the occasions when you are required to facilitate; regular participation will be worth 10% and facilitation will be worth 10%.

You may also earn up to two points of extra credit (to be added to your average in the course) by seeing full-length 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 VHS and/or DVD versions of most of the plays we read and of related material are available on campus or will be made available. You may also rent your own videos and/or DVD's. 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. Your name on an assignment will constitute acknowledgement that you have done that assignment in accordance with the dictates of the Honor Code.

