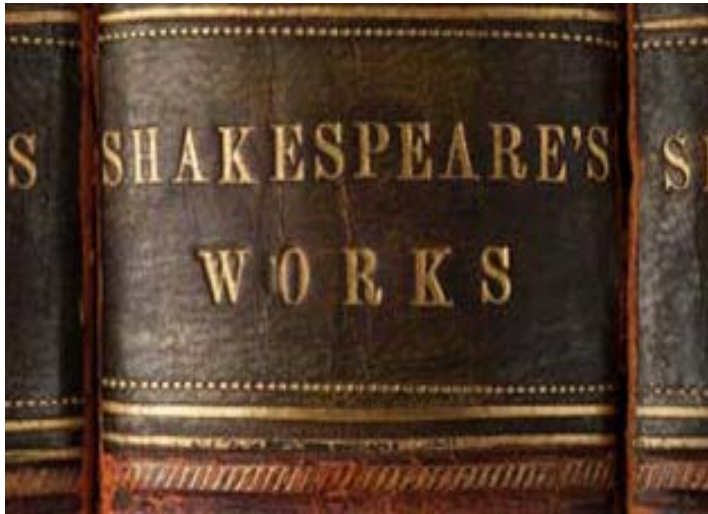


ENGLISH 311: SHAKESPEARE and LAW

DR. SARAH HIGINBOTHAM
OXFORD COLLEGE OF EMORY UNIVERSITY

OVERVIEW

Shakespeare's lines reverberate not only on stages, movie screens, and in classrooms, but also in courtrooms: he has been cited in more than 800 judicial opinions. This course will explore three of Shakespeare's plays through the lens of the law, examining the ways in which justice, punishment, and litigation are a cultural practice often rooted in our shared stories. All three of our plays this semester – *King Lear*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Merchant of Venice* – center around themes of the law's violence. How violent does the law need to be to control violence? That's the question that Shakespeare investigates, and one that we will consider in the context of our own legally violent culture.



IMPORTANT DATES

September 13	data mining due
September 27	first essay due (in class, open book)
October 18	second essay due
November 15	research essay due
November 27, 29	conferences

Fall 2018

TTh 1:00 - 2:15 p.m. Language Hall 201

E-mail: sarah.higinbotham@emory.edu

Office hours: 8 - 9 a.m. and by appointment, Humanities Hall 205B

MATERIALS

REQUIRED

Merchant of Venice
Folger, 2009

King Lear
Bloomsberry, 1997

Measure for Measure
Folger, 2004

WEBSITES

[Canvas](#)

[Dr. Higinbotham's Website](#)

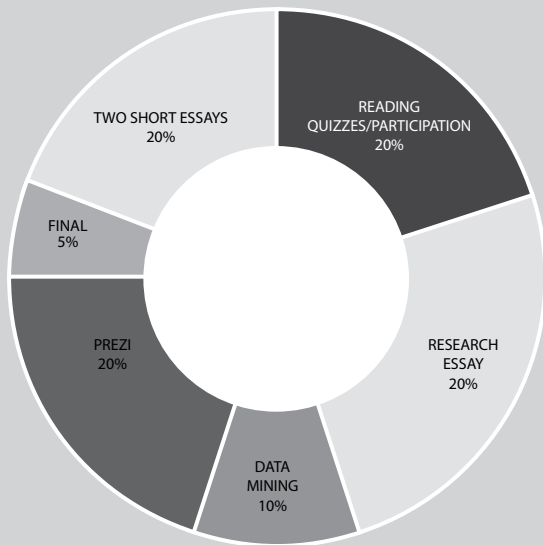
[Library Research](#)

[Voyant](#)

EVALUATION

Every assignment will have specific and thorough guidelines that explain the project. You can access the assignment information on both Canvas and the course website. You can also discuss an assignment with me before it's due. While the assignments themselves are challenging, you should never feel lost or confused about the actual parameters of an assignment or my expectations. If you do, please ask questions in class, make an appointment to come see me, or e-mail me.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING



The **reading quizzes** will occur periodically at the beginning of class. They will cover the day's assigned readings or podcasts. I will drop your lowest quiz grade, which includes a 0 received for a quiz given during a class absence. The grade includes your attentive and active participation in class (explained more fully below in "Classroom Policies"). You may replace up to two quizzes with 14 lines of memorized text, approved by me ahead of time. The first question of each quiz will be a quote from the day's reading, written on the board when you arrive.

In the **short essays** (10% each), you have the opportunity to 1) Choose a metaphor, trope, concept, or symbol from one of Shakespeare's plays that we have read and expand on its implications. 2) Respond to a manuscript that you transcribed, analyzing how your understanding of the period was enhanced by the materiality or other aspects of the original document. These essays will not use outside sources other than the plays and early modern manuscripts.

In the **research essay**, you will closely engage with one of Shakespeare's plays. Choose a question you want to answer provoked by one of the plays, conduct research, and write a 6-page paper.

The **Prezi** assignment provides you the opportunity to choose an image of Justice (from the English Renaissance or other culture/time) and analyze its visual rhetoric, presenting on your findings to the class.

The **data mining assignment** requires you to create four different infographic representations of one of the plays, each with 3-5 sentences explanation.

The **final** will be identifying twenty (20) quotes from the plays, including speaker and context.

FOLGER SHAKESPEARE READING ROOM



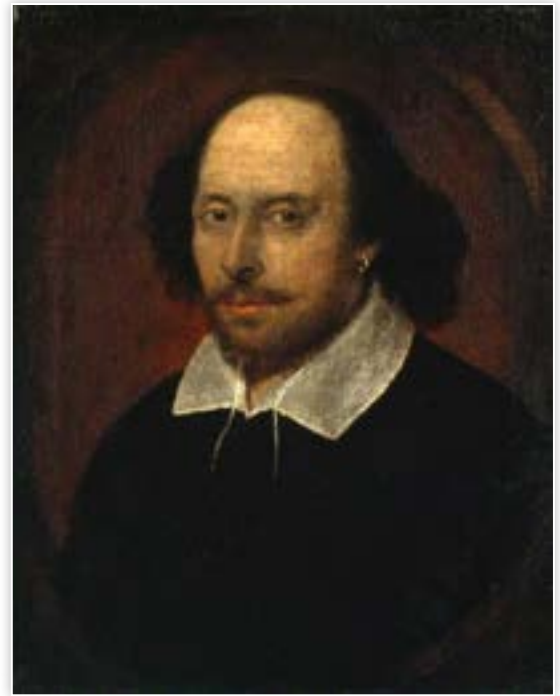
Photo: Reading Room triptych, Folger Shakespeare Library project © Robert Dawson

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism, from the Latin word for kidnapping, is presenting another person's work as your own. When you deliberately use someone else's language, ideas, images, or other original material or code without fully acknowledging its source by quotation marks as appropriate, in footnotes or endnotes, in works cited, and in other ways as appropriate, you will be in violation of Emory Oxford's Honor Code.

[Honor Code](#)

[Process for academic misconduct](#)



Taylor, John. *William Shakespeare*. 1651. Oil on canvas. National Portrait Gallery, London.

MISTAKES ARE WELCOME

A writing teacher I admire, Nick Carbone, has this to add about plagiarism:

Unfortunately, the term “plagiarism” is more technical than practical. It’s used to describe equally mistakes in handling and citing sources and deliberate cheating and lying about the authorship of the work you hand in. In fact, one refuge of many cheaters is to say that they merely made mistakes in source handling. So by plagiarism in this course I want us all to distinguish between fraud and cheating, which is always wrong, and mistakes in learning, which are inevitable, correctable, and for many people, necessary for learning. Mistakes are welcome; deliberate fraud is not. (“Talking about Plagiarism: A Syllabus Strategy”)

THE QUALITY OF FAILURE

One of the greatest obstacles to learning is the fear of failure. Students have sometimes been taught that they need to be perfect – or as close to perfect as possible – in order to be validated, approved, and rewarded. But I think that there are things far more important than perfection: curiosity, risk taking, persistence, integrity, self-awareness, and often failure itself. I want you, in the words of Edward Burger, to make for yourselves “a mind enlivened by curiosity and the intellectual audacity to take risks and create new ideas, a mind that sees a world of unlimited possibilities.”

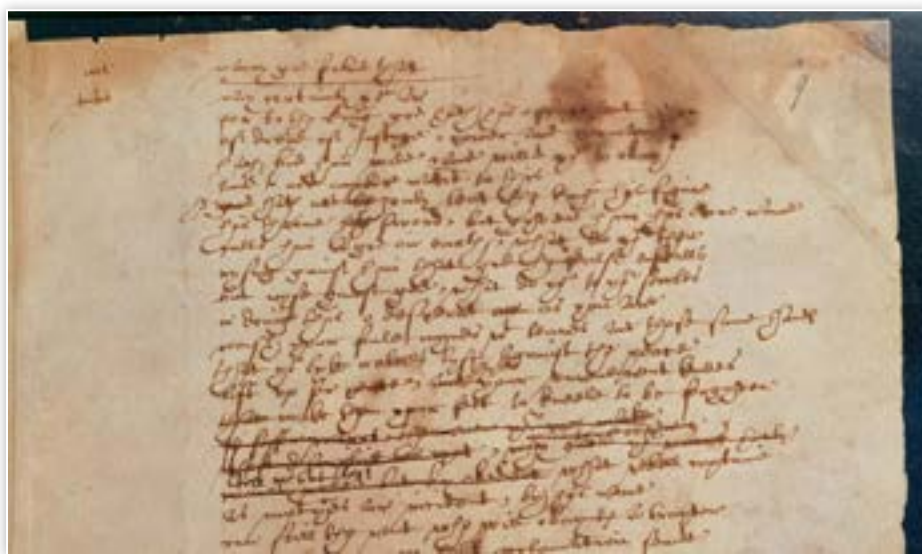
For this reason, part of the course will involve addressing how you handled failure this semester in English 311. Have you been willing to challenge yourself and take risks that might result in failure? Have you been aware of when you have failed, and refused to give up in the face of failure? Have you found ways to use your failure to create something new and interesting? Have you grown from your failures? I hope – in the spirit of Shakespeare’s own risk-taking – that you will allow yourself to take risks and learn from them.

REVISION

You have the opportunity to revise any of your papers or your Prezi this semester. The ability to accept and act on criticism is one of the most important critical abilities you can develop. Can you hear constructive criticism with an open mind, build on lessons learned, and make revisions in response to suggestions? Then I will assess your revised project a second time. A revision isn't just a quick fix of the obvious errors, but a "re-vision," or another look at your project, in which you address feedback. If you choose to revise, it can only help, not hurt your grade. **The revision must include a cover letter**, in which you explain to me what and why you revised what you did. You may send revisions as e-mail attachments, but make sure I respond and tell you I received the revision. If I do not respond within a day, I did not receive the revision.

Revisions are due one week from when you receive a grade and feedback from me. If you revise an assignment, I will average the two grades as your assignment grade.

Please note: Some scholarships and academic tracks require that you maintain a certain grade point average. My grading policies are fair, and I'm always willing to discuss concerns you have over any specific grades when I return them to you. But I will not negotiate an overall course grade based on your jeopardized scholarship (or any other social or funding pressures). I am committed to fair, ethical, and equitable grading at all times.



Munday, Anthony and Henry Chettle. Rev. by William Shakespeare. *Sir Thomas More*. c. 1590. British Museum. Facsimile.

DISAGREEMENTS

I think most of what I have learned that is of any consequence has come through disagreement and further exploration. I welcome your respectful disagreements with me. If we all interpret Shakespeare's plays -- or literature and law more broadly -- in the same way, we have a problem, because no true thinking will be occurring. At the prison where I teach, the new students are very hesitant to disagree with their peers, or me, because in the prison universe, disagreements almost invariably escalate into violence. But the incarcerated students gradually learn that disagreements make the classroom environment more interesting, productive, generative, and challenging. My classroom is not Plato's Cave.

Please note that the college classroom is a place where ideas are exchanged respectfully. I look forward to an environment where this will occur, but I don't have much tolerance for distracting behavior, such as rudeness, texting, sleeping, or updating your Facebook page during class. If your participation is disruptive to the classroom discussion, if it creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment, you are subject to removal from the classroom at my discretion.

[See Emory Oxford's Code of Conduct](#)



Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*, 1623. U of Virginia Electronic Database.



Shakespeare, William. *82 First Folios*, 1623. Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

In order to make the evaluation process fair to students who submitted their work on time, I will accept late assignments only if you communicate with me about it before the assignment is due. Every day an assignment is late, the grade will be lowered by a letter grade (ten points). This includes weekends and there are no exceptions.

Any assignment that is not submitted will be recorded as a 0 (“zero”) and averaged with the rest of your grades. This can damage your course average severely: For example, if you have completed five assignments with a 92 average but don’t submit a sixth assignment (which is counted as a “zero”), your overall average will be a 77.

COMMON POLICIES

Emory Oxford common policies, course completion, attendance requirements, participation in class, non-discrimination, accommodations, academic misconduct, syllabus modifications, and learning outcomes are available on the website. You will be responsible for these policies, and when you sign the Statement of Understanding, you affirm that you are familiar with these policies.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

In addition to respectful, engaged participation, I have the following (somewhat controversial) classroom policies: 1) no laptops unless we are specifically using them, for example during the workshop days; 2) cell phones on silent and in your bags; 3) *you should ask at least two questions or make two comments in each class*. If speaking during class is extremely uncomfortable for you, you may write down your comments and/or questions and give them to me at the end of class. Alternatively, if you are very enthusiastic about speaking in class, please refrain from making more than five comments or asking more than five questions. You may write down what you were not able to say and I will read it after class. I also urge you to come to my office hours, and if they do not suit your schedule, arrange alternative office hours with me. This is to keep the entire class equitably participating during the time we have together.



King Lear (National Theater Live). Dir. Sam Mendes. London: Arts Council England, 2014. Movie Poster.

**“When we are born,
we cry that we are come
To this great stage of fools.”**
(*King Lear* 4.6.186-87)

MLA DOCUMENTATION

[OWL Purdue website](https://owl.purdue.edu)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUGUST 30	INTRODUCTIONS, SYLLABUS “AWE AS PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR”
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 4	HAVE READ <i>KING LEAR</i> , ACT 1 QUIZ GRADE: HAVE PHYSICAL COPY IN CLASS HAVE READ BRYSON’S WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE SIGN UP FOR PRESENTATION HAVE READ “IMAGES OF JUSTICE” WEBSITE, HERE
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 6	HAVE READ <i>KING LEAR</i> , ACT 2 HAVE LISTENED TO MICHAEL WHITMORE’S DATA MINING PODCAST
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 11	HAVE READ <i>KING LEAR</i> , ACTS 3-4 HAVE READ PAUL KAHN’S LAW AND LOVE: THE TRIALS OF KING LEAR
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 13	HAVE READ <i>KING LEAR</i> , ACT 5 DATAMINING DUE
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 18	HAVE READ <i>MEASURE FOR MEASURE</i> , ACTS 1-2 HAVE READ R. V TAVERNER
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 20	HAVE READ <i>MEASURE FOR MEASURE</i> , ACTS 3-5 HAVE READ “ WHY I WRITE ”
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 25	HAVE READ KENJI YOSHINO’S “ON EMPATHY IN JUDGMENT”
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 27	FIRST ESSAY DUE: IN CLASS (750 WORDS)
TUESDAY OCTOBER 2	HAVE READ <i>MERCHANT OF VENICE</i> , ACTS 1-2
THURSDAY OCTOBER 4	HAVE READ <i>MERCHANT OF VENICE</i> , ACTS 3-5
TUESDAY OCTOBER 9	FALL BREAK
THURSDAY OCTOBER 11	HAVE WATCHED <i>MERCHANT OF VENICE</i> , 1-PAGE REFLECTION DUE
TUESDAY OCTOBER 16	DR. DANIEL LACHANCE, GUEST LECTURE
THURSDAY OCTOBER 18	SECOND ESSAY DUE (750 WORDS)
TUESDAY OCTOBER 23	DEATH ROW ATTORNEY RACHEL CHMIEL, GUEST LECTURE
THURSDAY OCTOBER 25	HAVE READ ROBERT COVER, “VIOLENCE AND THE WORD” HAVE READ <i>BROWN V PLATA</i>
TUESDAY OCTOBER 30	LIBRARY WORKSHOP: PROPOSAL DUE
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 1	NO CLASS: DR. H IN NM FOR 16TH C. STUDIES CONFERENCE
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 6	WORKSHOP, RESEARCH WRITING
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 8	WORKSHOP, RESEARCH WRITING
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 13	WORKSHOP
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 15	RESEARCH ESSAY DUE
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 20	VIRTUAL CLASS: WATCH LOOKING FOR RICHARD AND POST COMMENT BY 3 P.M.
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 22	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 27	CONFERENCES
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 29	CONFERENCES
DECEMBER 4	WRITING DAY (DR. HIGINBOTHAM AT FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY)
DECEMBER 6	RESEARCH REVISIONS DUE, WITH COVER LETTER
DECEMBER 11	FINAL REVIEW
DECEMBER 19, 9 A.M. - NOON	FINAL EXAM