

English 311: Shakespeare
Professor Gretchen Schulz

Office: 103 Humanities Hall

Office Hours: 2:00 to 4:00 M, T, Th 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.

Class Schedule:

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

Sept. 02 Labor Day

[pizza and video of A Midsummer Night's Dream on Monday evening, September 2, or Tuesday evening, September 3]

04 MND

06 MND

09 The Taming of the Shrew

[pizza and video of The Taming of the Shrew on Monday evening, September 9, or Tuesday evening, September 10]

11 TS

13 TS; possible essay 1 due (MND, TS)

[live performance of The Taming of the Shrew by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company on Sunday evening, September 15]

16 Much Ado About Nothing

18 MAAN

[pizza and video of Much Ado About Nothing on Wednesday evening, September 18, or Thursday evening, September 19]

20 MAAN

23 The Merchant of Venice

25 MOV; possible essay 1 due (MND, TS, MAAN, MOV)

27 MOV

Sept. 30 Twelfth Night

[pizza and video of Twelfth Night on Monday evening, September 30, or Tuesday evening, October 1]

Oct. 02 TN
04 TN

[pizza and video of Richard III on Wednesday evening, October 3, or Thursday evening, October 4]

Oct. 07 Measure for Measure
09 MforM; possible essay 2 due (MOV, TN, MforM)
11 SCENES DAY

14 Fall Break
16 Henry the Fourth, Part One
18 1HIV

21 IHIV; possible essay 2 due (TN, MforM, 1HIV)
23 Julius Caesar

[pizza and video of Julius Caesar on Wednesday evening, October 23, or Thursday evening, October 24]

25 JC

28 JC
30 Macbeth

Nov. 01 no class on Friday (conference on campus)

[live performance of Macbeth by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company on Sunday evening, November 3]

04 M
06 M; possible essay 3 due (1HIV, JC, M)
08 Hamlet

11 H

[pizza and video of Hamlet on one night during the week, TBA]

13 H
15 SCENES DAY

18 Othello
20 O; possible essay 3 due (JC, M, H, O)
22 O

[live performance of Twelfth Night by the Oxford Ensemble of Shakespearean Artists, the weekend of the 21 to the 24]
25 King Lear

THANKSGIVING

Dec. 02 KL

04 KL

06 The Tempest

09 T; essay 4 due (H, O, KL, T); last day of class

[pizza and video of The Forbidden Planet on Monday evening, December 09, or Tuesday evening, December 10]

13 possible make-up essay due by 5:00 on Friday (on any of the plays you have not yet written on)

17 final exam, 9:00-12:00 Tuesday

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. frequent intelligent contribution to discussion of the plays both in class and on-line;
3. facilitation of class discussion of the plays several times during the semester;
4. participation in presentation of scenes from the plays twice during the semester;
5. submission of four critical and/or creative essays on the plays at intervals throughout the semester;
6. a combination of required and voluntary viewing of full-length productions of the plays (both live and on tape) at intervals throughout the semester;
7. 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 productions of the plays, both on stage and on tape, 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 four essays (of a minimum of 750 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 fifth essay, a make-up essay, on any play (we have read) you have not already written upon. This make-up essay will be due (as indicated) on Friday, December 13, by 5:00 p.m. I will count your best four essays towards your final grade.

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

Another 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.

A final 15% of your grade will be based on the frequency and quality of your on-going class participation-- in the form of contributions to in-class discussions and contributions to on-line

discussions in the Blackboard conference for the 311 class—and also on the quality of your facilitation of class discussion upon the occasions when you are required to facilitate .

You may also earn up to three 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. These are best seen live, of course, and we will have the opportunity to see a number of productions live, but they may also be seen as movies, TV shows, and videos. Video 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. 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.