**ENG 323 Shakespeare I: Comedies and Romances**

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|  | **Prof. Katy Stavreva**  <[kstavreva@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:kstavreva@cornellcollege.edu)>  **Office**: 200 South Hall, x4255; 319/930-1687 (cell)  **Office Hours**: M & F 11-noon and by appointment  **Class meets**: 10-11, 1-3 PM (exceptions in schedule) |

**Required Texts** (available at the Commons bookstore)

Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, ed. Paster and Howard. Bedford Shakespeare, 1999.

\_\_\_. *Measure for Measure*, ed. Kamps and Raber. Bedford Shakespeare, 2004.

\_\_\_. *The Merchant of Venice*, ed. Kaplan. Bedford Shakespeare, 2002.

\_\_\_. *Twelfth Night*, ed. Smith. Bedford Shakespeare, 2001.

\_\_\_. *The Winter’s Tale*, ed. DiGanghi. Bedford Shakespeare, 2007.

**Course Description and Objectives**

What would you do for love? For reconciliation? What is love, anyway? What does it have to do with the political power or social stability? These are the questions that will drive our exploration of Shakespeare’s comedies and romances, some of which provoke more discomfort than laughter (hence the designation of several as “problem plays”). Other themes on which we will focus include the perils and profits of art and the imagination, the war of the sexes, friendship and marriage, control over women and ethnic Others / the power wielded by women and ethnic Others, cross-dressing, dressing up, and dressing down. Our main task is to attend to Shakespeare's finely wrought, playful, multivalent, and often irreverent language and to the ways in which performance choices (in recorded productions and our own mini-theater classroom) bring out diverse and often contradictory interpretations of the playtexts.

In class discussions, oral presentations, formal papers, and a final creative project you will perfect your skills of conducting both close and "wide" literary analysis, as well as the research skills needed for both types of analysis. For the purposes of analyzing the plays closely, you will practice exploring their linguistic texture (language choices, imagery, rhythm, sentence structure) as well as the performative opportunities that the language affords. The “wide” reading entails considering how the plays’ language and plots resonate with the concerns of Shakespeare’s culture: gender, sexuality, and the family; social authority and resistance; social and moral geography and mobility; just and corrupt governance; religion and supernatural beliefs; the power of the arts (music, performance, visual arts), etc. You will notice that these are concerns that are very much relevant to our time as well. Your final project will challenge you to interpret the past (a short scene from *Measure for Measure* or *The Winter’s Tale*) for a modern audience by reading closely *and* unleashing your creative imagination.

My goals for this course are to help you learn how to

* consider how Shakespeare’s dialogue works dramatically (for the characters of the play) as well as poetically and/or rhetorically (for off-stage audiences);
* ask significant questions of Shakespeare’s plays; develop analytical and creative ways of addressing these questions;
* apply relevant specialized analytical tools (historical dictionaries, concordances, documents from Shakespeare’s era) to understand historical differences and to appreciate the diversity of opinions on key topics held by Shakespeare’s contemporaries;
* improve writing thesis-driven interpretative arguments that draw on appropriate evidence and reasoning;
* improve in citing appropriately and writing engagingly;
* reflect on the connections between the past/other cultures and your own culture.

*This course supports the Educational Priorities and Outcomes of Cornell College with emphases on knowledge, inquiry, communication, intercultural literacy, and ethical behavior.*

**Course Requirements**

**Active class participation** is vital to your success and the success of this course. Come to class not only having read the assigned material, but ready to articulate, examine, and negotiate the responses you have formed. We will open each class with your questions and focus discussion on scenes that you are most excited about. I expect you to keep an open mind about possible interpretations, to engage with readings offered by your classmates or myself, to share your insights gained through the in-reading or viewing, to evaluate the way other students frame questions or look at an issue.

Shakespearean language is rich and admittedly difficult, but you will be surprised at the new discoveries each re-reading brings to you. We will go over some tips for reading Shakespeare, but here are three pieces of advice: 1) *As you read the plays, keep an index card with the character list handy*. 2) If you get lost, *refer to the plot summary in the “Reading Resources” document* on Moodle. 3)Try to *read the entire play for the first day of discussion, then re-read the part assigned* for the specific class meeting.

To earn full credit for participation, you must complete all in-class involvement opportunities:

* Advance the discussion raising pertinent questions or making a point with a *specific reference to the text under discussion*.
* Listen attentively and *engage productively* with the contributions made by the professor, presenters, or other class members. This means listening to what each class member is saying, and what they may *not* be saying. Make an effort to engage with and build on the contributions of your peers. Be clear and respectful when disagreeing, and refrain from speech-making.
* Don’t shy away from putting to the test a line, speech or dialogue in *classroom readings (some of them on your feet)*.
* There may be unannounced *quizzes*, should the need arise.

**A research presentation** in week 2 will enable you to throw new light on a scene from *Twelfth Night* or *The Merchant of Venice* in view of a historical document from Shakespeare's era*.* Presentations must be accompanied by a write-up to get credit.

**Two shorter formal papers,** one focusing on Shakespeare's language, and the other discussing diverse takes on a social issue as represented in a Shakespearean comedy and relevant historical texts from the early modern era.

**A final creative project** of three parts: an annotated scene presenting an interpretive problem to which the creative project will respond; the project and its public presentation; and a short reflective paper.

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| Class participation | 10% |
| Exploratory Paper | 20% |
| Research Presentation and Write-Up | 20% |
| Shakespeare’s Comedy in Its Historical Context | 20% |
| Creative Project, including Scene Annotation and Reflection | 30% |

**Policies**

**Attendance**: Class attendance is assumed; you are individually responsible to cover missed topics and exercises; excessive tardiness or missing ***more than two class sessions*** will lower your final grade by one increment for each additional absence (e.g., from B+ to B). ***Coming to class without the assigned reading for the day counts as absence*.**

I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. If you have a co-curricular activity that could interfere with class attendance, or plan to observe a religious holiday, please notify me in writing at the beginning of class. Consult the syllabus and check with your classmates on what you may have missed. If you need help with the material, please arrange to meet with me as soon as possible after the missed session; if a planned absence conflicts with a deadline, talk to me before the missed class session.

**E-mail communication**: Students must check their Cornell e-mail *at least once daily* and respond promptly to all course-related communication. Failing to respond to course-relevant e-mail communication within 24 hours *will be treated as tardiness to class*. Please indicate the course title (or number) in the subject heading of your e-mail.

**Paper format and submission**: Papers or other assignments turned in late get a grade of F. If you need an extension for health or other sound reasons, please let me know *at least 24 hours* in advance. All papers must be submitted electronically through the class Moodle website. *Acceptable file formats are MS Word or pdf*.

**Plagiarism** (also known as intellectual theft) and cheating will not be tolerated.  The official College policy stipulates:

Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College’s requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty.

The procedures for cases of academic dishonesty are outlined in the 2018-19 *Catalogue* (<http://catalog.cornellcollege.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=125#academic-honesty>). Take responsibility for your thinking and your language; give credit where credit is due.

For a quick overview of “MLA Formatting and Style Guide,” see the document compiled by the Purdie Online Writing Lab at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>.

If you’re ever in doubt about how to credit a source, don’t hesitate to ask me, a Writing Consultant, or a Reference Librarian.

**Cell phones, laptops, food**: Turn off your cell phone and put it away before class. You may bring a laptop to class, but unless you have a documented disability that necessitates its use, or you have been asked to look up information, your laptop should remain closed during class. Taking notes with pen and paper keeps you focused. You may bring a drink to class, but no food. This policy is meant to secure your undivided attention and thoughtful contributions to the class.

**Help and accommodation**: Reading Shakespeare, though fun, can be a challenge. Don’t hesitate to stop by my office if you’re struggling with a reading, or are concerned about an assignment. I’ll be happy to talk with you, and besides, there's always tea in my office. For help with writing, check out the Writing Studio in the library. Finally, if you have a documented disability that requires accommodation, or if you are participating in a College-sponsored event or activity, please come see me during the first two days of classes, so we can discuss relevant accommodations.

**Reading and Writing Schedule**

NOTE: An update of the schedule for the rest of the block will be posted on Moodle by first Wednesday, when I have a better sense of the discussion pace of this group. It may need to be adjusted later, too; please record updates if/when they occur on your hard copy.

**Week 1**

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| M | **AM** Introduction to the course. **PM** Introduction to Shakespeare's rhetoric and to the historical roots of Shakespeare's theater. Bring *MND* to class. Read 1) “Court Entertainments” (117-25); 2) John Stow, from *A Survey of London* (99-103); 3) Philip Stubbes, from *The Anatomy of Abuses* (108-10). |
| T | **AM** Discuss 1) *MND,* act 1; 2) "Amazons" and Christine de Pizan, from *The Book of the City of Ladies* (*MND*, 194-205); 3) "Nuns" (*MND* 221-23) and either Layton, "A Letter, Certifying the Incontinency of the Nuns of Syon" (*MND* 224-26) or Erasmus, from *A Maid Hating Marriage* (*MND* 226-31).  **PM** Introduce paper 1 prompt. Workshop on using historical dictionaries and concordances.  Discussion of *MND*, act 2. |
| W | **AM and PM** Discuss 1) *MND*, act 3; 2) "Fairy Belief" and Aubrey, *Collecting Fairy Lore* (*MND* 307-13). |
| R | **AM class meets 9:30 to 11 (no PM class; writing time).** Discuss *MND*, act 4-5, 2) "The New Man: Simon Forman's Dreams," Forman, from *The Autobiography of Simon Forman* (*MND* 188-91). Sign up for presentations. |
| F | **PM only** 1) Discuss *Twelfth Night,* act 1 and 2; 2) Sandys, from *A Relation of a Journey Begun Anno Domini 1610* (*TN* 126-28); Ascham, from *The Schoolmaster* (*TN* 128-33). **Turn in paper 1 (Moodle upload and a printed copy in class).** |

**Week 2**

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| M | **Presentation Day 1.**  **AM** Assign paper 2. Read 1) *TN,* act 2 through 3.1; 2) Stephano Guazzo, from *Civil Conversation* (*TN* 282-86); 3) William Vaughan, from *The Golden Grove Moralized in Three Books* (TN 286-91); 4) Crooke, from *Microcosmographia* (*TN* 195-201); and 5) Gibson, from *A Woman's Worth Defended against All the Men in the World* (*TN* 163-66).  **PM** Discussion of *TN* and presentations continue. |
| T | **Presentation Day 2.**  **AM** Read 1) *TN,* 3.2 through 4.2; 2) Ovid*,* from *The Heroical Epistles of Publius Ovidus Naso in English Verse* (*TN* 203-07); 3) Donne, *Sappho to Philaenis* (*TN* 207-09); 4) Overbury, from A Wife . . . Whereunto Are Added Many Witty Characters (TN 323-24); and 5) Bancroft, from *A Survey of the Pretended Holy Discipline* (*TN* 334-36).  **PM** Discussion of *TN* and presentations continue. |
| W | **Presentation Day 3.**  **AM** Read 1) *TN,* 4.3 through 5.1; 2) Montaigne, from *Essays* (*TN* 218-25).  **PM** Catch up on *TN* discussion and presentations. |
| R | **Presentation Day 4.**  **AM**Read1) Read Merchant of Venice, act 1 through 2.1; 2) Thomas Coryate, from Coryats Crudiites (MV 139-45); Thomas Wilson, from A Discourse upon Usury by Way of Dialogue and Orations and Debate on the Usury Bill (MV 194-204).  **PM** Discussion and presentations continue. |
| F | **PM** Read *MV*, 2.2 through 3.2.  **Paper 2 on Moodle.** |

**Week 3**

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| M | **AM Paper 2 due on Moodle and in hard copy in class.** Read *MV* 3.3-end.  **PM** Discussion continues. Introduce creative project. |
| T | **AM** Read 1) *Measure for Measure*, act 1 through 2.2; 2) Fynes Moryson, from *An Itinerary* (335-37), 3) John Stow, from *The Survey of London* (271-75).  **PM** Discussion continues. |
| W | **AM** Read 1) *MM*, 2.3 through 4.1, Kamps and Raber, “Understanding Isabella” (194-203).  **PM** Discussion continues. Sign up for a project proposal conference with prof.  **By midnight**: upload the annotated scene, complete with introductory note and stage directions to Moodle. |
| R | **AM****9-12:30** individualconferences with prof, as scheduled.  **PM** Read 1) *MM*, 4.2-end, 2) Machiavelli, from *The Prince* (160-66), 3) St. Augustine, from *The Lord’s Sermon of the Mount* (226-28). |
| F | **AM****9-12:30** individualconferences with prof, as scheduled.  **PM** Read 1) *Winter’s Tale*,acts 1 and 2, 2) DiGangi, “Conjugal Faultlines” (199-201). |

**Week 4**

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| M | **AM** Read 1) *WT*, acts 3 and 4, 2) Edward Topsell, *Of the Bear* (306—09).  **PM** Discussion continues. |
| T | **AM** Read 1) *WT*,act 5, 2) DiGangi, from “Hermione’s Statue” (360-67), and 3) “Artists, Patrons, and Collectors (405-10).  **PM** Discussion continues, then unveiling of final projects. |
| W | **9 AM-noon.** Unveiling of final projects.  **4 PM**: Documentation of creative contribution and reflection paper due (two separate Moodle uploads). |