



GESM 120g: Humanistic Inquiry
Shakespeare On His Feet: Exploring Shakespearean
Drama Through Textual Analysis and Performance

Units: 4
Fall 2018
Tue-Thu: 8am-9:20am

Location: VKC 102

Instructor: Andrew McConnell Stott

Office: ADM 304H

Office Hours: Flexible, best to make an appointment
by emailing Tracie Cacatian: cacatian@usc.edu

Contact Info: astott@usc.edu

Course Description

The history of Shakespeare studies is the history of two equally great traditions: literary criticism on the one hand, the deep textual study that looks for themes and patterns and brings hidden meanings to the fore; and the history of performance, the way Shakespeare has been acted, adapted, revised, and received by audiences throughout the centuries and across the world. Instead of thinking of “stage” and “page” as separate paths, this class will seek to combine them as complementary modes of analysis that deepen our understanding of how rich and multi-faceted the work of Shakespeare is.

We will read three plays in detail – *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *Macbeth* – and look to spend equal time on two activities: i) analyzing the texts and developing our skills in “close reading”; and ii) putting Shakespeare “on his feet,” that is, experiencing the plays through group-based performance work that pays attention to concepts such as voice, character, action, language, and subtext to explore the ways in which different choices in performance can produce significant variations in meaning.

This is not a drama class. It’s a literature class that uses active learning as a tool for critical inquiry in order to better understand the ways in which play texts make themselves available to different interpretations. No prior experience with Shakespeare is required, and no acting experience is necessary (in fact, I’d prefer it if very experienced actors did not take this class). The class will be entirely judgement-free on your abilities as a performer. All you need are a sense of humor and the willingness to jump in.

Please do bear in mind that this class begins promptly at **8am**. Let me repeat that – **8am**. Please sign up only if you are serious getting up early and coming to class on time two days a week for 15 weeks.

Required Reading

William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*
--- *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*
--- *Macbeth*

All plays are available via Folger Digital Editions at no cost:

<http://www.folgerdigitaltexts.org/?chapter=4>

Please ensure you have read the assigned week’s reading prior to the class and are ready to discuss it.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- a) Reflect on what it means to be human through close study of human experience through time and across diverse cultures;

- b) Cultivate a critical appreciation for various forms of human expression, including literature, language, philosophy and the arts, as well as develop an understanding of the contexts from which these forms emerge;
- c) Engage with lasting ideas and values that have animated humanity through the centuries for a more purposeful, more ethical, and intellectually richer life;
- d) Learn to read and interpret actively and analytically, to think critically and creatively, and to write and speak persuasively;
- e) Learn to evaluate ideas from multiple perspectives and to formulate informed opinions on complex issues of critical importance in today's global world.

Assignments and Weighting

This course will be assessed by means of the following activities and assignments:

1. Participation – While there is no attendance requirement for this class, your participation in class discussions, performance activities and group work will be graded. Obviously, if you don't show up, you can't participate – but just showing up isn't enough to secure your grade. Discussion, collaboration, the collective making of meaning, and free exchange of ideas are all key to the spirit of humanistic inquiry, so be ready to approach these concepts in good faith and with the best intentions. The better the group dynamic, the more rewarding the class.
2. Two Close Readings: Two 5-7-page papers in which you will be asked to prepare a close reading/textual analysis of key passages we have studied. **First paper is due 09/21 by 11:59pm; Second Paper is due 10/26 by 11:59pm.**
3. Performance Presentations – We will organize the class into three “Acting Companies.” Each company will be asked to perform a key scene (or scenes) from one of the plays we have studied, to be followed by an oral reflection on the artistic choices they have made. This is an exercise in teamwork, collaboration and your ability to manage and execute a project. Considerations include: conceptualizing the performance, directing and blocking the scene, making cuts (as required), performing the roles and sourcing props, among others. Preparation for the performance takes place outside of class. Roles and responsibilities are decided by the members of the company themselves but must be divided equitably. Every company-member is expected to make an equal contribution, with no exceptions. Your company is graded as a team, so respect the efforts of your team-mates and pull your weight. **Check the syllabus for your company's presentation date.**
4. Final Paper – A take-home paper on a topic we have discussed. 10-12 pages in length. **Due 12/07 by 11:59pm.**

Assignment	Learning Objectives Covered	% of grade
Participation	c, b, d, e	20
First Close Reading Paper	a, c, d	15
Second Close Reading Paper	a, c, d	15
Group Performance Presentation	d, e	30
Final Paper	a, b, c, d, e	20
Total		100

Grading Scale

Final grades will be determined using the following scale:

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Assignment Submission

Group performances will be presented in class according to the class schedule. The Mid-term and Final can be should be emailed to me (astott@usc.edu) no later than 11:59pm on the day marked for submission in the class schedule. Students will be penalized one fraction of a letter grade (+/-) for each 12-hour period they are late.

Grading Timeline

Feedback on timely submissions will be received within seven days.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Plagiarists are the worst. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>

Course Schedule

Please note that, per university policy, for each unit of in-class contact time, students are expected to devote two hours of out-of-class work per week over the course of the semester. This means you should plan to set aside at least **EIGHT HOURS** a week reading/writing/studying for this class.

Week	Date	Topic	Reading (Act, Scene, Lines)	Notes
1	8/21	Introduction & syllabus review		
	8/23	Preparing to Study Shakespeare		Divide into Acting Companies
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>				
2	8/28	Civil Brawls	1.1.1-105	Insults!
	8/30	Petrarchan Love/Queen Mab	1.2 & 1.3 & 1.4	Homework: Roles for next class
3	9/04	A Mask	1.5	Performance Presentations: Expectations and Tips
	9/06	Directorial Decisions: The Balcony scene	2.2	
4	9/11	Double Meaning/Verbal Play	2.3.23-93, 2.4.38-103, 2.5.1-83	How to do a Close Reading
	9/13	<i>Tableaux Vivants</i>	3.1	
5	9/18	Subtext	4.1 & 4.2	
	9/20	The Tomb	4.3 & 4.4 & 4.5	First Close Reading Paper Due 09/21 by 11:59pm
6	9/25	Fate	5.2 & 5.3	
	9/27			Company 1 performance presentation
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>				
7	10/02	Authority in the Court of Athens	1.1	Mapping the play
	10/04	Mechanicals	1.2	
8	10/09	Life in the Green World	2.1	
	10/11	Subtexts	2.2	
9	10/16	Foolish Mortals	3.2	Improvisation: Disbelief!
	10/18	Shakespearean Insults	3.2	
10	10/23	Making Sure We Understand the Characters	4.1 & 4.2	
	10/25	Pyramus and Thisbe	5.1	Second Close Reading Paper Due 10/26 by 11:59pm
11	10/30	Pyramus and Thisbe (con't)	5.1	
	11/01			Company 2 performance presentation

Macbeth				
12	11/06	Meeting Macbeth	1.1 & 1.2	Improvisation: Hail, Brave Friend!
	11/08	Soliloquies	1.7.1-28, 1.7.29-96	
13	11/13	The Sexual Politics of Regicide	2.1, 2.2.1-95	
	11/15	Doubt and Consequences	3.1.52-77 3.2 3.3	Cutting, Rewriting or Editing a Scene
14	11/20	Dinner with Ghosts	3.4	
	11/22	THANKSGIVING. NO CLASS		
15	11/27	Decline and Fall	All of Act 5	
	11/29			Company 3 performance presentation
		Week of 12/03: All Week – Scheduled Meetings to Discuss Final Papers		
12/07 Final Paper Due				

Student Support Services:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu