



ENG 430: Shakespeare

Tu/Th 9:30–10:50am
THH 108
Fall 2022

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Office Hours: Tues 12:30–1:20, Thurs 1:30–2:20

A ruler whose spiraling paranoia destabilizes international affairs; a gender-bending heroine who stumbles into an awkward love triangle; a brooding young man who suspects his mother's new boyfriend of nefarious designs: these are characters from Shakespeare. That they wouldn't be out of place in a contemporary television show—or in real life, for that matter—tells us something about the durability of Shakespeare's imaginative worlds.

In this course we time travel between Shakespeare's England and today. Reading Shakespeare plays alongside contemporary adaptations on film, and attending a local production of a play, we will explore historical categories, ideas, and language in early modern England, even as we reimagine Shakespeare's works for the 21st century in Los Angeles and elsewhere. You will gain practice in thinking comparatively across history, and along the way will develop your ability to ask and answer questions that connect your personal interests to areas of ongoing academic inquiry.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Analyze words on multiple levels by drawing on etymology, historical usage, and distinct meanings
- Paraphrase literary language to understand lexical, syntactic, and other stylistic choices
- Reflect on your readerly interests and practices of reading historical literature
- Compare a film adaptation of a Shakespeare play to the play's text
- Evaluate the argument and supporting points in a scholarly article
- Make an argument about literary texts that engages with counterarguments

Course Texts

Books

Richard III
The Merchant of Venice
Twelfth Night
Othello
King Lear
Macbeth
The Tempest

Films

Laurence Olivier, *Richard III* (1955)
Michael Radford, *The Merchant of Venice* (2004)
Trevor Nunn, *Twelfth Night* (1996)
Oliver Parker, *Othello* (1995)
Akira Kurosawa, *Ran* (1985)
Justin Kurzel, *Macbeth* (2015)
Fred Wilcox, *Forbidden Planet* (1956)

Assigned texts not in the course books will be posted to Blackboard. Having the Folger editions of Shakespeare's plays will make it easier to follow along in class, but the Arden, Riverside, Norton, Pelican, Penguin, or Signet editions are acceptable alternatives. Films not on Blackboard can be rented online for \$2–4 each via websites including Amazon.com, Youtube.com, and Vudu.com.

Assignments and Grading

The bulk of the work for this class (with the exception of the final essay) is designed around weekly intensive work rather than building to cumulative, high-stakes assignments. As such, it depends on your everyday curiosity, your willingness to take intellectual risks, and your lively engagement with the readings, with one another, with me, and with yourself.

You will keep a handwritten **commonplace book** throughout the semester, making one entry per day of assigned reading (20 entries total). Your commonplace book will serve as a seedbed for your other written work in this class, particularly your final argumentative paper.

You will contribute an entry to a class **annotated bibliography** in which you describe and evaluate an assigned scholarly article. You will give an account of the article in an informal class presentation of 3–5 minutes, in which you summarize the overall argument, explain how it changed your understanding of the text, and point to one claim or reading that you found interesting. The compiled annotated bibliography may be useful as a resource for your final paper.

You will complete three exercises that will help you approach Shakespeare's plays from different angles. The **first exercise** (3 pages) will analyze Shakespeare's use of a particular word by considering its etymology, historical usage, and distinct meanings, drawing on the *Oxford English Dictionary*. The **second exercise** (3 pages) will reflect on what it means to read Shakespeare in the 21st century, developing some of the observations you make in your commonplace. The **third exercise** (2–3 pages, or in video format) will review one or more film adaptations of a play.

You will write an **argumentative essay** (6–8 pages) that engages with one or more scholarly sources. You will develop your argument in stages, including formulating a research question, conferencing with the professor, and proposing a bibliography with notes on how you plan to use the sources.

Finally, you will **participate** in class: preparing carefully for class, engaging (include listening actively) in class conversations, and writing thoughtful answers on occasional in-class exercises or think pieces based on your assigned reading for the day.

ASSIGNMENT	PERCENTAGE
Participation	10%
Commonplace book	10%
Bibliography entry	10%
Exercises	45%
Argumentative essay	25%

A note on grades. Research has shown that students take more intellectual risks and learn more when they receive comments rather than grades. This semester, I would like us to experiment with treating your reading, writing, and speaking as part of an ongoing conversation with me about your intellectual and creative growth, that I will carry on on my part through comments and conferences rather than through giving letter or numerical grades. At the end of the semester we will together consider your collected portfolio of work, keeping in mind the relative weighting of percentages above, and I will take your self-assessment into account when assigning a final grade for the course. (And if not having grades is too anxiety-producing for you, I will supply them. The goal of this experiment is to free up your energy for learning, not to raise your stress levels!)

Expectations

You will:

- **attend class regularly and on time.** Please clear legitimate absences—for illness, religious holidays, or emergencies—with me beforehand.
- **closely read assigned texts**, making notes while you read, and come to class prepared for discussion.
- **be engaged and focused in class**, listening to others respectfully and with openness to differing points of view, and avoiding the distractions of phones and computers. If you would like to use a laptop to take notes, please clear it with me before class.
- **work to produce creative and intelligent writing.**
- **turn your work in on time.**

I will:

- **prepare for class time** while remaining flexible to respond to your interests, questions, and concerns.
- **approach each day with enthusiasm** and an openness to learning alongside you.
- **communicate clearly and in a timely manner** about assignments and deadlines.
- **be available** over email and in office hours to discuss issues relating to the course, and to serve as a resource for your reading, thinking, and writing.
- **read your work carefully, provide thoughtful feedback, and evaluate it fairly** according to clear standards and in conversation with you.

Schedule of Readings

	Readings	Tasks
Week 1 Aug 23	<i>Richard III</i> , Act I	Sign up for annotated bibliography
Aug 25	<i>Richard III</i> , Acts II–III	
Week 2 Aug 30	<i>Richard III</i> , Acts IV–V	
Sept 1	Laurence Olivier, <i>Richard III</i>	
Week 3 Sept 6	<i>Macbeth</i> , Acts I–II	Attend Shakespeare in the Park at 7pm
Sept 8	<i>Macbeth</i> , Acts III–IV	
Week 4 Sept 13	<i>Macbeth</i> , Act V	
Sept 15	Justin Kurzel, <i>Macbeth</i>	
Week 5 Sept 20	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i> , Acts I–II	Turn in exercise 1
Sept 22	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i> , Acts III–IV	
Week 6 Sept 27	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i> , Act V	

Sept 29	Michael Radford, <i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	
Week 7 Oct 4	<i>Twelfth Night</i> , Acts I–II	
Oct 6	<i>Twelfth Night</i> , Acts III–IV	
Week 8 Oct 11	<i>Twelfth Night</i> , Act V	
Oct 13	NO CLASS – FALL RECESS	
Week 9 Oct 18	Trevor Nunn, <i>Twelfth Night</i>	Turn in exercise 2
Oct 20	<i>Othello</i> , Acts I–II	
Week 10 Oct 25	<i>Othello</i> , Acts III–IV	
Oct 27	<i>Othello</i> , Act V	
Week 11 Nov 1	Oliver Parker, <i>Othello</i>	
Nov 3	<i>King Lear</i> , Acts I–II	
Week 12 Nov 8	<i>King Lear</i> , Acts III–IV	Turn in exercise 3
Nov 10	<i>King Lear</i> , Act V	
Week 13 Nov 15	Akira Korusawa, <i>Ran</i>	Turn in research question
Nov 17	<i>The Tempest</i> , Acts I–II	
Week 14 Nov 22	<i>The Tempest</i> , Acts III–IV	Essay conferences
Nov 24	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING	
Week 15 Nov 29	<i>The Tempest</i> , Act V	Essay conferences, cont'd.
Dec 1	Fred Wilcox, <i>Forbidden Planet</i>	Turn in proposed bibliography
Week 16		Turn in Argumentative Essay

Other Resources

opensourceshakespeare.org - Resources such as a concordance and lists of characters' speeches.
folger.edu - Vast digital image library, among other things.
shaksper.net - Online discussion boards with archived discussions about many Shakespeare topics.
shakespeareswords.com - Helpful for dealing with difficulties in reading Shakespeare's language.
labs.jstor.org/shakespeare/ - Will be useful for papers; can look at particular lines of plays and see which JSTOR scholarly articles cite those lines.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

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. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://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>.

Support Systems:

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.
<https://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. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship & 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. <https://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: <http://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. <https://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. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

Student Support & Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

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

Diversity at USC – <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

Tab for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students