

English 3391.01
Studies in Shakespeare: Tragedies and Histories
Summer 2, 2015

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Office Hours: 9:00-10:00
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Class Information: 10:00-11:00 Evans 358

1. Course Description:

The purpose of English 3391 is to read and discuss a number of Shakespeare's histories and tragedies, from the earliest experiments of his career to the great history plays of the 1590s through the major tragedies of the early 1600s. By reading the works of an **iconic** author from a variety of perspectives, this course places Shakespeare in his own time, as well as to examine his continuing influence today. Pointedly, Shakespeare's work will be read in a cultural, historical, and thematic context. Furthermore, this course pertains to literary form and meaning as well as larger issues concerning literature's agency in the shaping of intellectual achievement and personal identity.

2. Course Objectives:

- 1) To examine how Shakespeare manipulated the conventions of tragedy and the chronicle play of his time to create quite different effects in each of his plays.
- 2) To investigate the historical and cultural backgrounds of his plays.
- 3) To appreciate his status as a leading public playwright as well as to observe his relationship to the courts of Elizabeth I and James I.
- 4) To discuss the current themes and philosophical insights of his plays.
- 5) To practice essential skills of critical analysis.
- 6) To understand through a close reading of the specifics of the language one can investigate the issues, recurrent themes, and problems in the plays.
- 7) To gain a confident engaging with Shakespeare's imagery, characterization and context.

3. Text:

Shakespeare, William. The Complete Works 7th Ed. David Bevington. New York: Pearson Longman, 2014.

4. Course Requirements:

- 1) Reading assignments and writing situations will be given over the plays and background. These assignments are announced in class. These assignments will

be averaged and evaluated as a major grade. No make-ups are given; however, the one (1) lowest grade will be dropped for each student.

- 2) 3 major examinations will be given in class. These examinations will require writing and analysis over the material read and discussed.
- 3) Consideration will be given for class participation.

5. Selected Readings:

King Richard the Third

King Richard the Second

The First Part of King Henry the Fourth

King Henry the Fifth

Julius Caesar

Macbeth

King Lear

Hamlet

6. Absence Policy:

The University bulletin stresses the importance of punctuality and "regular" attendance. In order to adhere to their guidelines, I have adopted the following absence policy for my classes:

- 1) A student is allowed four (4) absences during the semester without any penalty being imposed. (This absence without penalty does not apply to any work missed).
- 2) If a student misses five (5) meetings during the session, the student may be penalized five (5) points.
- 3) After a student misses six (6) classes during the semester, he or she may not receive credit for the course.
- 4) If a student has maintained a perfect attendance for the entire session, he or she will have three (3) points added to the final grade in the course.

7. Grading System:

All grades are based on a 100 point scale: 100-90=A, 89-80=B, 79-70=C, 69-60=D, 59-0=F. All work must be completed and turned in on time or you fail by default.

Your final course grade will be calculated and averaged as follows:

- 1) Average of reading assignments will be 1 component
- 2) 3 major exams will be 3 components

I add the grade of each component and divide by the total number of components to determine your final grade. The last consideration given for grade

distribution is to include points for perfect attendance or to subtract points for lack of attendance.

8. Classroom Decorum:

No cell phones or electronic communications devices may be used without permission. No disruption (behavioral, electronic, or otherwise) of class is acceptable. Be courteous and respectful of others.

9. Plagiarism:

Should you have any questions about handling source material for your writing, consult the MLA guidelines, your instructor, and/or a tutor. Evidence of plagiarism results in a grade of F.

10. Tutoring:

For free assistance on any of the writing requirements for this course, visit the Writing Center in Farrington 111. Check online to determine specific hours of operation during the current term. (It is generally open mornings through early evenings, Monday through Thursday, and mornings through early afternoon Friday.)

11. Late Papers:

If a paper is not to be submitted on time, you must formally request an extension from the professor. No final drafts of papers may be submitted via email. All submissions must be given directly to the professor, so do not leave papers in mailboxes, under office doors, with a secretary, etc.

12. Special Accommodations:

Any student with a documented disability who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations should contact the Counseling Center at the beginning of each semester. For more information, contact the disability counselor.

University Policies

13. Americans with Disabilities Act

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex (tel. 936.294.1720). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful

procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.

14. Religious Holy Days

Section 51.911 (b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

15. Visitors in the Classroom

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom. This policy is not intended to discourage the occasional visiting of classes by responsible persons. Obviously, however, the visiting of a particular class should be occasional and not regular, and it should in no way constitute interference with registered members of the class or the educational process.

16. Instructor Evaluations

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.