



Tuesday, November 15, 2011

# General Education and I-Series Course Submission and Review

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## ENGL206 Shakespeare

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### General Information

Title	Shakespeare
Course Number	ENGL206
College	ARHU - Arts and Humanities
Department	English
Submitted By	Thomas Colborn Moser Jr

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### CORE Information

CORE Fundamental Studies	No
CORE Distributive/Advanced Studies	(HA) - The History or Theory of the Arts
CORE Diversity	No

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### General Education Information

Fundamental Studies	None
Distributive Studies	Humanities

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Diversity None

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## Course Questions

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### General Questions

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**Please give a brief description of the course:**

In English 206: Shakespeare. Students will examine the ways Shakespeare thinks by reading, discussing, and writing about his plays and poems. The texts will be approached as thought experiments, as agnostic investigations into governance, family, sexuality, ethics, and language. The plays will be presented as dramatic essays affiliated with procedures common to Montaigne and Bacon. Students will learn to think critically about Shakespeare's, and their own, language. Students will discover ways his works put pressure on familiar words—like "mortality" and "truth"—and student in turn will become self-conscious about language in the plays and in their own accounts of them. Students will learn to think critically about doxa—about what Shakespeare's as well as our own cultures take for granted and about what common sense both enables and obscures. And students will explore Shakespeare's attitudes toward history, toward economic change and social mobility, and toward authority. Students will be encouraged to adopt the plays' fiercely uncompromising and unsentimental analytical postures.

**Please list any pre- or co-requisites for this course:**

None

**If there are pre- or co-requisites, please justify them with respect to their appropriateness for a General Education course:**

NA

**Please list any restrictions (e.g. majors only) placed on this course:**

May not receive credit for this course and for ENGL 205.

**What is the approximate course size (students/academic year)?**

400

**Please describe how student learning will be assessed (i.e. exams, homework, papers, group projects, etc.):**

Students will write one 5-page paper and one 7 page paper. Papers will be on assigned topics. Both papers must be written in accordance with the "Paper Instructions" posted on Blackboard as well as all instructions on the individual paper assignments

(also posted on Blackboard). Assignments will be available at least two weeks before each paper is due. There will be six take-at-home, open-book reading quizzes, each of which will be posted on Blackboard. Students may skip one of these quizzes, but must take five; if a student takes six, the five best grades will count. Discussion session assignments separate from lecture assignments will require you to formulate questions for discussion and to lead portions of discussions.

**Comments on the course that you feel may be useful for the review process. Also, if this is an existing course that you are planning on making changes to via VPAC (i.e. changing the title), please list those proposed changes here:**

This is a revised version of the long-standing ENGL 205, "Introduction to Shakespeare." We do not plan to run ENGL 205 once we begin running 206. We will be submitting a separate proposal to VPAC in order to change the name of the class to "Shakespeare" and the number to ENGL 206.

## Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are phrased as "*At the completion of this course, students will be able to...*". Answers are expected to demonstrate how the course will (1) give students the ability to meet the learning objective and (2) determine that students were successful in meeting the learning objective.

Learning outcomes in **this color** are **REQUIRED**

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### Humanities

*Courses in the humanities disciplines study history and the genres of human creativity, and they include courses in the practice of architecture and the visual, literary and performing and creative arts. Under "Humanities," students will find courses in cultures and literatures in any language, creative writing, art, architecture, art history, classics, history, linguistics, philosophy, and the performing arts (dance, music, theatre) and their histories.*

Must address **at least 4** of the following Learning Outcomes

**At the completion of this course, students will be able to...**

**...demonstrate familiarity and facility with fundamental terminology and concepts in a specific topical area in the humanities.**

Students will gain some mastery over unfamiliar and often dense, multivalent language. Students will develop an understanding of the bearing of generic categories (tragedy, comedy, romance, historical chronicle), of indeterminate

language (paronomasia, ambiguity, irony), and of historically-specific discourses (orientalism, patriarchalism, anti-papalism) on the ways Shakespeare and we construe reality. Quizzes will give students the opportunity to interpret assigned passages in light of such specific generic, linguistic, and discursive entailments.

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**...demonstrate understanding of the methods used by scholars in a specific field in the humanities.**

Students will test out a variety of methodological approaches to the plays and poetry. They will be asked to read from the inside outward (starting with the language on the page and moving out into the world in which early modern people, and we, live) and from the outside inward (starting with absolutism or the Reformation or the humoral body and applying such discourses to readings of the plays). Papers will require students to take positions of their own with regard to current debates and methodologies in Shakespeare studies (historicism, gender and queer studies, new formalism, eco-criticism, etc.).

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**...demonstrate critical thinking in the evaluation of sources and arguments in scholarly works, or in the evaluation of approaches and techniques in the visual, literary, or performing arts.**

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**...describe how language use is related to ways of thinking, cultural heritage, and cultural values.**

Students will recognize that the Shakespearean language on the page in front of them speaks no more clearly for itself than does the language of the U. S. Constitution, hence they will better appreciate the necessity, the responsibility, and the inescapability of interpretation. Discussion sessions will be devoted to student presentations and debates that demonstrate the indeterminacy of Shakespeare's language. Exercises will require students to work with the OED, interrogate modern editors' annotations, and comprehend the limitations of paraphrasing as opposed to analyzing. Discussion sessions will also be given over to exercises which reveal cultural/historical differences (e.g., minds and bodies in Shakespeare's plays were understood in ways that are foreign to us) as well as cultural/historical overlap (e.g., minds and bodies in Shakespeare's plays were understood in ways that pertain today).

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**...conduct research on a topic in the humanities using a variety of sources and technologies.**

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**...demonstrate the ability to formulate a thesis related to a specific topic in the humanities and to support the thesis with evidence and argumentation.**

Student papers will require students to articulate their own arguments in response to assigned topics and to argue their theses in logical, coherent, and effective prose. Students will grapple with the frustration that arises when they are asked to write persuasive prose in the absence of definitive proof. They will learn 1. How to deploy text-based evidence in order to back up their arguments; 2. How to make allowances for ambiguity; 3. How to make concessions; 4. How to shape their arguments.

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**...demonstrate understanding of the creative process and techniques used by practitioners in a specific field of the visual, literary, or performing arts.**

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