ENGLISH 403: SHAKESPEARE: THE EARLY WORKS
SYLLABUS & POLICIES
FALL 2016 | TuTh 2:00 PM – 3:15 PM | TAWES 1106
OFFICE: 2120B TAWES HALL | OFFICE HOUR: TUESDAY 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM & BY APPOINTMENT
INSTRUCTOR: KAREN NELSON, PHD | EMAIL: knelson@umd.edu | TELEPHONE: 301.405.3185

FINAL EXAM: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2016, 10:30 am-12:30 pm

REQUIRED TEXTS:
  Note: Pagination will be keyed to this text, but any edition is fine. You are also welcome to work from another version of the Complete Works or from single editions. The Folger modern editions are available online, free, here: http://www.folgerdigitaltexts.org/
- Russ McDonald, Bedford Companion to Shakespeare, second edition. ISBN 9780312248802
- ELMS course website: https://myelms.umd.edu/courses/1200440

SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Tu 30 Aug: Introductions. Course Policies; Setting the Stage; Shakespeare; Reading Strategies. Code of Academic Integrity: http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-100A.pdf


F 2 Sep, 3-5 pm OPTIONAL Reading Group for Venus & Adonis in 2123 Tawes Hall


Th 8 Sep. “Shakespeare’s Dramatic Language,” Bedford Companion 36-78

F 9 Sep, 3-5 pm OPTIONAL Reading Group for Titus Andronicus in 2123 Tawes Hall

Tu 13 Sep. Titus Andronicus, Oxford Shakespeare, 155-182

Th 15 Sep. “What is Your Text?” Bedford Companion, 194-218

F 16 Sep. RECITATION DUE on or before 1:00 pm.

Th 22 Sep. PAPER ONE DUE, 11:59 pm, on line in ELMS

F 23 Sep. OPTIONAL Reading Group for 1 Henry VI in 2123 Tawes Hall

Tu 27 Sep. 1 Henry VI, Oxford Shakespeare, 125-154
Th 29 Sep “Theater a la Mode: Shakespeare & the Kinds of Drama,” Bedford Companion 79-108

F 7 Oct, 3-5 pm OPTIONAL Reading Group for Comedy of Errors in 2123 Tawes Hall

Tu 4 Oct ARCHIVAL SHAKESPEARE in Special Collections. MEET IN 3210 Hornbake North (Library Side)

Tu 11 Oct Comedy of Errors, Oxford Shakespeare, 285-306


Tu 18 Oct PAPER TWO DUE, 11:59 pm, on line in ELMS.

F 21 Oct, 3-5 pm OPTIONAL Reading Group for Romeo & Juliet in 2123 Tawes Hall

Tu 25 Oct Romeo & Juliet, Oxford Shakespeare, 369-400

Th 27 Oct “Performances, Playhouses, and Players”

Th 3 Nov PAPER THREE DUE, 11:59 pm, on line in ELMS

F 4 Nov, 3-5 pm OPTIONAL Reading Group for Midsummer Night’s Dream in 2123 Tawes Hall

Tu 8 Nov Midsummer Night’s Dream, Oxford Shakespeare, 401-424

Th 10 Nov Critical Methodologies: Reading against cultural contexts: gender, class, politics, religion
Read ONE of these chapters (as assigned) and be ready to REPORT on key issues:
- “Men & Women: Gender, Family, Society” Bedford Companion 253-302
- “Politics & Religion: Early Modern Ideologies” Bedford Companion 303-352

Tu 15 Nov. RESEARCH METHODS with Patricia Herron. MEET IN McKeldin 6103

Tu 22 Nov View Folger production, Midsummer Night’s Dream, 2015, from WAPAVA archive

Th 24 Nov THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY. No class.

Tu 29 Nov PERFORMANCE RESPONSE DUE, 11:50 pm in ELMS

Tu 6 Dec Synthesis & Conclusions

Th 8 Dec Exam Review

Sa 17 Dec 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. FINAL EXAM.
ENGLISH 403: SHAKESPEARE: THE EARLY WORKS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Close study of selected works from the first half of Shakespeare’s career. Early histories, comedies, tragedies, narrative poetry, considering:

Cultural Contexts | Character | Dramatic Technique | Form |
Gene | Language | Poetics | Sources | Style | Theme

We will take special note of the ideas of the tragic and the comic as they organize and give meaning to experience and life. We will also be especially interested in the plays in their editorial, publication, theatrical, and performance contexts, in Shakespeare’s time and in our own.

Methods

This course is writing-intensive and discussion-based, with students participating actively. I foster discussion with in-class writing and small group assignments. In addition, students will focus their attention, using a variety of analytical tools, on assigned portions of Venus and Adonis to develop an on-line edition and archive.

Goals

• Increase your knowledge and understanding of some of Shakespeare’s early works
• Hone your abilities as a writer and your skills in textual analysis
• Expand your awareness of some of the current and historical critical conversations in the field of Shakespeare studies
• Develop your critical voice, help you value it and the voices of others in the class and in the discipline

Requirements and Grades

Grades will be based on:

• Final Project: contribution to an on-line reader’s guide (includes a second conference, 15% in sum)
• Final examination (10%).
• Participation (discussion and in-class assignments, 20% in sum)
• Recitation, Performance Response, Report (10% in sum)
• Quizzes (15%)
• Papers. 3: Site, Cite, Sight. (3–4 pp. or 750-1000 words apiece, 10% each)
• Special Collections assignment (5%)

Additional information about these assignments is included in this document, below, and is available on ELMS.

University policies and resources concerning academic integrity, code of student conduct, sexual misconduct, discrimination, diversity, accessibility, attendance, absences, missed assignments, student rights, official UMD communications, mid-term grades, grade complaints, copyright, final exams, and course evaluations are available here: http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html

Note that attendance will radically affect the class participation grade. You will be quizzed at the beginning or end of each class period. Most classes also include a graded activity or in-class assignment. Students with more than three unexcused absences will be unable to earn an A in participation, and since participation and quizzes cannot be made up, absences will impact those grades as well. Course preparation outside of class should
average two to three hours of study for every hour in class. Regular attendance and participation in class are the best ways to grapple with the readings under consideration in this course.

**Academic Integrity:** [http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-100A.pdf](http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-100A.pdf)

The UMD Honor Code prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit for two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. Do your own work. Cite the sources for any work not your own. I will report allegations of academic dishonesty directly to the Student Honor Council, [www.shc.umd.edu](http://www.shc.umd.edu).

If you are having trouble with the course materials or the workload, come talk with me or send email as soon as you recognize the problem. If an assignment overwhelms you, we need to develop a plan of action together. Avoidance will cause different sorts of complications for you. It is my job to help you with academic issues or concerns; I can also direct you to myriad resources on campus.

**ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION**

**PAPERS, PROJECTS & REPORTS | PAPERS 1, 2, AND 3 | PERFORMANCE RESPONSE | QUIZZES | READINGS RECIATION | REPORT | FINAL PROJECT | FINAL EXAMINATION**

**Papers, Projects, and Reports:** Typed, double-spaced, with 1” margins, in a “standard” 12-point font (Arial, Calibri, Cambria, Helvetica, Times, or the like). Number the pages. Include the title on the first page. Your name should not appear in the body text or as part of the page header.

I evaluate papers and reports using these criteria:

- **Thesis and exigence:** You communicate an argument, and you show how your reading helps us understand this text. 20%
- **Proof:** You use the best details from the text and from your research to support your argument. You do NOT summarize the plot; instead, you provide the precise elements from the text that ensure that your readers agree with your assessment of the way this text is working. You do not allow critics’ assertions to overwhelm your own thesis; instead, you synthesize and select from their conversations and place your own reading within the context of theirs. 20%
- **Analysis:** You explain to your reader how these details from the text and from critical debates illuminate your own thesis and thereby develop your argument. 20%
- **Argument and organization:** You structure your ideas into a cohesive, logical explanation of the topic. You almost certainly cannot rely upon the structure of one paragraph of introduction, three explanatory paragraphs, and one concluding paragraph. You also probably cannot offer a play-by-play summary of the text. Instead, think of the argument you are making about this text. What aspects of this text helped you understand this text in this fashion? How might someone who reads the text differently than you do counter your argument? How might you persuade that person to agree with you? 20%
- **Stylistics:** You use language effectively and grammatically. You proofread your paper. You use punctuation correctly. Your title appears on the first page of your paper, your pages are numbered, and your name appears nowhere in the text. You cite your sources. You include a bibliography or works cited page. You apply the standards from a style guide consistently. (MLA is the department standard. My own expertise resides in Chicago. Choose one of those two and use it. If you haven’t worked yet with a style guide and need a lot of assistance from me, choose Chicago, because I’ll be more readily able to help.) 20%
Paper One, Due 22 September at 11:59 pm in ELMS. 3-4 pp (750-1000 words). Site. Zoom in, and read the passage you’ve been assigned in *Venus & Adonis* with care. What is going on here? Offer a close reading that perhaps engages the *Oxford English Dictionary* definition of two or three words, or considers characterization at this moment, or engages with the details at work here. Your line of argument will work something like this: “This passage is crucial for our understanding of *Venus & Adonis* because…” OR, “This concept of [fill in], explicated in this passage, is crucial to an understanding of *Venus & Adonis* because [fill in]”

Paper Two, Due 18 October at 11:59 pm in ELMS. 3-4 pp (750-1000 words). Cite. What’s available to you from the archives? Again, focus on your passage of *Venus & Adonis*, but this time, look at the versions available in online archives such as the Folger, the British Library, the Bodleian the Huntington, the Newberry, and Early English Books On Line. Are there variations? Do these seem to have any significance? Do they change the way you think about the passage? Select two or three variants to discuss, posit a hypothesis, and explain (using examples from your research in these archives) why you now think about the text the way you do, or how these versions complicate your understanding of the text.

Paper Three, Due 3 November at 11:59 pm in ELMS. 3-4 pp (750-1000 words). Sight. Return once more to your assigned passage of *Venus & Adonis*, and think about the cues Shakespeare offers to a reader’s senses. What aspect of this passage especially activate your imagination? How? Why? For example, does he offer descriptive words that help you see a person, place, or situation? Does he evoke something that engages your sense of smell or taste? Is there a sound scape that aligns? Do the rhythms of the passage help you hear the beat underlying the action? Make an argument that assesses the impact of one of these aspects of your passage on your reading of the poem as a whole.

Performance Response, due November 29 by 11:59 pm. Electronic submission. View a Shakespeare performance (either live, or available from the Washington Area Performing Arts Video Archive, available in the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library in the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center), and write a one-to-two page, double-spaced, response, using the criteria and suggestions available in the online course space.

Quizzes: Will happen at the beginning of class each time we begin a play or have reading assigned, and will happen at the end of class on other days. Will primarily be drawn from study questions available on line, although will also include text identification, explication exercises, and a quick question to help synthesize work in class. With the study questions and your reading more generally, you may decide to generate a reading “notebook.” It may be a password-protected blog, a Word or Google document, or a more traditional written notebook. You are welcome to use these notes in the quizzes, with one caveat: they must be in printed form as you refer to them. You cannot have access to the internet during quizzes.

Readings: Complete assigned plays or readings from the Bedford *Companion to Shakespeare* before the class day for which the quiz is listed. You are responsible for the whole play on the first day and may need to re-read.

Study questions will be available on ELMS.

Recitations. Due by September 16 at 1:00 pm. During your recitation appointment, you will recite 14 lines (or the equivalent) of a portion of Shakespeare’s text of your choosing. You may select something we are reading in class, but you need not. If you want to learn a sonnet, for example, that would fulfill this assignment. You will need to be able to interpret the text as well as recite it, and I will ask why you’ve chosen the text with which you are working. You may also use this appointment to discuss ideas for your first paper.
Report. Due for class on November 10. You will be assigned a chapter from the Bedford Companion for which you and some of your classmates will be solely responsible; other students will prepare other chapters. You can work singly or in groups to determine a key critical voice, approach, or set of issues from your chapter. You might write a summary or prepare talking points to distribute in class. Your goal is to help those not reading the chapter some of the ways they might engage with this aspect of Shakespeare studies, and especially how aspects of the materials you encounter might help others interpret Midsummer Night’s Dream.

Final Project. Contribution to on-line edition of Venus & Adonis. Final version, equivalent to 7-10 pp. of formal writing or 2,000-3,000 words excluding works cited, due on ELMS at 11:59 pm December 8.

Learning Goals: For an assigned portion of Venus & Adonis, which we will revisit throughout the semester, you will need to:

- Identify genre
- Attend to form
- Consider meaning
- Analyze style and language
- Assess aspects of historical significance
- Scrutinize the text’s strategies of representation
- Explicate perspective or perspectives operating within the text

For this final project, you will also need to:

- Conduct research
- Identify productive and legitimate sources
- Show effective use of research tools
- Distinguish your own argument from those made by other scholars
- Engage primary sources with critical understanding

Here, you will offer a sustained argument about the poem. You will need to grapple with secondary sources. You might build upon discoveries you’ve made in earlier papers, or you might broaden your scope or head in another direction entirely.

Final Exam: Saturday, December 17, 2016, 10:30 am-12:30 pm. 10%

A standard in-class examination. You can expect to see identification, short answer, and two essays. You will have choices. We may generate some of the questions together in the review session, and/or I may pull un-used questions from on-line study guides.

Draft dated 25 August 2016

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RESEARCH RESOURCES: [Partial list. More will be on ELMS]

- Our wonderful librarians at UMD have developed a number of finding aids to use with our collections. These include:
  - British and US Primary Sources: [http://lib.guides.umd.edu/primary_sources](http://lib.guides.umd.edu/primary_sources)
  - English and American Literature: [http://lib.guides.umd.edu/literature](http://lib.guides.umd.edu/literature)
  - William Shakespeare: [http://lib.guides.umd.edu/williamshakespeare](http://lib.guides.umd.edu/williamshakespeare)

- ResearchPort at the University of Maryland Libraries: See especially
  - ArtStor
  - Early English Books On Line
  - Early English Prose Fiction (LION)
  - English Drama (1280-1915) (LION)
  - Films on Demand Digital Educational Video
  - Iter: Gateway to the Middle Ages & Renaissance
  - Oxford English Dictionary
  - Shakespeare Quarto Archive
  - WorldCat (FirstSearch)
  - Women Writers Online

- *Understanding Shakespeare*, on JSTOR in partnership with the Folger Shakespeare Library [https://labs.jstor.org/shakespeare/](https://labs.jstor.org/shakespeare/)

- [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)
  - Huge online archive of books and more. But, CLUNKY to find things. For *Calendar of State Papers*, choose a text search, and then use key words CALENDAR STATE PAPERS DOMESTIC and the ruler (ie: ELIZABETH I or JAMES I) to access the volumes. There are multiple volumes for a reign, and they are not always labeled as fully as they might be....

- Folger Shakespeare Library
  - Digital Image Collection: [http://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/FOLGERCM1~6~6](http://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/FOLGERCM1~6~6)
    - An amazing digitization project. Not comprehensive of the Folger Shakespeare Library holdings, but provides access to tens of thousands of high resolution images from their collection, including manuscripts, art, and early English books.
  - Folgerpedia, the Folger Shakespeare Library's collaboratively edited encyclopedia of all things "Folger" [http://folgerpedia.folger.edu/Main_Page](http://folgerpedia.folger.edu/Main_Page)
  - Hamnet, the online catalog for the Folger collection. [http://hamnet.folger.edu/](http://hamnet.folger.edu/)

- Bodleian Library [http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley](http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley)
- Bibliothèque Nationale de Francais [http://www.bnf.fr/fr/acc/x.accueil.html](http://www.bnf.fr/fr/acc/x.accueil.html)
- Washington Area Performing Arts Archive, with resources available to view in the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library. [http://www.wapava.org/](http://www.wapava.org/)