

# **A Survey of Shakespeare**

**Spring 2011**

**LLSL 3420**

**MW 12-1: 40**

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## **SYLLABUS**

**Course Description** This in-depth look at Shakespeare studies him in a mode mindful of the context of literary history and through the prism of the different ways he has been admired, criticized, and appropriated by subsequent writers and readers. We look at each of Shakespeare's major genres: history play (*Richard II*), comedy (*As You Like It*), problem play (*Measure for Measure*), tragedy (*Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*), and romance (*The Winter's Tale*). We also read several of his incomparable sonnets and his enigmatic poem "The Phoenix and Turtle." In addition, we read prominent critics such as Frank Kermode and Marjorie Garber who have pivotally changed what Shakespeare's plays mean for us and who provide crucial background. We look especially at how Shakespeare handles the issue of genre: how does he innovate beyond the Greeks, writing plays that cannot be pigeonholed as tragedy or comedy? How is Shakespearean tragedy and comedy different from

the ancient understanding of those genres and from our own?  
What do Shakespeare's plays reveal about Shakespeare,  
about us, and about our cultural inheritance?

**Course Objectives 1)** To gain an understanding of Shakespeare's importance in the literary history of the English language and of world intellectual culture.

**2)** To be able to closely read his plays, with particular attention to the rhetoric and imagery of the plays' language.

**3)** To understand the interaction of characters and the philosophical idea of a 'character' as they play out in Shakespeare.

**4)** To understand the plays both as textual and theatrical phenomena.

**5)** To understand the genres in which Shakespeare worked and how they affect or embody his vision.

**6)** To write an expository prose capable of analytically responding to the plays.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Grade Breakdown**

**10%** - participation

**30%** - paper (seven pages) How (if you think he does) does Richard II fail as a king? If his fall is not his fault, whose is it? What does Shakespeare want us to think of Richard II?

**30%** - Second paper (six pages) Is the Forest or Arden in *As You Like It* a sustainable paradigm that can be a model for a better society, or is it a pastoral pipe dream to be put away when we return to serious life? *As You Like It* offers evidence for both positions; choose one and defend it.

**20%** - Third paper—six pages. What is more important, Hamlet the character or *Hamlet* the play? This is a major fault-line between the nineteenth and the mid-twentieth century consensuses, and in exploring this we will not only explore the intricacies of Shakespeare's most complicated plays but the various ways in which he has been and can be regarded.

10%--fourth paper-two pages—Did Hermione 'really' turn into a statue, or is it just a trick played by Paulina? How does that make a difference as to how we evaluate the 'happy ending' of the play.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

Shakespeare, *Richard II*. Arden. 978-1903436332

Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Arden, ISBN-13 978-1904271222

Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*. Arden, 9781903436912

Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*. Arden. 978-1903436349

Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure* Signet Classic, 045152715

Shakespeare, *Hamlet* Penguin, 978-0-14-101307-7

Marjorie Garber, *Shakespeare After All*. Anchor. ISBN 978-0-375-42190-7.

Frank Kermode, *The Age of Shakespeare*. Modern Library. 978-067964244A

## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Monday January 24 Introduction

Wednesday January 26 Kermode, pp. 1-49, Garber, 3-42.

Monday January 21 *Richard II*, Act I-II

Wednesday February 2 *Richard II*, Act III

Monday February 7 *Richard II*, Acts IV-V; Garber, 238-269.

Wednesday, February 9. *Romeo and Juliet* Act 1

Monday February 14 *Romeo and Juliet* Acts II, III. Paper 1 due.

Wednesday February 16 *Romeo and Juliet* Acts IV-V, Garber, 409-436.

Monday February 21 President's Day—no class

Wednesday, February 23 *As You Like It*, Act I

Monday, February 28 *As You Like it*, Act III

Wednesday March 2 *As You Like It*, Acts III-IV=

Monday March 7 *As You Like It*, Act V. Garber, 437-465.

Wednesday March 9 Kermode 49 to 174. Paper 2 due.

March 14, 16 No class, spring break

Monday March 21 *Hamlet* Act 1

Wednesday March 23 *Hamlet* act II

Monday March 28 *Hamlet Act III*

Wednesday March 30 *Hamlet Act III* continued

Monday April 4 *Hamlet Act IV*

Wednesday April 6 *Hamlet Act V*

Monday April 11 *Measure for Measure Act 1* Paper 3 due.

Wednesday April 13 *Measure for Measure Act II-III*

Monday April 18 *Measure for Measure Acts IV-V*

Wednesday April 20 *Macbeth Acts I-II*

Monday April 25 *Macbeth acts III-V*

Wednesday April 27 *The Winter's Tale Acts I-II*

Monday May 2 *The Winter's Tale Acts III-IV*. Kermode 175-196.

Wednesday May 4 *The Winter's Tale Act V*. Garber 827-851.

Monday May 9 Selected sonnets (to be copied by instructor)

Wednesday May 11 *The Phoenix And Turtle* (to be copied by instructor). Paper 4 due.

## **New School Policies**

**Plagiarism** The New School adheres to a Zero Tolerance Policy regarding plagiarism. Plagiarism will result in an F in the course at the discretion of the instructor and in accordance with the University's policy on plagiarism (see Student Handbook). Students should purchase *A Writer's Reference* by Diana Hacker, available at most book stores, for information on proper citation format.

**Incompletes** The grade of Incomplete "I" is not assigned automatically. It will be assigned only at the request of the student and only at the discretion of the instructor. Students who have not completed assigned coursework and have not requested Incompletes should either fail the course or receive a grade of WF. Incomplete grades cannot be given for Bachelor's students who are graduating seniors. The maximum time allowed for the completion of the work and removal of the "I" will be set by the instructor but may be for no later than the 7th week of the following semester for

undergraduates and one year after the end of the class for graduate students. The instructor may set earlier deadlines.

Terms of the Incomplete should be agreed upon before the last class session. The grade of “I” is due and must be submitted at the same time as all other grades—one week after the last class session. An Incomplete for an undergraduate that is not changed to a grade through a Change of Grade form by the 7th week of the following semester will automatically be converted to a failing grade of a “WF” by the University Registrar’s Office. The WF is factored into the student’s GPA the same way a grade of F would be factored in.

Change of Grade forms can be printed from MyNewSchool and faxed to the Dean’s Office at 212.229.6814. If you have any questions about the policy please contact Chrissy Roden in the Dean’s Office at 212.229.5615 or at [rodenc@newschool.edu](mailto:rodenc@newschool.edu).

**Students with Disabilities** In keeping with the University's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations should contact the office of Student Disability Services. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to meet with Jason Luchs in the office of Student Disability Services, who will conduct an intake, and if appropriate, provide an academic accommodation notification letter. Mr. Luchs's office is located at 79 5th

Avenue on the 5th floor. His direct line is 212.229.5626 x3135. You may also access more information through the University's web site.