

## English 403: Shakespeare, The Early Works

Tuesdays/Thursdays 3:30-4:45 pm, Tawes Hall 0205

**Professor:** Scott Trudell  
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**Office hours:** Tuesdays 5-6pm, Thursdays 10-11am, and by appointment  
Tawes Hall 3243

This is a course on the early career of William Shakespeare. We will attend closely to language and meter, spending a substantial section of the course on Shakespeare's sonnets and his narrative poem *Venus and Adonis*. We will also think carefully about the performative dimensions of Shakespeare's work, tracking the intersection between written and theatrical traditions in comedies, histories and tragedies. Throughout the course, we will ask how and why embodied performance becomes so prominent and dynamic a vehicle for Shakespeare's art, how the theater engages with its historical and political moment, and what ideas, themes, philosophies and emotions emerge in Shakespeare's work as he rises to prominence during the 1590s.

This course requires immersing yourself in Shakespeare in a new way. Many of you will know Shakespeare from other courses and contexts: that is not enough. Plan to draw connections between Shakespeare and contemporary culture, to reimagine his work in performance, and to read closely, with fresh eyes.

### Books:

- William Shakespeare. *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare*. Ed. Stephen Orgel and A. R. Braunmuller. Penguin, 2002. ISBN: 9780141000589.

I suggest purchasing the Pelican edition of the complete works, since you will likely consult passages from plays not on the syllabus, and we will sometimes flip back to texts from earlier in the semester. *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare* is available cheaply online and good to own.

If you anticipate a problem lugging around this large book, you may use the Pelican editions of the individual texts we will be reading, edited by Orgel and Braunmiller. Careful to purchase the recent Pelican editions only (this can be confusing: we will not be using the previous editions by Alfred Harbage, nor the "new Penguin Shakespeare"):

- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ed. McDonald, ISBN: 978-0140714555
- *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. Holland, ISBN: 0786508515
- *The Merchant of Venice*, ed. Braunmuller, ISBN: 978-0140714623
- *Richard III*, ed. Holland, ISBN: 978-0140714838
- *Henry IV, Part 1*, ed. McEachern, ISBN: 978-0140714562
- *Titus Andronicus*, ed. McDonald, ISBN: 978-0140714913
- *The Sonnets*, ed. Hollander, ISBN: 978-0140714531
- *The Narrative Poems*, ed. Crewe, ISBN: 978-0140714814
- *Hamlet*, ed. Braunmuller, ISBN: 978-0140714545

Alternatively, you may use another edition of the complete works if you already own one (such as the Riverside or the Norton). It is possible to get by with recent Oxford, Signet, Cambridge, Folger, Norton or Arden editions of individual texts - but remember that, in addition to the plays on the syllabus, you will need editions of the sonnets as well as Venus and Adonis. Check all other editions with me in advance: online editions and some printed editions are not acceptable.

Check [www.addall.com](http://www.addall.com) and [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) for used copies.

I have scanned all additional readings and made them available for download as pdfs on our ELMS course site. Hard copies are necessary: you are required to download them, print them and bring them to class. **Students who forget to bring hard copies of all required readings to class will gain no participation credit for the day.**

#### **Course requirements:**

- Active participation in class discussion (10%)
- Reading quizzes and sonnet memorization (10%)
- Weekly blog posts and comments (15%)
- First paper, 4-5 pages (15%)
- Second paper, 8-9 pages (30%)
- Final exam (20%)

#### **Policies**

- It is imperative that you come to each class. You are unlikely to succeed in this course if you do not have a strong attendance record.
- Reading quizzes begin on time at the beginning of class, and they cannot be made up.
- If you have an unavoidable absence, you are required to post a reaction to that day's readings on the blog. This is in addition to your weekly required blog posting (it does not count as your post for the week). Make the post within three days of each missed class and title it "Make-up post for [date]."
- You are responsible for obtaining notes if you miss class. Find a partner and exchange contact information early in the semester.
- Your participation grade is not based on the number of times that you comment during class. It is based on your sustained engagement in our discussions throughout the semester. Your participation grade improves (for example) when you are attentive to your peers, when you ask a thoughtful question, when you suggest a new topic and when you try out a new idea. It's okay to make mistakes and change your mind: what that tells me is that you are processing new ideas and pushing yourself.
- Turn off phones and computers completely (not to vibrate or silent) and leave them in your bag.
- You are responsible for following the university code on academic honesty. If I detect plagiarism, I will report it to the Honor Council, and you will be subject to receiving an "XF" for the

course, with the notation on your transcript, "Failure due to academic dishonesty." For information on plagiarism, visit: <http://www.lib.umd.edu/guides/citing.html>

Bookmark our course blog and sign up for email alerts:

[english403spring13.wordpress.com](http://english403spring13.wordpress.com)

You are required to contribute to the blog at least once per week. Vary your entries so that some are posts and some are comments. Each week's contribution should add up to one substantial post, or a few shorter comments.

I encourage you to be informal and creative. Try posting further thoughts about something that came up during class discussion. Or, bring up a passage that we didn't discuss in class. Or, try out an idea you have been mulling over in a paper. Experiment with pairing texts on the syllabus with texts from other courses, literature of other periods, or media from contemporary culture. For example, you might link to a clip on YouTube that helps to illuminate something at stake in an early modern play. Make sure to explain how your pairing helps us understand the course text in a new way.

I will occasionally provide blog prompts, but in general I would like you to generate the discussion. Any topic that relates to the issues of the course is welcome. Your grade will depend upon how thoughtfully you respond to your classmates as well as the quality of your own posts.

Please complete your contribution **by midnight Wednesday each week**. Make sure to read the blog regularly and respond to your peers. To make a post, it is best to use the "Write a new post" link, in the "Get to work" column on the right (using the drop-down menu sometimes leads to technical problems).

You will be required to memorize a sonnet of your choice. You will write down your sonnet from memory halfway through the semester, and again (the same sonnet) in the final weeks of class.

Reading quizzes will be unannounced, but the only preparation necessary is to complete the assigned reading for each class. Failing quizzes after having done the reading is a warning sign of comprehension problems and/or a warning sign that you have not read closely enough. Those of you who are new to Shakespeare: it is normal to have comprehension trouble right away, and I emphasize improvement when I tabulate your final reading quiz grades. If you are having comprehension trouble, email me to make an appointment or drop into my office hours.

The final exam will take the form of five short-essay questions, each asking you to pair two texts on the syllabus. The exam touches on many texts and aims to reward those who have read attentively engaged actively throughout the course. Halfway through the semester I will distribute a sample exam so that you are able to practice your responses on the blog and on your own. You will be allowed to use your books and your marginal

notes (though not notebooks or loose sheets of paper) on the exam - so it will help to annotate passages that we discuss in class.

If you have a disability that requires accommodation, please let me know during the first two weeks of class.

I encourage you to let me know as soon as possible about personal hardships that affect your course performance, including issues that have been a problem in previous semesters. I will help you strategize about how to succeed in this course.

Pay close attention to the due dates on the syllabus: most of your writing assignments have deadlines outside of class, in electronic form.

Classes on March 28 and April 4 will be rescheduled: see the calendar below.

**Thursday, January 24**

- Introduction
- Christopher Marlowe, Prologue to *Tamburlaine the Great, Part I*

**Tuesday, January 29**

- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Act 1-2

**Wednesday, January 30**

- Blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, January 31**

- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Acts 3-4

**Tuesday, February 5**

- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Act 5
- Robert Watson, "The Ecology of Self in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*" (download)

**Wednesday, February 6**

- Blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, February 7**

- *Romeo and Juliet*: Acts 1-2

**Tuesday, February 12**

- *Romeo and Juliet*: Act 3
- James Shapiro, from *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare* (download)

**Wednesday, February 13**

- Blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, February 14**

- *Romeo and Juliet*: Acts 4-5
- Peter Holland, Introduction to *Romeo and Juliet*, in the Pelican edition

**Tuesday, February 19**

- Sonnets 1, 12, 15, 18, 20, 29, 31
- Stephen Orgel, "Mr. Who He?" (download)

**Wednesday, February 20**

- Blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, February 21**

- Philip Sidney: *Astrophel and Stella*, Sonnets 1 and 45 (download)
- Edmund Spenser: *Amoretti*, Sonnets 1 and 75 (download)
- Shakespeare: Sonnets 33, 35, 42, 55, 60

**\_\_\_\_\_, February \_\_\_\_ (TBD the week of the 25th)**

- Rescheduled class: revision workshop
- Draft of first paper due: minimum 3-4 pages uploaded to ELMS **by 5pm the day before the rescheduled meeting**. Bring a hard copy to class.

**Tuesday, February 26**

- Sonnets 71, 73, 86, 94, 106, 107, 127, 128
- John Hollander, Introduction to the Sonnets, in the Pelican edition

**Wednesday, February 27**

- Blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, February 28**

- Decide which sonnet you will memorize
- Sonnets 129, 130, 136, 138, 144, 147, 152

**Tuesday, March 5**

- Shakespeare: *Venus and Adonis* (read the whole poem by this date)
- Ovid, from *Metamorphoses* (download)

**Wednesday, March 6**

- Blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, March 7**

- Shakespeare: *Venus and Adonis* (continued)
- Coppélia Kahn, "Self and Eros in *Venus and Adonis*" (download)

**Friday, March 8**

- First paper due: **upload to ELMS by 5pm**

**Tuesday, March 12**

- **Sonnet memorization due**
- *Titus Andronicus*, Acts 1-3

**Wednesday, March 13**

- Blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, March 14**

- *Titus Andronicus*, Acts 4-5

**SPRING BREAK!**

**Tuesday, March 26**

- *Richard III*: Acts 1-2

**Wednesday, March 27**

- Blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, March 28**

- Class rescheduled: work on final papers

**Tuesday, April 2**

- *Richard III*: Acts 3-5
- Peter Holland, Introduction to *Richard III*, in the Pelican edition
- Review of research methods

**Wednesday, April 3**

- Blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, April 4**

- Class rescheduled: work on final papers

**Tuesday, April 9**

- *Henry IV, Part 1*: Acts 1-2

**Wednesday, April 10**

- Blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, April 11**

- *Henry IV, Part 1*: Act 3-4
- Annotated bibliography **hard copy due in class**

**Tuesday, April 16**

- *Henry IV, Part 1*: Act 5
- Brian Walsh, "'By Shrewsbury Clock': The Time of Day and the Death of Hotspur in *1 Henry IV*" (download)

**Wednesday, April 17**

- Blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, April 18**

- *The Merchant of Venice*: Acts 1-2

**Monday, April 22**

- Draft of final paper due: **minimum 6-7 pages uploaded to ELMS by 5pm**

**Tuesday, April 23**

- Revision workshop: **bring a hard copy of your draft to class**

**Wednesday, April 24**

- Blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, April 25**

- *The Merchant of Venice*: Acts 3-4

**Tuesday, April 30**

- *The Merchant of Venice*: Act 5
- Amanda Bailey, "Shylock and the Slaves: Owing and Owing in *The Merchant of Venice*" (download)

**Wednesday, May 1**

- Final paper due: **upload to ELMS by midnight**
- No blog post due this week

**Thursday, May 2**

- *Hamlet*, Act 1

**Tuesday, May 7**

- **Sonnet memorization (second round)**
- *Hamlet*, Acts 2-3

**Wednesday, May 8**

- Final blog post due by midnight

**Thursday, May 9**

- Course evaluations: meet in Tawes 0232
- *Hamlet*, Acts 4-5

**\_\_\_\_\_, May \_\_\_\_ (TBD)**

- Rescheduled class: review session

**Friday, May 17, 10:30-12:30pm, in our normal classroom**

- Final exam: bring all required texts