**Shakespeare on Stage (THEA 402)**

Fall 2015

Tue/Thur 9:45-11:35 B310

Instructor: Dr. Kristi Good Email: [good@lycoming.edu](mailto:good@lycoming.edu)

Office Hours: Tue/Thur 12:00-1:30 AC C108 (or by appointment)

MOODLE KEY: “Shakespeare”

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

* *The Norton Shakespeare*, 2nd Edition, by Stephen Greenblatt, et al., W. W. Norton & Company (2008)
* *Shakespeare by Stages: A Historical Introduction*, by Arthur F. Kinney, Wiley-Blackwell (2003)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will acquaint you with William Shakespeare the dramatist and a sampling of his plays. In order to understand Shakespeare and his plays as products of the environment in which they were written, we will study the culture of England during Shakespeare’s era as well as the conventions of his theatre. We will examine several of Shakespeare’s plays primarily as blueprints for performance, with emphasis on interpretation of the literature as it might be realized in production. We will explore character development and Shakespeare’s language from the point of view of the actor; we will study his dialogue as the expression of characters’ interaction with the world around them. We will watch video excerpts of both film and stage productions in order to experience the scripts realized in performance and to critique how a Shakespearean play moves “from page to stage.” We will focus our attention on four plays in their entirety, representing each of the genres of history, comedy, tragedy, and romance.

**COURSE GOALS**

* At the conclusion of the course, each student will be able to:
* recognize the importance of Shakespeare in his native historical context.
* recognize the importance of Shakespeare in a contemporary context.
* make informed, critical decisions and judgments both academically and practically on the staging of Shakespeare from a variety of perspectives.

This course partially fulfills the following Departmental Learning Goals for Theatre:

* Understanding of the distinctive roles performed by each of the artists who contribute to the creation of a theatrical production: playwright, actor, director, scene designer, lighting designer, costume designer, makeup designer, and sound designer.
* Ability to analyze and evaluate dramatic texts, both as literature and as blueprints for production, from a variety of perspectives: performance, directorial, design, and technical.
* Ability to analyze and evaluate theatrical productions from a variety of perspectives: performance, directorial, design, and technical.
* Ability to create and deliver a formal presentation about some aspect of theatre theory and/or practice.
* Understanding of the historical development of Western theatre and drama from Ancient Greece to the present and their relationship to the distinctive social, political, and cultural aspects of each era.
* Understanding the diversity of global cultures through the focus of theatre and drama.
* Fundamental understanding of the actor’s creative process and the ability to apply those skills in performance.
* Ability to create and deliver a formal presentation about some aspect of theatre theory and/or practice.
* Comprehension of specific techniques required by various acting styles and the ability to apply those skills to create different acting styles, including realism, classical, and Shakespearean.
* Understanding of the director’s creative process and the ability to apply those skills in the creation of a theatrical production.
* Understanding of the historical development of Western scene, lighting, and costume design and the ability to apply design aesthetics to particular theatrical productions.
* Refinement of effective speaking, writing, and critical thinking skills.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Professional Conduct**

Students are expected to arrive at class on time and prepared for the day’s activities. Students should show respect to fellow students and the instructor by refraining from sleeping, chatting, attending class under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, engaging with electronic devices for non-class purposes, or any other disruptive behavior.

**Participation**

Exemplary participation begins with appropriate preparation. Students should prepare for class by reading and completing assignments as per the day-to-day schedule while also preparing questions and comments on the material. Bring your books and plays to class with you so you can reference them. Full participation marks each day will be given according to attendance, alertness, and active participation in discussion. Yes, I will know if you are late or absent. Yes, I can see when you nod off in class or are getting Snapchats from your friends. Yes, I will deduct points if I can’t recognize the sound of your voice by the end of the semester.

**Attendance Policy**

Theatre is an active art. You cannot participate if you are not present.

* According to the Theatre Department policy, class attendance is mandatory; there are no make-up assignments. Much of the information discussed in class is intended to complement your textbook; therefore, you can only learn about it by being present in class.
* Theatre Department policy allows you to accumulate two absences. Your final course grade will be lowered one increment for every absence thereafter (e.g., an A will lower to an A- if you accumulate a total of four absences during the semester, etc.).
* You are expected to arrive to class on time and ready to work. If the door is closed, the instructor has finished taking attendance, and you are late! Because tardiness is disrespectful and disruptive to everyone in the room, every three tardies (or leaving early) equals one absence.

\*Special accommodations can be made for religious observations and official college obligations if advance notice is given to me in writing via email. In extreme cases, such as ER visits or bereavement, please get in touch with me as soon as possible so I am aware of the situation.

**Due Dates**

Your training here is for the professional world, and there are consequences in the professional world when you do not meet your deadlines (you can lose money for your project, you can be demoted, you can even be FIRED). Whether the assignment is due via Moodle or hard copy in class, no late submissions will be accepted. Quizzes, classwork, and assignments missed due to lateness or absence may only be made up in cases of extreme emergency or if alternate arrangements have been made with the instructor prior to the assigned due date.

**Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to follow the College’s Honor Code and do their own work. While some assignments require collaboration, the majority of the work required in this course—exams, quizzes, and writing assignments—must be completed by each student independently, without unauthorized assistance of any kind. See the student handbook for the college’s policies regarding plagiarism.

\*If you find yourself in a situation where you are tempted to cheat, plagiarize, or engage in other types of misconduct, please remember that I am much happier to help you through your difficulties than to fail you or be responsible for your expulsion from the college.

**Writing Skills**

The development of effective writing skills is an essential component of any college education, regardless of the student’s major or the course subject matter. Proper grammar, correct spelling, and careful proofreading are expected on all written assignments. Both the form and content of writing assignments will be considered in grading. Peer editing, rough drafts, consultation with writing tutors and/or re-writes of written assignments may be required at the instructor’s discretion.

**FAQs**

**What if I require special accommodation in the course?**

Lycoming College provides academic support for students who officially disclose diagnosed learning, physical, and psychological disabilities. If you have a diagnosed disability and would like to seek accommodations, please contact Jilliane Bolt-Michewicz, Assistant Dean of Academic Services/Director of the Academic Resource Center. Dean Bolt-Michewicz will help you arrange for appropriate academic accommodations. She can be reached by calling (570) 321-4050, emailing [michewicz@lycoming.edu](mailto:michewicz@lycoming.edu), or visiting her office (Academic Resource Center, 3rd Floor of Snowden Library). Please contact your instructor during the first week of class to discuss accommodations to help you succeed in the course.

\*If you require different assignment deadlines from the ones noted in the syllabus, you are responsible for arranging new dates with the instructor and will be held to the same consequences as other students if those new deadlines are not met.

**When is the best time to talk to you?**

You can chat with me before or after class or during my office hours regarding quick questions or information. If you have any concerns that require a more private setting or more time to discuss, please email me or see me before/after class to set up a time to meet. Also, I am always happy to chat via email if you feel more comfortable using that medium.

**How often do you check your email?**

I check my email fairly often, but do not always have time to respond right away. I promise to respond to your email within 24 hours, but I do my best to respond on the same day I receive it (especially if I perceive it to be an urgent matter). Chances of getting an immediate response are much less likely if you email me between 10pm—7am or on a weekend.

**What’s my grade?**

You can access your grade at any time on Moodle and should check it frequently. This is the best way to keep from being surprised at the end of the semester. If you check your grade regularly, you will be more likely to catch any potential mistakes that I make when entering point values. If you notice something amiss, tell me! If you wait until the end of the semester, it is very unlikely that either of us still has the original assignment for reference, and I will have to rely on the current entry to be fair to everyone. Points deducted for absences/tardies will not be subtracted until the end of the semester. Check in with me at any time to see how many absences/tardies you have.

**Do you have any formatting requirements for papers?**

Yes. All papers must be double-spaced, use Times New Roman (12 point) font, have 1” margins, and contain your name in the header (the margin header, not the first line of the page). You may use MLA or Chicago styles for citations. They must be stapled and handed in during class on the day they are due, unless it is an online Moodle submission.

**Do you give extra credit?**

There is no guarantee that extra credit opportunities will be offered. They are offered only at the discretion of the instructor and will be offered to the class as a whole. Details regarding any extra credit opportunities will be given in class and posted on Moodle.

**ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN**

**Character Analysis Project**

Each student will select a character from a play that we have not studied at length in class and examine that character, assuming his/her voice. Your project will be in four parts:

* “Monologue,” in which you perform one of your character’s monologues.
* “A Letter of Importance,” in which you address another character in the play responding to a major circumstance in the events of the plot
* “Character in a Box,” in which you gather and explain physical objects connected to your character
* “Music Essence,” in which you select a song representing your character.

This four-part project is intended to express your creative understanding of a specific character and his/her perspective on the world of the play. No outside sources are required other than the play text, but you are encouraged to do outside research in order to enrich and enliven the project. Our designated “Theatre Librarian,” Mary Broussard, is an excellent resource for help in this area: broussm@lycoming.edu

**Production Essays**

In the second half of the semester, we will be watching portions of or full performances (film & stage) of the plays that we have read this semester. For each play and its accompanying 2-3 videos, you will write a short 1-2 page essay. Each essay will have a specific prompt designed to help you think critically about the various means and purposes of “Staging Shakespeare” and prepare you for the Final Exam.

**Final Project**

Each student will present a creative project (with a written component) in which you explore a play of your choice selected from those read in class this semester. I encourage you to discuss with the instructor and each other your own ideas for the form this creative project might take. Some suggestions are:

* A concept design for a contemporary production (including sets, costumes, and/or sound)
* A performance of monologues from each of the four genre categories (History, Tragedy, Comedy, Romance)
* Directing a short scene

It is also possible this assignment could take the form of a group project should some or all of you want to work together on the same play.

**Final Exam**

There will be one final take-home exam. This exam will be in the form of essay questions regarding the plays we have studied at length in class, either addressing new material or asking you to expound on the shorter Production Essays you have already completed. It must be submitted via Moodle by 5pm on Tuesday, December 8th (Final Exam Period).

**BONUS!**

The Campus Theatre in Lewisburg has periodic showings of famous productions in the UK through the National Theatre Live campaign. On Sunday, November 1st, they will be showing Benedict Cumberbatch’s *Hamlet*. I strongly recommend that you organize a social outing for yourselves to see it. More information can be found here: <http://www.bucknell.edu/x96940.xml>

**GRADING BREAKDOWN**

Participation 200

Character Analysis Project 200

Production Essays (4@ 50 pts.) 200

Final Project 200

Final Exam 200

Total 1000 pts.

**GRADING SCALE**

100-95 = A 83-80 = B- 69-67 = D+

94-90 = A- 79-77 = C+ 66-64 = D

89-87 = B+ 76-74 = C 63-60 = D-

86-84 = B 73-70 = C- 59-0 = F

Day-to-Day Schedule

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| DATE | TOPIC/ACTIVITIES | READING DUE |
| Week 1 |  |  |
| T 8/25 | Intros & Syllabus  Who is Shakespeare to you?  Introduction to Character Analysis Project |  |
| Th 8/27 | Shakespeare’s England | Norton “Shakespeare’s World” pp. 1-30 |
| Week 2 |  |  |
| T 9/1 | *Richard III* Discussion | Norton |
| Th 9/3 | Shakespeare the Man & Artist  Guest Speaker: Dr. Meghan Andrews | Norton “Shakespeare’s Life and Art” pp. 42-67 |
| Week 3 |  |  |
| T 9/8 | *Much Ado About Nothing* Discussion | Norton |
| Th 9/10 | Shakespeare’s Language | Moodle “Down & Dirty Guide to Scanning Verse,” “On Acting Shakespeare” |
| Week 4 |  |  |
| T 9/15 | *Macbeth* Discussion | Norton |
| Th 9/17 | Shakespeare’s Theatre | Norton “The Playing Field” pp. 30-42  Norton “The Shakespearean Stage” pp. 79-99 |
| Week 5 |  |  |
| T 9/22 | *The Tempest* Discussion | Norton |
| Th 9/24 | The Dream of the Master Text, or Why Do  We Cut Shakespeare? | Norton “The Dream of the Master Text” pp. 67-78 |
| Week 6 |  |  |
| T 9/29 | Shakespeare Then & Now: The  Dramaturgical Question | Shakespeare by Stages “Preface,” Ch. 1 & 4 |
| Th 10/1 | Shakespeare Then & Now: The  Dramaturgical Question | Shakespeare by Stages Ch. 2, 3 & 5 |
| Week 7 |  |  |
| T 10/6 | Character Analysis Monologue Workshop  and General Work Day | \*Must be memorized! |
| Th 10/8 | Monologues/Work Day (cont.) |  |
| Week 8 |  |  |
| T 10/13 | Character Analysis Project Presentations  Instructions for Final Project |  |
| Th 10/15 | SHAW FESTIVAL—NO CLASS |  |
| Week 9 |  |  |
| T 10/20 | Looking for Richard (Full Documentary) |  |
| Th 10/22 | *Richard III* (Olivier & McKellen Excerpts)  Brainstorm Writing |  |
| Week 10 |  |  |
| T 10/27 | *Much Ado* (Branagh & Whedon Excerpts) | *Richard III* essay due (Moodle 9am) |
| Th 10/29 | *Much Ado* (Tennant, Act I)  Brainstorm Writing |  |
| Week 11 |  |  |
| T 11/3 | *Macbeth* (McKellen & Stewart Excerpts) | *Much Ado* essay due (Moodle 9am) |
| Th 11/5 | *Throne of Blood* and *Scotland, PA* Excerpts |  |
| Week 12 |  |  |
| T 11/10 | *Tempest* (Plummer & Mirren Excerpts) | *Macbeth* essay due (Moodle 9am) |
| Th 11/12 | Wishbone “Shakespaw”  *Shakespeare Behind Bars* |  |
| Week 13 |  |  |
| T 11/17 | Student’s Choice (remaining video) | *Tempest* essay due (Moodle 9am) |
| Th 11/19 | Student’s Choice (remaining video) |  |
| Week 14 |  |  |
| T 11/24 | Final Project Work/Q&A Day |  |
| Th 11/26 | THANKSGIVING—NO CLASS |  |
| Week 15 |  |  |
| T 12/1 | Final Project Work/Q&A Day |  |
| Th 12/3 | Final Project Presentations |  |
| Week 16 |  |  |
| Tu 12/8 | Take-Home Exam Due via Moodle by 5pm |  |

**PRODUCTION VIEWINGS**

*Richard III*

Olivier (1955) 161 min

McKellen (1995) 104 min

Looking for Richard (1996) 111 min

*Much Ado About Nothing*

Branagh (1993) 111 min

Tennant/Tate (2011) 160 min

Whedon (2012) 109 min

*Macbeth*

McKellen/Dench (1978) 145 min

Stewart (2008) 160 min

Throne of Blood (1957) 110 min

Scotland, PA (2001) 104 min

*The Tempest*

Plummer (2010) 171 min

Mirren (2011) 111 min

Wishbone “Shakespaw” (1995) 30 min

Shakespeare Behind Bars (2005) 93 min