



# Shakespeare I: Playing with Power

English 4330.11546

Fall 2011

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Instructor	Dr. Paige Reynolds
Office	Irby 424
E-mail	preynolds@uca.edu
Office Hours	TR, 2:00-3:30; Wed., 9:00-2:00; or by appointment
Class Location	Irby 303
Class Time	TR, 10:50 am-12:05 pm

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**Course Description** This course surveys Shakespeare's works through close readings of representative plays. We will also consider the relationship of the texts to the cultural contexts in which they were produced. This semester, we will pay special attention the connections between Shakespearean playing and various forms of power.

## Read This!

In our reading material this semester we will encounter "adult situations." If you choose to take this course, you are choosing to consider in a mature and constructive manner religious, political, and ethical perspectives that differ from your own. I will do the same.

**Course Objectives** This semester, I invite you to:

- Increase your confidence and enjoyment in reading, discussing, and writing about the works of Shakespeare
- Detect cultural assumptions underlying the writings of Shakespeare, and in the process become aware of your own cultural assumptions
- Explore the connections and contradictions between these texts and their contexts
- Engage ideas and critical approaches to Shakespeare that may or may not reflect your personal beliefs
- Participate in a performance project that will change the ways you think about Shakespeare
- Develop your skills as a scholar and writer through research and sustained analysis

**Required Texts** The Norton Shakespeare. Ed. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, and Katharine Eisaman Maus. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1997.  
The Bedford Companion to Shakespeare: An Introduction with Documents, ed. Russ McDonald. Boston: St. Martin's Press, 2001.

**Course Readings** Please read carefully, completely, and repeatedly. As a general rule, please read the entire play by the first day of discussion. Readings from the Bedford are detailed on the schedule. We will be using the text during class regularly, so be sure to bring yours with you. Annotate your text, keep track of questions that come to mind as you read, and be prepared to contribute your ideas and questions to the class.

**Class Conduct** The most crucial thing you bring to this class is your desire to actively participate. I invite you to take control of your own education in this course—think about what it is you want to learn and work at it. Come to class having read all of the assigned material and be prepared to engage in a meaningful discussion of the issues it raises. Please be on time, stay awake, and refrain from carrying on private conversations or working on other coursework during class. This is a community of learners in which respect, trust, and courteous classroom conduct are essential. As such, a significant portion of your grade will depend on your attendance, punctuality, observation of classroom etiquette, and participation in class discussions.

Please silence cell phones and other gadgets and remove them from your desk or lap. Laptop use is permitted during class only for taking notes. If you choose to use your computer in class, please do so respectfully.

**Class Commitment** I enthusiastically invite you to be a part of this community of learners, but if your schedule has constraints that will not allow you to attend regularly or to come to class prepared to participate, you may choose not to join us this semester. If you decide to take this course, you are deciding to attend the class every time it meets. In return, I am promising you that I will do my part to make class meetings meaningful learning experiences. Inevitably, situations may arise throughout the course of the semester that will cause even the most committed members of the class to be absent. You will be unable to pass the course if you are absent more than four times (this includes both excused and unexcused absences—written excuses are not necessary).

**Academic Integrity** The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

### **Read This!**

If caught plagiarizing, you may be dismissed with an "F" in this course. Using unauthorized assistance of any kind in taking examinations is also grounds for failing the course. If ever tempted to plagiarize or cheat, I encourage you first to come talk with me. This will be far more productive than plagiarism.

**Examinations** Over the course of the semester, you will be asked to take two exams. For both exams, you will have to identify and write about quotations from the works and write short essays. Please bring a Blue Book to both exams. At the instructor's discretion, an exam may be rescheduled only due to dire circumstances and only when documented appropriately.

**Project #1** The Formal Analysis  
You will write one 6-8 formal paper on one of the plays we read this semester. The essay should:

- Be a clear and coherent analysis of a particular aspect—an overarching theme, a character, a motif, structure, language, context, etc.—of the play(s) in question.
- Be typed in Times New Roman or Garamond 12-point font.

- Be double-spaced, on an 8.5 x 11 inch sheet, with margins not exceeding one inch.
- Be as free of errors as possible (use spell and grammar check, and edit responses carefully before turning in).
- Observe MLA format.
- Cite 4-6 secondary sources (scholarly articles or books).

Please schedule conferences with me to discuss your paper at any stage in the process (earlier will be better for you). You must turn in a proposal (of 3 sentences or more) for your project on October 27, 2011.

## Project #2

### The Performance Project

This assignment consists of two parts: the Portfolio and the Presentation. In pairs, you will work to create a theatrical or cinematic staging of one scene from our selected readings. Each of you will prepare your own portfolio detailing your interpretation of the scene and justifying each of your choices for your staging. You and your partner will then make a presentation to the class during which you pitch your idea for the scene. This portion of the assignment will require meeting to prepare outside of class.

#### *Part I: The Portfolio (10%)*

Think of the portfolio as a “director’s notebook.” Each student’s portfolio will be graded individually and will be due on the day of your presentation. It must include:

- A log of meeting activities outside of class (1 page)
- A brief explanation of why you chose this particular scene, your vision for the scene, and your justification for the medium you have chosen (stage or film) (2-3 pages).
- Your assertion of the scene’s significance to the play as a whole (2-3 pages)
- Your explanation of design choices and casting preferences, with any examples you deem appropriate (photos, material samples, drawings, etc.) (2-3 pages). Please consider: theme (decide on the one theme/problem that your staging will address and put it into a sentence—can be a phrase from the work, or something that your group writes); casting (you may choose from public figures—actors, singers, athletes, politicians, and other popular culture icons, living or dead, past or present—to cast as the main characters); protagonist (whose story does your version of the scene tell?); genre (is your staging part of a Broadway production of the play, a traditional Renaissance version of the play, or an experimental blackbox theatre production? Is it part of an artsy indie film, a Hollywood summer blockbuster or a horror flick?).
- A set of 4-6 discussion questions relevant to the scene and your particular interpretation of it. These questions should be open-ended and aimed at fostering discussion in class (thus you should avoid questions that merely ask for content summary or invite “yes” or “no” responses).
- An annotated bibliography of 4-6 scholarly sources relevant to the play—ideally, this bibliography will include sources that relate directly to your scene. Scholarly journals accessible online are acceptable; other internet sources are not.
- Any visual aids you plan to use in your presentation (if possible).

#### *Part II: The Presentation (10%)*

For the presentation, you will convey to your classmates the work you have already compiled in your portfolio. Your goal during the presentation is to convince the class that your particular staging choices are valid in terms of current scholarship and will be compelling in performance. Presentations should be creative and fun, but also must be critically sound, professionally executed, and academically appropriate for your scholarly audience (if it looks like a high school project you can find on YouTube,



Course Grade	Exam #1	20%
	Exam #2	20%
	Analytical Journal Assignments (5 total)	20%
	Project #1	20%
	Project #2	20%
Open Door Policy	Feel free to come see me whenever you need to discuss a quiz, exam, problem, or anything else related to the course. If you cannot come to my office hours, please make an appointment with me. The easiest and best way to contact me outside of my office hours is via e-mail.	
Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act	The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need accommodation under this act due to a disability, contact the Office of Disability Support Services at 450.3135.	
Sexual Harassment Policy	Please consult the current UCA Student Handbook for the university's policies regarding sexual harassment.	

Week 1      August 25      Introduction to the Course: The Power of Imagination

**Part I:      Language and Power: Shakespeare and the Sonnet**

Week 2      August 30      Discussion:      Shakespeare's Life;  
Introduction to The Sonnets  
Reading:      Bedford, Chapter 1, "Shakespeare, 'Shakespeare,' and the  
Problem of Authorship";  
Norton General Introduction—be prepared to discuss!  
September 1      Discussion:      The Sonnets  
Reading:      Sonnets 1, 20, 29, 30  
Montaigne, "Of Friendship" (handout)  
\*Sign up for Performance Project

Week 3      September 6      Discussion:      The Sonnets  
Reading:      Sonnets 73, 116, 129, 130  
September 8      Discussion:      The Sonnets  
Reading:      Sonnets 138, 144  
Castiglione, from The Book of the Courtier (handout)  
Bedford, Chapter 6, "To What End Are All These  
Words?: Shakespeare's Dramatic Language"

**Part II:      Patriarchy and Power: The Ends of Comedy**

Week 4      September 13      Discussion:      The Shakespearean Stage;  
Discuss Project #2  
Reading:      Bedford, Chapter 2, "Performances, Playhouses, and  
Players" and Chapter 5, "Theater à la Mode: Shakespeare  
and the Kinds of Drama"  
September 15      Discussion:      A Midsummer Night's Dream (1595)  
Reading:      Norton Intro to AMND and entire play

Week 5      September 20      Discussion:      AMND  
Due:      Analytical Journal 1  
September 22      Discussion:      AMND

Week 6      September 27      Discussion:      As You Like It (1599)  
Reading:      Norton Intro to AYLI and entire play  
September 29      Discussion:      AYLI  
Reading:      Bedford, Chapter 8, "Men and Women: Gender, Family,  
Society" (with documents)  
Due:      Analytical Journal 2

Week 7      October 4      Discussion:      AYLI  
October 6      Presentations:      Pairs 1, 2, 3, & 4

### **PART III: Knowledge and Power: Proving the Unprovable**

Week 8	October 11 October 13	Exam # 1 Discussion: Reading:	Much Ado About Nothing (1598) Norton intro to Much Ado and entire play
Week 9	October 18 October 20	Research day for paper proposals (instead of class) Fall Break	
Week 10	October 25  October 27	Discussion: Due: Discussion: Due:	Much Ado Analytical Journal 3 Much Ado Paper Proposal
Week 11	November 1  November 3 *November 4	Discussion: Reading: Discussion: Due: Final date to withdraw with a grade of W	Othello (1603-4) Norton Intro to Othello and entire play Othello Analytical Journal 4
Week 12	November 8 November 10	Discussion: Presentations:	Othello Pairs 5, 6, 7, & 8

### **PART IV: Monarchy and Power: Sovereign, Subject, and Social Order**

Week 13	November 15  November 17	Discussion: Reading: Discussion: Reading: Due:	Richard III (1592-93) Read introduction and entire play Richard III Bedford, Chapter 9, "Politics and Religion: Early Modern Ideologies" (with documents—specific assignments TBA) Analytical Journal 5
Week 14	November 22  November 24	Discussion: Workshop: Due: Thanksgiving Break	Richard III Formal Papers Complete draft of formal paper—bring 2 copies
Week 15	November 29  December 1 *December 2	Discussion: Discussion: Due: Final date to withdraw with a grade of WP or WF	King Lear (1605) or Hamlet (1600-1601) *to be determined based on class vote Formal Paper—turn in to my office by 5:00 pm

Week 16	December 6	Discussion:	
		Reading:	Bedford, Chapter 3, "What is your Text?"
	December 8	Presentations:	Pairs 9, 10, 11, & 12
Finals Week	December 13	11:00-1:00, Exam #2	