

English 263

Byron Nelson, ENGL 263, Spring 2004, Shakespeare I

English 263, Lec. 001 Byron Nelson

Spring 2004

341 Stansbury Hall

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SHAKESPEARE

Required texts (2):

1. Bevington, *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, 5th ed. (Pearson Longman)
2. Shakespeare, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, ed. Peter Holland (Oxford World's Classics)

Readings and Assignments:

I 1-12 Introduction

1-14 King John, Act 4, Scenel (Arthur and Hubert) (pp. 724-26 in Bevington)

1-16 Romeo and Juliet 2.2 (Balcony scene) (pp. 1021-23)

II 1 - 19 Martin Luther King Holiday

1-21 Julius Caesar 3.2 (Caesar's funeral) (pp. 1074-77)

1-23 Midsummer Night's Dream I (Oxford World's Classics); SHORT RESPONSE TO THE FIRST 3 SCENES DUE

III 1-26 Midsummer Night's Dream I, read also pp. 49-59 (Theseus and Hippolyta)

1-28 Midsummer Night's Dream II

1-30 NO CLASS

IV 2-2 FIRST READING REPORTS DUE (see below); Midsummer Night's Dream III; read also pp. 21-3 (Fairies)

2-4 Midsummer Night's Dream IV

2-6 Midsummer Night's Dream V

V 2-9 LAST NAMES A-L: Midsummer Night's Dream V; read also pp. 69-84 (Bottom)

2-11 LAST NAMES M-Z: Midsummer Night's Dream V; read also pp. 69-84 (Bottom)

2-13 FIRST EXAM

VI 2-16 Merchant of Venice I

2-18 Merchant of Venice II

2-20 Merchant of Venice III

VII 2-23 LAST NAMES M-Z: Merchant of Venice IV

2-25 LAST NAMES A-L: Merchant of Venice IV

2-27 Merchant of Venice IV-V

VIII 3-1 Merchant of Venice V

3-3 Richard III, Act I

3-5 Richard III, Act II

IX 3-8 Richard III, Acts III-IV

3-10 Richard III, Act V

3-12 Richard III, Act V

SPRING VACATION, March 13-21

X 3-22 Henry IV, Part I, Act I

3-24 Henry IV, Part I, Act II

3-26 Henry IV, Part I, Act III

XI 3-29 Henry IV, Part I, Act IV

3-31 Henry IV, Part I, Act V

4-1 SECOND EXAM

XII 4-5 Hamlet I

4-7 Hamlet II

4-9 EASTER HOLIDAY

XIII 4-12 Hamlet III

4-14 Hamlet IV

4-16 Hamlet V

XIV 4-19 Hamlet V; SHORT PAPER DUE (on Henry IV, Part I and Hamlet)

4-21 Othello I

4-23 Shakespeare's birthday: NO CLASS

XV 4-26 Othello II and III; LAST CHANCE TO SUBMIT A READING REPORT

4-28 Othello IV

4-30 Othello V

FINAL EXAM: Monday, May 3, 3-5 pm

RATIONALE:

The course is a general introduction to the life and works of William Shakespeare, the greatest poet and playwright in the English language. There will be a special emphasis on the performance of Shakespeare, with the showing of videos (often with two or more versions of the same scenes). I have chosen the Bevington edition of Shakespeare's works, which has relatively few notes and easily readable texts in double columns. For *Midsummer Night's Dream*, you will need Peter Holland's edition, and I want to make us of its excellent introduction. You will normally need to read one act per class session. ALWAYS bring the appropriate book to class, and make sure that you obtain both the required texts. The classes will be generally be in the lecture-discussion format, with an emphasis on performance strategies and performance history. We will celebrate Shakespeare's 440 birthday on April 23, 2004.

POLICIES:

Attendance is required and expected. Make sure that you sign in on the attendance sheet for each class. You are allowed no more than THREE ABSENCES, for whatever reason; SIX or more absences will result in automatic failure. Because this is a large-enrollment class, it is important that you come to class promptly and hand in assignments on time. Double-space your papers and cite quotations by act, scene and line numbers (e.g., 5.5.75). Please hand in your papers only at class time; DO NOT put papers in my mail box or send them by e-mail attachment. As a courtesy, please be sure to switch off all cell phones.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. There will be two major exams and a final exam.

2. You will need to submit FOUR written reports, each based on the previous week's readings and films; these can be submitted during any Monday class, beginning on Feb. 2. These will consist of a brief summary of the main issues and ideas raised in the texts, lecture notes and films—but they are NOT mere plot summaries or emptily subjective responses; it is an engagement, in your own voice, with the serious issues. (You may use the format in the sample that I'll provide.) It would be prudent to do these early in the semester; the last opportunity to submit a report will be the Monday of week fifteen.

1. There will be a short comparative paper (4-7 pp.) on Henry IV, Part I and Hamlet, due on April 19.
4. There will be other short responses to be written in class on an occasional basis. The short paper due on the first three scenes read in class will be due on Friday, Jan. 23.
5. There will be rewards for near-perfect attendance and for active participation. Take your three absences—but otherwise plan to be in class. "Hang there like fruit, my soul, / Till the tree die."

SAMPLE RESPONSE:

Tempest, Act 5: It must be painful for Prospero to give up his island and return to Milan—after all he admitted that he had not been an ideal administrator when he was Duke of Milan. He has accomplished his goals of regaining his title, punishing his enemies and marrying off his daughter to the next King of Naples, Ferdinand. But in leaving his tropical island, he renounces his magic and gives freedom to his supernatural assistant, Ariel. He easily defeats the conspiracy of Caliban and the drunkards Stephano and Trinculo, but he never manages to justify his seizure of the island from its presumed heir, Caliban. At the end of The Tempest, when the judgments are being handed out, he seems to admit his affinity with Caliban. Unlike Stephano and Trinculo, who initially regarded Caliban as a "monster" or a "f sh," Prospero seems to confirm the humanity of Caliban and admits his own complicity in Caliban's bad behavior: "This thing of darkness I / Acknowledge mine" (5.1. 278-79). Perhaps Prospero means that he himself is the "thing of darkness," or that he himself, by his own use of magic (a practice that he shared with Caliban's mother, Sycorax, the witch), is guilty of overstepping the boundaries of nature. It will be hard for him to live without his magic and his spirits, but perhaps this time he will be a more efficient Duke of Milan. The actor playing Prospero needs to decide exactly how much Prospero has learned from his island experience—and to give the audience some sense of whether he will be more successful Duke of Milan in his second term.