

ENGLISH 392W
Studies in Shakespeare
Comedies & Romances
Spring, 2008



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Course Description & Objectives:

The purpose of English 392 is to read and discuss a number of Shakespeare's comedies and romances, from the early years of his career to the festive comedies of the 1590's, from the so-called "dark comedies" of the 1600's, to the romances which he wrote in the last years of his career. One objective of the course will be to study how Shakespeare manipulated the various connections and structures of comedy to create quite different effects in each of his plays. The course will also investigate the historical and cultural backgrounds of his plays as well as an awareness of recurrent motifs in the plays.

Selected Readings:

The Taming of the Shrew
As You Like It
Twelfth Night
Measure for Measure
A Midsummer's Night Dream
The Tempest
The Merchant of Venice

Text:

Shakespeare, William. The Complete Works of Shakespeare. Ed. David Bevington. 5th ed. New York: Pearson Education, Inc., 2004.

Course Requirements:

1. **3 to 4 Major Examinations** - These examinations emphasize literary analysis and topical discussions supported by factual and interpretive details and examples emerging from the readings and discussions.
2. **Reading Assignments & Reaction Papers** - Collectively this requirement will be evaluated as a major grade. There will be no make-ups for any assignment missed; however, the two (2) lowest grades will be dropped at the end of the semester.
3. **Research Project & Oral Presentation** - Details of this assignment will be discussed in class.
4. **Consideration will be given for class participation.**
5. **Final Examination/Project** - The final will be evaluated as two (2) major grades.

Absence Policy:

The University bulletin stresses the importance of punctuality and “regular” attendance. In order to adhere to their guidelines, I have adopted the following absence policy for my classes:

1. A student is allowed four (4) absences during the semester without any penalty being imposed. (This absence without penalty does not apply to any work missed.)
2. After the fourth (4th) absence, I will subtract five (5) points for each absence from your final grade, unless we have discussed your situation based on personal considerations.
3. If a student has maintained a perfect attendance record for the entire semester, he or she will have three (3) points added to his or her final grade in the course.

Grading System:

All grades are based on the 100 point scale: **100 - 90 = A, 89 - 80 = B, 79 - 70 = C, 69 - 60 = D, 59 - 0 = F.** All work must be completed and turned in on time or you fail by default.

Your final course grade will be calculated and averaged as follows:

1. Average of reading assignments and writing will be one (1) component
2. 3 to 4 major exams will be three (3) to four (4) components
3. Project, if applicable, will be one (1) component
4. Final examination will be two (2) components

I add the grades of each component and divide by the final number of components to determine your final grade. The last consideration given for grade distribution is to include points for perfect attendance or to subtract points for lack of attendance.

Classroom Policies (very important):

1. **Academic Fraud** - The penalty for cheating or plagiarism is an automatic F for the course on the **FIRST** (1st) offense. **DON'T CHEAT!!!**
2. **Visitors** - No visitors without my prior consent.
3. **ALL** written work is to be done in **INK**. **NO** pencils in my classroom.

4. NO CELL PHONES ALLOWED!!! Try to make comfort calls BEFORE class begins; students are expected to remain in their seats for the duration of the class period.
5. You may bring coffee, water, sodas, or other non-alcoholic beverages for consumption in my class. You may not, however, consume candy, chips, or other victuals that may disturb the progress of the class. You are responsible to clean any mess that you leave.

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days:

Prior notice must be given to me. Refer to the guidelines found in the SHSU undergraduate catalogue.

Student Comments:

Stay in The Merchant of Venice world. Our newsletter is designed to inform the most demanding customers about the new fragrances and exclusive proposals of the Venetian perfumery. I authorize the processing of my personal data in the way and for the purposes listed in the privacy statement. I authorize the processing of my personal data for marketing, commercial, market research, profiling and for advertising purposes. Antonio, the merchant in The Merchant of Venice, secures a loan from Shylock for his friend Bassanio, who seeks to court Portia. Act 1, scene 1. Antonio, a Venetian merchant, has invested all his wealth in trading expeditions. Bassanio, his friend and kinsman, asks him for a loan. Act 1, scene 2. In 16th century Venice, when a merchant must default on a large loan from an abused Jewish moneylender for a friend with romantic ambitions, the bitterly vengeful creditor demands a gruesome payment instead. Venice, 1596. Melancholy Antonio loves the youthful Bassanio, so when Bassanio asks for 3000 ducats, Antonio says yes before knowing it's to sue for the hand of Portia. His capital tied up in merchant ships at sea, Antonio must go to Shylock, a Jewish moneylender he reviles. Shylock wraps his grudge in kindness, offering a three-month loan at no interest, but if not repaid, Antonio will owe a pound of flesh. The Jew's daughter elopes with a Christian, whetting Shylock's hatred.