

ENG 201 : SHAKESPEARE

Transcript title

Shakespeare

Credits

4

Grade mode

Standard letter grades

Contact hours total

40

Lecture hours

40

Recommended preparation

[WR 121](#).

Description

Study representative plays from Shakespeare's early and middle periods and sonnets relevant to play elements.

Learning outcomes

1. Define and illustrate principal literary elements of Shakespearean drama: plot, character, diction, theme, actions and special effects, applying college-level criteria for literary analysis.
2. Analyze relationships among selected elements of dramatic forms of comedy, tragedy, history, and romance to determine how genre shapes the development of individual plays. Know variations within the genre, such as stock vs. complex character, or subtypes of the genre, such as Roman comedy and romantic or festive comedy and Senecan tragedy vs. historical tragedy. For later plays, practice comparative analysis in Shakespeare's development of genres.
3. Identify key biographical, historical, social, and intellectual issues of the Renaissance, Reformation, and Tudor-Elizabethan England in relation to the plays. Analyze the plays by comparing dramatic elements with selected intellectual, historical and/or biographical issues. For later plays, apply comparative analysis to show development of dramatic methods.
4. Practice in-depth formal literary criticism, applying relevant critical opinions to one's own analysis and interpretation of Shakespearean plays (both text and visual). Illustrate these in graded writing assignments using appropriately selected examples from the plays and from scholars.
5. Demonstrate effective writing skills when communicating and supporting literary analysis, interpretation, and evaluation, in graded writing assignments. For later plays in ENG 201, practice comparative analysis of applicable literary approaches and "schools" of literary analysis, including theories of "the other," feminist theory, gender studies, diversity issues, New Historicism, and psychological and economic approaches.
6. Identify and analyze complex practices, values, and beliefs and the culturally and historically defined meanings of difference in Shakespearean drama, both in terms of their function within Shakespeare's plays and in terms of how the cultural context of Shakespeare's time informs the plays.

Content outline

- I. Shakespeare's early to early middle periods (1590 through 1600)
- II. Comedies, tragedies, histories, and sonnets
- III. Standard/common themes in Shakespeare (e.g. fate, honor, betrayal, revenge, identity/mistaken identity, madness, gender, and family)
- IV. Elements of dramatic structure (e.g. Aristotle's Principles for Tragedy, the "Three Unities," exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement)
- V. Dramatic sub-genres (e.g. Senecan Tragedy, Revenge Tragedy, Farce, and Romantic Comedy)
- VI. Play staging (e.g. setting, props, costuming, blocking, pacing, and special effects)
- VII. Critical approaches (e.g. psychological [Freudian, Jungian, etc.], economic [Marxist], gender [feminist and queer studies], and historical [New Historicism])

Required materials

All plays are available free online (links to reputable versions provided); hard copy plays are also on reserve in the COCC library; additional required readings (e.g., scholarly articles) are posted in our Blackboard course.

Grading methods

Grading for this course will be based on three essays, a final examination, factual quizzes (as opposed to interpretive), and in-class activities, or equivalent work.

General education/Related instruction lists

- Arts and Letters
- Cultural Literacy