

## Shakespeare & The Elizabethan Stage

### Location

NYU London

### Class code

ENGL-UA 9412 - 001

### Instructor Details

TBA

### Class Details

Tuesday and Thursday 2-5pm  
[Also see weekly schedule for evening performances]

### Prerequisites

Some college-level study of literature and/or theatre *very helpful, but not essential*

### Class Description

This course has a two-pronged focus; on the one hand, it is an opportunity to undertake a detailed study of Shakespeare's verbal and theatrical languages, and on the other hand, it equips you to investigate Renaissance London's importance in shaping Shakespeare's plays and Shakespeare's importance in shaping some of the fiercest debates about agency and government, family, and national identity in London and the world today. The two concerns are tightly interlaced and demonstrate how Shakespeare continues to occupy a dominant status in English literature and culture today.

Course content is delivered through close reading, discussion, lectures, seminars, workshops, and field trips. Each of these activities is mutually enhancing.

### Desired Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- critically analyse the verbal, generic, structural, and dramatic qualities of Shakespeare's plays
- relate Shakespeare's plays to the historical, cultural, social, literary, and creative contexts in which they were produced
- demonstrate an intimate understanding of the interpretive choices involved in editing and performing Shakespeare's plays
- participate in some of the dominant debates informing the study of Shakespearean drama
- put into practice a number of transferable skills such as close reading, editing, reviewing, researching, and critical writing
- exhibit an enhanced understanding of Shakespeare's place in British and World literature and culture

## Assessment Components

### Quizzes (20%)

You are given a series of quizzes throughout the term. These quizzes are designed to test your familiarity with the text being studied.

### Portfolio (60%)

See separate detailed brief.

### Participation (20%)

Marks are awarded for punctuality, robust participation in seminars including completing preparatory reading and research tasks, and meeting deadlines.

Failure to submit or fulfil any required course component results in failure of the class.

## Assessment Expectations

Grade A: The work demonstrates mastery over the skills and knowledge required to address the chosen topic. Lucid original thinking is buttressed with thorough research and the material is analysed critically. Writing is excellent, fluent, and clear. Sources are referenced appropriately. Class contributions are thoughtful, regular, founded on a thorough knowledge of the text in question, and extend and deepen our discussion.

Grade B: The work demonstrates the ability to grasp material and argues its case well. The questions are focussed, and some independent research has been undertaken. Writing is fluent and clear, and suggested sources have been consulted and used appropriately. Referencing and presentation are mostly correct. Class contributions are regular, perceptive and based on a familiarity with the text in question.

Grade C: The work demonstrates basic skills and knowledge required to discuss the topic. It is lacking in independent research and there is little evidence that required readings have been pursued meaningfully. Essays show some knowledge of the material and a basic critical competence, but may be underdeveloped, unclear, inaccurate, or lacking in textual analysis. Class contributions are infrequent, and no initiative is taken to participate in group activities.

Grade D: Poor work. The assignments have been handed in but lack clarity, contain serious inaccuracies and/or structural faults, and fail to conform to the requirements of the course. Class contributions are rare and reluctant.

Grade F: The work failed to meet minimum requirements.

**Required Text(s)**

It is essential that you read and reflect upon the relevant reading *before* each class. Where it says 'Various Documents', the readings will be given to you as photocopies. Although any modern edition of the required plays is fine, the ones in brackets are particularly useful.

- *Romeo and Juliet* (ed. Rene Weis, Arden Shakespeare).
- *Twelfth Night* (eds. Roger Warren and Stanley Wells, Oxford Shakespeare).
- *Hamlet* (eds. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, Arden Shakespeare).
- *Othello* (ed. Julie Hankey, Cambridge Shakespeare in Production)

**Supplemental Texts(s)**

See weekly schedule for further reading suggestions.

**Internet Research Guidelines**

Selected Internet Resources

<http://globalshakespeares.mit.edu/#> MIT Global Shakespeares  
<http://shakespeare.ch.bbc.co.uk> BBC Shakespeare Archive Resource  
<http://bufvc.ac.uk/shakespeare> International Database of Shakespeare on Film, Television, and Radio  
<http://www.globeplayer.tv> Globe Player  
<http://shalt.dmu.ac.uk> Shakespearean London Theatres

**Additional Required Equipment**

N/A

**Session 1**

**30 May**  
Thursday

Topic: Shakespeare and Us  
Text: Various Documents  
Further Reading:

- Dickson, Andrew. *The Rough Guide to Shakespeare*. Penguin, 2009.

\***Evening Field Trip:** *Hamlet as Told by Gertrude* @Greenwich Theatre

**Session 2**

**4 June**  
Tuesday

Topic: *Hamlet* without Hamlet

Text: *Hamlet*

Further Reading:

- Peterson, Kaara. "Framing Ophelia: representation and the pictorial tradition." *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* (1998): 1-24.

**Assessment Deadline: Hamlet Quiz**

**Session 3**

**6 June**

**No session in lieu of three theatre trips outside session times**

**Session 4****11 June**

Tuesday

Topic: Performance Conditions + Portfolio Preparation

Text: Various Documents

Further Reading:

- Dessen, Alan. *Elizabethan Stage Conventions and Modern Interpreters*. Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Carson, Christie, and Farah Karim-Cooper eds. *Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008

**Session 5****13 June**

Thursday

**Matinee Field Trip: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* @The Bridge Theatre****Session 6****\*MONDAY****17 June****\*Evening Field Trip: *Twelfth Night* @Shakespeare's Globe****Session 7****18 June**

Tuesday

Topic: Shakespeare Plays with Genre

Text: *Twelfth Night*

Further Reading:

- Gay, Penny. *As She Likes It: Shakespeare's Unruly Women*. Routledge, 2002.

**Assessment Deadline: *Twelfth Night* Quiz****Session 8****20 June**

Thursday

Topic: Portfolio Feedback and Preparation

Text: Student Portfolios

**Session 9****25 June**

Tuesday

Topic: Global Shakespeare

Text: *Romeo and Juliet*

Further Reading:

- Trivedi, Poonam and Chakravarti, Paromita eds. *Shakespeare and Indian Cinemas*. Routledge, 2019.

**Assessment Deadline: *Romeo and Juliet* Quiz****Session 10****27 June**

Thursday

Topic: Portfolio Preparation+ Hamlet 's Soliloquies

Text: *Hamlet*

Further Reading:

- Escolme, Bridget. *Talking to the Audience: Shakespeare, Performance, Self*. Routledge, 2004.

**\*Evening Field Trip: *Hamlet* @Iris Theatre [TBC]**

**Session 11****2 July**

Tuesday

Topic: The Politics of Casting

Text: *Othello*

Further Reading:

- Jarrett-Macauley, Delia, ed. *Shakespeare, Race and Performance: The Diverse Bard*. Routledge, 2016.
- Thompson, Ayanna, ed. *Colorblind Shakespeare: New Perspectives on Race and Performance*. Routledge, 2006.

**Assessment Deadline: Othello Quiz****Session 12****4 July**

Thursday

Topic: Revision, Reflection, and Future Directions in Shakespeare

Text: Various Texts

**Assessment Deadline: Portfolio Submission – Hard Copy Required****Classroom Etiquette**

- Mobile phones should be set on silent and should not be used in class except for research tasks.
- Please dispose of rubbish in the bins provided.

**Required Co-curricular Activities**

See weekly schedule of theatre trips

**Estimated Travel Costs**

Public transport fares to performance venues

**Suggested Co-curricular Activities**

Please keep updated by following and sharing your own finds on Twitter @EarlyModernDoc #ShaxStudents  
See as much theatre-going as you can afford!

**Your Instructor**

Dr Varsha Panjwani was a lecturer at the department of Theatre, Film, and Television at the University of York from 2009-13. She currently teaches at Boston University (London) and NYU (London). Varsha's research focuses on the way in which Shakespeare is deployed in the service of diversity in theatre and films. As well as publishing widely in leading international journals such as *Shakespeare Survey* and in prestigious collections such as *Shakespeare and Indian Cinema* and *The Diverse Bard*, she has co-edited special issues of *Multicultural Shakespeare*. She has also won prestigious research grants from the Society of Theatre Research and Folger Shakespeare Library. In addition to her individual research, she was the principal investigator of the multi-grant-winning project 'Indian Shakespeares on Screen' (2016). Varsha is also an academic consultant for a number of theatre and film companies and is a regular reviewer for specialised journals and blogs.

## NYU GLOBAL ACADEMIC POLICIES

Policies and procedures for Global Academic Centres, including policies on **academic integrity and the Study Away Standard**, can be found here:

<https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/student-services.html>

**Absences:** Key information on NYU London's absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found here:

<http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html>

**NYU London work submission policies** can be found

here: <http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html>

**Classroom conduct:** Academic communities exist to facilitate the process of acquiring and exchanging knowledge and understanding, to enhance the personal and intellectual development of its members, and to advance the interests of society. Essential to this mission is that all members of the University Community are safe and free to engage in a civil process of teaching and learning through their experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Accordingly, no student should engage in any form of behaviour that interferes with the academic or educational process, compromises the personal safety or well-being of another, or disrupts the administration of University programs or services.

Please refer to the **NYU London Disruptive Student Behaviour**

**Policy** at <https://goo.gl/Nvt5Vu> for examples of disruptive behaviour and guidelines for response and enforcement.