Shakespeare & The Elizabethan Stage

Location
NYU London

Class code
ENGL-UA 9412 - 001

Instructor Details
Dr Varsha Panjwani
Email: vp46@nyu.edu
Twitter @EarlyModernDoc #ShaxStudents
Office Hours: Please email for an appointment

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.
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.


See weekly schedule for further reading suggestions.

Selected Internet Resources:
- [http://shakespeare.ch.bbc.co.uk](http://shakespeare.ch.bbc.co.uk) BBC Shakespeare Archive Resource
- [http://bufvc.ac.uk/shakespeare](http://bufvc.ac.uk/shakespeare) International Database of Shakespeare on Film, Television, and Radio
- [http://www.globeplayer.tv](http://www.globeplayer.tv) Globe Player
- [http://shalt.dmu.ac.uk](http://shalt.dmu.ac.uk) Shakespearean London Theatres

**Session 1**
30 May
Thursday

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


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

**Session 2**
4 June
Tuesday

Topic: *Hamlet* without Hamlet
Text: *Hamlet*
Further Reading:


**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:

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:
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:
Assessment Deadline: Romeo and Juliet Quiz

Session 10
27 June
Thursday
Topic: Portfolio Preparation+ Hamlet ‘s Soliloquies
Text: Hamlet
Further Reading:
*Evening Field Trip: Hamlet @Iris Theatre [TBC]
Session 11
2 July
Tuesday

Topic: The Politics of Casting
Text: *Othello*

Further Reading:

**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.