COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course is intended to bridge the gap between text and performance, between English and
Theater Arts, between book and play. Prior familiarity with Shakespeare is a must, but acting
experience is not. This term our focus will be on the tragedy of all tragedies -- the play that will
crack your heart open, if you let it: *King Lear*. Through a variety of creative and conventional
writing assignments, lecture/discussions, film viewings, acting workshops and performances we
will read, live and breathe *King Lear* together for 10 weeks. The course requires intense focus
and commitment, even though the writing and reading load is relatively light for a 300-level
class. In particular, you must be willing to commit time outside of class for group work. As with
all my classes, attendance is mandatory - and a pattern of repeated absence will affect your final
grade - but students will be penalized by a loss of one complete grade for an unexcused absence
on Tuesday, June 4 (the Group Performance Workshop).

Thanks to a very generous donation to the English Department, twenty-three students will have
the opportunity on a first-come, first-served basis to attend a FREE day trip to Ashland on
Saturday, April 27th to see the world-famous Oregon Shakespeare Festival perform *King Lear*.
(We will meet at 8 a.m. by the Robinson Theater entrance of Villard Hall, and travel together by
van - returning to campus by ~11 p.m.) Ticket, transport and dinner will be provided for you. To
reserve your space, bring a check (made out to UO English Department) or exact change
for a $20 refundable deposit to class on Thursday, April 4th. If you fail to attend the trip, your
deposit will become a donation to the English Department.

REQUIRED TEXTS/FILMS:
Available at the UO Bookstore:

Available via Blackboard:
- Course readings (assorted chapters, articles) in PDF [Bb]
- Course films (available as Dropbox link)
  
  One of our course films is not widely available, but you are encouraged if possible to
  purchase (via Amazon or other Internet resource) or rent (e.g. via Netflix) the remaining
  three:
  
  KING LEAR (Elliott, dir; starring Laurence Olivier)
  - Studio: Kultur Video / DVD Release Date: June 13, 2000 / ASIN: 0769712231

  KING LEAR (Nunn, dir; starring Ian McKellen)
  - Studio: PBS Home Video / DVD Release Date: April 21, 2009 / ASIN: B001TR4G6W

  KING LEAR (Eyre, dir; starring Ian Holm)
  - Studio: PBS / DVD Release Date: September 28, 2004 / ASIN: B0002XVRIY
Course Reserve:


COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

20% In-Class Writing on each of our four class films
20% Textual Exam (essay based)
10% Casting Assignment
10% Editing Assignment
20% Group Performance (5% Treatment, 5% Execution, 5% Script, 5% Individual)
20% Take-Home Final (essay based)

COURSE POLICIES

Please also review the “Course Policies” Folder in our Blackboard site.

Attendance:

- Because of its exploratory, performative nature this class is especially dependent on full attendance and commitment. Punctual, regular attendance is absolutely required. Come to class prepared, with your text (NC or Bb xeroxes), film notes, and any assigned handouts in hand.
- We only have 20 classes together this term, and an entire Shakespearean universe to unfold.... Regardless of the reason for your absences, a pattern of repeated absence will affect your final grade significantly, at the instructor’s discretion. See Prof. Freinkel immediately if you anticipate or experience any difficulties with attendance.
- If you miss class, it is your responsibility to check our Blackboard website for any handouts or announcements.

Deadlines:

- Check the due date and time for all homework assignments. Assignments due in class are due at 12 noon promptly. No late papers or assignments will be accepted, except in case of documented emergency. Assignments due by 5 pm in Villard 313 (the Comparative Literature Department main office) need to be dropped off during the office hours: 7:30-12:30 and 13:45-17:00. Turn your work in to the marked box on the front desk. No electronic submissions accepted.
- ALWAYS PLAN AHEAD, BUDGET YOUR TIME, AND MAKE BACK-UP COPIES OF YOUR WORK. Technological glitches do happen, but they will not constitute a valid excuse for missed deadlines.
- Except in case of documented emergency, in-class assignments, exams or quizzes missed due to absence cannot be subsequently made up, and no incompletes will be granted for this course.

Electronics Policy:

- In order to cultivate a mindful and focused learning environment, our classroom will be a zone of “digital detox.” Other than the professor’s use of PowerPoint (etc.), no laptops,
tablets, smartphones (etc.) are to be used in class. Please turn OFF all devices (i.e. don’t just silence them…)

Academic Honesty:
- All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course, and the use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented, according to current MLA guidelines. (The Purdue OWL site has a very helpful section on MLA citation form).
- Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course or at this university. The penalty for plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty (e.g. cheating on exams) is a failing final grade for the course. Please see me if you have any questions about your sources, or about this policy. Refer also to the UO library’s excellent webpage on the subject, http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/.
- Use of popular Shakespeare/study-aid websites (like NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE) is not prohibited, but given the low quality of such resources, neither is their use encouraged. In any event, all use of study aids and websites must be documented in submitted work.

Access for All Students:
- If you have a disability or special need that you think may affect your work for this course, please see me at the beginning of the course so that we can make arrangements, if necessary.

Respectful Environment:
- A diversity of thought and expression is actively encouraged in this class and in our discussions. To nurture this diversity, respect, tolerance, and openness toward others’ comments is absolutely necessary. Please let me know at any time if you have questions or concerns.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS
- Special activities (e.g. workshops, exams) and assignments due are listed in boldface.
- All readings, viewings due on a particular date are preceded by an *asterisk.
- Note: I reserve the right to specify additional reading assignments (e.g. “review Act 3”) for any given day. If you miss class, always check Blackboard for announcements about additional reading, or for important handouts/assignments.

Weeks 1 & 2 - INTRODUCTION TO King Lear
U April 2
- Introduction: Shakespeare on Page and Stage
- Intro to scansion

R April 4
- *Ioppolo's Intro Norton Critical [NC]
- * "A Note on the Text" [NC]
- *Acts 1-2

NOTE: As you read the play, underline all uses of "nature" and "nothing" (and cognate terms/concepts). Also note references to concepts of hierarchy, law and (dis)order.
• Scansion Workshop
• DUE: Reserve space for Ashland ($20 check to “UO English Dept” or exact change)

U April 9
• *Acts 3-5
• *Recommended Reading: Intro to King Lear and Textual Note, “Dream of the Master Text” [Greenblatt]
• Language Workshop: Nature, Law and Nothing

R April 11
• *Olivier’s (dir. Elliott) King Lear [film] - Stop, pause and take copious notes while watching ea. film. Review key scenes (just as you would reread passages in a text).
• Olivier In-Class Writing

Weeks 3 & 4 - CLASSIC READINGS
U April 16
• Textual Exam (essay-based exam to test recognition of key themes, language, plot elements)

R April 18
• *New Criticism: Stephen Booth, “On the Greatness of King Lear” [Bb]

U April 23
• *Lit and Philosophy: Stanley Cavell, “The Avoidance of Love” [Bb]

R April 25
• *New Historicism: Stephen Greenblatt, "Shakespeare and the Exorcists" [Bb]
• *Recommended Reading: “The Shakespearean Stage” [Greenblatt]
• Exorcism Workshop

Sa April 27
• ASHLAND TRIP: Meet outside Robinson Theater at 8 a.m. Bring cash, etc., for lunch and necessities.

Week 5 - ADAPTATION
U April 30
• *Selected essays from King Lear and Its Afterlife, ed. Peter Holland [Bb]
• *Excerpts from early criticism: Tate, Johnson, Lamb, Hazlitt, Bradley, Kott [NC]
• **"Adaptations and Responses" [NC]
• Adaptation Workshop

R May 2
• Double-casting Workshop
Week 6 - McKELLEN AND HOLM

U May 7
- *McKellen (dir. Nunn) King Lear [film]
- McKellen In-Class Writing

W May 8
4 p.m. (location TBA): Lecture with Harry Berger, Jr.

R May 9
- *Holm (dir. Eyre) King Lear [film]
- Holm In-Class Writing
- DUE: Casting Assignment

F May 10
- DUE (by 5 pm in VIL 313): Harry Berger, Jr. extra credit

Week 7 - GENDER

U May 14
- *Kathleen McCluskie, “The Patriarchal Bard” [Bb]
- Playing Gender Workshop

R May 16
- Janet Adelman, “Suffocating Mothers” [Bb]
- Performance Groups announced

Week 8 - EDITING

U May 21
- *Selected essays from The Division of the Kingdoms, ed. Taylor and Warren [Bb]

R May 23
- Editing Workshop

Week 9 - PETER BROOK

U May 28
- *Scofield (dir. Brook) King Lear [film]
- Brook In-Class Writing
- DUE: Editing Assignment

R May 30
- *Brook, “The Rough Theater” [Bb]
- Rough Theater Workshop
- Take-Home Final Distributed
Week 10 - Conclusions?

U June 4
- Group Performance Workshop
  *This class is absolutely mandatory. Except in case of documented emergency or serious/infectious illness, failure to attend this class without 14 days advance notice will result in an automatic loss of one grade (e.g. A dropped to B) for the course.*
- DUE: "Treatment" for Group Performance (~5 pp)

R June 6
- Final Discussion

Finals Week
Thursday June 13 @ 8-10 am in VIL 300
- Group Performances
  *Room opens at 7 a.m. - students are encouraged to arrive as early as possible to enable an 8 am curtain. There will be only minimal breaks between productions.*
- DUE: Group Script.

Friday June 14 by 5 pm in Villard 313
- DUE: Final Take-Home exam (6-8 pp)
EDMUND

Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?
Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take
More composition and fierce quality
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,
Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well, then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to the legitimate: fine word,--legitimate!
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper:
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!
SCANSION AND METRICAL FORM

Prose vs. Verse
Most early modern plays are written in a combination of blank verse and prose. Blank verse is unrhymed iambic pentameter. When Shakespeare and other early modern dramatists write in prose it is usually to signal low diction: either the language of a commoner, or bawdy/comic subject matter. End rhymes are often used to signal the end of a scene, or to denote closure of some other sort.

Pentameter comes from the Greek word meaning “five” and denotes a line of poetry with five feet. A line of iambic pentameter thus has five iambics in it -- or ten syllables total.

What is “scansion”??
When literary critics want to measure the patterns of stressed syllables being used in poetry -- particularly in traditional verse forms (e.g. sonnets or blank verse) -- they are said to “scan” the poetry. “Scansion” is the act of counting stressed syllables in a line of poetry.

Feet, don’t fail me now.
When literary critics talk about “feet” of poetry, they are talking about specific patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables. In general, a foot is a unit of metrical stress. There are six types of feet that literary critics often mention: iambic, trochaic, spondaic, pyrrhic, dactylic, anapestic.

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\text{IAMB (adj. iambic)} \\
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\text{PYRRHIC (adj. pyrrhic)} \\
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\text{DACTYL (adj. dactylic)} \\
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\text{SPONDEE (adj. spondaic)} \\
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