

## ENG 207: Early Shakespeare

**Mitchell Macrae**

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**Office Hours: Wed 2-4, Thur 11-Noon, or by  
appointment.**

**Office Location: PLC 228C**

### Course Info

**Fall 2016, 4 Credits**

**T/R 2:00 - 3:20, Gerlinger 248**

**CRN: 12067**

*Thou shalt not sigh, nor hold thy stumps to heaven,  
Nor wink, nor nod, nor kneel, nor make a sign,  
But I of these will wrest an alphabet,  
And by still practice learn to know thy meaning.*  
~Titus Andronicus

### Course Description

This introductory course will cover four plays from the first half of Shakespeare's career: *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Richard II*, and *The Merchant of Venice*. The selected plays provide a sampling of Shakespeare's contributions to the three primary genres of early modern theater: history, comedy, and tragedy. Throughout the course we will orient ourselves to early modern culture in order to be attentive to Shakespeare's wordplay, his use of theatrical conventions, and his treatment of themes or issues contemporary to his writing. We will also use this orientation, along with our explorations of Shakespeare's texts, to challenge and disrupt our own cultural assumptions about language, identity, and power. Throughout the term, students will be tasked with developing and honing skills in close reading and analysis, paying careful attention to the details of language and using textual evidence to support various interpretations of Shakespeare's texts.

### Learning Outcomes

In addition to gaining a preliminary understanding of texts and contexts of Shakespeare's early work, this course's assessment procedure is built around six desired learning outcomes. Students are expected to:

1. read Shakespeare's works with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of early modern conventions
2. draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts
3. perform critical, formal analyses of literary, theatrical, and other cultural texts
4. write focused, critical analyses of literary and other cultural texts in clear, grammatical prose
5. employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments
6. engage primary and secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation, as they contribute to a critical essay's thesis

### Required Texts

- *The Norton Shakespeare, Vol. 1.* (ISBN: 9780393931440)

## Grading

### Assignments

- Essays
  - Close Reading Assignment 15%
  - Midterm Exam 20%
  - Final Exam 20%
  - Analytic Essay (5-7 pages) 25%
- Quizzes, Homework, Activities 15%
- Participation 5%

### Grading Scale

90-92 (A-)	93-96 (A)	97-100 (A+)
80-82 (B-)	83-86 (B)	87-89 (B+)
70-72 (C-)	73-76 (C)	77-79 (C+)
0-59 (F)	60-66 (D)	67-69 (D+)

**Note:** To receive full credit for an assignment, it must be turned in by the start of class on its assigned due date. You must complete all essay assignments to pass the course.

## Course Work

Midterm and Final Exams	Exams will cover assigned readings and material from lectures.
Close Reading Assignment	For this assignment, you will be asked to choose from a selection of specific passages from the assigned plays and identify striking features of the text, including rhetorical features, structural elements, or significant themes. You will use your observations of particular details of the text to develop and argue for an interpretation of the passage. You will receive a more detailed instruction sheet in class.
Analytic Essay	Throughout the term, we will be practicing putting plays in conversation with each other. For this assignment, due at the end of the term, you will analyze how two of Shakespeare's plays handle a single issue, conflict, or idea. For example, you might consider how <i>Titus Andronicus</i> and <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> each depict violence against women. Or you might argue about issues of authority and power in <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i> and <i>Richard II</i> . You will receive a more detailed instruction sheet with possible topic ideas and a list of recommended secondary sources later in the term.
Quizzes and Activities	There will be frequent quizzes throughout the term. Quizzes may cover assigned readings, lecture material, or points raised during class discussions. The best way to be prepared for quizzes is to attend class, take notes, and to read the assigned texts slowly and carefully. Class activities include brief in-class writing prompts, group discussions, close reading exercises, etc. Missed quizzes or activities cannot be retaken, though there may be extra credit opportunities throughout the term.
Participation	Be prepared for class by doing the assigned readings and bringing your book with you. Be present in class. Be attentive during lectures. Be willing to contribute to discussions of the text. Be respectful of me and your classmates.

## Course Policies

Required Format for Essays	All written work should be typed and double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font and 1" margins. Include the following information on the first page of your essay: your name, ENG 207, my name (Mitchell Macrae), the assignment name, word count, date due, and your original title for the assignment. Insert your last name and page numbers on subsequent pages of each document. Use MLA format for quoting and citing sources. Failure to format and/or cite sources may significantly lower the assignment grade.
Attendance Policy	Attendance is required. You are allowed two unexcused absences. An absence will be excused only in cases of emergency. For an absence to be excused, you must communicate with me about it in a timely manner and may be asked to provide documentation. Three or more absences will lower your final course grade by half a letter (5%). Please notify me ahead of time if you must miss class, will be late, or need to leave class early. You are responsible for anything you miss if you are not in class.
Accessibility	The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me in week one if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You may also wish to contact Disability Services in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or <a href="mailto:disabsrv@uoregon.edu">disabsrv@uoregon.edu</a> .
Academic Integrity	All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course (this means you may not turn in a paper you wrote for another class, even if you've read the plays before). The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. Please consult the Code of Student Conduct on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website: <a href="http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/AcademicMisconduct/tabid/248/Default.aspx">http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/AcademicMisconduct/tabid/248/Default.aspx</a> . In cases where academic dishonesty has been clearly established, the award of an F for the final course is standard practice. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources.
Decorum	Please turn off all electronic gadgets, including cell phones or smart phones, ipods, tablets, and computing devices. Any unauthorized use of electronics during class time may result in an automatic absence for the day. Please refrain from chatting with your neighbors during class.
Content Advisory	You should be aware that Shakespeare deals with adult themes and subjects. His work can be violent and sexual, sometimes simultaneously. His work often challenges conventional conceptions of political and religious issues. We will discuss these subjects specifically in class. Please be prepared for thoughtful engagement with the texts and with your classmates on a spectrum of provocative (perhaps uncomfortable) topics. I do not expect you to like (or agree with) everything you read, but I do expect gracious and responsible treatment of your classmates and of these intellectually challenging texts.

<p>Late Work</p>	<p>All assigned work is due according to the assignment schedule and directions. You may turn in work early. If you know you will need additional time to complete an assignment, I am willing to discuss an extension if you contact me at least 48 hours before the assignment is due. If you miss a due date for an assignment, I reserve the right to apply grading penalties at my discretion. Computer difficulties are not an excuse for failure to produce your assigned work in this class. Back up your files. There are computer labs all over campus; make use of them if you experience difficulties with your computer or internet access.</p>
<p>Incompletes</p>	<p>No grades of “Incomplete” will be assigned in this course.</p>
<p>A note on using online summaries, paraphrases, and other sources:</p>	<p>I hope to see your own grappling for meaning with these texts in your writing and contributions for this course. You have something valuable to contribute, and there is usually not one “correct” interpretation. To this end, remember that online summaries are other people’s interpretations. They reflect the choices other people make about what to include and what to emphasize. They are themselves arguments, and their paraphrasings of Shakespeare erase some possible meanings while privileging others. Online summaries are also not written for college-level courses, and thus they are only a good supplement if you are struggling. <b>I fully expect you to read every play in its entirety in the original language.</b> Relying on someone else’s work in any capacity on an assignment constitutes Academic Dishonesty and will be treated as such. If you do quote from, get an idea from, or even read an online summary, that source must appear in a “Works Consulted” list on any subsequent assignment.</p>

### Tentative Course Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to change. Check our course's Canvas page regularly for updates.

#### Week One (Sept. 26-30)

Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Syllabus</li></ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i> (pp. 159-166)</li><li>• <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>, Inductions 1-2</li></ul>

#### Week Two (Oct. 3-7)

Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Norton, pp. 1-13 and 42-67</li><li>• <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>, Acts 1-2</li></ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Taming</i>, Act 3</li></ul>

#### Week Three (Oct. 10-14)

Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Taming</i>, Act 4-5</li></ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Taming</i>, Act 5</li><li>• <b>Close reading assignment due</b></li></ul>

#### Week Four (Oct. 17-21)

Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to <i>Titus Andronicus</i>, pp. 399-407</li><li>• <i>Titus Andronicus</i>, Act 1-2</li></ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Titus</i>, Act 3</li></ul>

#### Week Five (Oct. 24-28)

Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Titus</i>, Act 4-5</li></ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Midterm Exam</b></li></ul>

#### Week Six (Oct. 31 - Nov. 4)

Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intro to <i>Richard II</i>, pp. 974-980</li><li>• <i>Richard II</i>, Act 1</li></ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Richard II</i>, Act 2</li></ul>

#### Week Seven (Nov. 7-11)

Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Richard II</i>, Act 3-4</li></ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Richard II</i>, Act 5</li></ul>

Week Eight (Nov. 14-18)

Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intro to <i>The Merchant of Venice</i>, pp. 1111-1119</li><li>• <i>Merchant</i>, Act 1-2</li></ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Merchant</i>, Act 3</li></ul>

Week Nine (Nov. 21-25)

Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Merchant</i>, Act 4-5</li><li>• <b>Analytic Essay due</b></li></ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• THANKSGIVING BREAK (no class today)</li></ul>

Week Ten (Nov. 28 - Dec. 2)

Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Merchant</i>, Act 5</li><li>• Shakespeare and contemporary scholarship</li></ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final Exam review</li></ul>

Week Eleven

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Final Exam: Monday, December 5 @ 12:30pm</b></li></ul>
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