



Optional Literature Module: Shakespeare in Theory, in Print, and on Stage

(7.5 credits)

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Module description

The aim of this module is to help undergraduate students to develop advanced skills for reading and analyzing English-language literature. Students will study literary texts in English from specific historical, critical or generic perspectives and will learn advanced analytic methods, as well as theoretical perspectives. The module comprises a number of seminars (on campus), all of which involve active participation from the students. The students will read primary texts and secondary material before each seminar. They will discuss the material in class, using seminars as occasions to reflect upon and voice their ideas about their reading of primary texts and understanding of the secondary material. The final examination will be comprised of two written assignments.

More specifically, this module will explore William Shakespeare's plays from the major genres of tragedy, comedy, history, and lyric poetry. Our main focus will be on what defines Shakespearean dramatic form and how the plays capture new understandings of sexuality, political authority, Englishness, and social class. The course will introduce key debates in Shakespeare studies and the major critical approaches to Shakespeare such as new historicism, cultural materialism, feminism, and psychoanalysis to ask how his literary works validate these critical approaches, but also to attend to the ways these different interpretations and the media of print and stage affect Shakespeare's texts.

Intended learning outcomes

Upon completion of the module, students are expected to be able to:

- Account for the contents of the course literature;
- Display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field;
- Apply these concepts to literary texts;
- Analyse literary texts from a relevant theoretical perspective;
- Motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field;
- Display a good understanding of written English;
- Express themselves in academic English.

Grading

The module adopts the 7-grade SU scale (A–F).

To receive a final grade, students must have completed and passed all the examination assignments (not having completed all examination assignments results in no grade).

To receive a passing grade (A to E), students must complete and pass all the examination assignments and thus demonstrate that they achieved all the learning outcomes at least at the minimum level (as described below).

Module activities

The module consists of the following activities:

- Eight two-hour seminars on campus (pre-seminar instructions will be posted on Athena);
- Before each seminar, students are expected to finish the assigned reading and do any accompanying tasks to be prepared to discuss the reading and tasks at the seminar;
- Students are expected to complete all the tasks assigned by the teacher, which includes one oral presentation in class.

Examination

Students are required to complete the following:

- Oral presentation: a structured presentation discussing and comparing recurring themes and motifs in a selection of works from the reading list: pass/fail grading. These presentations will be given by students in the seminars. The order will be decided at the start of the module.
- Analytical essay: a research-led argument essays of 2000–2500 words, which must make reference both to primary sources and to at least two secondary peer reviewed sources. A–F grading scale.

Module format

The module will take place in the form of seminars, taught on campus, where students will practice analyzing literary texts in terms of the specific historical, generic and critical perspectives dealt with in the course, as well as develop their skills in providing textual support for their reading.

Seminars are intended to be active, hands-on opportunities for students to practice the skills they will learn throughout the module; for this reason, the students should bring the assigned text(s) with them to every seminar.

Required reading / viewing

Primary Texts

Reading will include a selection of 1800–2000 pages from the following list. Recommended scholarly editions for the plays and sonnets are: The Arden Shakespeare, New Cambridge Shakespeare, The Oxford Shakespeare. These editions provide very helpful notes to explain details of the text and useful introductions. Please note that for *King Lear* we use the Arden edition.

1. William Shakespeare. *The Sonnets* (first printed 1609)
2. ---. *Henry IV, Part I* (prtd. 1598)
3. ---. *Richard III* (prtd. 1597)
4. ---. *The Merchant of Venice* (prtd. 1600)
5. ---. *Twelfth Night* (prtd. 1623)
6. ---. *King Lear* (prtd. 1608) in the edition by R. A. Foakes, Arden Shakespeare, Bloomsbury, 1997. ISBN: 9781903436592
7. ---. *Romeo and Juliet* (prtd. 1597)

Secondary Readings

Dutton, R. and J. E. Howard. *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works*. 4 vols. Oxford: Blackwell, 2003.

All chapters are available electronically at SUB (abbreviated as ACSW below).

Hadfield, Andrew. "The Power and Rights to the Crown in *Hamlet* and *King Lear*: 'The King: The King's to Blame'." *The Review of English Studies*, New Series, 54:217 (2003): 566–86. Available electronically at SUB.

Electronic Resources

On *Original Pronunciation*:

<http://www.openculture.com/2013/09/what-shakespeare-sounded-like-to-shakespeare.html>

The Folger Shakespeare Library holds numerous early editions: <https://www.folger.edu/>

Schedule

Please note that there may be changes to seminar dates/times and rooms. Check Time Edit regularly.

WEEKS	SEMINARS	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
36	Seminar 1: Introduction	Module description	Sign up for individual presentations at seminar 1
37	Seminar 2: Sonnets	1. <i>The Sonnets</i> 2. Bruce R. Smith, "Shakespeare's Sonnets and a History of Sexuality" (ACSW vol.4)	Individual presentations on <i>The Sonnets</i>
38	Seminar 3: Tragedy	1. <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> 2. Naomi Conn Liebler, "There is no world without Verona walls": The City in <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> (ACSW vol.1)	Individual presentations on <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
39	Seminar 4: The History Play	1. <i>1 Henry IV</i> 2. James Knowles, "1 Henry IV" (ACSW vol.2)	Individual Presentations on <i>1 Henry IV</i>
40	Seminar 5: The History Play	1. <i>Richard III</i> 2. James Siemon, "'The Power of Hope': An Early Modern Reader of <i>Richard III</i> " (ACSW vol.2)	Individual Presentations on <i>Richard III</i>
41	Seminar 6: Comedy	1. <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> 2. Marion Wynn-Davis, "Rubbing at Whitewash" (ACSW vol.3)	Individual presentations on <i>The Merchant of Venice</i>
42	Seminar 7: Comedy	1. <i>Twelfth Night</i> 2. Phyllis Rackin, "Shakespeare's Crossdressing Comedies" (ACSW vol.3)	Individual presentations on <i>Twelfth Night</i>
43	Seminar 8: Tragedy	1. <i>King Lear</i> 2. Andrew Hadfield, "The Power and Rights to the Crown in <i>Hamlet</i> and <i>King Lear</i> [...]" (RES)	Individual presentations on <i>King Lear</i>
44			DEADLINE FOR ESSAY: Friday 1 November
49			Deadline for re-submissions: Friday 6 December

Grading criteria: Essay

	A	B	C	D	E	Fx	F
	excellent skills in	very good skills in	good skills in	satisfactory skills in	adequate skills in	inadequate skills	totally inadequate skills
Overview of material	accounting for the contents of the course literature	accounting for the contents of the course literature	accounting for the contents of the course literature	accounting for the contents of the course literature	accounting for the contents of the course literature	The student has displayed some, but not all, of the skills of the level of the criteria for E.	The student's work does not demonstrate the achievement of the course outcomes at a minimally adequate level.
Discussion	displaying the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field, and applying these concepts to literary texts	displaying the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field, and applying these concepts to literary texts	displaying the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field, and applying these concepts to literary texts	displaying the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field, and applying these concepts to literary texts	displaying the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field, and applying these concepts to literary texts		
Analysis	analysing literary texts from a relevant theoretical perspective critically, and motivating their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field	analysing literary texts from a relevant theoretical perspective critically, and motivating their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field	analysing literary texts from a relevant theoretical perspective critically, and motivating their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field	analysing literary texts from a relevant theoretical perspective critically, and motivating their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field	analysing literary texts from a relevant theoretical perspective critically, and motivating their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field		
Comprehension	displaying a good understanding of written English	displaying a good understanding of written English	displaying a good understanding of written English	displaying a good understanding of written English	displaying a good understanding of written English		
Expression	expressing themselves in academic English	expressing themselves in academic English	expressing themselves in academic English	expressing themselves in academic English	expressing themselves in academic English		

Grading criteria: Oral presentation

Criteria	Pass	Fail
Content	The presentation introduces the topic of the presentation in a clear and concise manner demonstrating the student's understanding of the literary, historical and theoretical issues discussed. These issues are presented and discussed in a lucid manner.	In the presentation the student does not demonstrate a sufficient understanding of the literary, historical, and theoretical issues discussed. These issues are not presented and discussed in an adequate manner.
Organisation and language	The presentation is well structured and easy to follow. The language used is academic and does not contain any severe mistakes.	The organisation of the presentation is poor, and the language used contains several mistakes.