

SYLLABUS - Fall 2004

ENLT 341 Shakespeare, Special Topics: Comedies
Instructor: Michael Friedman
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Office: CLP 210 Tel: x4229
Office Hours: M and F 10:00-11:30
and by appointment

Required Texts

The Pelican edition of The Two Gentlemen of Verona, and the Signet Classics edition of six plays: The Comedy of Errors, Love's Labor's Lost, The Taming of the Shrew, The Merchant of Venice, Much Ado About Nothing, and As You Like It.

Course Requirements

1. Two short papers, printed, of approximately 4-6 pages, on a topic given by the instructor. These essays will be due on Oct. 14 and Nov. 16 (See CALENDAR OF EVENTS). Late papers will be grudgingly accepted, but one grade will be subtracted for each day that the paper is late. Papers turned in more than three days late will receive no credit, and neglecting to turn in a paper before our last class will earn you a failing grade for the course. One extension per semester may be granted if you see me before the due date with a good reason. More information on the form of these essays will be given during the Paper Clinic on Sept. 23.
2. One Final project. This assignment will involve the staging of a scene from one of the plays we are reading this semester. You will perform this scene in class near the end of the semester, and a group representative will give a short talk afterwards. One member of each group who may not feel comfortable acting may serve as the group's director and present the oral report which summarizes the group's intentions and discoveries.
3. Two exams, one midterm and one final, the midterm to be held on October 26 and the final during the exam period. The exams will be primarily objective; that is, you will be asked to give concise definitions of terms used in lectures and discussions and to identify the speaker and significance of quotations taken from the texts we have read. You will not be given long essay questions to answer, for such subjects are the stuff of papers.
4. Discussion. During the second class period devoted to each play, you will meet in discussion groups of approximately five members to share your insights on issues not covered in lectures. During the term, each of you will be responsible for serving one turn as the leader (directing the course of the discussion) and several turns as a participant. To prepare for these sessions, you will answer in writing two sets of discussion questions that will lay out the broad thematic issues that the discussion should cover. To receive a high pass on these assignments, you must adhere to the basic grammatical rules of English and answer both sets of questions with sufficient elaboration and textual support. Responses turned in late will receive only half credit. Half of your grade for discussion will be based upon the combined performance of all the members of your group in their assigned roles; the other half will depend upon your personal performance on the written responses and in the discussions themselves over the course of the semester.

5. Critical Readings - Along with the plays and their introductions, you will be assigned two articles per play to read and respond to in writing for our third class period devoted to each play. Your half-page response should give a brief summary of the thesis of the essay and a personal evaluation of whether or not the essay was helpful, convincing, and/or well-supported. These articles are located at the back of the Signet editions of each play or in the packet of readings on reserve in the library, and their due dates are listed on the CALENDAR OF EVENTS.

6. Attendance will be taken at every class, and one grade will be subtracted from your final grade in the course for each absence above four. You must also prepare for class by completing all reading assignments on time. Before each lecture class, I will administer a short objective quiz intended to encourage you to finish reading the play by that time. Video versions of the plays are available in the library for you to view, but seeing the videos is not a substitute for reading the plays. You are also strongly encouraged to participate in our classroom staging of scenes from the plays. You will not be evaluated on the basis of your acting or suggestions, but around grading time, I do consider positively your willingness to contribute to the effort we expend when we workshop a scene.

Computation of Grades

Short papers (2)	10% each
Discussion	20% (10% group and 10% individual)
Midterm	20%
Critical Readings/Quizzes	10%
Final project	10%
Final exam	20%

Course Structure - We will spend three class periods on each play:

1. The first period will be taken up by a lecture providing background information on the play and the place it holds in the body of Shakespeare's work.
2. The second period will include a small-group and then a large-group discussion of several aspects of the play's design, the ideas it presents, and the questions it provokes.
3. The third period will be devoted to questions of staging and production. During these sessions, we will act out scenes from the plays or view videotapes of productions.

Formal writing for undergraduate literature courses in the English department should follow Modern Language Association guidelines, as found for example in the current edition of Joseph Gibaldi's MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, available in the campus bookstore.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

8/31 Go over syllabus

9/2 The Two Gentlemen of Verona

9/7 " " " " "

9/9 Brooks [R] and Berggren [R]

9/14 The Comedy of Errors

9/16 " " " "

9/21 Evans [164] and Salgādo [R] (**Get paper topics**)

9/23 Paper Clinic

9/28 Love's Labor's Lost

9/30 " " "

10/5 McLay [R] and Kehler [R]

10/7 The Taming of the Shrew

10/12 " " " " "

10/14 Leggatt [147] and Bamber [163] (**Paper #1 due**) Fall Break: 10/19

10/21 Follow-up Paper Clinic

10/26 Midterm

10/28 The Merchant of Venice

11/2 " " " " (**Get paper topics**)

11/4 Bamber [137] and Leggatt [142]

11/9 Much Ado About Nothing

11/11 " " " " (**Final Projects approved**)

11/16 Stauffer [117] and Neely [128] (**Paper #2 due**)

11/18 As You Like It

11/23 " " " "

11/30 Gardner [161] and Erickson [180]

12/2 Final Projects

12/7 " "

12/9 " "

This entire syllabus is subject to change and may be updated as the semester progresses.