

## *Course Syllabus*

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### **Course Information**

<i>Course Number/Section</i>	LIT 3320, section 001
<i>Course Title</i>	<b>Shakespeare's Tragedies</b>
<i>Term</i>	Spring 2007
<i>Days &amp; Times</i>	T, R 10-11:15 AM

### **Professor Contact Information**

<i>Professor</i>	Dr. Milton Cohen
<i>Office Phone</i>	972-883-2029
<i>Email Address</i>	mcohen@utdallas.edu
<i>Office Location</i>	JO 5.518
<i>Office Hours</i>	T, R 11:15-12:15

### **Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions**

LIT 2341 "Literary Analysis"

### **Course Description**

This course covers five tragedies: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *King Lear*.

In reading the plays, we shall pay particular attention to their poetry, a quality that sometimes defers to discussions of character and theme. Augmenting our discussions, we shall watch scenes from video performances, sometimes comparing how different versions interpret a scene.

We shall also consider the plays in their tragic form, reading Aristotle's prescriptions for tragedy in the *Poetics*, and noting how Shakespeare's patterns both adhere to and diverge from classical standards.

### **Required Textbooks and Materials**

packet of readings

*Romeo and Juliet* (New Folger Library, Washington Square Press)

*Hamlet* (Signet)

*Othello* (Signet)

*Macbeth* (Signet)

*King Lear* (Signet)

(Students may use other editions or a "complete works" edition, but will be responsible for finding page and line references matching the editions listed above and for finding scholarship assigned from the assigned editions.)

### **Course Requirements and Grading Policy**

1. Students will write two short, analytical papers (ca. 5-6 pages) or one long one (10-12 pages). The long paper and one of the short papers will require secondary research. In place of a short paper, students can substitute a 20 minute oral report or a carefully-rehearsed performance of a scene.
2. Class participation is especially important in this course (counting for about 30% of the final grade) and assumes the following forms:
  - a. brief "response" papers and/or quizzes over particular acts and scenes
  - b. voluntary "reading" performances of brief scenes
  - c. class discussion and attendance

### **Syllabus**

<b><u>Date due</u></b>	<b><u>Topic / Readings</u></b>	<b><u>Paper</u></b>
1/09	Introduction to course	
1/11	<u>What is Tragedy?</u> Aristotle, from <i>Poetics</i> (packet) Russ McDonald, "Tragedy" in Shakespeare (packet)	
1/16 (packet)	Simon Lesser, "Tragedy, Comedy, and the Aesthetic Experience"  <u>Shakespearean language</u> "The Forms of Dramatic Language" in Shakespeare (packet) "Chart of the Relative Proportions of Poetry and Prose in Shakespeare's Plays" (packet)	
1/18	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> Introduction Acts I – II	<b>Reaction paper</b>
1/23	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> Acts II – III	
1/25	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> Acts III – IV	
1/30	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> Acts IV – V	
2/01	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> Performances, Videos	

2/06	<i>Hamlet</i> Introduction Acts I – II	<b>Reaction paper</b>
2/08	<i>Hamlet</i> Acts II – III	
2/13	<i>Hamlet</i> Acts III – IV	
2/15	<i>Hamlet</i> Acts IV – V	
2/20	<i>Hamlet</i> Performances, Videos	
2/22	<i>Othello</i> Introduction Acts I – II	<b><u>1st short paper due</u></b>
2/27	<i>Othello</i> Acts II – III	<b>Reaction paper</b>
3/01	<i>Othello</i> Acts III – IV	
3/06-3/08	Spring Break(!)	
3/13	<i>Othello</i> Acts IV – V	
3/15	<i>Othello</i> Performances, Videos	
3/20	<i>Macbeth</i> Introduction Acts I – II	<b><u>Reaction paper</u></b>

3/22	<i>Macbeth</i> Acts II – III	
3/27	<i>Macbeth</i> Acts III – IV	
3/29	<i>Macbeth</i> Acts IV – V	
4/03	<i>Macbeth</i> Performances, Videos	
4/05	<i>King Lear</i> Introduction Acts I – II	<b><u>Long paper due</u></b>
4/10	<i>King Lear</i> Acts II – III	<b><u>Reaction paper</u></b>
4/12	<i>King Lear</i> Acts III – IV	<b><u>2nd short paper due</u></b>
4/17	<i>King Lear</i> Acts IV – V	
4/19	<i>King Lear</i> Performances, Videos	

#### **Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

1. Students will comprehend the themes and action of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear*.
2. Students will develop an appreciation for Shakespeare's poetic styles.
3. Students will respond to the plays (and show their understanding) through class participation and a subjective reaction paper (1-2 pp.) for each play.
4. Students will write either two short formal analyses (ca. 5 pp.) or one longer research paper (ca. 10 pp.) on themes of their choice regarding the plays.

## Course Policies

### Syllabus

Items on the syllabus (due dates, readings, etc.) are subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

### Reaction Papers

R.P. encourage you to express your views of the assigned work or a particular element of it (character, theme, style, etc.). R.P. are evaluated with a  $\sqrt{+}$  (effort above expectations),  $\sqrt{\phantom{x}}$  (meets expectations), or  $\sqrt{-}$  (below expectations). A missing r.p. counts as a two  $\sqrt{-}$ . These marks are averaged at the end the semester. Straight  $\sqrt{\phantom{x}}$ 's over the semester = B.

### Class Participation

C.P. is part of your final grade, though the exact percentage varies from course to course. It represents your active contribution to class discussion. Quality, not quantity, of contributions is what matters.

C.P. is computed as follows. At the end of the semester, I assign a participation grade using a "C" base. I.e., if you came to class, but said nothing, you would receive a "C" for c.p. I then adjust that grade based on your attendance. Excellent attendance (0-2 absences in a twice-a-week course) can raise c.p. by 1/3 of a grade; 3-4 absences don't change it; more than 4 absences lower it progressively by the number of absences.

Those students who would sooner face a firing squad than speak in class should contact me after the first class about doing extra written work to compensate for their silence.

### Attendance

I do take attendance, and your cumulative absences affect your class participation grade (see above). Absences are excused for medical reasons or family emergencies only and require documentation (e.g., doctor's note, Rx, severed hand, etc.). Grandparents, I've found, have a disturbing tendency to die when major assignments are due (anxiety e.s.p., no doubt); in such cases, bring a signed and dated card from the hospital or funeral home. Leaving after the break in a long class may result in an absence recorded for that class.

### Tardiness

Since class typically starts on time, if you come in late, you disturb not only the instructor and your classmates, but the "flow" of the lesson. Coming in late while a student is presenting an oral report is even more disturbing. And leaving early (except in an emergency) really has no justification in a 75 minute class. If you know you must leave early, let me know at the beginning of class and sit near the door. **Cumulatively, two tardies = one absence.**

### Late Papers

Graded papers turned in late will be marked down as follows: 1-2 days late = 1/3 of a grade lower; 3-4 days late = 2/3 of grade lower; 5-7 days late = full grade lower; beyond 1 week, paper not accepted. **Late reaction papers are normally not accepted.**

Slide late papers under my door (JO 5.518), but be aware that it's when I receive it, not when you submit it, that determines the paper's lateness.

### **Secondary Research**

Check to see if s.r. is required, optional, or forbidden for the assigned paper. (In reaction papers, for example, s.r. is not allowed; in long papers it is usually required). When used, it should never dominate your paper or control the discussion; your ideas should. Use s.r. to amplify your arguments, to provide contrasting views you will argue against, or (in your introduction) to suggest the range of critical opinion on your topic.

Consider the source's potential validity (and respectability): scholarly books and journal articles have been peer-reviewed and are therefore more reliable (and usually more sophisticated) than material found on the internet. Going into the library stacks also shows more effort than relying on the internet or on material in omnibus collections (e.g., *Poetry [or Short Story] Criticism*). High school-level notes such as *Cliff's Notes* or *Monarch Notes* are never acceptable.

Use quotation marks for all material taken directly from a secondary source. For quoted material and for paraphrased material, **cite your source** parenthetically immediately after the quoted or paraphrased material, using author's last name (or abbreviated book title) and page number: "xxxxx" (Smith 40). At the end of your paper add a "Works Cited" page with complete bibliographical data. See the *MLA Handbook* for correct form.

### **Using the internet**

Internet material is easy to obtain, but did not necessarily pass a quality-control test of peer-review and may therefore contain misinformation or highly dubious claims. **Let the user beware!** Researching books and articles on an author or work shows more effort.

### **Plagiarism**

Passing off someone else's ideas as your own constitutes plagiarism, whether it was done intentionally or inadvertently. Likewise, having someone else write all or part of your paper. Thus, it's essential to show where your ideas came from, using parenthetical citation (see "Secondary Research" above). Be aware that A&H subscribes to "Turnitin.com," which can trace the source of material taken from the internet. UTD takes all forms of academic dishonesty very seriously, as does your instructor. Plagiarism can result—and in my courses has resulted—in an "F" for the course and the incident recorded on the student's permanent record.

### **Grading**

As you'll see, I spend a lot of time on each paper, hoping (perhaps Quixotically) that you'll apply corrections and comments to your subsequent papers. When I've finished grading a set of papers, I then distribute them by grade and scan each paper quickly to make sure it conforms (in relative strengths and weaknesses) to others of the exact same grade. This final scanning sometimes results in a grade being raised or lowered slightly. Split grades, e.g., A-/B+ means the grade is on the borderline.

In computing your grades, I assign specific points to each grade:

A+	4.5	B+	3.5	etc.
A	4.25	B	3.25	
A-	4.0	B-	3.0	
A-/B+	3.75	B-/C+	2.75	

I then multiply the grade by its relative weight (30%, 40%, etc.) to determine total points. Likewise, for class participation, which comprises oral participation (typically 35% of CP) and reaction papers (typically 65%).

Normally, total points for the semester determine the final grade as follows:

		340	B+	240	C+	140	D+
413+	A	313	B	213	C	113	D
375	A-	275	B-	175	C-	75	D-

### **Improvement points**

In many courses, I review your work over the entire semester, and add a few points to your semester total if your writing has improved. Hence, save all your written work during the semester as I may collect it at the end of the semester.

## **Student Conduct & Discipline**

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

## **Academic Integrity**

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.



## **Email Use**

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

## **Withdrawal from Class**

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

## **Student Grievance Procedures**

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

### **Incomplete Grade Policy**

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

### **Disability Services**

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:  
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22  
PO Box 830688  
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688  
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

## **Religious Holy Days**

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

## **Off-Campus Instruction and Course Activities**

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address given below. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. ([http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel\\_Risk\\_Activities.htm](http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm))

***These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***