

**San José State University**  
**Department of English**  
**ENGL 144: Introduction to Shakespeare, Fall 2017**

**Course and Contact Information**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Adrienne Eastwood
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m. and by appointment.
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:30 – 2:45 p.m.
<b>Classroom:</b>	BBC 130
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	Upper division standing

**Course Format**

Lecture/Discussion

**Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

*Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on [Canvas Learning Management System course login website](#) at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through [MySJSU](http://my.sjsu.edu) at <http://my.sjsu.edu> (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor) to learn of any updates.*

**Course Description (Required)**

This course will explore some of the major plays of William Shakespeare. We will approach these texts chronologically (with a few minor exceptions), and examine the ways in which Shakespeare developed as a playwright through his work in various dramatic modes (comedy, history, tragedy, and romance). One of my goals for this class is to encourage you to understand the plays within the historical context of early modern culture. To this end, we will examine and discuss not only the plays themselves, but also some additional primary texts (e.g., excerpts from homilies, speeches, pamphlets, and other texts) that will help us to imagine this context. While we will approach the plays from different thematic perspectives, we will concentrate on familial relationships, examining how topics related to the family (courtship, marriage, parent/child relationships, etc.) coincide with larger issues of the political and social order. For example, we will discuss the construction of the family as a mini-commonwealth, and the political impact that added to Shakespeare's dramatic productions. Similarly, we will consider the relationship between patriarchal and monarchical authority, and the ways in which related ideologies circulated among Elizabethans.

Moving from an understanding of Shakespeare in his own historical context, we will also address the more universal applications of Shakespeare's plays through performance. Performance tends to reinterpret and

update the words on the page and, I argue, keep Shakespeare's vision relevant and alive. Performance in this sense includes not only performance on a stage, or the performance of a particular character, but the way in which the play is interpreted—how the variety of choices made about the play in its production (either on stage or on screen) shape its meaning. This course examines in depth several of Shakespeare's plays, specifically addressing issues of performance. We will discuss each play in the context of its original performance during Shakespeare's time and its life on stage and screen in the ensuing centuries. Paying particular attention to modern productions, we will analyze the ways in which production elements such as setting, casting, staging, costuming, editing, and individual performances shape and create meaning (or fail to do so) for the audiences of today. Placing these plays within this context of performance will raise larger issues about the complex relationships between the Shakespearean canon and its ever changing audiences. Students will respond to each Shakespearean play text through both writing and oral interpretation, integrating speech and dramatic performance with an understanding of the complexities of plot, characterization, and dramatic form.

### **Course Goals (Optional)**

The primary goals of this course are to introduce you to several of Shakespeare's major works, and to encourage you to begin to imagine what life must have been like for Shakespeare and his audiences, as well as to get a sense of the enormous impact the professional theater had on Elizabethan culture. You will also gain from this course a general understanding of dramatic form (comedies, histories, tragedies, and romances), and a reading competence in Elizabethan English. Finally, I would like you to acquire an appreciation for the range of choices involved in performing—and therefore interpreting—a Shakespearean play. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, and/or rhetoric (Familiarity with dramatic forms through reading, lecture, and discussion-assessed by participation grade.)\
2. Show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British literature (Final Exam)
3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively (Essays, Film Reviews, Final Project)
4. Develop and carry out research projects (Performance Research Project)
5. Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts (Lecture, Final, Essays)

This course serves the department's Student Learning Objectives 1 and 2 (LO1 and LO2) by introducing you to Shakespearean poetry and drama (i.e., British Literature). Students read closely throughout the course and will have ample opportunity to discuss and write about what they learn. Success in LO1 and LO2 will be measured by the final grade in the course.

Students are asked to write several essays for this course (a total of at least 5,000 words) including one research assignment; this clearly serves Learning Objectives 3 and 4 (LO3 and LO4). Assessment of student success in LO3 and LO4 will be measured by their grades on these essays.

All of my classes are discussion based. Students are asked to come to class prepared to talk about the material they read, and my lectures aim to help students to realize the relations among culture, history, and the texts we read. The ability to articulate the relationships listed in Learning Objective 5 (LO5) is measured by the students' participation grade in the course.

### **Required Texts/Readings (Required)**

## Textbook

*The Norton Shakespeare Volume 3*. Ed. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean Howard, Katherine Eisaman Maus, Gordon McMullan, and Suzanne Gossett. ISBN: 978-0-393-93499-1.

McDonald, Russ. *The Bedford Companion to Shakespeare*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (BCS), New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 200. 978-0-312-24880-6

## Other Requirements

### Other technology requirements / equipment / material

MLA Guidelines available here: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

## Course Requirements and Assignments (Required)

**Because this is a 4-unit course, students can expect to spend a minimum of twelve hours per week preparing for and attending classes and completing course assignments. This course will have integrated into the syllabus the following 1-unit course enhancement:**

### **Increased course content and/or collateral readings: Final Project, Performance Assignment**

**Participation:** Because a large portion of this course involves discussion, workshops, and oral performances, regular attendance and active participation are imperative. Students will be expected to discuss the plays in detail, and to deliver and evaluate a variety of performances.

Participation also includes bringing your book to class and following along as directed. In other words, OPEN your book. Maintain proper posture and a polite demeanor: this means appearing awake and conscious while in class.

**Essays:** You will be asked to write three formal essays (1,500 words each) for this class. Suggested topics for the essays will be distributed in advance. If you wish to write on a topic of your own devising, you should discuss the project with me well in advance. Your papers should clearly demonstrate your own engagement with the plays rather than your paraphrase of what others have written about them—or what I have argued about them in class. All assignments must be typed, double-spaced, with 1” margins all around. Please use a 12 point font. General guidelines for papers will be discussed in class. **Your success on these papers will be directly proportional to your knowledge and understanding of the texts.**

MLA Guidelines available here: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

**Performance Assignment:** You will be asked to either attend a live performance or view a film of one of the plays we are reading for this course and to write a review of that production. Detailed instructions for this assignment will be posted on Canvas.

**Final Project:** By way of a final project, I would like you to respond creatively to one of Shakespeare's plays or to an important scene in one of the plays. You might decide to “produce” a version of an important scene for yourselves and then provide a written rationale of your production. Consider your creative options wide open. One approach could be to choose a small cast and act the scene for the class; however, depending on your talents and interests, you might wish to approach this project differently, choosing instead to film a scene on video, do an audio production, or respond to the scene in some other way. For example, you might draw a

cartoon version of a scene, or write an “updated” version. Since many of you will be going on to teach Shakespeare in high schools, you might choose to write a lesson plan for a unit on Shakespeare. Further instructions will be distributed later in the semester, but keep this requirement in mind as you read through the material.

**Late Papers:** Turning in assignments late is unfair to the other students and to me; therefore, I will lower your grade one full letter for each day the paper is late. In the case of emergencies, please see me. Papers are due at the beginning of class. If I do not receive your paper by 9:15 a.m., I will consider it late.

*I do not accept emailed assignments under any circumstances.*

### **Final Examination or Evaluation**

Include University’s Credit Hour Requirement below.

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

### **Final Examination or Evaluation**

A final exam will be given in class at the end of the semester involving close reading and identification of Shakespeare’s text and an essay component.

### **Grading Information (Required)**

*Specify your grading policy here. Provide rubrics and explain how grades are assessed and assigned. Allow multiple opportunities to give feedback on student learning. Use rubrics or examples to explain and show students how they can assess themselves or check their own learning. More guidelines on grading information and class attendance can be found from the following two university policies:*

- [University Syllabus Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>)
- [University Attendance and Participation policy F15-12](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf>)

### **Determination of Grades**

#### **Grading Breakdown:**

Class Participation: (discussion & performances) 10%

Essay 1: 10 %

Essay 2: 15%

Essay 3: 20%

Performance Assignment: 5%

Final Project: 20%

Final Exam: 20 %

In order to receive a passing grade in this course, you must complete **all** of the above assignments.

***In ALL assignments, students will be graded on the depth of their knowledge and understanding of Shakespeare's works.***

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined by the SJSU Catalog (Grades-Letter Grading). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A+/A/A- = excellent; B+/B/B- = above average; C+/C/C- = average; D+/D/D- = below average; F = failure. Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a + or - grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

**Classroom Decorum:** Have the plays and supplementary materials read in full by the time we begin to discuss them in class. Regular attendance and active class participation are encouraged. Please come to class on time, bring your books to every class, and be considerate of the other students should you have to leave the room during our class.

I reserve the right to assign quizzes and written assignments throughout the semester.

Cell phones, laptops, e-readers, and other devices will remain turned off and put away for the duration of the class period unless otherwise instructed by me.

## **ENGL 144 Reading Schedule: SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

*List the agenda for the semester including when and where the final exam will be held. Indicate the schedule is subject to change with fair notice and how the notice will be made available.*

### **Course Schedule**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
1	8/23	Introductions
2	8/28	Shakespeare's Life and Times (Read the introductory material in your anthologies). Bedford Chapters 1 & 2.
2	8/30	Bedford, Chapters 3 & 4. Shakespeare's Life and Times Continued.
Recommended viewing: <i>Shakespeare in Love</i> , Dir. J. Madden		
3	9/4	LABOR DAY – NO CLASS
3	9/6	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>
4	9/11	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>
4	9/13	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i> (Post Topics for Essay 1)
RecoRecommended viewing: <i>Taming of the Shrew</i> , Dir. F. Zefferelli, with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton.		
5	9/18	<i>The Rape of Lucrece</i> , Bedford Chapter 8
5	9/20	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>
6	9/25	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
6	9/27	<i>Richard II</i>
7	10/2	<i>Richard II</i> - ESSAY 1 DUE
7	10/4	<i>Henry IV, Part I</i>
8	10/9	<i>Henry IV, Part I</i>
8	10/11	<i>Henry IV, Part I</i> (Post Topics for Essay 2)
Recommended Viewing: <i>The Hollow Crown</i>		
9	10/16	<i>Twelfth Night</i>
9	10/18	<i>Twelfth Night</i>
Recommended Viewing: <i>Twelfth Night</i> . Dir. Trevor Nunn, with Helena Bonham Carter and Ben Kingsley.		
10	10/23	<i>Hamlet</i>
10	10/25	<i>Hamlet</i>
<b>Required</b> viewing: <i>Hamlet</i> Dir. M. Almereyda, with Ethan Hawke. Review due 11/6. Recommended viewing: <i>Hamlet</i> . Dir. K. Branagh.		
11	10/30	<i>Hamlet</i>
11	11/1	NO CLASS
12	11/6	<i>Othello</i> - ESSAY 2 DUE
12	11/8	<i>Othello</i>
Recommended viewing: <i>Othello</i> . Dir. Parker, with Lawrence Fishburne		
13	11/13	<i>Othello</i> (Post Topics for Essay 3)
13	11/15	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>
14	11/20	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>
14	11/22	NO CLASS: HAPPY THANKSGIVING
Recommended viewing: <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> , dir. Joss Whedon.		
15	11/27	<i>The Tempest</i> PERFORMANCE ASSIGNMENT DUE
15	11/29	<i>The Tempest</i>
16	12/4	Screen <i>The Tempest</i> , dir. Julie Taymour. ESSAY 3 DUE
16	12/6	Screen <i>The Tempest</i>
	12/11	Last Day of Instruction. Final Projects Due
Final Exam	12/18	12:15 – 2:30 p.m. – BRING BLUE BOOKS