Boston University Study Abroad London
Seminar in Shakespeare Studies
CAS EN 368 (Elective B)
Spring 2016

Instructor Information

Name            Dr Varsha Panjwani
Day and Time     Mondays, 9am-1pm
Location         Alexander Room, 43 Harrington Gardens, SW7 4JU
Email            varsha.panjwani@york.ac.uk
Twitter          @EarlyModernDoc
Office hours     Tuesday 2-5pm

Other time slots might be available by appointment

Course Objectives

By the end of this elective, you will be able to:

- critically analyse the verbal, generic, structural, and dramatic qualities of Shakespeare’s plays
- relate Shakespeare’s plays to the historical, cultural, social, literary, and creative contexts in which they were produced
- demonstrate an intimate understanding of the interpretive choices involved in editing and performing Shakespeare’s plays
- participate in some of the dominant debates informing the study of Shakespearean drama
- put into practice a number of transferable skills such as close reading, editing, reviewing, presentation, researching, and critical writing
- exhibit an enhanced understanding of Shakespeare’s place in British and World literature and culture

Course Overview

This course has a two-pronged focus; on the one hand, it is an opportunity to undertake a detailed study of Shakespeare’s verbal and theatrical languages, and on the other hand, it equips you to investigate Renaissance London’s importance in shaping Shakespeare’s plays and Shakespeare’s importance in shaping some of the fiercest debates about agency and government, family, and national identity in London and the world today. The two concerns are tightly interlaced and demonstrate how Shakespeare continues to occupy a dominant status in English literature and culture today.
Course Methodology
Course content is delivered through close reading, discussion, lectures, seminars, workshops, and field trips. Each of these activities is mutually enhancing.

Course Assessment
Mid-Term Paper (20%)
You are expected to complete a take-home exercise. Further guidance is provided prior to the submission.

Portfolio (60%)
A portfolio consisting of research exercises, editing exercises, and reflection on seminar topics. In each case, the assignment must be ten to twelve pages. Ample practice and guidance is given prior to the submission.

Attendance & Participation (20%)
Marks are awarded for punctuality, attendance, robust participation in seminars including completing preparatory reading and research tasks, and meeting deadlines.

Grading
Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria and policies on plagiarism: http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester
* Final Grades are subject to deductions by the Academic Affairs Office due to unauthorised absences.

Attendance Policy
Classes
All Boston University London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, seminar, and field trip in order to fulfil the required course contact hours and receive course credit. Any student that has been absent from two class sessions (whether authorised or unauthorised) will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their continued participation on the programme. This may result in the student having to take a medical leave of absence from the programme or withdraw from the programme.

Authorised Absence:
Students who expect to be absent from any class should notify a member of Academic Affairs and complete an Authorized Absence Approval Form 10 working days in advance of the class date (except in the case of absence due to illness for more than one day. In this situation students should submit the Authorised Absence Approval Form with the required doctor’s note as soon as possible). Please note: Submitting an Authorised Absence Approval Form does not guarantee an authorised absence

Students may apply for an authorised absence only under the following circumstances:
• Illness (first day of sickness): If a student is too ill to attend class, the student must phone the BU London Student Affairs Office (who will in turn contact the student’s lecturer).
• Illness (multiple days): If a student is missing more than one class day due to illness, the student must call into the BU London Student Affairs Office each day the student is ill. Students must also provide the Student Affairs office with a completed Authorised Absence Approval Form and sick note from a local doctor excusing their absence from class.
• Important placement event that clashes with a class (verified by internship supervisor)
• Special circumstances which have been approved by the Directors (see note below).

The Directors will only in the most extreme cases allow students to leave the programme early or for a significant break.

Unauthorised Absence:
Any student to miss a class due to an unauthorised absence will receive a 4% grade penalty to their final grade for the course whose class was missed. This grade penalty will be applied by the Academic Affairs office to the final grade at the end of the course. As stated above, any student that has missed two classes will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their participation on the programme as excessive absences may result in a ‘Fail’ in the class and therefore expulsion from the programme.

Lateness
Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Any student with irregular class attendance (more than two late arrivals to class) will be required to meet with the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs and if the lateness continues, may have his/her final grade penalised.

Required Readings
It is essential that you read and reflect upon the relevant reading before each class. Although any modern edition of the plays is fine, the ones in brackets are particularly useful.

- Shakespeare, Macbeth (Sourcebooks Shakespeare edition which comes with a CD)
- Shakespeare, Titus Andronicus (ed. by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen for RSC Shakespeare. This is a two text version and includes Timon of Athens)
- Shakespeare, Hamlet (ed. by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor for Arden Shakespeare or Sourcebooks Shakespeare edition which comes with a CD)
- Shakespeare, Othello (ed. by E. A. J. Honigmann for Arden Shakespeare)

Select DVDS

Titus Andronicus, dir. by Julie Taymor
Macbeth, starring Antony Sher
Hamlet, starring Laurence Olivier
Othello, starring Ian McKellen

Useful Journals
Shakespeare Survey
Shakespeare
Multicultural Shakespeare
Course Chronology

Session 1 [22 February] Setting the Scene
Essential Reading: Several Texts [copies will be supplied]
Research Trip [latter half of the seminar] V&A Museum
Further Reading:

Session 2 [29 February] Coloured Shakespeare
Essential Reading: *Othello*
Further Reading:

**Evening Field Trip [4 March, FRIDAY]**
*Complete Works: Table Top Shakespeare: Othello* by Forced Entertainment

Session 3 [7 March] Representing the Uncanny
Essential Reading: *Macbeth*
Further Reading:

Session 4 [14 March] London Theatres, Performance Conditions, and Language
Essential Reading: Several Texts [copies will be supplied]
**Evening Field Trip* A Midsummer Night’s Dream* by Filter
Further Reading:

Session 5 [21 March] Globe and the City
Essential Reading: Several Texts [copies will be supplied]
Research Trip [within the seminar] Shakespeare’s Globe, Printing Press Demonstration, and a Walking Lecture
We will concentrate on the material conditions of production in Shakespeare’s time. Through a tour of Shakespeare’s Globe, we will be able to appreciate the physical conditions of performance. This will allow us to discuss how Shakespeare bore the open stage, the shifting and restless audience, and the resources of the theatre in mind while writing his plays. Through a printing press demonstration at Shakespeare’s Globe, we will be able to see how texts were printed and produced in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries. This is important in order to understand how modern editors influence our interpretation of Shakespeare. The walking lecture following this will further map how the surroundings of the theatre inspired Shakespeare’s plays.
Further Reading:

Assessment Deadline: Mid-Term Paper Submission

[28 March] NO CLASS: EASTER MONDAY

Session 6 [4 April] Textual Culture and Hamlet’s Soliloquies
Essential Reading: Hamlet
Further Reading:

Session 7 [11 April] Shakespeare on Film
Essential Reading: Titus Andronicus
Further Reading:

Session 8 [12 April, TUESDAY] Global Shakespeare
Essential Reading: Various Critical Extracts [copies will be supplied]
Further Reading:


* Contingency Class [20 April, WEDNESDAY] Students are obligated to keep this date free to attend class should any class dates need to be rescheduled.

FINAL PROJECT SUBMISSION [21 April, THURSDAY]

PLEASE NOTE: Schedules and topics are subject to change, in which case announcements will be made in class as appropriate.