



**Boston University British Programmes**  
**CAS EN 368**  
**Seminar in Shakespeare Studies**  
**Professor Mark Allen**  
**Elective B**

### **Course Overview**

This course aims to provide the student with an appreciation of the nature of Shakespeare's achievement through class sessions devoted to the close study of four plays.

The sessions will naturally involve some discussion of general background to Shakespeare and his works, with time being devoted to the various thematic, structural, and historical issues that arise from a study of his plays. For the greater part of the course however, time in class will be devoted to a close critical reading of various sections of the plays in order to give the student the opportunity to gain an intimate understanding of the verbal and dramatic qualities of Shakespeare's genius, and of the myriad ways in which meanings are expressed through the language, imagery, structure and dramatic possibilities of the works themselves.

Students will be expected to study specific scenes from the plays in advance, in order to focus discussion in class. Students will also watch video performances of the plays and, when possible, theatrical performances in London and Stratford-Upon-Avon in order to encourage their responses to and thinking about the plays as plays, rather than as novels or poems.

### **Class sessions**

**Session 1** Introduction/*Henry IV Part 1*

**Session 2** *Henry IV Part 1*

**Session 3** *Henry IV Part 1*

**Session 4** *Henry IV Part 2*

**Session 5** *Henry IV Part 2*

**Session 6** *Macbeth*

**Session 7** Visit to the Globe Theatre

**Session 8** *Macbeth*

**Session 9** *Twelfth Night*

**Final Examination** for time & place please consult BU exam website.

Some suggestions for background and critical reading you will find on your reading list. It will always be worth your while investing some time in exploring the Shakespeare shelves in the library. EVERYBODY needs to make full use of the explanatory notes you will find in (especially) the Arden editions of the plays.

All students must refrain from eating in class, using Wikipedia in their essays and leaving mobile phones on during class (not in that particular order...).

### **ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS:**

1. One essay, at least 2500 words in length. This is to be handed in before the final examination and will be devoted to a subject chosen by the student and approved by the tutor (45%.)
2. Final examination consisting of a two-hour paper in which students will have to answer two context questions from the plays we have studied and one essay devoted to one of the plays. No texts will be allowed in the examination room and material from previous essays must not be duplicated. (45%.)
3. Class participation is (10%) of your grade and attendance is compulsory.

### **Shakespeare Seminar: Reading List**

Out of the many introductory books on Shakespeare, Leah Scragg's *Discovering Shakespeare's Meaning* (1994) and the Arden *Reading Shakespeare's Dramatic Language* (2001) are particularly useful. Older, but still valuable, are the first 91 pages of A Harbage's *William Shakespeare: A Reader's Guide* (1963). For further information and references on any and all Shakespearean topics please consult S Wells' (Ed) *Shakespeare: A Bibliographical Guide* (new ed, 1990). Recent general volumes include the Blackwell's *A Companion to Shakespeare*, Eds DS Kastan and S Wells' *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare Studies* (1986) and also perhaps *A Shakespeare Reader: Sources and Criticism* (Eds RD Brown and D Johnson, 2000). The most up-to-date and authoritative biography is *Shakespeare: A Life* (1998) by P Honan.

### **Editions of Individual Plays**

There are valuable introductions in various editions of the plays, including the Signet, New Penguin, Oxford and New Cambridge Shakespeares. Detailed, critical work on the texts requires, however, the unrivaled explanatory notes of the Arden series, and every student must own the respective editions of *Macbeth*, Ed K Muir (1951, rev ed 1984), *Henry IV, Parts I & II*, Ed AR Humphreys (1960 & 1966) and *Twelfth Night*, Eds JM Lothian and TW Craik (1975).

### ***Macbeth***

#### **Critical anthologies and introductory readings**

The old Macmillan *Casebook* (1968) is edited by John Wain and is still worth a look. More recent are the *Longman Literature Guides* (1988), Eds L Cookson and B Loughrey and the Harvester *New Critical Introduction to Shakespeare* with the *Macbeth* volume written by M Long (1989).

#### **Books and articles**

J Bayley, *Shakespeare and Tragedy* (1981)

H Berger Jr, 'The Early Scenes of *Macbeth*: Preface to a New Interpretation' (*ELH* 47, 1980, 1-31)

H Berger Jr, 'Text Against Performance in Shakespeare: The Example of *Macbeth*' in

*The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance* (Ed S Greenblatt, 1982)

JR Brown, Ed, *Focus on 'Macbeth'* (1982)

S Booth, *'King Lear', 'Macbeth', Indefinition and Tragedy* (1983)  
 AC Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy* (1904 and often reprinted)  
 NS Brooke, 'Language most shows a man...? Language and speaker in *Macbeth*' in *Shakespeare's Styles*, Ed P Edwards, IS Ewbank and GK Hunter (1980)  
 C Brooks, *The Well-wrought Urn* (1947)  
 JL Calderwood, *If it Were Done: 'Macbeth' and Tragic Action* (1986)  
 W Clemen, *Shakespeare's Soliloquies* (1987)  
 ST Coleridge, *Coleridge's Criticism of Shakespeare*, Ed RA Foakes (1989)  
 F Fergusson, 'Macbeth as the Imitation of an Action' reprinted in *Shakespeare: The Tragedies* Ed, A Harbage (1964)  
 EAJ Honigmann, *Shakespeare Seven Tragedies: The Dramatic Manipulation of Response* (1976)  
 E Jones, *Scenic Form in Shakespeare* (1971)  
 GW Knight, *The Wheel of Fire* (1930, rev ed 1949)  
 LC Knights, 'How Many Children had Lady Macbeth?' reprinted in his *Hamlet and Other Shakespearean Essays* (1979)  
 C Leech, *Tragedy* (Methuen Critical Idiom Series, 1969)  
 MM Mahood, *Shakespeare's Wordplay* (1957)  
 K Muir and P Edwards Eds, *Aspects of 'Macbeth'* (1977)  
 JIM Stewart, *Character and Motive in Shakespeare* (1969)  
 G Williams, 'Macbeth' (*Text and Performance* series, 1985)  
 WK Wimsatt Jr Ed, *Dr Johnson on Shakespeare* (1969)

## **Twelfth Night**

### **Critical anthologies and introductory readings**

There is a Macmillan Casebook on *Twelfth Night* edited by D J Palmer (1971) and a useful little introductory book by J M Gregson in the *Studies in English Literature* series (1975). There is also a collection of fairly recent essays in the *Longman Literature Guides* series edited by L Cookson and B Loughrey (1990).

### **Books and articles**

CL Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy* (1959)  
 A Barton, '...Shakespeare's Sense of an Ending' in *Shakespearean Comedy*, Ed M Bradbury and D J Palmer (*Stratford upon Avon Studies* 14, 1972)  
 C Belsey, 'Disrupting Sexual Difference: Meaning and Gender in the Comedies' in *Alternative Shakespeare*, Ed J Drakakis (1985)  
 R Berry, *Changing Styles in Shakespeare* (1981)  
 MC Bradbrook, *The Growth and Structure of Elizabethan Comedy* (1955)  
 AC Bradley, 'Feste the Jester' in *A Miscellany* (1929)  
 JR Brown, *Shakespeare and his Comedies* (1957, second ed 1962)  
 WC Carroll, 'The Ending of *Twelfth Night*...' in *Shakespearean Comedy*, Ed M Charney (1980)  
 M French, *Shakespeare's Division of Experience* (1982)  
 N Frye, 'The Argument of Comedy' in *Shakespeare: Modern Essays in Criticism*, Ed LF Dean (1957, second ed 1967)  
 N Frye, *A Natural Perspective: The Development of Shakespearean Comedy and Romance* (1965)

J Hartwig, 'Feste's Whirligig and the Comic Providence of *Twelfth Night*' (*ELH* 40, 1973,501-13)  
 L Hotson, *The First Night of 'Twelfth Night'* (1954)  
 C Leech, '*Twelfth Night* and Shakespearean Comedy' (1965)  
 R Nevo, *Comic Transformations in Shakespeare* (1980)  
 L Potter, '*Twelfth Night*' (*Text and Performance* series, 1983)  
 J Southworth, *Fools and Jesters at the English Court* (1998)  
 E Welsford, *The Fool: His Social and Literary History* (1935)  
**Henry IV, Parts I & II** (the two separate plays)

### **Critical Anthologies and Introductory readings**

For both plays, students will certainly find David Bevington's introductions to the Oxford Shakespeare editions very useful and fairly up to date (1987). For a concise (if conservative) account of some of the background to the plays there are pertinent chapters in CWRD Moseley (see below) and for more varied approaches, see the anthologies listed below under D Bevington and GK Hunter.

### **Books and articles**

CL Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy: A Study of Dramatic Form and its Relation to Social Content* (1959)  
 D Bevington Ed, *Henry IV, Parts I & I: Critical Essays* (1986)  
 AC Bradley, 'The Rejection of Falstaff' in *Oxford Lectures in Poetry* (1909) (Also in Hunter,1970)  
 W Empson, 'Double Plots' in *Some Versions of Pastoral* (1935)  
 G Holderness, J Turner & N Potter, *Shakespeare: The Play of History* (1988)  
 GK Hunter, '*Henry IV* and the Elizabethan Two-Part Play' in *Review of English Studies*, new series V, 1954  
 GK Hunter Ed, *Shakespeare: Henry IV, Parts I & II* Macmillan Casebook series (1970)  
 H Jenkins, *The Structural Problem in Shakespeare's Henry IV* (1956)  
 DS Kastan, *Shakespeare and the Shapes of Time* (1982)  
 LC Knights, 'Time's Subjects: The Sonnets and *King Henry IV, Part II*' in *Some Shakespearean Themes* (1959)  
 C Leech, 'The Unity of *King Henry IV, Part II*' in *Shakespeare Survey* VI, (1953)  
 CWRD Moseley, *Shakespeare's History Plays, 'Richard II' to 'Henry V: The Making of a King*, Penguin Critical Studies (1988)  
 ME Prior, *The Drama of Power: Studies in Shakespeare's History Plays* (1973)  
 AP Rossiter, 'Ambivalence: The Dialectic of the Histories' in *Angel with Horns* (1961)  
 JIM Stewart, *Character and Motive in Shakespeare* (1949)  
 N Taylor, *Shakespeare Henry IV Part II*, Penguin Critical Studies (1992)  
 EMW Tillyard, *Shakespeare's History Plays* (1944)  
 DA Traversi, *Shakespeare: From 'Richard II' to 'Henry V'* (1957)  
 JS Wilders, *The Lost Garden: A View of Shakespeare's English and Roman History Plays* (1978)  
 JD Wilson, *The Fortunes of Falstaff* (1943)

## GRADING SYSTEM

The following Boston University table explains the grading system that is used by faculty members on Boston University's British Programmes.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Honour Points</b>	<b>Usual%</b>	<b>Definition</b>
A	4.0	93-100	Excellent
A-	3.7	89-92	
B+	3.3	85-88	
B	3.0	81-84	Good
B-	2.7	77-80	
C+	2.3	73-76	
C	2.0	69-72	Satisfactory
C-	1.7	65-68	
D	1.0	60-64	Low pass
F	0.0	Unmarked	Fail

### Grading Criteria

**A** An exceptional grade that is only given to work that shows a consistent and outstanding level of insight and expression. This type of essay shows a rigorous and persuasive attention both to matters of detailed explication and to wider questions of evaluation. Crucially, this type of essay will also show real independence of thought expressed in fluent and well-written English.

**A-** A grade that is given to work that shows a commanding grasp of the central issues and also demonstrates an ability for close textual analysis combined with attention being paid to the larger implications of the analysis (whether this involves aesthetic, moral, political, or other considerations.) An appreciable degree of background reading and intelligent use of that reading is often shown at this level, and allowance is given here for the odd weak points and infelicities in phrasing

**B+, B, B-** This range of grades indicates descending levels of competence and thoroughness. On the whole, the B essay is less polished than the A essay, but a B+ essay will certainly still have to show commendably detailed stretches of analysis, a clear grasp of the central issues and some discussion of the implications of a student's close reading of any given text(s). Work within the B grades often shows evidence of reading in the secondary literature (critical commentaries and background reading) but also often shows an overdependence on such sources over and against making intelligent, critical and discrete use of that reading. The sharpening and exercising of your own critical responses is the target to aim for, and, whereas many essays in the B range show a good understanding of the ground gone over in class there is less evidence here of really independent analysis and appreciation. The difference between a B+, a straight B, and a B-, typically involves the frequency of spelling mistakes, awkwardness or solecisms in expression, or clumsiness in the exposition of your analysis or argumentation.

**C+,C,C-** These grades indicate unsatisfactory work. Such essays may suffer from being too vague and generalised or else being excessively narrow in coverage; they may be seriously marred by errors of fact or errors of interpretation; they may involve only a crude repetition of areas covered in class without any demonstration of real intellectual engagement with the issues. The differences between a C+, a straight C, and a C- reflect the various degrees of inadequacy of organisation and presentation. Essays that are riddled with errors in spelling, punctuation and syntax, or are chaotic in argument and exposition, will fall into the lowest range.

**D** A marginal pass can be given where some but not all the elements of the course have been completed satisfactorily.

**F** The failing grade indicates the work is seriously flawed in one or more ways:

- \*Obvious lack of familiarity with the material
- \*So poorly written as to defy understanding
- \*So brief and insubstantial that it fails to properly address the subject
- \*Material presented is not relevant to the assignment
- \*Demonstrates evidence of plagiarism

### **Boston University's code of student responsibilities**

The value of any grade, credit, honour or degree received by a student presupposes that all work submitted by a student is his or her own. A student who uses or relies upon the work of others or who, except under conditions expressly permitted by the instructor, furnishes assistance to another student, violates the standards of the University. Students must insist upon academic honesty and integrity from their fellow students and must report promptly any case of alleged academic conduct. Failure to do so is a violation of this code.

Plagiarism can take many forms, including the reproduction of published material without acknowledgement, or representing work done by others as your own. This includes the increasingly common practice of purchasing and downloading work from Internet 'paper mills'. You should be extremely careful when submitting work for this course that all work is correctly sourced. Print outs of web sites that have been used in research may be required by the lecturer in cases of a grade dispute and all web site based reference material should be kept by the student until after the end of the semester.

### **Terms and Conditions**

***\*\*Attendance at all classes and visits is mandatory. Students missing lectures without a doctor's letter or authorisation from the Director or from the EUSA Placements' Team will automatically be docked a – or a + from their final grade. Persistent lateness will also be penalised in the final grade. A register of attendance will be taken at the beginning of each session and marks will be awarded for attendance. Absence can be conveyed either by advising a senior member of staff in the Academic Affairs Office with a request that the information be passed on to me; or by email prior to class. Leaving it to another class member to convey messages will not***

*be acceptable. Appointments for interviews for internships should not conflict with attendance at classes.*

Any student who is unable to attend a class, or take part in an assignment because of religious reasons, must give notice in advance of class. He/she will be required to make up for time lost. In this situation arrangements must be made with another student for class notes to be shared. Written papers must be delivered before agreed deadline, failure to hand in the paper will result in deducted marks.

I will make some time available in each session for students to raise questions etc. Should students wish to discuss matters with me in person I will also be available during the break mid-lecture and at the end of class. Alternatively, please feel free to e-mail me with questions. If you have problems with the availability of reading materials (all of which should be in the library) please contact me either through the Academic Affairs Office or via e-mail.

**Tutor Mark Allen**