

# English 263

Jonathan Burton, ENGL 263, Fall 2004

English 263 — Shakespeare I

TTH 1:00 - 2:15

Fall 2004, West Virginia University

Professor Jonathan Burton

Office: 356 Stansbury

Email: [jburton4@wvu.edu](mailto:jburton4@wvu.edu)

## Introduction to Shakespearean Drama

This course will serve as an introduction to Shakespeare's plays and the practice of Shakespeare studies. We will approach each play through three complementary approaches: (1) close reading; (2) historical analysis; and (3) performance.

## Required Text

Greenblatt, Stephen, et. al. *The Norton Shakespeare*

## Course Requirements and Grading

Nine Plays

- Four 3-page papers (60 %)
- Group Performance (15 %)
- 4-page Performance Narrative (15%)
- Class Participation (10 %)

## Attendance

Attendance is mandatory and will be taken at the beginning of every class. You are granted a maximum of three absences during the course of the semester. For each absence in excess of this limit 1% will be subtracted from your final grade. Any student who misses seven classes will be dropped from the class, If you arrive after I take attendance, you are responsible for informing me of your presence at the end of class. Two tardies will be counted as an absence. Students th perfect attendance records will have 3% added to their final grades.

## Participation

The quality of this class is dependent on your informed participation. I expect you to complete assignments before class and to make regular contributions to class discussions and exercises. A student who attempts to make at least one contribution per class meeting can expect to earn all 10 participation points.

## Learning Environment

WVU is committed to social justice. I support that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect and non-discrimination. Any suggestion as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with Disability Services (293-6700)

## Submission of Assignments

1. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified.
2. Assignments submitted late will lose one grade for each day (not class) that they are not in my hands, beginning from the end of class on the due date.
3. All assignments are to be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins.
4. All assignments are to be proofread for coherence and grammar.
5. It is highly recommended that you keep a photocopy of every assignment that you submit.

## English 263 Schedule of Readings and Assignments

### August

**24** Introduction

**26** *Richard III* 2.1 Key Themes: kingship, deceit, seduction

**31** *Richard III* 3.4

### September

**2** Finish *Richard III*

**7** *Midsummer* 2.1 Key Themes: obedience, duty, matrimony

**9** *Midsummer* 3.3

**14** Finish *Midsummer* Dialectical Notes

**16** *Twelfth Night* 2.4 Key Themes: carnival, masquerade, order

**21** *Twelfth Night* 3.3

**23** *Twelfth Night* Performance: 3.4.127-359 (7)

**28** *Antony & Cleopatra* 2.3 Key Themes: cultural difference, waste, virtue

**30** *Antony & Cleopatra* 3.12

## **October**

**5** *Antony & Cleopatra* Performance: 5.2. 203-319 (7)

**7** *Othello* 2.2 Key Themes: jealousy, transformation, integration

**12** *Othello*

**14** *Othello* Concordance Assignment

**19** *Henry V* 3.2

**21** *Henry V* 4.2

**26** Finish *Henry V* Performance: 4.7.108 - 4.8.66 (7)

**28** *Tempest* Key Themes: power, revenge, parent-child bonds

## **November**

**4** *Tempest* 3.3

**9** Finish *Tempest* Performance: 4.1.163-262 (9)

**11** *Measure for Measure* 2.2 Key Themes: morality, desire, restraint

**16** *Measure* 4.2

**18** Finish *Measure* Minor Character Study: Barnardine

**30** *Much Ado* 2.2 Key Themes: faith, jealousy, mutuality

## December

2 *Much Ado* 4.1

7 Finish *Much Ado Performance* 5.4 (10)

9 Genre Analysis

## Assignments

**9/14** Dialectical Notes for *Midsummer*: For each of the five assigned passages respond in a full paragraph. Then offer one concluding paragraph indicating corrections between the five required passages as well as any others in the play that you deem relevant.

**10/14** Concordance Assignment for *Othello*: In a coherent, thesis-driven essay, track the use of a single word that appears in the play at least six times. Choose a term that you feel is relevant to a major theme of the play and explain why it is important? Consider who uses the word, how and when. Is it used literally or figuratively? Does the use of the word change over the course of the play, or when deployed by different characters?

**11/18** Minor Character Study: In a brief thesis-driven essay, answer the following questions: How is Barnardine significant to the play as a whole? How does he influence the way we see other characters in *Measure for Measure*? How might he be presented onstage? Why?

**12/9** Genre Analysis; Write a brief, comparative essay arguing a thesis regarding how genre affects Shakespeare's treatment of jealousy another theme in *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Othello*. Is the treatment of that theme any different in tragedy and comedy?

### Within I week of your performance:

**Performance Narrative:** In a coherent, four-page essay discuss the production of your group's scene by addressing the following questions: How does this scene develop the themes of the play? What did your performance do in terms of blocking (i.e. movement, gestures, and placement on stage), costuming, props or vocalization to foreground those themes? What were the most important lines or speeches for your purposes? What other performative options were available to you and/or your group? What readings of character, action, and so on were enabled (or disabled) by your choices? In retrospect, how might you change your performance and why? Finally, how does this play develop, complicate, or even contradict themes found elsewhere in Shakespeare's plays?

## Academic Honesty

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. Please note the University definition of plagiarism, as explained in the Undergraduate Catalog: "To take or pass off as one's own the ideas, writings, artistic products, etc. of someone else; for example, submitting, without

appropriate acknowledgment, a report, notebook, speech, outline theme, thesis, dissertation, or other written, visual, or oral material that has been knowingly obtained or copied in whole or in part, from the work of others, whether such source is published, including (but not limited to) another individual's academic composition, compilation, or other product, or commercially prepared paper" (p. 52). If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, collaboration, , documentation, or related issues, please feel free to ask.

Understanding that plagiarism will result in an automatic failure of this course, you are encouraged to consult the websites available through my Shakespeare Home Page at [www.as.wvu.edu/~burton](http://www.as.wvu.edu/~burton).