LIT 327.01 - Shakespeare

Fall 2015
TR 11:10 – 12:30
SG 303

Robert Baker (543-4135 / robert.baker@mso.umt.edu)
Office Hours: TR 12:30 – 2:00, 3:30 – 4:00,
or by appointment (LA 219)

Course Description

This course is an introductory study of ten of Shakespeare’s plays that are widely regarded as among his best plays. In a loose sense, not an exact sense, we will follow the temporal order in which the plays were written, beginning with the comedies and the histories, and then turning to the tragedies and the romances. The exact dating of the plays remains a debated question, and at certain points in the course, in any case, we will abandon the probable temporal order of composition in order to emphasize the question of genre. But we will devote most of our time to discussing the things one always want to discuss in engaging a play: plot, character, theme, mood, figurative pattern, linguistic energy, horizon of meaning, and larger context. Possibly, too, if there is time, we will now and then act out a scene of a play. The task of poetry is to teach and delight, poets and philosophers like to say, and this course is meant to persuade you (if you are not already persuaded) that the first way into whatever is to be discovered in Shakespeare’s plays is the way of delight.

Course Requirements

- Reading of all assigned texts
- Regular attendance and engagement
- One or two quizzes
- Two short papers (5-7 pages)
- One longer final paper (10-12 pages)

Texts

- The Sonnets (optional)
- A Midsummer Night’s Dream
- As You Like It
- Twelfth Night
- Henry IV, Part I
- Henry IV, Part II
- Hamlet
- Othello
- King Lear
- Macbeth (optional)
- The Winter’s Tale
- The Tempest
- Essays filed on moodle for LIT 327.01
Map of Course

*There may be slight changes as we move along.
*All the essays are optional reading assignments.

T Sept 1  Introduction
R Sept 3  *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

T Sept 8  *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*
          Northrop Frye, “The Mythos of Spring: Comedy”
R Sept 10 *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

T Sept 15 *As You Like It*
R Sept 17 *As You Like It*
          Rosalie Colie, “Perspectives on Pastoral”

T Sept 22 *Twelfth Night*
R Sept 24 *Twelfth Night*

T Sept 29 *Henry IV, Part I*

*** Paper I Due ***

R Oct 1  *Henry IV, Part I*
          Harold Bloom, chapter on *Henry IV* from *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*

T Oct 6  *Henry IV, Part II*
R Oct 8  *Henry IV, Part II*

T Oct 13 *Hamlet*

*** Quiz I ***
R Oct 15  Hamlet
    Harold Goddard, chapter on Hamlet from The Meaning of Shakespeare
R Oct 22  Hamlet
T Oct 20  Hamlet
T Oct 27  Othello
R Oct 29  Othello
T Nov 3  King Lear

*** Paper II Due ***
R Nov 5  King Lear
    Marjorie Garber, chapter on King Lear from Shakespeare After All
R Nov 12  King Lear
T Nov 10  King Lear
T Nov 17  The Winter’s Tale
R Nov 19  The Winter’s Tale
    A. D. Nuttall, “The Last Plays” from Shakespeare the Thinker
T Nov 24  The Winter’s Tale
R Nov 26  Thanksgiving Break
T Dec 1  The Tempest
R Dec 3  The Tempest
    Northrop Frye, chapter on The Tempest from On Shakespeare
    Stephen Greenblatt, “Learning to Curse” from Learning to Curse

*** Quiz II ***
T Dec 8  The Tempest
*** Final Paper: Due on Monday December 14 by 10:00 a.m. ***

Department and University Policies

Department Assessment

The English Department’s process of curriculum assessment requires that faculty read student papers, outside of specific courses, to measure the progress students are making as they move through the program. One of your papers may be selected to be evaluated in this assessment process. If so, all identifying information will be removed, and no evaluation of your work outside the course will have any effect on your grade. If you wish that your work not be read a second time in this context, please let me know, and I will make sure that none of your work is forwarded to the assessment committee.

Disability Accommodation

It is university policy that students with disabilities receive reasonable accommodations in their course-work. If you wish to request accommodations, please do contact me early in the semester, and I will work with you and Disability Services to make sure that the necessary accommodations are made. For more information, call 406.243.2243 (Voice/Text), or visit the Disability Services website at http://www.umt.edu/dss/.