ENG495: 02 – Independent Study Shakespeare

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OFFICE (LAN 255) Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11 am – 12 pm and Thursday 4 – 5 pm
All other times BY APPOINTMENT

Meeting Times and Location:

Sex and Sovereignty in Shakespeare

In the thick of her treasonous plot to have her husband crowned, Lady Macbeth demands to be stripped of that which, ironically, would produce a line of heirs: “Spirits,” she fervently cries, “unsex me here.” For Lady Macbeth, sex signifies more than just her body; her sex is intimately bound with the physical (re)production of sovereignty. This course takes its cue from Lady Macbeth’s provocative soliloquy and investigates “sex” as a form of amorous reproduction, as a malleable feature of one’s body, and as gendered traits that impact one’s political power. Taken in this broad sense, “sex” allows us to address a number of important issues about sexuality, gender, and power in Shakespeare and his day. To this end, we will ask what it means to be “unsex[ed]” across a number of Shakespeare’s sonnets, comedies and tragedies.

As an upper-year seminar, this class endeavours to create a vibrant community of thinkers and writers through engaged discussion, writing workshops, and frequent peer review and revision assignments. The assignments are short in page-length, but prioritize depth, clarity, and creativity. Together, we will weigh in on debates in Shakespeare scholarship and devise our own unique arguments that our peers will help us to refine.

Required Shakespeare Texts:

- Selection of sonnets (D2L)
- Twelfth Night, or What You Will
- As You Like It
- The Merchant of Venice
- Macbeth
- King Lear
- Selection of secondary criticism and literary theory (D2L)

Program Outcomes

This course should help serve the following official outcomes for the English major and minor:

- The student will demonstrate the ability to read complex texts, closely and accurately.
- The student will demonstrate the ability to comprehend both traditional and contemporary schools/methods of critical theory and apply them to literary texts to generate relevant interpretations.
• The student will demonstrate knowledge of literary history in regard to particular periods of World, British and American literature.
• The student will demonstrate ability to effectively conduct literary research.
• The student will demonstrate the ability to write clear, grammatically correct prose for a variety of purposes in regards to literary analysis.

Assignments:
Weighted grade Assignment Title

(20%) Reading Responses
(20%) Analysis and Evaluation of Scholarship
(40%) Conference Paper
(10%) Conference Paper Peer Q&A
(10%) Engaged Class Participation:

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Your running grade will be available on D2L (http://d2l.sfasu.edu); please advise me ASAP if you see anything that seems amiss.

Late Penalties for Papers

Penalty for Late Final Conference Paper:

2% will be docked for each day that a final paper is late (including weekends) unless a documented excuse is provided.

Penalty for Late Peer Q&A

2% will be docked for each day that the Peer Q&A is late unless a documented excuse is provided. Given the date necessary to submit final grades, the Peer Q&A cannot be accepted after May 10 at 9:00 AM.

Plagiarism

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an
assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

No form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. If you are having trouble understanding academic dishonesty or plagiarism, ask me. I will be happy to clarify your concerns.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

**Student Code of Conduct: Policy 10.4**

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This policy applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the iCare: Early Alert Program at SFA. Information regarding the iCare program is found at https://www.sfasu.edu/judicial/earlyalert.asp or call the office at 936-468-2703.

**Missed Classes**

Much of the learning and intellectual growth of this class occurs because of student interaction, discussion, and feedback. For this reason, consistent attendance is necessary for the course to
succeed as a whole. While I strongly encourage students to attend all classes, each student is permitted 1 class of unaccounted absence during the semester. All further absences will deduct 5% from your participation grade per class missed unless a documented excuse is provided. Because each student provides feedback on their fellow classmates’ papers, missing the Paper Workshops classes 6 will result in a ZERO grade for the Feedback Assignment unless a documented excuse is provided.

Reading, Writing, and Researching Resources:

AARC Policy:

The AARC is located in the Steen Library and offers tutoring, workshops, and other online resources to improve your reading, writing, and research skills, regardless of your academic discipline. If you would like a tutoring session, please sign up for one ahead of time either in person or online at https://library.sfasu.edu/aarc.

Resources for Mental and Emotional Wellness:

The rigors of university pose unique forms of stress—stress that can significantly compound life’s other challenges. If you are experiencing mental and emotional distress or if you just need to gain a new perspective on personal issues, please book an appointment at SFA’s Counselling Services. These services are FREE to any enrolled student. If you are having troubles identifying or accessing mental and emotional health resources, let me know and I will do my best to refer you. Please make use of these wonderful, life-changing resources.

Counselling Services: http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/ 3rd floor, Rusk Building, 936.468.2401

How to book an appointment: http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/104.asp Call 936.468.2401

Cell Phone Policy

Please turn all cell phones on “silent” during class unless you are expecting an emergency call or text. If your cell phone rings during class, I reserve the right to change your ringtone to the Justin Bieber song of my choice. If you send a text message during class, I reserve the right to send a text message from your phone to my darling mother in Canada. If your cellphone activity distracts other students on more than one non-emergency occasion, I will deduct 2% from your participation grade.

Laptop Policy

In the interest of saving you money, I permit using free, online versions of a number of the texts we will read for class. I also understand that some students take better notes on the computer than they do by hand. For these reasons, students are permitted to bring a laptop for class use during our weekly meetings. Please resist the urge to send emails, play online games, or check facebook! It is distracting for other students to see you creeping on your friends’ facebook walls and photos, so
please be respectful of your fellow classmates and use your computer for note-taking purposes only. Remember, this is a small class — it will be easy to spot who is taking notes and who is tweeting about their lunch. If you are repeatedly found using your computer for purposes other than note-taking, I will deduct up to 5% of your participation grade.

Classroom Conduct

This course is designed to be engaging, insightful, rigorous, and fun. Please come to class open to new ideas and methodologies, willing to share and participate in discussion, and, whenever possible, ready to laugh.

Food is permitted, provided you dispose of any remains in an appropriate fashion and the classroom clean. If you have any extreme allergies, please let me know and I will bar any food that may cause you any issues.

Seminar Schedule

Part I: Shakespeare in Love and Lust

Week 1: Th Jan 21
- Introduction and Syllabus
- Close Reading Workshop

Week 2: Th Jan 28
- Shakespeare’s sonnets
- Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s Between Men
- Margaret de Grazia’s “Scandal in Shakespeare’s Sonnets,” in Shakespeare and Sexuality

Week 3: Mon Feb 1 and Th Feb 4
- Shakespeare’s sonnets
- Valerie Traub’s Thinking Sex with Early Moderns, Chp 8
- Writing Workshop

Part II: Crossdressing on Shakespeare’s Stage

Week 4: Th Feb 11
- Twelfth Night
- Casey Charles’ “Gender Trouble in Twelfth Night”
- Judith Butler’s "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution"

Week 5: Feb 18
- Twelfth Night
- Nancy K. Hayles’s “Sexual Disguise in As You Like It and Twelfth Night”
• John E. Howard’s “Crossdressing, the Theatre, and Gender Struggle in Early Modern England”

Week 6: Feb 25
• As You Like It up to Act 3, Scene 2
• Marjorie Garber’s Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety,” Chp 3 pages 71-77

Week 7: Th Mar 3
• As You Like It Act from Act 3, Scene 3 to end
• Valerie Traub’s Desire and Anxiety: Circulations of Sexuality in Shakespearean Drama, Chp 5
• Writing Workshop

Week 8: Th Mar 10
• The Merchant of Venice
• Alan Seinfeld’s “How to Read Shakespeare without Being Heterosexist,” in Alternative Shakespeares
• Analysis and Evaluation of Scholarship Due

Week 9: Th Mar 17
• SPRING BREAK (research your conference paper)

Week 10: Th Mar 24
• EASTER (begin writing your conference paper)

Week 11: Th Mar 31
• Merchant of Venice
• Karen Newman’s “Potria’s Ring: Unruly Women and Structures of Exchange in The Merchant of Venice”

Part III: Sex and Sovereignty in Shakespeare

Week 12: Th Apr 7
• Macbeth
• Thomas Laqueur’s Making Sex, excerpts from Chp 3 and 4
• Terry Eagleton’s William Shakespeare, Chp 1

Week 13: Th Apr 14
• Macbeth
• Stephanie Chamberlain’s “Fantasizing Infanticide: Lady Macbeth and the Murdering Mother in Early Modern England”
• Conference Paper Draft Due

Week 14: Mon Apr 18 and Th Apr 21
- *King Lear* up to Act 3, Scene 3
- Writing Workshop
- *Feedback Assignment 2 Due*

**Week 15: Thr Apr 28**

- CONFERENCE DAY (you only need to attend the panel on which your partner presents)
  - *Conference Paper Final Due*
  - *Conference Paper Peer Questions Due Tonight at Midnight*

**Week 16: Th May 5**

- *King Lear* from Act 3, Scene 4 to end
- Course Evaluations and wrap up
  - *Conference Paper Peer Q&A Due*