

Shakespeare and Elizabethan Literature



Faculty Contact Information

Name:

Email:

Office Hour information:

Course Information

Course Description

Through the work of Shakespeare and his contemporaries this course familiarises students with important aspects of Elizabethan and Jacobean culture. The texts studied are considered both as works of art in their own right and as historical artefacts reflecting the preoccupations of their time. Students do not have to be studying literature to be able to engage fully in this course; detailed and fully accessible information of every element covered is provided in lectures as well as being supported by further reading.

Course Goals

This course encourages an understanding of key social and cultural aspects of the late Elizabethan and Jacobean period with specific reference to drama and poetry while also facilitating critical engagement of cultural, social, and intellectual contexts of the work of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. The course also familiarises students with at least two Shakespearian plays and facilitates a detailed critical reading of each text alongside key secondary works as well as aspects of performance (in both film, TV, and on stage).

Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will:

1. Have a deeper knowledge of Elizabethan and Jacobean culture
2. Have a detailed critical understanding of three Elizabethan play texts
3. Show an ability to understand the emphases and nuances of performance of key Elizabethan play texts

Course Assignments, Grading, and Assessment

Assignment	Percentage	Grading Requirements
Attendance and Participation	20%	
Presentation	15%	Please see rubric on MyStudy
Journaling	10%	Please see rubric on MyStudy
Research Paper	30%	Please see rubric on MyStudy
Final Exam	25%	Please see rubric on MyStudy

Brief Assessment Overview

Assessment 1: Presentation

Due:

In small groups, students present for 20 minutes with topics provided by the tutor. Topics are related to the plays and topics that we study on the course. Full support is given to each group in developing and presenting their topic.

Assessment 2: Journaling

Due:

Students keep a journal of at least three pages per week in which they record their reactions to classes, reading, visits, and screenings.

Assessment 3: Research Paper

Due:

2,000 words. This paper offers students the chance to develop their thinking about a topic by drawing upon close reading of one or more plays, with key scenes or speeches examined in detail as well as reference to key secondary works. Students develop the work that they will do within class and are also provided with research materials (alongside the bibliography and online resources).

Assessment 4: Final exam

Due:

Students are asked questions on key topics from the course and are also required to think critically and in detail about key scenes from the plays that we have studied. Full support is given on what topics to review, how to approach the exam, as well as the amount of detail to use. Students are expected to think critically about Shakespeare's work in the exam rather than learning large quotes from his work.

Grading

Grade	Knowledge & Content	Methodology & Structure, Language & Style	Understanding, Reflection & Critique	Integrative thinking & demonstration of experiential learning
A (93- 100%) A- (90-92%)	Interesting topic handled with intelligence, originality, and depth; wealth of supporting material, smoothly integrated into the text; tone is evident and maintained throughout; no factual inaccuracies	Material is unified and well focused; organization is clear, logical and purposeful throughout the essay; well-chosen examples. Uses sophisticated sentences effectively; usually chooses words aptly; observes conventions of written English and manuscript	Well-chosen examples; persuasive reasoning used to develop and support thesis consistently; uses quotations and citations effectively; causal connections between ideas are evident	Gives full insight into the nature of an event, experience, or artifact; achieves complete integration of knowledge from diverse disciplines to interpret an issue. Shows clear understanding of cultural impact through appropriate examples

		format; makes few minor or technical errors		
B+ (87-89%) B (83-86%) B- (80-82%)	Content is above average; worthwhile topic; satisfactory depth of development; supporting details for the thesis and topic sentences are specific, concrete, and plentiful; has only minor factual inaccuracies	Material is unified and well focused; pattern of organization is clear, logical, and well executed; makes an effort to organize paragraphs topically. Some mechanical difficulties or stylistic problems; may make occasional problematic word choices or awkward syntax errors; a few spelling or punctuation errors or cliché; usually presents quotations effectively	Pursues thesis consistently: develops a main argument with clear major points and appropriate textual evidence and supporting detail; makes an effort to organize paragraphs topically	Gives some insights into the nature of an event, experience, or artifact; achieves partial integration of knowledge from diverse disciplines to interpret an issue; some understanding of cultural impact through appropriate examples
C+ (77-79%) C (73-76%) C- (70-72%)	Worthwhile topic; supporting material for thesis and topic sentences is general and abstract rather than specific and concrete; most information is correct	Organization is clear, logical, and coherent; some ideas unsupported; fails to integrate quotations appropriately. More frequent wordiness; several unclear or awkward sentences; imprecise use of words or over-reliance on passive voice; one or two major grammatical errors	Only partially develops the argument; shallow analysis; some ideas and generalizations undeveloped or unsupported; makes limited use of textual evidence; fails to integrate quotations appropriately	Able to explain to a limited extent, the quality of a performance, event, or artifact; gives few insights into event, experience; discusses few qualities of an experience; a limited understanding of cultural impact with few examples
D (60-69%)	Trivial subject; very few supporting details for the thesis and topic sentences; has some correct & incorrect information	Not logically organized; digresses from one topic to another; no clear organizational pattern. Some major grammatical or proofreading errors (subject-verb agreement; sentence fragments); language marred by clichés	Frequently only narrates; digresses from one topic to another without developing ideas or terms; makes insufficient or awkward use of textual evidence	Little integration of experience and narrative; limited insight of issues and insufficient understanding of cultural impact
F (0-59%)	Consists of unsupported generalities and/or the repetition of	Does not follow the instructions; rambling, disorganized and	Little or no development; may list incorrect facts or misinformation; uses	Little or no integration experience and narrative; lack of insight and fails to

	commonplace ideas; lacks originality and insight; information is inaccurate or absent	incoherent. Numerous grammatical errors	no quotations or fails to cite sources or plagiarizes	understand cultural impact
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Policies specific to this course

- **Co-curricular Activities and Field Trips:** Field trips for your FIE courses have been planned to help students achieve the learning objectives of the course and are required. They take place during class time unless otherwise noted. Details about required visits appear on the class by class schedule below. Please note that any make up for missed co-curricular activities are at the personal expense of the student.
- **Late submission of work:** Written work may be submitted later than the due date only with express permission from the faculty. Credit is not given for work received late, except in exceptional circumstances of personal illness or similar (which must be made known to FIE at the time). Documentation of exceptional circumstances from a third party, such as a doctor's note, may be required. Any extensions made beyond the last class meeting must be committed to writing and include information on the exceptional circumstances that require the extension, the nature of work yet to be submitted, and the date by which the work will be received. If said work is not received by the agreed extension date, barring further exceptional circumstances, the work will not be given credit.
- **Late arrivals to class or site visit:** Please arrive on time. Lateness, particularly on days with co-curricular visits, results in missed course material. Faculty may use their discretion to mark a student as 'Absent' if they feel the student has arrived too late or left too early to be considered 'Present' for that session.
- **Trigger Warnings:** Some topics covered in class may expose students to past traumas and evoke a negative reaction. Sensitive topics can vary, such as sexual violence, death, racism, or xenophobia. I want this to be an inclusive space where every student feels comfortable; therefore, I will provide content warnings before lectures for sensitive subject matters. Content warnings are meant to give students a forewarning so they can prepare for their emotional safety. It is important to note that anything in the environment could be a trigger for someone's trauma, such as smell, sound, or texture; it is impossible to account for all possible triggers, and ask for grace as I do my best as an educator to warn students of potentially distressing content during lectures, assignments and/or discussions.

Attendance and Participation

- Regular attendance is essential in order to pass a course. A class constitutes lectures, student presentations, discussions, seminars, co-curricular activities, tests, and examinations. In addition, under UK Home Office regulations class attendance is mandatory.
- Class attendance and participation is formally recorded and incorporated into a student's final grade.
- In addition to physical presence in class, a student's participation in a class is evaluated on the mastery of assigned course readings as reflected in a consistent, valid contribution to class discussions, in-class exercises, and in asking questions that enrich the on-going

discourse. Consistency and validity in participation is expected in every class. Limited participation will have a negative impact on a student's participation score.

- When unexpected events cause students to miss a class, it is the student's responsibility to initiate contact with the faculty member to notify them in advance, or as soon as is reasonably possible.
- Absence from class does not relieve a student of responsibility for assignments. Students bear the ultimate responsibility for all missed class material and assessment.
- If a student misses 25% or more of a course, then they may be awarded a failure for the course and/or not permitted to finish the course.
- [See the full attendance policy here](#)

Required Readings

The plays on this course change according to what is being performed in London. In this sense the bibliography changes accordingly.

The Shakespeare texts may be bought in separate editions such as the Arden Shakespeare or as published by Oxford World Classics. Students might, however, prefer to buy one single volume of Shakespeare's Collected Works (various editions).

Additional Resources and Readings

Bate, J. (1997). *The Genius of Shakespeare*. Basingstoke: Picador

Burrow, C. (Ed.). (2002). *William Shakespeare: The Complete Sonnets and Poems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Cox, J. D. & Kastan, D. S. (Eds.). (1997). *A New History of Early English Drama*. New York: Columbia University Press

Danson, L. (2000). *Shakespeare's Dramatic Genres*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Greenblatt, S. (1980). *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press

Greenblatt, S. (1988). *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*. Oxford: Clarendon Press

Greenblatt, S. (2004). *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*. London: Jonathan Cape

Greer, G. (2007). *Shakespeare's Wife*. London: Bloomsbury

Gurr, A. (1996). *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*. 2nd Ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Honan, P. (2005). *Christopher Marlowe: Poet and Spy*

Hunt, M. (2002). *Romance and Tragicomedy in A Companion to Renaissance Drama*. Kinney, A. F. (Ed.). Oxford: Blackwell

- Kastan, D. S. (2000). (Ed.). *A Companion to Shakespeare*. Oxford: Blackwell
- Kermode, F. (2000). *Shakespeare's Language*. London: Allen Lane
- Maguire, L. E. (2004). *Studying Shakespeare: A Guide to the Plays*. Oxford: Blackwell
- McDonald, R. (2001). *Shakespeare and the Arts of Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- McMullan, G. (2007). *Shakespeare and the Idea of Late Writing: Authorship in the Proximity of Death*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Nicholl, C. (2002). *The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe*
- Stern, T. (2004). *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page*. London: Routledge
- Wells, S. W. & Orlin, L. C. (2003). (Eds.). *Shakespeare: An Oxford Guide*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Wiggins, M. (2000). *Shakespeare and the Drama of his Time*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

[MyStudy@FIE](#)

MyStudy@FIE is FIE's virtual learning environment based on the open-source platform Moodle. Students are required to access MyStudy@FIE for course information, readings, link to resources, assignment submissions and communication with faculty.

[FIE's Values in the Curriculum](#)

A unique aspect to FIE's curriculum is our courses reflect an engagement with values of 1) knowledge and inclusivity, 2) ethics and human rights, 3) social and cultural engagement, and 4) sustainability. For information about each of these values and how each of FIE's courses aligns with them, please see [Our Values](#).

[Topics](#)

- **Kingship and politics:** This topic examines the role of Kingship within these works alongside the intensely political aspects of power and personal fate in contrast to the larger narratives of history and nationalism. Work of this period is saturated in the politics of the age but frequently allows the audience the possibility of asking questions of the status quo of the sixteenth or seventeenth century.
- **Belief, heresy & superstition:** The England that Shakespeare and his contemporaries wrote in was intensely religious and demanded much from its subjects. How far does religion play a role within the politics of this work? How far is belief questioned and how far are heresy and superstition set up as individual issues?
- **Gender & identity:** Within the sixteenth and seventeenth century one art form begins to question the notion of identity, of who 'we' are and this is the drama. Shakespeare's work in particular, through his use of soliloquy and tragic narrative as well as his appropriation of the carnivalesque, allows us to see both gender and identity as negotiable concepts.
- **Comedy & tragedy:** Comedy and tragedy are linked together within renaissance drama. Shakespeare for example frequently portrays them as sitting side by side each other

within his plays. This topic asks us to consider instances of each genre coming together by examining key scenes in detail and thinking carefully about the effects produced upon the stage and the page.

- **Performance spaces:** The history of Shakespearean theatre develops from the Globe built in 1599 and part owned by Shakespeare to the West End stage in the twenty-first century. The history of staging and stagecraft of this work has a lot to tell us about how plays have been represented differently in different periods. Theatrical space defines the work of Shakespeare and his contemporaries and in this topic we shall explore those differences.
- **Death & Time:** The role of time became central to Shakespeare's later work but can be understood as a key philosophical issue in his early work. Death also becomes a key aspect of Shakespeare's reworking of Aristotle's concept of tragedy. We examine the different ways in which death is seen as both a personal tragedy as well as a narrative device within different types of plays in the canon of Shakespeare and within the work of his contemporaries.

Possible co-curricular activities

- Live theatre performance of one of the works read in the course
- Bankside walking tour
- Shakespeare's Globe Theatre
- National Portrait Gallery – Elizabethan and Jacobean paintings

Academic Integrity

By enrolling at FIE, you have joined an academic community and you are expected and required to act honestly regarding the work you submit for assessment in your courses. Academic integrity is closely related to the concept of good academic practice.

Any attempts to Cheat; Fabricate; Plagiarise; Collaborate without Authorisation; Participate in Academically Dishonest Activities; and/or Facilitate Academic Dishonesty will be viewed as a breach of this regulation.

[Please see FIE's Academic Integrity Policy in full.](#)

Most students do not have any problems understanding the rules and expectations about acting honestly at university. If you have any questions you must talk to your faculty or a member of FIE's Academic Team.

Writing and Language Support

FIE's Writing Support Tutors are available to assist students of all levels of expertise with all phases of the writing process. Available year-round and to all students. To book an appointment or for more information visit www.fie.org.uk/wst.

Please note that FIE allows the use of a foreign language/English dictionary in exam situations for students where English is not their primary language UNLESS the use of the dictionary would

give the student a significant advantage (e.g. where the exam is aimed at getting the students to define terms that might be found in the dictionary).

Accommodations for Students

Students who wish to use academic accommodations at FIE can register to do so via FIE's Administration Team, by providing the appropriate supporting documentation. Students who have approved FIE academic accommodations should discuss them directly with their faculty member(s) within or around the first few class sessions, or via email. Exams are facilitated by FIE faculty and students should give 2 weeks' notice to faculty members if use of approved exam accommodations is required. The Administration team can assist students and faculty with liaison and facilitation as needed.

Additional Policies and Resources

Mental Health and Stress Management Support

FIE's qualified and accredited counselor is Dr Deborah Hill, who offers appointments via video call and over the phone. The first three appointments are free of charge and ongoing sessions can be arranged directly with Dr Hill. To make an appointment with Dr Hill, simply email studentlife@fie.org.uk.

If you have a counselor from back home that you are seeing, we strongly encourage you to maintain contact with them throughout your time studying abroad with FIE.

Diversity and Inclusivity

FIE regards its housing and classroom facilities as safe spaces to live, study, and work with students, faculty, and staff who are understanding, supportive, and trustworthy. Inappropriate, derogatory comments and/or actions, harassment, bullying, victimisation and discrimination are not tolerated. Any such behaviour will be investigated and dealt with appropriately. Students must be respectful of diverse opinions and of all class members regardless of personal attribute and use inclusive language in written and oral work.