

Shakespeare and Elizabethan Literature



Faculty Contact Information

Name:

Email:

Office Hour information:

Course Information

Course Description

Through reading, studying and watching different versions of the work of Shakespeare and his contemporaries this course familiarises students with critical and creative ways of interpreting twenty-first century responses to Elizabethan and Jacobean culture. The text and performances studied are considered both as adaptations reflecting issues of modern identity as well as historical artefacts reflecting the preoccupations of the 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, the work of Shakespeare and his contemporaries with reference to drama and poetry while also facilitating critical discussion of current cultural, social, and intellectual contexts. The course also familiarises students with at least two Shakespearean 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 two to three Elizabethan play texts
3. Show an ability to understand the emphases and nuances of modern adaptation and performance of key Elizabethan play texts in relation to both the 16th or 17th century and 21st century adaptation

Course Assignments, Grading, and Assessment

Assignment	Percentage	Grading Requirements
Attendance and Participation	20%	
Presentation	15%	Please see rubric on MyStudy
Two Response Pieces	10%	Please see rubric on MyStudy
Research Paper	30%	Please see rubric on MyStudy
Research Project	25%	Please see rubric on MyStudy

Brief Assessment Overview

Assessment 1: Presentation

Due:

In small groups, students present for 15 minutes with topics provided by the tutor. Topics are related to the plays and themes that we will study on the course. Full support is given to each group in developing and presenting their topic.

Assessment 2: Two short response pieces to performance or field trips

Due:

Students will be asked to write **two** short response pieces (500-800 word) reflecting on either a theatre performance seen on the course, a poetry workshop from the course or a field trip (the Globe Theatre backstage tour, for example).

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 key themes or characters in one or more plays from the course, with key scenes or speeches examined in detail as well as reference to different versions of the play studied on the course as well as key secondary works (extracts will be provided for the students). 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: Research Project

Due:

Students are asked to develop a written response to questions on key topics from the course (using visual material where relevant). Students are required to think critically and in detail about interpretation of character using key scenes from the plays that we have studied and watched. Full support will be given on what topics to discuss, how to approach and develop the piece, what secondary sources to consider as well as the amount of detail to use. Word limit 1200-1500 words.

Grading

Alternative formats of the FIE Grading Rubric are available in the Student Resources area of MyStudy@FIE.

	Relevance Questions are interpreted correctly; Argument/thesis is clear and developed throughout; Discussion is focused on topic of the questions; Irrelevant content and discussion are not included	Knowledge and Understanding Recommended literature and/or research guidelines are used and interpreted appropriately; Selection and use of evidence shows understanding and insight; There is evidence of study beyond the recommended literature and that introduced in the module	Analysis, Critical Thinking and Integration of Experiential Learning Approach shows evidence of analysis and independent reasoning; Originality in argument; Evidence of critical insight and reasoned questioning of assumptions; Integration of connections and experiences outside of the formal classroom	Scholarship and Style Conclusions are well justified and complete; Facts reported and statements made are accurate; Writing is clear and fluent; All sources are appropriate, accurately acknowledged and formatted in recognised style; All work is the student's own
A 93-100%	Totally appropriate interpretation and relevant; Excellent and thorough thesis development	Comprehensive understanding and mastery of core evidence and extensive wider reading	Excellent analytical skills, outstanding evaluation of evidence, independent and original critical insight; Meaningfully integrates experiential learning where appropriate	Exceptional fluency and accurate writing using appropriate language, conclusions are well-justified; Accurate and thorough referencing
A- 90-92%	Almost wholly appropriate interpretation and relevant; Very strong thesis	Very strong understanding of evidence and clear evidence of appropriate wider reading	Well-developed analytical skills, excellent evaluation of evidence, shows strong critical insight; Effectively integrates experiential learning where appropriate	Almost wholly accurate and fluent writing using appropriate language, conclusions are full and justified; Accurate referencing

B+ 87-89%	Appropriate interpretation and relevant; Good thesis throughout	Strong understanding of evidence and appropriate wider reading	Very good analytical skills, strong evaluation of evidence; Shows critical insight; Acknowledges and compares experiential learning and other perspectives	Largely accurate and fluent writing using appropriate language; conclusions are justified; Accurate referencing
B 83-86%	Largely appropriate interpretation and relevant; Thesis is clear	Good understanding of evidence and some appropriate wider reading	Good analytical skills, good evaluation of evidence; Shows critical insight; Acknowledges and compares experiential learning and other perspectives	Largely accurate and fluent writing using appropriate language; Conclusions are justified; Accurate referencing
B- 80-82%	Mostly appropriate interpretation and relevant; Thesis is underdeveloped but clear	Sound understanding of evidence and some wider reading	Sound analytical skills; Sound evaluation of data; Shows some critical judgement identifies experiential connections	Sound level of accuracy and written fluency and some use of appropriate language; Conclusions are coherent; Sound use of referencing conventions
C+ 77-79%	Some appropriate interpretation and relevant;	Evidence is largely understood and some wider reading	Sometimes inconsistent analytical skills; Some evaluation of data;	Sound level of accuracy and written fluency and some use of appropriate language;

	Thesis is underdeveloped and lacks clarity		Shows some critical judgement though often descriptive; Identifies experiential connections	Conclusions are coherent but not fully supported; Sound use of referencing conventions
C 73-76%	May contain some misinterpretation and/or irrelevant material; Thesis lacks clarity	Evidence is largely understood; Limited reading beyond material introduced in module	Mostly inconsistent analytical skills; Some evaluation of data; Scant critical judgement mostly descriptive; Identifies experiential connections	Some level of accuracy and written fluency and some use of appropriate language; Conclusions are coherent but not fully supported; Sound use of referencing conventions
C- 70-72%	Limited interpretation and relevance; Thesis is inconsistent	Weak understanding of evidence; Limited reading beyond material introduced in module	Mostly inconsistent analytical skills; Some evaluation of data; Lacks critical judgement; Little integration experiential learning	Inconsistent written fluency; Weak use of appropriate language; Weak justification for conclusions; Adequate use of referencing conventions
D 60-69%	Limited interpretation and relevance; Lacks thesis	Weak understanding of evidence and limited, inappropriate wider reading	Inconsistent and weak analytical skills, poor evaluation of evidence, lacks critical insight; Little integration of experiential learning	Inconsistent written fluency; No justification for conclusions; Inaccurate use of referencing
F	Significant misinterpretation	Lacks understanding of evidence and	Lacks analytical skills, lacks	Poorly written with little fluency;

0-59%	and irrelevant material	inappropriate or no wider reading	evaluation of evidence, lacks critical judgement; Lacks integration of experiential learning	No justification for conclusions; Poor referencing; Evidence of plagiarism or inappropriate use of AI
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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 in advance of the due date from the course instructor. Late work will receive a 5% reduction in points for each 24-hour period handed in past the deadline, including each weekend day. Work submitted a week late will be marked at a C or lower. Any extensions made beyond the last class meeting must be requested in writing to the faculty and include any information on the 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
- Kishi, T & Wells, S (eds.) (1994) *Shakespeare and Cultural Traditions*
- 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
- Thompson, Ayanna *Colorblind Shakespeare* (ed) (2006)
- Traub, Valerie (2016) *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment: Gender, Sexuality and Race*
- 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
- Zimmerman, S (ed) (1992) *Erotic Politics Desire on the Renaissance stage*

[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](#)

- **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? How do we represent such issues in the 21st century?

- **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 offers mental health support. If students wish to seek this support, including with FIE's counselor, 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.