

ENGL 17: INTRODUCTION TO SHAKESPEARE

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Demonstrated proficiency in English by placement via multiple measures OR through an equivalent placement process OR completion of ESLL 125 & ESLL 249.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 3: Arts & Humanities
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Student Learning Outcomes

- A successful student will be able to evaluate and interpret in writing a variety of poetic elements and thematic meanings in Shakespeare's sonnets.
- A successful student will be able to evaluate and interpret in writing a variety of tragic, comic, and historical plays by Shakespeare.

Description

Introduction to selected tragic, comedic, romance, history plays, and sonnets of Shakespeare, with focus on detailed analysis of texts. Includes critical theory and secondary source research. Intended as an introductory course for English majors and students across the curriculum.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Engage close readings of selected plays and sonnets of Shakespeare
2. Identify poetic and dramatic terminologies
3. Relate the basic historical concepts of the plays to the Elizabethan period, while comprehending their relevance to the modern world
4. Analyze selected plays within racial, ethnic, gender, class, aesthetic, historical, and cultural contexts
5. Examine the plays for their political, racial, social, gender, and intercultural implications
6. Compose formal analysis essays demonstrating appropriate academic language and scholarly rigor
7. Research appropriate secondary sources and integrate those into literary analyses without plagiarism
8. Demonstrate appropriate formatting and documentation

Course Content

1. Active, close readings of selected plays and sonnets
 - a. Structure and development of plot, speaker, emotions, images, and ideas
 - b. Denotative and connotative meaning of words and dialogue
 - c. Figurative and symbolic language in relation to central theme(s) of the work
 - d. Artistic synthesis of literal and figurative details with theme(s)
2. Identify elements of poetry and drama in Shakespeare
 - a. Poetry (e.g., sonnet, narrative poem, riddles, iambic pentameter, blank verse, rhyme, metaphor, simile)
 - b. Drama (e.g., soliloquy, forms of irony [e.g., situational, dramatic], plot, causation, rising and falling action, crisis, denouement)
 - c. Dramatic genres (e.g., tragedy, comedy, romance)
3. Historical contexts
 - a. Religion
 - b. Economics
 - c. Gender hierarchy
 - d. Racial hierarchy
4. Critical theoretical concepts
 - a. New Historicist studies
 - b. Feminist studies
 - c. Queer theories
 - d. Psychological theories (Freudian, Archetypal, Existential)
 - e. Marxist theories
 - f. Ethnic and racial theories
 - g. Post-colonial studies
5. Racial, ethnic, gender, class, aesthetic, historical, and cultural contexts
 - a. African, Arabic, Jewish, and multi-ethnic representations
 - b. Issues of gender and sexuality
 - c. Socioeconomic diversity
 - d. Historical and cultural influences upon texts
6. Formal, scholarly literary analysis essays
 - a. Development and delivery of a clear literary analysis thesis
 - b. Effective use of textual evidence
 - c. Comparisons among texts
 - d. Stylistic conventions of literary analysis
 - e. Attention to scholarly language
7. Research
 - a. Navigation of research databases and print archives
 - b. Evaluation of sources and identification of those scholarly
 - c. Critical reading of research sources
8. Formatting and documentation
 - a. Modern Language Association (MLA)

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

When taught via Foothill Global Access: ongoing access to computer with email software capabilities; email address; internet browsing software.

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Reading quizzes
Response papers
One longer paper or two short literary analysis essays

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lectures, writing assignments, and classroom discussions based on sonnets and selected plays by Shakespeare
In-class reading of plays and sonnets; class interpretation and analysis
Individual and group presentations of major projects followed by discussion and evaluation

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Bevington, David, ed.. The Necessary Shakespeare, 5th ed.. 2016.

Greenblatt, Stephen, et al.. The Norton Shakespeare, 3rd ed.. 2015.

Smith, Emma. This Is Shakespeare. 2020.

Taylor, Gary, ed.. The New Oxford Shakespeare: Critical Edition, The Complete Works. 2016.

Although some of these texts are older than the suggested "5 years or newer" standard, they remain seminal texts in this area of study.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Reading from representative Shakespeare texts.
2. Quizzes on reading comprehension of assigned literary texts.
3. Individual and small group presentations on the literature and its historical, cultural, and theoretical contexts.
4. Analytical and reader response journal assignments on readings.
5. At least one formal literary analysis writing project demonstrating comprehension and critical thinking.

Discipline(s)

English