

**Shakespeare and his Time**

Code: 100266  
 ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2500245 English Studies	OT	3	0
2500245 English Studies	OT	4	0

**Contact**

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**Use of languages**

Principal working language: english (eng)  
 Some groups entirely in English: Yes  
 Some groups entirely in Catalan: No  
 Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

**Prerequisites**

The students' level of English should be between C1 (advanced) and C2 (proficiency) of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*.

Students should have completed the English Studies third year courses, specifically 'Literatura Anglesa del Renaixment i la Il·lustració'.

**Objectives and Contextualisation**

The overall purpose of this course will be to explore aspects of the evolution of Shakespearean drama by focussing on its main genres, namely, comedy and tragedy. Though we shall consider essential concepts such as 'mimesis', 'hamartia' or 'catharsis', the course will not seek to produce a theoretical discussion of the notions of 'comedy' and 'tragedy'. Rather, it will attempt to describe and contextualize an evolving practice, and will include the possibility of a critique of dramatic art. The examination of four masterpieces from different periods of Shakespeare's production will give students a sense of the playwright's creativity and of the rich variety of the early modern stage. A detailed reading of the texts will deepen their understanding of the complex ways in which drama, literature, culture, and society interacted at this crucial moment of European history. Finally, an analysis of some of the best-known productions of the plays will reveal the essentially performative nature of Shakespeare's work.

**Skills**

**English Studies**

- Critically assessing the scientific, literary and cultural production in the English language.
- Demonstrate a comprehension of the relationship between factors, processes and phenomena of linguistics, literature, history and culture, and explaining it.
- Develop critical thinking and reasoning and knowing how to communicate effectively both in your mother tongue and in other languages.
- Distinguish and contrast the various theoretical and methodological models applied to the study of the English language, its literature and its culture.
- Identify the main literary, cultural and historical currents in the English language.

- Produce clear and well structured and detailed texts in English about complex topics, displaying a correct use of the organisation, connection and cohesion of the text.
- Rewrite and organize information and arguments coming from several sources in English and presenting them in a coherent and summarised way.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

## Learning outcomes

1. Analysing and interpreting texts in an advanced level about the literary genres and literary criticism in English.
2. Applying appropriate secondary academic sources to text comments and argumentative essays about literary genres and literary criticism in English.
3. Carrying out oral presentations about topics related to the genres of English literature and its academic criticism using secondary academic sources.
4. Communicating in the studied language in oral and written form, properly using vocabulary and grammar.
5. Comparing in an advanced level different topics and texts related to literary genres and literary criticism in English.
6. Comparing in an advanced level the methodologies of the literary criticism in English.
7. Demonstrate a master of the specific methods of individual academic work that prepare the student for a postgraduate specialised education in the same or a different field of study.
8. Describing in detail and in an academic way the diachronic and synchronic evolution of the topics and texts of literary genres and literary criticism in English.
9. Distinguishing the main ideas from the secondary ones and summarising the contents of primary and secondary texts related to the literary genres and literary criticism in English.
10. Drawing up academic essays of medium length in relation to the genres of the English literature and its academic criticism using secondary academic sources.
11. Effectively communicating and applying the argumentative and textual processes to formal and scientific texts.
12. Explaining in an advanced level, the nature and main traits of the literary genres and literary criticism in English.
13. Localising secondary academic sources in the library or on the Internet related to the literary genres and literary criticism in English.
14. Mastering the advanced knowledge and scientific methodologies related to linguistics, literature, history and culture that prepare the student for a postgraduate specialised education in the same or a different field of study.
15. Students must be capable of comprehending advanced academic or professional texts in their own language or the another acquired in the degree.
16. Students must be capable of precisely arguing ideas and opinions in their own language or another acquired in the degree.
17. Summarising the content of primary and secondary academic sources about literary genres and literary criticism in English.

## Content

UNIT 1- The Shakespearean Stage

UNIT 2 - *Romeo and Juliet*

UNIT 3 - *Twelfth Night*

UNIT 4 - *Hamlet*

UNIT 5 - *Antony and Cleopatra*

Students are advised to read the plays in the following editions:

- *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. by Jill L. Levenson, The Oxford Shakespeare, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- *Twelfth Night*, ed. Roger Warren, The Oxford Shakespeare, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- *Hamlet*, ed. by G.R. Hibbard, The Oxford Shakespeare, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- *Anthony and Cleopatra*, ed. by Michael Neill, The Oxford Shakespeare, Oxford University Press, 2008.

## Methodology

Autonomous activities

Directed activities

Supervised activities

## Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
<b>Type: Directed</b>			
Lectures	30	1.2	16, 15
Practice classes with text analysis and debate	20	0.8	
<b>Type: Supervised</b>			
Oral presentation preparation	25	1	16
<b>Type: Autonomous</b>			
Reading	35	1.4	
Study	10	0.4	

## Evaluation

*The practical dimension of the course will require students to take an active part in class. Group discussion will be normal practice and students will be requested to offer a presentation on specific aspects of the productions of the plays analysed in class. Percentages will be as follows:*

- Class presentation and group work: 10%
- Class participation: 10%
- Exam 1: 40%
- Exam 2: 40%

The minimum pass mark is 5 for all exams and activities. Students who have failed one of the exams but passed the other will have the opportunity of a resit examination ("recuperació") if their average mark is 3,5 or higher. In this case, the maximum final grade will be 5.

NB: Students whose exercises contain plagiarism will automatically receive the final grade of "fail".

**Exam 1 (units 1,2, and 3) will take place during week 7 or 8; exam 2 (units 3 and 4) will take place during the final teaching week, i.e. 15.**

Procedure for Reviewing Grades Awarded:

On carrying out each evaluation activity, lecturers will inform students (on Moodle) of the procedures to be followed for reviewing all grades awarded, and the date on which such a review will take place.

Evaluation Activities Excluded from Reassessment:

Class presentations are not eligible for reassessment.

## Evaluation activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Class Participation	10%	5	0.2	1, 16, 6, 11, 4
Class presentation and group work	10%	5	0.2	16, 7, 3, 12, 4
Exam 1 ("The Shakespearean Stage", "Romeo and Juliet" and "Twelfth Night")	40%	10	0.4	2, 5, 14, 8, 11, 10, 17
Exam 2 ("Hamlet" and "Antony and Cleopatra")	40%	10	0.4	1, 5, 15, 9, 13

## Bibliography

### 1. Context

Susan Brigden, *New Worlds, Lost Worlds. The Rule of the Tudors 1485-1603*, Penguin Books. (A survey of the Tudor age incorporating the latest findings of sixteenth-century scholarship.)

Julia Briggs, *The Stage-Play World: English Literature and its Background, 1580-1625*. (A very sound and user-friendly introduction, full of interesting ideas and suggestions.)

Patrick Collinson, *The Reformation*, Weidenfeld & Nicholson. (A readable assessment of a major turning point in European history by a leading Reformation scholar.)

Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*, Palgrave Macmillan (A famously controversial study of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. It approaches the plays from a cultural materialist perspective.)

Northrop Frye, *Northrop Frye on Shakespeare*, Yale UP. (It includes brilliant chapters on several of the plays we shall look at)

Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning. From More to Shakespeare*, U of Chicago P. (A critical earthquake that shook Renaissance criticism to its foundations.)

Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642*, CUP. (An authoritative description of the theatrical conditions of Shakespearean drama.)

-----, *Studying Shakespeare. An Introduction*, Edward Arnold. (How to tackle the study of a Shakespearean play.)

Frank Kermode, *The Age of Shakespeare*, Weidenfeld & Nicholson. (An account of Shakespeare's career by one of England's most distinguished critics.)

Martin Wiggins, *Shakespeare and the Drama of his Time*, Oxford Shakespeare Topics, OUP. (A reliable introduction to the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramaturgical traditions.)

## 2. Criticism

Auden, W.H., *The Dyer's Hand*, Vintage, 1989.

Bradley, A.C., *Shakespearean Tragedy*, Penguin Books, 1991.

Dutton, Richard and Jean E. Howard (eds.), *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works: The Tragedies*, Blackwell, 2006.

-----, *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works: The Comedies*, Blackwell, 2006.

-----, *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works: Poems, Problem Comedies, Late Plays*, Blackwell, 2005.

Eisaman Maus, Katherine, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance*, Chicago UP, 1995.

Everett, B., *Young Hamlet. Essays on Shakespeare's Tragedies*, Clarendon Press, 1989.

Goddard, Harold C., *The Meaning of Shakespeare*, 2 vols., The University of Chicago Press, 1951.

Greenblatt, Stephen, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*, The University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Jackson, Russell (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Film*, CUP, 2007.

Kermode, Frank, *Shakespeare's Language*, Penguin Books, 2000.

Nuttal, A.D., *Shakespeare the Thinker*, Yale UP, 2007.

Poole, Adrian, *Tragedy: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford UP, 2005.

Rackin, Phyllis, *Shakespeare and Women*, Oxford UP, 2005.

Tanner, Tony, *Prefaces to Shakespeare*, Harvard UP, 2010.

Traub, Valerie, *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment: Gender, Sexuality, and Race*, Oxford UP, 2016.

Wells, Stanley (ed.), *Shakespeare: A Bibliographical Guide*, Clarendon Press, 1990.