

## Shakespeare and his Times

Code: 106303  
ECTS Credits: 6

2024/2025

Degree	Type	Year
2504212 English Studies	OT	3
2504212 English Studies	OT	4

### Contact

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### Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

### Prerequisites

The course requires an initial level of English C2 (Proficiency) of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. With C2, students can understand almost everything they read or hear without effort; they can summarise information from different oral and written sources, reconstruct facts and arguments and present them in a coherent way; they can express themselves spontaneously, with fluency and precision, distinguishing subtle nuances of meaning even in the most complex situations.

Students should have completed the English Studies third year courses, specifically 'Literatura Anglesa del Renaixement 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.

### Competences

- English Studies
- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
- Apply scientific ethical principles to information processing.

- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Use digital tools and specific documentary sources for the collection and organisation of information.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Analyse the fundamental aspects of ethical conduct and the challenges this poses to a culturally diverse environment.
2. Integrate knowledge and information from academic sources consulted for written work, citing, referencing and paraphrasing correctly.
3. Locate and organise relevant English-language information available on the internet, databases and libraries, and apply this to work and/or research environments.
4. Organise the autonomous component to the learning process in an effective manner.
5. Rigorously approach the values conveyed by the texts analysed, carrying out constructive criticism.
6. Understand the fundamental aspects of the rights and duties that construct values in a democratic society.

## Content

UNIT 1- The Shakespearean Stage

UNIT 2 - *Romeo and Juliet*

UNIT 3 - *Twelfth Night*

UNIT 4 - *Hamlet*

UNIT 5 - *The Tempest*

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

- *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. Jill L. Levenson, The Oxford Shakespeare, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- *Twelfth Night* ed. Roger Warren and Stanley Wells, The Oxford Shakespeare, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- *Hamlet*, ed. G.R. Hibbard, The Oxford Shakespeare, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- *The Tempest*, ed. Stephen Orgel, The Oxford Shakespeare, Oxford University Press, 2008.

## Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures	30	1.2	
Practice classes with text analysis and debate	20	0.8	
Type: Supervised			
Oral presentation preparation	25	1	

Type: Autonomous		
Reading	35	1.4
Study	15	0.6

Methodology includes the following activities:

Autonomous activities

Directed activities

Supervised activities

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

## Assessment

### Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Class participation	10%	2.5	0.1	2, 6
Class presentation (Shakespeare in Performance)	10%	2.5	0.1	3, 6
Exam 1 ("The Shakespearean Stage", Plays I and II)	40%	10	0.4	1, 3, 4, 5, 6
Exam 2 (Plays III and IV)	40%	10	0.4	1, 2, 4, 5, 6

*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 attendance and participation: 10%
- Exam 1: 40%
- Exam 2: 40%

The minimum pass mark is 5 for all exams and activities.

- Continuous assessment applies to this subject. This means that all exercises are compulsory and submission of 30% or more of these exercises automatically excludes the possibility of obtaining "No available" as a final grade. The minimum mark for any exercise or exam to be considered for the average final mark is 5. The minimum average pass mark for the whole subject is 5.
- The student's command of English will be taken into account when marking all exercises and for the final mark. It will count as 25% of this mark for all the exercises and will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

Grammar (morphology and syntax)  
Vocabulary (accuracy and variety)  
Cohesion (among sentences and paragraphs)  
Organization (sound argumentation of ideas)  
Style (expression and register)  
Spelling

- Reviewing procedure: Students have a right to review their exercises with the teacher in a personal tutorial, on the set dates, never later than 2 weeks after the marks have been made available. The student loses this right if s/he fails to collect the exercise/exam within the period announced by the teacher.

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.

Students will obtain a "Not assessed/Not submitted" course grade unless they have submitted more than 30% of the assessment items.

#### NOT ASSESSED

Students will obtain a Not assessed/Not submitted course grade unless they have submitted more than 30% of the assessment items, that is to say, provided that they have taken none of the two midterm exams.

#### (ITEM-BY-ITEM) RE-ASSESSMENT:

a) Students who fail both exams are not eligible for re-assessment; those who have failed one of the two exams are eligible provided that its mark is higher than 3,5. Students who have failed one of the two exams must retake it even if the provisional average mark of the course were 5 or higher.

b) Students whose re-assessment is successful will get, in all cases, a final grade of 5. Students who have passed both exams cannot opt for re-assessment in order to upgrade their average mark.

c). Class presentations will not be re-assessed. Students are committed to offering their presentation on the date agreed with the rest of the class at the beginning of the semester.

#### SINGLE-ASSESSMENT OPTION: Students will be assessed on the basis of the following components:

(1) An in-class exam on "The Shakespearean Stage" unit plus plays I and II to be taken on the day the rest of group sit exam 2 (50%)

(2) An essay on plays III and IV to be submitted on exam day (40%)

(3) Class attendance and participation (10%)

*Re-evaluation:* The same re-assessment method as continuous assessment will be used.

#### PLAGIARISM:

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

Irregularities refer, for instance, to copying in an exam, copying from sources without indicating authorship, or a misuse of AI such as presenting work as original that has been generated by an AI tool or programme. These evaluation activities will not be re-assessed.

## **Bibliography**

## 1. Contexts

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.)

Richard, Eldridge, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Literature*, Oxford UP. (A useful examination of the major literary genres).

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, Barbara, *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.

Nuttall, 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.

Smith, Emma, *This is Shakespeare*, Random House, 2020.

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.

## Software

Not used in this subject.

## Language list

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	English	first semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	English	first semester	morning-mixed