

# ENGL 2183 COIN4: Shakespeare 1

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## Syllabus for Shakespeare 1

### Course Instructor

Welcome to Shakespeare 1. My name is Dr. Jessica Slights and I teach introductory English and upper-level undergraduate courses on Shakespeare in the Department of English & Theatre at Acadia. Periodically, I also offer Honours and Graduate seminars on such topics as the sonnet, theoretical approaches to early modern literature, and film adaptations of Shakespeare's plays. My scholarly research is focused on various aspects of early modern literature and culture, and my work has appeared in such journals as *Early Modern Literary Studies*, *English Studies in Canada*, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, *Studies in Philology*, and *Studies in English Literature*. I am co-editor, with Paul Yachnin, of *Shakespeare and Character: Theory, History, Performance, and Theatrical Persons* (Palgrave 2009). My print edition of Shakespeare's *Othello* is available from [Broadview Press](#). My scholarly open-access digital edition of *Othello* is accessible online at <http://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/Texts/Oth/>.

I can be contacted by email at [jessica.slights@acadiu.ca](mailto:jessica.slights@acadiu.ca).

### Course Description

This course aims to introduce you to the study of Shakespeare's plays at the university level. You will explore five plays in detail, three comedies and two histories. You will also learn a little about Shakespeare and about the historical context in which his plays were written and first performed.

Although you may have studied Shakespeare in high school or in a previous university course, you do not need to have read any of his plays before now to succeed in this course. Just come to the material with an open mind, a bit of patience, and a lively imagination!

### Prerequisites

You must have completed "Writing and Reading Critically" (ENGL 1406 or ENGL 1413 & ENGL 1423) or an equivalent introductory English course with a C- or higher in order to take this course.

This course—"Shakespeare 1" (ENGL 2183)—focuses on Shakespeare's histories and comedies. "Shakespeare 2" (ENGL 2193) focuses on his tragedies and romances. "Shakespeare 1" and "Shakespeare 2" are not sequential. This means that you are welcome to take both courses, and that you may take them in whichever order you prefer.

### Scheduling Success

You have **6 months** to complete this course. I invite you to work at your own pace and recommend that you establish a regular schedule to ensure that you stay engaged. You should work gradually through the lessons and complete assignments as you encounter them.

The course is divided into modules, each of which contains a series of lessons. The first module provides an introduction to key topics and skills. Each of the next five modules is based on a play from the syllabus. Give yourself plenty of time to read both the plays and my lesson notes, to familiarize yourself with new material, and to absorb complex ideas. I have **bolded important terms** in the lessons in order to draw them to your attention. You are responsible for understanding what these terms mean and how they are relevant to the study of Shakespeare. You may refer to the [Glossary of Literary Terms linked here](#) in order to flesh out definitions with which you are unfamiliar.

Clickable boxes like this one are interspersed throughout the lessons. When you've answered a question, click on the box to open it and read my response. (click to open/close)

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The assignments you submit to me should each be drafted and revised with care. Please allow time to review my comments and corrections on one assignment before proceeding to the next. Although I will make every effort to accommodate your schedule, I do need time to grade your work. For both of our sakes, please avoid cramming everything into a single desperate week at the end of the course.

## Assignments & Evaluation

Reading Quizzes x 5	10%
Short Writing Tasks x 5	30%
Final Essay	30%
Final Examination	30%

You will complete one online multiple choice **Reading Quiz** for each of the Shakespeare plays on this syllabus. You will need to have read a play in full before taking the corresponding quiz. I recommend that you complete the quizzes with your books and notes closed as a means of helping you track how much you are understanding and retaining as you read.

The first five modules of the course are followed by a **Short Writing Task**. Consult the appropriate lesson notes as you complete these, and then **submit them as Word documents via the online assignment dropboxes**. I have provided detailed instructions for each assignment, but I welcome any questions you have via email.

Once you have completed each of the following, you will be ready to schedule your final exam.

- Reading Quiz #1 (2%)
- Reading Quiz #2 (2%)
- Reading Quiz #3 (2%)
- Reading Quiz #4 (2%)
- Reading Quiz #5 (2%)
- Short Writing Task #1 (6%)
- Short Writing Task #2 (6%)
- Short Writing Task #3 (6%)
- Short Writing Task #4 (6%)
- Short Writing Task #5 (6%)
- Final Essay (30%)

## Final Exam

Once you have submitted all the Short Writing Tasks and the Final Essay, and at least 10 days ahead, you must **apply to write the 3-hour, proctored online exam by clicking on the "Apply for the Final Exam" link on the course page** and following the relevant instructions.

At the confirmed time on the scheduled date, your proctor will input a password in Moodle which will enable you to access the exam by clicking on the "Final Exam" link on the course page.

The Final Exam module of the course includes the instructions for each section of the exam as well as advice about how to prepare.

## Course Materials

The editions of Shakespeare's plays that I have chosen for this course are published by Simon and Schuster for the Folger Shakespeare Library and by Canada's own Broadview Press. They are reasonably priced and carefully edited, with useful introductions, solid explanatory notes, and helpful suggestions for further reading. I suggest that you purchase hard copies of each text if possible so that you can annotate them as you read. If this is not feasible, you may be able to work with a combination of library copies and the free online editions linked below.

**\*Please consult the Open Acadia [student handbook](#) for ordering information.\***

These editions are also available for order from independent bookstores and online retailers.

***Twelfth Night*** edited by David Carnegie and Mark Houlihan for the Internet Shakespeare Editions, Broadview Press, 2014. (ISBN 9781554810949)

Full play and notes available online at <https://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/Texts/TN/>

***The Taming of the Shrew*** edited by Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine for the Folger Shakespeare Library, Simon & Schuster, 1992. (ISBN 9780743477574)

Play without explanatory notes available online at <https://shakespeare.folger.edu/shakespeares-works/the-taming-of-the-shrew/>

***The Merchant of Venice*** edited by Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine for the Folger Shakespeare Library, Simon & Schuster, 1997. (ISBN 9780743477567)

Play without explanatory notes available online at <https://shakespeare.folger.edu/shakespeares-works/the-merchant-of-venice/>

***Richard II*** edited by Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine for the Folger Shakespeare Library, Simon & Schuster, 1996. (ISBN 9780743484916)

Play without explanatory notes available online at <https://shakespeare.folger.edu/shakespeares-works/richard-ii/>

***Henry V*** edited by James D. Mardock for the Internet Shakespeare Editions, Broadview Press, 2014. (ISBN 9781554812226)

Full play and notes available online at <https://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/Texts/H5/>

I also recommend that you purchase a good handbook for academic writers. This is not a requirement, and we won't work with such a text directly in this course, but if you don't already have one you should take this opportunity to one pick up as it will prove invaluable as you work to improve your writing. A well-designed and reasonably priced option is:

***The Broadview Pocket Guide to Writing*** by Doug Babington et al., Broadview Press.

## Useful & Fun Links

There is an astounding amount of information available online for students of Shakespeare--some of it wonderful, some of it truly awful. I've listed here some of the sites that I've found most helpful and fun. I encourage you to browse through these and also to wander beyond them. My general advice is that you avoid sites that offer simple plot summaries of the plays. As study tools, these have limited potential and they are, of course, unacceptable as scholarly sources when you are preparing written work.

**[The Internet Shakespeare Editions](#)** provides fully annotated and interactive scholarly editions of many of Shakespeare's plays and poems, as well as extensive supplementary materials.

**[The Folger Digital Texts](#)** offers scholarly editions of Shakespeare's plays and poems for download in a variety of formats. These files do not contain the notes and essays that accompany the texts in print.

[Shakespeare Documented](#) is an authoritative multi-institutional resource documenting Shakespeare in his own time.

[The Folger Digital Image Collection \(LUNA\)](#) provides images of books, artworks, manuscripts, and all kinds of primary sources relating to the study of Shakespeare.

[Shakespearean Insult Generator](#) A wonderfully entertaining way to scold yourself!

[The Globe Theatre](#) This official site offers information about the history and the current season of London's most famous theatre.

[The Agas Map of Early Modern London](#) This interactive digital map developed by Janelle Jenstad at the University of Victoria offers a detailed view of London c.1561. The site also has an online encyclopedia and gazetteer containing comprehensive information about some of the city's most famous churches, neighbourhoods, and playhouses.

[BBC: "How the Tudor Dynasty Shaped Modern Britain"](#) This interactive timeline developed by the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) enables readers to explore the formative role of the Tudor dynasty in early modern life.

[Shakespeare at the Movies](#) IMDb is your source if you're after information about a film adaptation of one of Shakespeare's plays or if you're curious how often Shakespeare is mentioned in the movies (well over a thousand titles, including *Beauty and the Beast* and *A Nightmare on Elm Street!*).

[The National Portrait Gallery](#) Founded in London in 1856 to collect portraits of famous British women and men, the NPG is the place to see some of the historical figures that Shakespeare writes about, to find links to images of Shakespeare himself, and to view pictures of some of the famous actors who have performed in his plays.

## Student Handbook

You are responsible for becoming familiar with the contents of the Student Handbook. It contains important information about scheduling examinations (if applicable), applying for extensions, withdrawing from your course, ordering books, and computer and library services available to you. If you have questions about the policies outlined in the handbook (<https://courseware.acadiau.ca/openacadia/studenthandbook.html>), contact:

Open Acadia  
21 University Avenue (Rhodes Hall)  
Wolfville, NS B4P 2R6  
Phone: 1-800-565-6568  
Fax: 1-902-585-1068  
Email: [openacadia@acadiau.ca](mailto:openacadia@acadiau.ca)

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity demands responsible use of the work of other scholars. It is compromised by academic dishonesty such as cheating and plagiarism. A student who is uncertain whether or not a course of action might constitute cheating or plagiarism should seek in advance the advice of the instructor involved.

- Cheating is copying or the use of unauthorized aids or the intentional falsification or invention of information in any academic exercise
- Plagiarism is the act of presenting the ideas or words of another as one's own. Students are required to acknowledge and document the sources of ideas that they use in their written work.
- Self-plagiarism is also a form of plagiarism. It is the presentation of the same work in more than one course without the permission of the instructors involved.
- A student who knowingly helps another to commit an act of academic dishonesty is equally guilty.
- Penalties are levied in relation to the degree of the relevant infraction. They range from requiring the student to re-do the piece of work, through failure on that piece of work, to failure in the course, and to dismissal from the university.

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