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ENG 5002-001: English Renaissance Drama

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English 5002: English Renaissance Drama

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Office Hours: 12:00-13:00 MWF; 14:00-15:00 W; and by appointment

Required Texts:

Brooke and Paradise, English Drama 1580 to 1642
Ford, John, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore

PURPOSE. English Renaissance Drama is unparalleled in its richness, complexity, variety, and scope. Nowadays, the near-deification of Shakespeare has eclipsed many excellent writers who, in any other period, would be literary stars of some magnitude. We will study better-known playwrights such as Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, and John Webster; but we will also study fine plays by less well known but still very accomplished writers like Marston, Fletcher, Middleton, Massinger, and Ford.

The works of Shakespeare did not appear out of a vacuum. The Bard borrowed freely from and interacted on a regular basis with most of the dramatists we will be studying. Our overriding goal will be to gain a greater understanding of English Renaissance drama in its rich social and cultural context. We will also strive to understand the cross-fertilizations among and between these fascinating literary figures. A number of significant playwrights, among them Peele, Dekker, Chapman, and Shirley, could not be included, but it is hoped that the course will provide a wide-ranging introduction to an unrivaled theatrical legacy.

Our critical approach to the texts in this class will incorporate insights from a variety of perspectives, including archetypal, feminist, gender, historical, Marxist, semiotics, structural, and other branches of criticism.

ASSIGNMENTS. You will be required to write one shorter paper of approximately 4-6 pages and one longer, documented paper of some 12-15 pages. During the early part of the semester, you will be asked to introduce discussion for one session; later, you will give a short oral presentation (ca. 10-15 minutes) summarizing your documented paper for the class. There will be a midterm and a final exam.

GRADING. Evaluation of your work will be demanding and fair and will include an assessment of your class preparedness and participation. The first paper will make up 10%, the prospectus 5%, and the documented paper 20% of the course grade. The midterm exam will count 15% and the final exam 25%. Active participation in discussion will constitute the remaining 25% of the overall grade.
LATE WORK. Assignments turned in late will be penalized one-third grade PER CALENDAR DAY late. Missed in-class work cannot be made up; that is the reward for coming to class regularly.

PARTICIPATION. The success of this class depends on your active and constructive participation. As graduate students, you are adults and professionals, and therefore a major portion of your grade will reflect your contributions to thoughtful, provocative class discussions.

CONFERENCES. I encourage you to drop by and confer with me at any mutually convenient time regarding assignments, problems, or ideas for papers. Check with me before you get mired in that essay!

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.
English 5002 Assignments


- Oral Report (Spanish Tragedy): ________________.
- Oral Report (Doctor Faustus): ________________.


- Oral Report (Edward II): ________________.
- Oral Report (Richard II): ________________.


- Oral Report (Malcontent): ________________.
- Oral Report (Measure for Measure): ________________.

Feb. 19 - Jonson, *Volpone*, 1606. PAPER #1 DUE.

- Oral Report: ________________.

Feb. 26 - MIDTERM EXAM.

- Oral Report: ________________.


- Oral Report: ________________.

Mar. 11 - Fletcher, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, 1607-1610.

- Oral Report (Knight): ________________.
- Oral Report (Winter's Tale): ________________.

Mar. 18 - No class; Spring Break

Oral Report: ________________.

April 1 - Middleton, *The Changeling*, 1624; PAPER #2 PROSPECTUS DUE.

Oral Report: ________________.

April 8 - Massinger, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, 1625.

Oral Report: ________________.

April 15 - Ford, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, 1633.

Oral Report: ________________.

April 22 - Oral Presentations.

April 29 - Oral Presentations; FINAL PAPER DUE.

FINAL EXAM