

LIT 339: Shakespeare on Stage and Screen

Syllabus and Course Policies

Info

Course Meetings: Tuesday and Thursday, 11:25-12:40, Rettaliata 124

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 3:15-4:15 (excluding university holidays, and finals week)

Contact: aroback@iit.edu

Materials and costs

I have ordered the Folger Shakespeare Library paperback editions (see table 1) for each play at the campus bookstore (as Kindle or e-books they are only about one dollar apiece, or you can get them on Amazon for about three dollars apiece). No matter what version/vendor you go with, these books are very inexpensive (much less than the Norton or Bedford collections) and contain helpful glosses and illustrations.

If you own a collection from a previous course that has comparable textual notes, use that. **Do not** use a full-text edition off the internet. They do not have glosses and will not be sufficient to help you understand the text well enough for the exams and writing assignments in this course.

Romeo and Juliet	9780743477116
The Taming of the Shrew	9780743477574
Love's Labour's Lost	9780743484923
Macbeth	9780743477109
Henry V	9780743484879
Hamlet	9780743477123

Table 1: Folger Shakespeare Library editions and associated ISBN numbers.

Required textbook: Cowl, S. (2008). *Shakespeare and Film: A Norton Guide*. New York: Norton. ISBN 9780393927658

Required performance: *Love's Labour's Lost* (2017), Dir. Marti Maraden, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, 2/7 through 3/26

Provided you are under 35 years old or know someone who is and will buy tickets for you (and you book in advance), the price to see *The Tempest* is \$20. More details to come later on.

All other readings will be provided by me as .pdf files. They'll be available on Blackboard.

About the readings

The readings in this class are mandatory. You should consider them your homework. If you choose not to read or fall behind in your readings, it will be apparent and your performance in the course will suffer. Use your time management skills to keep up with the reading.

Shakespeare requires a *great deal* more time to read than modern prose as you must read glosses of unfamiliar words and explanatory footnotes. You will also need to reread passages a few times before they become clear to you, so plan your time accordingly.

Films

- *Romeo and Juliet* (1968), Dir. Franco Zeffirelli, 138 min., [PR2831.A232000](#)
- *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* (1996), Dir. Baz Luhrmann, 120 min., [PR2831.A2L832002](#)
- *The Taming of the Shrew* (1967), Dir. Franco Zeffirelli, 122 min., [PR2823.A23T361999DVD](#)
- *10 Things I Hate About You* (1999), Dir. Gil Junger, 97 min., [PN1997.2.T462010](#)
- *Love's Labour's Lost* (1985), Dir. Elijah Moshinsky, 120 min., in class
- *Love's Labour's Lost* (2000), Dir. Kenneth Branagh, 93 min., [call number pending]
- *Kumonosu-jō* (en: *Throne of Blood*, or *The Caste of the Spider's Web*) (1957), Dir. Akira Kurosawa, 110 min., [PN1995.9.S24K8552009](#)
- *Macbeth* (1971), Dir. Roman Polanski, 140 min., [PR2823.A23x1971](#)
- *Henry V* (1944), Dir. Lawrence Olivier, 137 min., [PR2812.A23H42006](#)
- *Henry V* (1989), Dir. Kenneth Branagh, 137 min., [PN1997.H46H462000](#)
- *Hamlet* (1948), Dir. Lawrence Olivier, 155 min., [call number pending]
- *Hamlet* (2000), Dir. Michael Almereyda, 112 min., [PR2807.A232001](#)

Watching Films

Films, just like the readings, are your responsibility outside of class (with the exception of *Love's Labour's Lost* [1985]). There are due dates for watching the films on the course schedule, but you should always read the play first before watching so that you will spend your time analyzing the directorial choices and composition of the film rather than trying to follow the plot action.

All required films are on reserve at Galvin Library. Simply go to the circulation desk on the first floor with the call number of the film (next to films on the above list) and you can check the film out to view in the library. There are laptops with DVD drives available to check out as well. You

can also [reserve a group study room](#) if you want to watch in groups (you'll need a laptop to hook into the monitor in the rooms--you can borrow them from OTS in the library).

There are plenty of options for viewing these films at low or now cost if you can't make it to the library for whatever reason, so don't spend your money on DVD copies, some of which can run upwards of \$30.

Objectives

- Students should have an understanding of the context in which Shakespeare's plays were performed for an Elizabethan audience.
- Students should understand the vocabulary and terminology associated with film/stage/print drama and should be able to converse intelligently about all three.
- Students should be able to articulate the differences between different productions of Shakespeare's works and major directors in the field. Students should be able to perform detailed written analysis of those productions.
- In addition to understanding the historical context of a work, students will be able to research and apply primary/secondary sources to construct an insightful analysis of a text.
- Students should demonstrate knowledge of the issues and methods entailed in providing and evaluating evidence or intellectual justification of claims.

Assignments

Scene analysis (15)

You'll select one scene from the play and analyze it on the course blog in two separate entries. The first entry will discuss concepts such as the figurative language Shakespeare uses, the roles of staging (character movements, entrances and exits, soliloquies and asides, etc.), and the significance of the scene within the broader context of the play up to that point (i.e. why is this scene important?). The second entry will analyze the interpretation of the scene from one film that we are watching (you pick the film). This analysis should contain commentary on *mise-en-scene* elements such as lighting, perspective, cuts, costume, music, etc. At all times in this analysis, your observations must be followed by what you think this interpretation conveys to the audience.

We'll practice as a class on *Romeo and Juliet*, and I'll discuss more of what I'm looking for. I'll also provide you a list of scenes to choose from. Your blog entries will be due the day before the class meeting where we discuss the corresponding scene or film in class. Don't be surprised if I ask you for your opinion on that scene in class (i.e. be ready with something interesting to say).

Midterm Exam (15)

The midterm exam will test your comprehension of the material we have read so far. It will include a section that tests your knowledge of the plays we have read up to that point, your understanding of film and critical terminology, and your ability to critically analyze films and text we have read. More details will be provided as the exam approaches.

Play Review (15)

You will write a review of Maraden's *Love's Labour's Lost* at the Chicago Shakespeare Theater that analyzes the directorial choices, performances, costumes, props, sets and staging (as well as any other aspects you find relevant). Your review should include your opinions, but your opinions should be supported by fact (i.e. if you say you liked/disliked something, you must say why and support your opinion with concepts covered in the course – we'll discuss appropriate review content as well). More details later in the semester.

Final Paper (25)

A detailed analysis of a film or filmed stage production outside of the required films for the course. In addition to the required and recommended texts, I expect a discussion of two outside sources. I'll expect progress reports as the semester ends in the form of a proposal, annotated bibliography, and rough draft. More details later in the semester.

Final Exam (15)

A comprehensive examination that tests your understanding of course readings/films and application of course concepts to those readings/films. The exam will take place during the final exam period for the course.

Participation (15)

Participation is critical to your understanding in a literature course. Come to class every day prepared to make at least one comment. I don't hand out "A" grades for people who sit silently the entire semester or work on other projects in class.

Attendance is mandatory. I'll allow two missed class meetings without penalty, but then I will reduce your final grade in the course by 10% for each subsequent missed class. If you reach six missed class meetings, you'll receive an "E" for your final grade.

Chronic lateness will be counted as an absence. If you have obligations that will make you late on a regular basis, seriously consider whether you can take this course. Having too much work in other classes is not an acceptable reason to miss class. Extracurricular activities not related to professional development or official university activities are not excusable absences.

Seek permission for extended absences whenever possible. You cannot miss extended periods of class without notifying me. I will issue a grade of "E" to students who stop attending class or who fail to contact me about extended absences.

Grading Scale

All grades on assignments are weighted to their corresponding point values on the syllabus. To calculate your grade, take the percentage grade I give you on an assignment, multiply by the weighted value listed next to the assignment above, and add the resulting figures. That is your final grade in the course.

90	A
80	B
70	C
60	D
<60	E

Table 2: Grading scale

Required Technology

You will need a non-IE browser for the course (Firefox or Chrome work just fine). You'll also need a way to watch films. You can probably borrow headphones from the library, but I'd recommend bringing your own if you watch films on campus.

Plagiarism

You are expected to adhere to all IIT rules regarding academic honesty and conduct. Please familiarize yourself with the [Student Handbook](#) policies. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas without appropriate attribution of those ideas to the original author. Reordering words or sentences but conveying the same ideas as another author and representing those ideas as your own still constitutes plagiarism. If I detect any plagiarized content in your paper, you will automatically fail the assignment and, depending on the severity of the infraction, the course. Additional penalties may be imposed, such as academic sanctions and, in some cases, expulsion. If you are concerned that your work might constitute a breach of academic integrity, contact me prior to turning in your assignment and I will advise you. I will report plagiarism to the appropriate authorities in every instance and issue failing grades as necessary to prevent academic dishonesty.

The Writing Center (SH 232-233)

The Writing Center is a tutoring service that helps students develop writing skills critical to success in academic and professional pursuits. I strongly encourage any student to visit the Writing Center if you are having difficulty with any part of the writing process or if you simply want some feedback on your writing from another writer. Since you will be writing a great deal in this class (and, presumably, your entire life), it is to your benefit to take advantage of this free service to help you become a better writer.

Accommodation for students with documented disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities. In order to receive accommodations, students must obtain a letter of accommodation from the Center for Disability Resources. The Center for Disability Resources (CDR) is located in Life Sciences Room 218, telephone 312 567.5744 or disabilities@iit.edu.