ENGLISH 345
SHAKESPEARE: SELECTED HISTORIES AND COMEDIES
SPRING 2014

Professor Huffman  Clifford.huffman@stonybrook.edu
Office hours:

TA:

Syllabus

1/28  Introduction
1/30, 2/4, 6  Richard III
2/11, 13, 18  Richard II
2/20, 25, 27  Henry IV, part one
3/4, 6, 11  Henry V
3/13  Essay 1
Spring vacation
3/25, 27, 4/1  Twelfth Night
4/3, 8, 10  Midsummer Night’s Dream
4/15, 17  Much Ado About Nothing
4/22, 24, 29  The Merchant of Venice
5/6  Review
5/8  Essay 2

Texts for this course have been ordered at the campus bookstore.

* Attendance is required. You are allowed 5 absences (no excuses necessary) but will be penalized above 5.
* There will be occasional unannounced quizzes, OF WHICH YOU MUST TAKE A MINIMUM OF 5. (There will be no make-ups for missed quizzes.) If you take more than 5, your BEST 5 will be averaged in computing your grade.

* You must submit a “term project,” typically a term paper. Suggested topics for the term paper option will be distributed (however, you are urged to develop your own).

Grading: assuming attendance is satisfactory, course grades will be computed as follows:

1/4  average of quizzes
1/2  average of Exam 1 and Exam 2
1/4  term project grade
COURSE OBJECTIVES

A major purpose of the upper division Shakespeare courses (EGL 345, 346) is to focus on literary texts written more than 400 years ago, thus to familiarize students with the history and structure of English, as well as the dialect variations of the time presented in some of the plays. Students will read texts closely with attention to nuances of language, content and form.

The subject matter itself, plays by Shakespeare, requires knowledge that the classwork, under the direction of the Professor, will provide. Students will learn and become familiar with literary terms, genres, and rhetorical, poetic and theatrical devices. They will also have the experience of encountering a variety of literary criticism and theory.

Part of the classwork entails the asking of productive questions in the classroom, and classroom discussion. In this way, students will listen to and respond to their peers’ perspectives and they will have the opportunity to articulate ideas with nuance and clarity. Students will express their ideas through speaking, writing, and the occasional use of digital media.

Attention to the historical backgrounds of the plays will help students understand how literary texts emerge from, respond to and help shape historical and cultural contexts.

The term project will provide students with the opportunity to locate, evaluate, synthesize and incorporate relevant primary and secondary source materials. These essays will give the students the opportunity to write in a focused, organized and convincing manner, in clear, standardized English prose and there will be feedback from the Professor and peers. Essays at the middle and end of the term will provide opportunity for increasing length and complexity of argumentation, and will help students communicate complex ideas clearly in formal presentations.