English 412: Shakespeare’s Women

Semester: Fall 2019
Section: 412-001
Meets: TTh 9:30-10:45
Room: Ferguson 292

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Tasker
Office: 260 Liberal Arts North
Office hours: Tues 10:45 a.m.- 12:15 pm, and 5:00 -6:00 p.m.
       Wed 2:30 -5:30 p.m.,
       Thurs 10:45 a.m. - 1:15-p.m
Office phone: 468-2487
Email address: taskerea@sfasu.edu

Course Description
According to the SFA General Bulletin, ENG 412 "British Literary Topics" (3 credits) consists of “Advanced study and research in British literature, which may focus on particular periods, genres and/or authors.”

Prerequisites: ENG 381 and nine semester hours of English.

ENGL 412 "Topics in British Literature" (3 credits) meets twice each week in 75-minute segments for 15 weeks, and also meets for a 2 1/2-hour final examination or seminar presentation. Students are expected to complete weekly reading assignments of primary, secondary, and tertiary materials. Completion and comprehension of the readings is assessed regularly through in-class activities, as well as through a final project. Students are required to conduct a significant literary research project, to give a major class presentation in which they synthesize the literature within larger critical and cultural conversations, and to produce formal written essays and other writings totaling 25-30 pages. These activities average at a minimum 9 hours of work each week to prepare outside of classroom hours.

In this section of ENG 412, we will study selected plays and poetry by William Shakespeare through the lens of gender studies with a particular focus on Shakespeare’s women, including his female characters, the women in his life, famous Shakespearian actresses, women critics, and applications of feminist criticism.

Textbook(s)
I strongly recommend that you purchase:

The RSC (Royal Shakespeare Company) text is a very good Shakespeare anthology and the most affordable. Alternatively, you can use another anthology or separate printed copies of the individual plays. You are required to bring to class an unabridged, printed copy of each play that we will be reading (The Taming of the Shrew, As You Like It, Merchant of Venice, Macbeth, King Lear, and The Winter’s Tale).

Course Goals
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
• Describe the cultural, political, and social contexts of the British Isles during the Early Modern Period.
• Explain the relationship between Shakespeare’s work and the cultural, political, and social developments of the period.
• Describe the characteristics of Shakespearean tragedy and comedy as they conform to dramatic conventions and traditions.
• Explain Shakespeare’s contribution to the early modern poetic genres and modes, including the sonnet, pastoral, and lyrics.
• Produce a researched written academic argument about one of Shakespeare’s plays.
• Work in a group to collaborate on Shakespearean research and a short adaptation.

The above goals ensure this course fulfills these State of Texas learning outcomes:
1. The student will demonstrate the ability to read complex texts, closely and accurately.
2. The student will demonstrate the ability to comprehend both traditional and contemporary schools/methods of critical theory and apply them to literary texts to generate relevant interpretations.
3. The student will demonstrate knowledge of literary history in regard to particular periods of World, British and American literature.
4. The student will demonstrate ability to effectively conduct literary research.
5. The student will demonstrate the ability to write clear, grammatically correct prose for a variety of purposes in regards to literary analysis.

Assignments
Group Presentation - Introduction to Assigned Play 10%
Exam I 15%
Annotated Bibliography 10%
Researched Literary Analysis Essay (8-10-page essay) 35% (5% draft, 5% reader reports (2), 25% final essay)
Exam II 15%
Group Project: Scene Adaptation 15% (Plan, Script, and Presentation)

Group Presentation – Play Introduction
You will work with a group to introduce one of the plays, including Shakespeare’s sources, key themes, important women characters, famous actresses who played them, and other noteworthy items of performance history. A detailed assignment sheet will be provided.

Exams
You will have two exams. The first will be a take-home or online test on the readings and class discussion through midterm. The second exam will be comprehensive and will consist of identifications, short answers, multiple choice, matching, and essay questions related to the assigned works, as well as pertinent cultural and political facts and events, and potentially anything that we discussed in class.
Annotated Bibliography
Over the course of the semester, you will conduct a focused research project on one aspect of Shakespeare related to our reading list. A detailed assignment sheet will be provided.

Researched Literary Analysis Essay
After conducting research, you will write an original academic argument in which you present your own ideas about Shakespeare’s work supported by primary and secondary textual evidence. A detailed assignment sheet will be provided.

Scene Adaptation
This will be a group project in which you will develop an adaptation of a scene from one of Shakespeare’s plays. The project deliverables will consist of a brief adaptation plan, a script, and a live or recorded performance. A detailed assignment sheet will be provided.

Grading
For each assignment, I calculate grades on a numeric scale first: I use a 10 point scale for quizzes, presentations, and in-class work, and I use a 100 point scale for tests, papers, and projects. Based on the numeric score, each assignment will also receive a letter grade, based on an A-F scale that uses plus and minus distinctions. According to university policy, your final grade for the course will consist of a letter grade only (no plus or minus). If your grade is borderline, class participation, enthusiasm, and punctuality can help your final grade; lack of participation, disrespectfulness, and tardiness can hurt your final grade.

All of your writing for this course should adhere to the rules of standard written English grammar, punctuation, and spelling (American). Here is a general description of my letter grades:

A – 90-100% On essays and written responses, this grade denotes superior composition, content, style, and mechanics; thoughtfulness, originality, and excellence in topic development, including vividly concrete details, insightful examples, and sophisticated analysis and synthesis of subject matter. Writing is mechanically pristine with only the smallest grammatical defects present (such as a missing comma or a single typo).

B – 80-89% On essays and written responses, this grade denotes very good composition, content, style, and mechanics; thoughtful and adequate topic development; clear and complete details and examples; and consistency in style. Slight problems may be present in one or two areas, but the paper shows strength in others. The paper is not heavily impacted by mechanical errors.

C – 70-79% On essays and written responses, this grade denotes acceptable content, but style, organization and mechanics are uneven and need revision, OR the composition is lacking in content and does not sufficiently consider the subject matter as evidenced by inadequate topic development and lack of concrete details, AND/OR the ethos of the writer is damaged by mechanical errors.

D – 60-69% This grade represents below average, unsatisfactory work. On essays and written responses, the paper (whether through lack of effort, revision, editing, or some other reason) is not clear or focused. The paper is very uneven in its content, organization, and style. The meaning of the paper is obscured by mechanical errors.

F – Below 60% The student did not do the work as assigned.

Attendance & Punctuality
Class attendance is required. You are allowed three absences with no penalty. Missing more than THREE classes can result in your final grade being dropped ten points for every day that you are absent. For example, if your GPA for the class is 92, and you miss six classes without documented excuses, your final grade will be reduced by 20 points to a 72. Note that excused absences require official
documentation. See university policy on guidelines for excused absences. Occasional lateness a few
times throughout the semester is understandable, but habitual lateness is unacceptable and will affect your
grade. If you come in after I take role, immediately after class be sure to speak with me or hand me a
note about the reason for your lateness. This note will ensure that I add you to the role that day if it is
appropriate. Continued lateness will start to count as absences.

Missed Class and Late Work
I will not repeat information given in class to those who were late or absent, and you cannot make up
missed in-class activities unless you have a documented, excused absence. See SFA policy for what
constitutes an excused absence. Regarding assignments, if you are unable to turn in a major paper or
project on time, you must make arrangements with me in advance of the class meeting in which the
assignment is due and have what I view as a compelling reason to be granted an extension (depending on
the circumstances). Otherwise, late work will be accepted for up to one week after the due date, but I will
deduct 5 points for every day it is late.

Other Classroom Policies
The number one rule in my classroom is to treat others respectfully. The number two rule is to put your
best efforts toward enjoying what we are doing. Come prepared and stay awake. I welcome lively
conversation on the topic of discussion. Please avoid outside distractions, including the urge to TEXT.
Turn off your cell phones upon entering class unless you have a critical life situation that could require
your immediate attention. In the event that you accidentally leave your cell phone on, and it rings, just
turn it off. If you have an emergency, quietly exit the classroom to quickly take care of business. Also, if
you finish an in-class activity quickly, check with me before leaving. Do not just get up and leave.

Academic Honesty
Acts of plagiarism and/or cheating are against university policy and can result in failure and/or
disciplinary action. According to the SFA policy manual, “Cheating includes but is not limited to (1)
using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a
class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise;
and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is
presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1)
submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of
another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or
another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the
author due credit.” Please be aware that I must and will report any infractions of this policy. For more
specifics, please refer to the university’s policy on academic honesty:
http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp.

Disability Services
SFA has the resources to assist students with disabilities and provide them “equal opportunity to
participate in the courses, activities or programs.” If you need assistance, see Disability Services in room
325 of the Human Services building or at http://www2.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

AARC
Writing tutors are available in the Academic Assistance and Research Center on the first floor of the
library. Drop-in tutoring is offered Mon.-Thurs from noon to 8 p.m. You can also make an appt. by
calling 468-4108.
## Weekly Schedule

Readings must be completed on the date listed. Changes may be made as the course proceeds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Th 1/16</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>T 1/21</td>
<td><em>Venus and Adonis</em>, Sonnets 127-141</td>
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<td>Th 1/23</td>
<td><em>The Rape of Lucrece</em>, Sonnets 142-154</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>T 1/28</td>
<td>Taming of the Shrew – Acts I &amp; II</td>
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<td>Th 1/30</td>
<td>Taming of the Shrew – Acts III &amp; IV</td>
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<td>T 2/4</td>
<td>Taming of the Shrew – Acts V</td>
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<td>Th 2/6</td>
<td>As You Like It – Acts I – II</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>T 2/11</td>
<td>As You Like It – Acts III-IV</td>
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<td>Th 2/13</td>
<td>As You Like It – Act V</td>
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<td></td>
<td>T 2/18</td>
<td>Merchant of Venice – Acts I &amp; II Group Presentation</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Th 2/20</td>
<td>Merchant of Venice – Acts III &amp; IV</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>T 2/25</td>
<td>Merchant of Venice – Acts V Take home Exam, due to d2l dropbox.</td>
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<td>Th 2/27</td>
<td>Macbeth – Acts I &amp; II Group Presentation</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>T 3/3</td>
<td>Macbeth – Acts III &amp; IV</td>
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<td>Th 3/5</td>
<td>NO CLASS.</td>
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<td>Sa 3/7</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<td>Su 3/15</td>
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<td>T 3/17</td>
<td>Macbeth – Act V</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Th 3/19</td>
<td>King Lear – Acts I &amp; II Group Presentation</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>T 3/24</td>
<td>King Lear – Acts III &amp; IV</td>
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<td>Th 3/26</td>
<td>King Lear – Act V. Annotated Bibliography due</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>T 3/31</td>
<td>The Winter’s Tale – Acts I &amp; II Group Presentation</td>
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<td>Th 4/2</td>
<td>The Winter’s Tale – Acts III &amp; IV</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>T 4/7</td>
<td>Adoptions planning meeting.</td>
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<td>Th 4/9</td>
<td>EASTER BREAK</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>T 4/14</td>
<td>The Winter’s Tale – Act V.</td>
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<td>Th 4/16</td>
<td>Adaptation Plan due. Exam review.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>T 4/21</td>
<td>Exam</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>T 4/28</td>
<td>No Class – Revising Day</td>
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<td>Th 5/7</td>
<td>Final Meeting - 8:00-10:30 a.m. Group presentations – scene adaptation - script due.</td>
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