

# SHAKESPEARE

{FOUR POLITICAL PLAYS}

## COURSE SYLLABUS

(version 1.2)

### General Information

**Instructor:** Professor Roy T. Tsao

**email:** roy.tsao92@brooklyn.cuny.edu

**Scheduled Course Period:** Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs, 6:10pm -7:55pm

Live (synchronous) class sessions will be held via the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra platform.

These class sessions will generally be of shorter duration than the full scheduled period, as a portion of the course credit-hours will be allotted to asynchronous online course activities.

**Instructor Office Hours** (online): Tuesdays, 12pm -1pm, or by appointment

### Course Description

This course offers an introduction to the dramatic works of William Shakespeare (1564-1616), through the reading of four of his major plays: *Henry IV, Part 1*; *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*; *Measure for Measure*; and *Coriolanus*. The primary learning objective is to give the development of the skills in close reading that are needed for the comprehension and appreciation of Shakespeare's theatrical writing. We will also consider the dimension of dramaturgical interpretation, supplementing our reading with video clips from a variety of staged and filmed productions of these four dramas.

### Course Requirements & Grading

Please note that this is a 4-hour credit course, with corresponding expectations for workload.

#### Attendance, Preparation, & Discussion Participation (25%)

This includes both attendance and participation in live online sessions, and also timely participation in text-based asynchronous discussions. Students will be asked, on a rotating basis, to make short, informal presentations on selected speeches and scenes from the assigned plays.

#### Essays (50%)

Formal written work for the course will consist in two short essays (approximately 1200-1500 words each) on assigned topics. The first is due on June 19; the second, on July 7. There will be no other midterm or final exam.

#### Course Wiki Contributions (25%)

The Course Wiki is a text-based collaborative module of the Blackboard platform, which we will use for the purpose of generating a base of common knowledge concerning the lexicographic, prosodic, and dramaturgic elements of these four plays. Specific assignments will be announced each week.

## Texts

We will be using the New Cambridge Shakespeare editions of the four plays:

- *The First Part of King Henry IV*, edited by Herbert Weil & Judith Weil (2007)
- *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, edited by Philip Edwards (2003)
- *Measure for Measure*, edited by Brian Gibbons (2006)
- *Coriolanus*, edited by Lee Bliss (2010)

These books have been ordered for purchase through the BC online bookstore. Digital versions are available for purchase or rent through Vital Source, Amazon, and other providers.

Please note that unfortunately there are many substandard, unreliable editions of Shakespeare's plays for sale on the internet. If you wish to use a different edition please consult with the instructor.

## Schedule of Class Meeting Dates & Reading Assignments

*Class meetings begin at 6:10pm on the scheduled dates, unless otherwise announced.*

*This subject may be subject to modification. Updates will be announced via Blackboard.*

Mon 6/1	[introductory session]	Mon 6/22	<i>Measure for Measure</i> , Acts I-II
Tues 6/2	<i>1 Henry IV</i> , Act I	Tues 6/23	<i>Measure for Measure</i> , Act III-IV
Wed 6/3	<i>1 Henry IV</i> , Act II	Wed 6/24	<i>Measure for Measure</i> , Act V
Thurs 6/4	<i>1 Henry IV</i> , Act III	Thurs 6/25	[review assignment t.b.a.]
Mon 6/8	<i>1 Henry IV</i> , Acts IV-V	Mon 6/29	<i>Coriolanus</i> , Act I
Tues 6/9	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act I	Tues 6/30	<i>Coriolanus</i> , Act II-III
Wed 6/10	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act II	Wed 7/1	<i>Coriolanus</i> , Acts IV-V
Thurs 6/11	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act III	Thurs 7/2	[video assignment t.b.a.]
Mon 6/15	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act IV		{ <i>Second Paper due on Tuesday, 7/7</i> }
Tues 6/16	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act V		
Wed 6/17	[video assignment t.b.a.]		
Thurs 6/18	[review assignment t.b.a.]		

{*First Paper Due on Friday, 6/19*}