

# HNRS 240-Reading the Past: From History to Performance

Fall 2017

Instructor: Chuck Leonard

Office Hours: 12-1 on M/T/W/R, others by appointment

Office location: Buchanan Hall D203H

Phone: 703 993-4290 (office)

Email is my preferred means of first contact. You are also welcome to drop by my office.

Section #'s- 007, 008

240-007          MW    1:30    Robinson B 122

240-008          MW    3        Thompson 2022

## Course Description

This course will examine Elizabethan history, writers and the politics of the period, focusing on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The culminating project will be construction of a performance piece, which reflects one of the specific aspects of the situation Elizabeth I was situated in. The class will take a dramaturgical approach, researching the play, the writer, the subject, and the context of the times and place where it was written. Our purpose is to develop new ways of seeing and comprehending history that uses theatre as a lens for understanding.

Student involvement includes, but is not limited to, critical thinking, analysis, research, group work and class discussion. Additional readings and videos will also be made available in library reserve, through Blackboard, or YouTube.

**Text:** *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599*. Shapiro, James. Harper Collins, 2005.

ISBN:978-0-06-008874-3

There will be other readings from books on reserve in Fenwick Library and online.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- This course aims to develop your ability to think critically- to read and think about complex historical issues beyond the simple facts of the case. The facts are important and exams will require you to learn them. Beyond that, you will learn to think like a historian/dramaturg, trying not only to understand the "what" of history, but the "why." *Based on syllabus of Jon Berndt Olsen at UMass.*
- Students will apply dramaturgical concepts to analyze playscripts.
- Students will be able to analyze list of criteria to prioritize compelling production choices.
- Students will be able to synthesize and evaluate multiple social variables to appreciate complexity.

- Students will learn to be effective members of a team.

### Course requirements and grade percentages

- Homework (usually through Blackboard), dialogue journal, in-class assignments (**15% total**)
- Exams (**15% each**): Two exams testing knowledge of lectures, readings, and terms, performances, and class discussion. There is potential for make-up group exams to alter original grade.
- Group projects (3 at **10% each**): Group projects requiring involvement from all individuals (generally groups of 5).
- Final group project (**20%**): (students collaborate in creating rubric and have input in some of the grading criteria)
- Participation (**5%**): Respectful engagement and contribution to the class is expected. Attendance and timeliness is reflected in participation.

<b>Grading</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>87-89</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>77-79</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>60-69</b>	
<b>A</b>	<b>93-100</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>83-86</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>73-76</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>&lt; 60</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>90-92</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>80-82</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>70-72</b>		

### Course policies

- Attendance is expected at all classes and is reflected in the grade for class participation.
- Unless required by the instructor, laptops and cell phones should be off during class time. If an emergency requires that you are accessible via cellphone, speak to the instructor before the class.
- Students will need to have access to Blackboard and Mason email and are responsible for checking it regularly for class assignments and information.
- Privacy and security is important for faculty and student digital communication. For that reason, please use your Mason email when communicating with me or classmates about the class.
- George Mason University is committed to providing equal opportunity and an educational and work environment free from any discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, marital status, pregnancy status or genetic information.
- George Mason University recognizes that individuals with disabilities may need reasonable accommodations to have equally effective opportunities to participate in or benefit from university educational programs. It is the responsibility of the student who requires

accommodations to provide the faculty member with a letter from the Office of Disability Services to determine the best ways to support the student.

### **Academic Integrity**

- The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.
- As in many classes, a number of projects in this class are designed to be completed within your study group. With collaborative work, names of all the participants should appear on the work. Collaborative projects may be divided up so that individual group members complete portions of the whole, provided that group members take sufficient steps to ensure that the pieces conceptually fit together in the end product. Other projects are designed to be undertaken independently. In the latter case, you may discuss your ideas with others and conference with peers on drafts of the work; however, it is not appropriate to give your paper to someone else to revise. You are responsible for making certain that there is no question that the work you hand in is your own. If only your name appears on an assignment, your professor has the right to expect that you have done the work yourself, fully and independently.
- Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

### **Student Support Resources**

George Mason University has a number of resources to help student's achieve success. They include Counseling and Psychological Services, Learning Services, University Career Services, the Writing Center, etc.

### **Important dates Fall 2017**

<b>First day of classes;</b> last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date	August 28
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Labor Day, university closed	September 4
<b>Last day to add classes</b> —all individualized section forms due <b>Last day to drop with no tuition penalty</b>	September 5
<b>Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty</b>	September 19
<b>Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)</b>	September 29
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via <a href="#">Patriot Web</a>	September 25 – October 20
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	October 2 – October 27
Columbus Day recess (Monday classes/labs meet Tuesday. Tuesday classes do not meet this week)	October 9
Incomplete work from spring/summer 2017 due to instructor	October 27
Incomplete grade changes from spring/summer 2017 due to Registrar	November 3
Thanksgiving recess	November 22 – 26
Last day of classes	December 9
<b>Reading Days</b> Reading days provide students with additional study time for final examinations. Faculty may schedule optional study sessions, but regular classes or exams may not be held.	December 11 – 12