INTL/ENGL:3287 Shakespeare’s England
Summer 2023
3 credit hours
4 weeks
Time: 9.30-12.15 M-Th
Blaine Greteman
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Phone: 319-384-1860
Office Hours: 12.15-1, M-Th

In this class, we’ll get out into the streets, museums, theatres, and even forests of London too see the way the city inspired and continues to inspire some of the greatest writing in English.

Around the time that Shakespeare moved to London from rural Warwickshire, an awed German visitor wrote that the city “is a wonder for learned men.” There was simply nothing like this monster city, of 200,000 people, anywhere else -- the next largest town, Norwich, had about 12,000 souls. As we’ll see, London is still unlike anything else: a teeming, diverse, international, metropolis, built on the bones of a Roman and medieval village. It is a center of a modern film industry, a capital of international finance and technology, and yet Shakespeare and Chaucer would still be able to recognize the shape of many of its winding streets.

How does the experience of moving from the English countryside to the teeming, cosmopolitan city imprint itself on Shakespeare’s plays? What can we recognize in the landscape and cityscape of today’s England that would have been familiar to him? How does the city inspire his own writing, and our own? These are the questions we’ll be asking, as we also talk with actors, directors, and scholars about the significance of performing the plays in Stratford or London, even if they are setting the plays in very different locations. On the one hand, theatre offers an escape from our particular circumstances – on the other hand, it is all about the actors and audience assembled right here, and how does that differ when the right here is Stratford as opposed to say, Iowa City?

In addition to readings and writing that will fill the standard requirements for an undergraduate Shakespeare course, this class will offer a study abroad experience in which we get to know Shakespeare’s England through performances, readings, and performances. Students will have the option of writing creative, or critical responses to Shakespeare’s works and Shakespeare’s England, as it was, and as it is today.

- **Eligibility requirements:**

  **GPA:** 2.75 or above

  **Majors:** open to all undergraduates

  **Good academic and disciplinary standing at the University of Iowa.**

- **Application Materials:** *A study abroad application form and a copy of the student’s current grade report.*
Outcomes: I want you to become a better reader, writer, and thinker. To facilitate this, we will be writing in various different modes – journalistic think pieces, short papers, creative works.

Course Requirements:

Regular reading responses, quizzes, engaged participation, final project and presentation.

I give quizzes to make sure you have done the reading and to help you get several grades on the books quickly so you know what to expect and everything doesn’t hinge on the final project. The same is true of the short papers. Having said that, the final project remains a major part of the grade, and you should begin early, consult with me often, and work hard to make sure it represents your best work.

Required text:


Grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Quizzes</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Papers/creative work (2 of these)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion boards and Q&amp;As</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
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I will give “+” and “−” grades.

A Note on Attendance

Since discussion is a core component of the course, your absence affects everyone. More than 1 absence without a university sanction will result in a deduction of ½ from your participation grade for each day missed. Excessive absences (more than 3) may result in failing the class.

Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&gt;94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
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Reading schedule and guest speakers (subject to change)

**Week 1: The Plague Comes to London**

M Introduction to the course. *King Lear* Act 1.1
T *King Lear* Act 1-2. Reading response 1.
W *King Lear* Act 3-4. Q&A with actors, or performance, TBA
Th *King Lear* Act 5. Q&A TBA; excursion to British Library. Creative response 1

**Week 2: Escape to the Suburbs**

T *Merry Wives of Windsor* Act 2. Q&A: with Professor Ruth Ahnert, Queen Mary’s London.
W *Merry Wives of Windsor* Act 3. Q&A with Matthew Barrow, Librarian for the Houses of Parliament
Th *Merry Wives of Windsor* Act 4-5. Creative response 2 (scene).
Week 3: The Forest (Love is in it)
M As You Like It Act 1. Excursion to Regent's Park.
T As You Like It Act 2. Excursion to the Natural History museum.
W As You Like It Act 3. Assignment/discussion: sonnet.
Th As You Like It Act 4-5

Week 4: English Nationalism in a Wooden O
M Henry V Act 1. Globe Tour and Q&A with Dr Will Tosh, research fellow and lecturer at Shakespeare's Globe.
T Henry V Act 2. Visit to the Imperial War Museum.
W Henry V Act 3
Th Henry V Act 4-5. Final project due.

Final Project:

The form your creative response takes is wide open: poetry, fiction, painting, film, music, or even an analytical paper, of 5-7 pages, that creatively illuminates and explores an issue in the play. This last option would basically be the kind of critical paper that you usually write in an English class, but one in which I would like you to be aware of the creative possibilities of the critical form.

For any project, regardless of form, you will also write a brief explanation (anywhere between one and five pages) that clarifies for me how your project relates to and illuminates one of Shakespeare's texts, and why you felt like the form you chose was the most appropriate. In your proposal, you should have given me at least a very brief version of this logic. Here, you should expand on this a little, explaining to me what you've produced and how you feel it has helped you develop or illuminate an issue from one or more of Shakespeare's works. If you've chosen to write a critical paper, you can probably get away with a brief 1-page discussion; if you've taken a more obviously creative route, this analysis should probably be more in the 3-5 page range and include specific textual references.

All projects will be graded on: 1) the originality and/or strength or your ideas 2) the clarity of your expression 3) your ability to use Shakespeare's work in way that both demonstrates an understanding of it and engages an audience/reader of your own.