

English 311.001 Shakespeare

Spring 2013

“Sci-Fi Shakespeare: Exploring the Alien Nature of the New World and the Cosmos in Shakespeare’s Works”

Course: English 323.001
Classroom: HL 325
Class Time: MWF 10:00 – 10:50 a.m.
Instructor: Dr. Connie Meyer
Office Location: 112
Office Hours: M/W 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
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 connie.meyer@tamuc.edu
Course Website: course ecollege site at myleo



Required Texts:

- *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd Edition
 [Hardcover] By William Shakespeare. (Author), G. Blakemore Evans (Editor), J. J. M. Tobin

ISBN-10: 0395754909

ISBN-13: 978-0395754900

Course Description:

Examines several works of Shakespeare within the context of New World discoveries.

Course Objectives/ Student Learning Outcomes



Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- analyze Shakespeare’s plays, including the development of his language, characterization, dominant themes, and dramatic structure on two exams that include short answer questions and a comparison/contrast essay.
- understand the origin of many Shakespearean examples of eccentricities that derived from New World and cosmic discoveries of the Early Modern Era.

The particular theme for this course is “Sci-Fi Shakespeare: Exploring the Alien Nature Of the New World and the Cosmos in Shakespeare’s Works.” In this course, we will explore the influence of the new world and cosmic discoveries of the Early Modern Era and how they impacted several Shakespearean dramas. In other words, we will examine Shakespeare’s representation of the “new” other, both in the newly discovered lands of the Americas and the imaginings that stemmed from the new discoveries in the heavens. We will be reading some of the primary texts that served as the source of some of Shakespeare’s more outlandish descriptions and some modern day secondary sources that discuss astronomical references in his plays.



Course Policies:

Please turn off cell phones and other disruptive devices, such as ipods, prior to class.

Because your active participation in discussions is expected, attendance is vital for success in this course. **After four absences your final grade will be lowered by a letter grade.** No late work will be accepted unless you make prior arrangements. Assigned readings must be completed before the start of class.

Although differing views and debate among class members are encouraged, I expect all students to treat other class members with respect and courtesy. Rudeness and insulting remarks will not be tolerated. I also try to foster an active, informal classroom atmosphere that further encourages free expression in regard to course selections. Please honor the spirit of this goal by keeping discussion focused on the topic at hand and crosstalk to a minimum.

Some notes on academic integrity: All students are expected to comply with the university’s policies regarding academic honesty. **The official departmental policy:** “Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b [1,2,3])



If you ever have any questions about a particular use of a source, always ask your instructor. They want you to avoid plagiarism, too, so they will help you do so whenever and wherever they can. Do what you can to take advantage of this support—to look innocent in addition to being innocent when it comes to charges of plagiarism.

Cheating on exams and quizzes will not be tolerated. Neither will plagiarism. While plagiarism was a form of compliment in much of the premodern world; it isn't at TAMU-Commerce in 2012. Plagiarism is any use of another person's work without giving credit to your source, including either someone's words (without putting it in quotations and providing a citation) or ideas. You need to cite your source for any information that is not common knowledge. Please ask if you are in any doubt. You may consider material given in lectures as "common knowledge." As with cheating on exams, plagiarism may result in *automatic failure* of this course.



Course Format

This is a discussion class. I will occasionally lecture to introduce new material or set background for the texts we read, but the greatest part of our class time will be spent in discussing the assigned reading together. Our discussions will allow students to learn from one another, and to have much more fun in the process! Some of the texts we are reading this semester are difficult, but I expect you to come to class having read the assignment thoroughly, and with notes on your observations and on any passages you did not understand. I recommend you review these notes right before class so you will be ready to participate fully.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

- 1) *Discussion Posts on ecollege - 20% of final grade*

Each discussion post response should fully engage with the discussion prompt, and should be supported with textual evidence from the assigned applicable reading. You should contribute your own response, which should be at least a paragraph in length, and then respond to 2 other student posts.

- 2) *One essay 30% of final grade* which should include original readings on selected works (8-10 pages; a handout and further direction will be provided in class);
- 3) *A Midterm Exam. 15 % of final grade*



- 4) *A Final Exam. 15% of final grade*

These exams will be a combination of short answer questions, identification essays, and a longer essay. Identification essays ask you to look at a passage and identify what work it comes from and perform a reading of the passage that explains its thematic significance to that work. The best way to study is to keep up with the readings and mark passages that you think are important, and to take good notes during class discussions. We will do a few practice questions

together in the week before the first exam. The final exam will *not* be comprehensive.



5) *Film review/comparative essay. 10% of final grade*

This essay will be based on your choice of a film adaptation of one of the literary texts we have studied in the course. (3-4 pages; a handout will be provided in class).

6) *Thorough class preparation and participation. 10% of final grade*

Your class participation grade will be based on your overall contribution to class discussions, both quality and quantity. Class participation also includes arriving punctually to class, bringing the relevant assigned reading with you, and acting respectfully toward the instructor and your fellow students.

Final Course Grade Breakdown:

Discussion Posts	20%
Film Review/Essay	10%
Essay:	30%
Midterm Exam:	15%
Final Exam:	15%
Participation	10%

Scale used to compute final letter grades:

- A: 90-100
- B: 80-89
- C: 70-79
- D: 60-69
- F: 59-Below



Final papers should conform to the MLA style guidelines. They should be double-spaced, using 12-point type, black ink, with normal (1") margins – approximately 300 words per page. Once again, no late papers will be accepted without my prior consent. It is wise to have a completed and polished hard copy of your essay in hand at least a day before the due date. You are encouraged to take advantage of the services offered at the writing center.



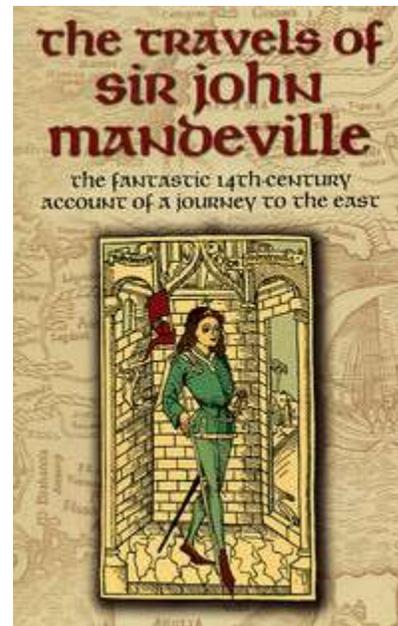
Additional Resources:

Writing Center

The Writing Center (or the "Communication Skills Center") offers writers free, one-on-one assistance. We welcome all writers, majors, and disciplines—undergraduate and graduate students alike. In fact, we work from the premise that all writers, no matter their ability level, benefit from the feedback of knowledgeable readers.

The Writing Center staff is trained to provide writers with just this service. In short, we are here to help you help yourself. In order to ensure the most effective session possible, we offer visitors the following suggestions: (1)

Get started on your writing project early, and visit the Writing Center at least one day before your final draft is due. You will need time to work with the ideas and suggestions generated in your tutorial sessions. (2) Bring a written copy of your assignment, any relevant readings, and one or two specific questions or concerns you would like to discuss with us. We are located in the Hall of Languages, Room 103 (903-886-5280) and online at <http://web.tamuccommerce.edu/academics/colleges/artsSciences/departments/literatureLanguages/writingCenter/>



Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu



On University-Sanctioned Activities

To accommodate students who participate in university-sanctioned activities, the First-Year Composition Program offers sections of this course at various times of the day and week. If you think that this course may conflict with a university-sanctioned activity in which you are involved--athletics, etc.--please see your instructor after class on the first day.