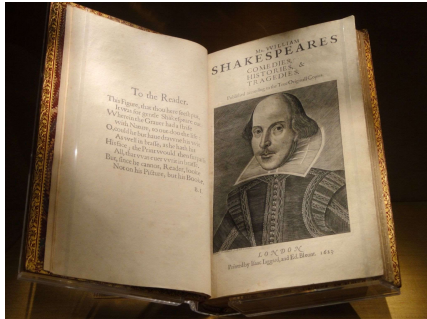


# ENG 218 - Introduction to Shakespeare

Spring 2024 | Tuesdays & Thursdays | 4:10-5:30 PM | Wells Hall A124



**Instructor:**  
Katherine Knowles

**Contact Information:**  
[knowle50@msu.edu](mailto:knowle50@msu.edu)

**Office Hours:**  
Tuesdays and Thursdays,  
3:00-4:00 PM, Wells Hall C711

**Course Description:** In this class, we will explore Shakespeare's plays and poems to work toward gaining a better understanding of the landscape of early modern literature. We will read some of Shakespeare's sonnets as well as three plays: a tragedy, a history, and a comedy—each of the genres listed in the folio. We will examine the nuances of these genres and investigate the technical and artistic structures of literary and dramatic texts. Additionally, we will look at short selections of primary sources from the early modern period that served as inspiration to Shakespeare as well as adaptations, performances, and scholarly criticism. We will analyze how views of race, gender, disability, power (and other topics) are represented in the renaissance as compared to today.

## Course Goals:

1. Analyze Shakespeare's works alongside historical sources, performances, criticism, and adaptations in order to better understand interpretations and the idea that literary works often have different, shifting meanings
2. Explore how Shakespeare's works relate to, respond to, and influence performance, culture, and history from the early modern period to today
3. Refine reading, writing, analysis, and presentation skills

**Course Materials:** This semester, we will be reading a selection of poems as well as three plays: *Othello*, *As You Like It*, and *Richard III*. [These are all available for free through the Folger Shakespeare Library](#). If you would prefer a physical edition, you can purchase the Folger's paperback versions of the text (they are pretty cheap on Amazon!). All other materials for the course will be presented in-class, on D2L, and/or on reserve at the library.

**Commented [1]:** I'm excited to get the opportunity to explore through multiple genres of Shakespeare especially with my limited current experience of Shakespeare.

**Commented [2]:** Im intrigued to learn about the different genres of his work.

**Commented [3]:** this is a good way to learn about different styles of shakespeare plays, i'm looking forward to it

**Commented [4]:** This is a genre of Shakespeare I haven't read yet, so I'm intrigued!

**Commented [5]:** I have not read a Shakespeare comedy before. I am excited to experience this.

**Commented [6]:** Will we be looking at modern-day adaptations as a comparison?

**Commented [7]:** excited to learn more about this!

**Commented [8]:** Is this about presenting the actual text or presenting our analyses of it?

**Commented [9]:** Othello is my favorite play, and I've never seen it performed before, so I'm very excited!

**Commented [10]:** Excited to read and understand plays that I have never read before.

**Commented [11]:** I've never read these before, so I'm excited!

## REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS

<b>Quizzes and Daily Work</b>	300 points	A quiz/daily work during each class (most often the first 10 minutes) that includes questions and/or prompts related to readings and topics that week; 10-15 points each
<b>Leading Class Discussion:</b> various	100 points	Sign up to lead discussion on one reading. You will give a brief presentation with discussion questions/key passages. You will be responsible for approximately 15-20 minutes of class time.
<b>Close Reading Essay:</b> Feb 8	100 points	750-1000 word analytical, argumentative essay that close reads a sonnet or a short selection from <i>Othello</i>
<b>Play Review:</b> Mar 14	100 points	600-900 word review of the performance of <i>Othello</i> or <i>As You Like It</i> that includes analysis of at least one specific production choice (acting, lighting, set design, a specific character, specific scene, theme, etc.)
<b>Special Collections Reflection:</b> Mar 28	100 points	600-900 word reflection on our visit to the library that includes a detailed discussion of one pre-1700 and/or Shakespeare-related text from special collections
<b>Final Project:</b> Proposal for Apr 4; Draft for Apr 18; Final for Apr 22	50 points for the proposal; 100 points for the draft and peer review; 150 points for the final version	2 options: (1) your own creative interpretation of a scene from one of the plays with a 800-1000 word rationale or (2) 1200-1500 word essay that analyzes a theme/idea in one of Shakespeare's plays and one of its adaptations; both options must include analysis of the play

**Commented [12]:** Is this participation-based?

**Commented [13]:** Will we be able to redo this if we mess up the first time?

**Commented [14]:** Is there a rubric or an outline for this assignment? as in, are there key points we need to have within the discussion

**Commented [15]:** this assignment reminds me of a previous assignment i've done before on a short story

**Commented [16]:** I like having different options

**Commented [17]:** I'm most looking forward to *Othello*. I've read the play before and truly enjoyed it.

**Commented [18]:** This is a really interesting assignment

**Commented [19]:** I am looking forward to this.

**Commented [20]:** This makes me very curious!

**Commented [21]:** Would this option be based off of the play scene or are you taking context from the scene and redefining it as your own?

**Commented [22]:** what exactly does this mean? would we be rewriting the scene?

**Description of Assignments:** Detailed assignment Sheets for each assignment with points breakdowns, explanations, rubrics, due dates for components, etc. will be distributed as the semester progresses. Due dates for all essays/projects are listed above. All assignments will be due before the start of class on the listed date.

### Grade Scale (out of a total of 1000 points)

**Registrar's Grade = Points Grade**

4.0 = 925 - 1000 points (or 92.5% - 100%)

enjoy how the points are easy to convert

3.5 = 875 - 924

3.0 = 825 - 874

2.5 = 775 - 824

2.0 = 725 - 774

1.5 = 675 - 724

1.0 = 620 - 674

0.0 = 619 and below

## SCHEDULE

Note: Schedule subject to change; students will be notified at least 1 week in advance of any major changes. Readings are italicized.

### Introductions

**Tu Jan 9:** *Syllabus* and Introductions  
**Th Jan 11:** *Excerpt from This is Shakespeare* (D2L) | Introduction to Shakespeare and Early Modern Literature

### The Sonnets

**Tu Jan 16:** The sonnet form  
**Th Jan 18:** *Sonnets* (selections on D2L) | Close readings, interpretations, and adaptations

### Tragedy & Othello

**Tu Jan 23:** *Othello, Act 1 -2* | An overview of the tragedies  
**Th Jan 25:** *Othello, Act 3* | *Ian Smith's "We Are Othello"*

**Tu Jan 30:** *Othello, Act 4-5*  
**Th Feb 1:** 2019 Stratford Festival *Othello*, part 1 | *Excerpt from Ayanna Thompson's "Introduction" to The Arden Shakespeare Othello*

**Tu Feb 6:** 2019 Stratford Festival *Othello*, part 2 | *Reviews*  
**Th Feb 8:** 2019 Stratford Festival *Othello*, part 3 | performance discussion

### Comedies & As You Like It

**Tu Feb 13:** [Canceled per university calendar]  
**Th Feb 15:** *As You Like It, Acts 1-2* | An overview of the comedies

**Tu Feb 20:** *As You Like It, Act 3* | *Juliet Dusinberre's "Fictions of gender" from the Arden Shakespeare Edition*  
**Th Feb 22:** *As You Like It, Acts 4-5*

**Tu Feb 27:** SPRING BREAK  
**Th Feb 29:** SPRING BREAK

**Tu Mar 5:** 2009 Globe *As You Like It*, part 1 | *David Bevington's Performance History for Internet Shakespeare Editions*  
**Th Mar 7:** 2009 Globe *As You Like It*, part 2 | *Reviews*

**Tu Mar 12:** 2009 Globe *As You Like It*, part 3 | performance discussion  
**Th Mar 14:** \*meet at library\* | [visit to Special Collections](#)

### History & Richard III

**Tu Mar 19:** *Richard III, Act 1 -2* | An overview of the history plays  
**Th Mar 21:** *Richard III, Act 3* | *Shakespeare Unlimited* podcast "*In Search of the Real Richard III*" (D2L)

**Tu Mar 26:** *Richard III, Act 4-5*  
**Th Mar 28:** 2022 RSC *Richard III*, part 1 | *Excerpt from Richard III's bodies from medieval England to modernity* (D2L) | Portraying disability on-stage

**Tu Apr 2:** 2022 RSC *Richard III*, part 2  
**Th Apr 4:** 2022 RSC *Richard III*, part 3 | performance discussion

**Tu Apr 9:** Guest Speaker: Dr. Ella Hawkins  
**Th Apr 11:** [Canceled -- Katie at conference]

### Conclusions

**Tu Apr 16:** Conclusions | Future Shakespeare  
**Th Apr 18:** [Peer Review](#)

**Mon Apr 22, 5:45 - 7:45 PM:** Final project due by end of exam time

**Commented [27]:** most excited about this portion of the semester because i've never visited the archives before

**Commented [23]:** familiar with some passages of this play from previous classes

**Commented [24]:** I've heard nothing about any of the readings we are expected to do, which is exciting since there's room to learn

**Commented [25]:** Watching plays be performed helps me understand the material better. I saw King Lear performed at Stratford and it was really good.

**Commented [26]:** I am looking forward to reading this, my brother has told me multiple times that he loves it

**Commented [28]:** Are these chosen partners or assigned partners?

## POLICIES, DISCLAIMERS, AND RESOURCES

### Policies:

#### Attendance

You have 3 free absences to use as you please (illness, travel for another class, sports, etc.). You will be responsible for finding out what you missed and making up any assignments and/or daily work. Ten percent will be deducted from your grade for absences four and five. If you miss more than five classes, you will automatically fail the course. Please be prompt to class. Classes will often begin with a quiz and arriving late will shorten the amount of time you have. I may mark you as absent if you arrive exceptionally late to class or leave class early.

**Commented [29]:** Never had a problem fulfilling the participation requirement but that line is always scary

**Commented [30]:** I think this is a good motivator for attendance

#### Communication

The best way to contact me is via email at [knowle50@msu.edu](mailto:knowle50@msu.edu). I will try to respond within 24 hours during the work week, but I will not be checking email during the weekend. You may also find me in my office in Wells C711 during my office hours from 3-4 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I am also always happy to schedule an alternative time to meet. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you might have regarding the class. If something comes up that may prevent you from attending class or completing an assignment on time, let me know sooner rather than later.

#### Decorum

Adapted from Koritha Mitchell, Ohio State University: This class will be free of hate speech regarding sexual orientation, gender expression, race, religion, and socio-economic status or background. Inflammatory remarks will not go unchecked and will not be tolerated. Each member of this class is responsible for fostering an environment in which people and their ideas are respected. For the same reasons, students will strive to make remarks that are informed by our material and the history that surrounds it. The professor is accountable for their statements; students must be, too.

#### Late Work

Late work will not be accepted. If you fear that you will be unable to complete an assignment on time, you must coordinate with me in advance of the due date for an extension. It is at my discretion as to whether or not to provide the extension.

#### Participation

Participation in a class with so much discussion will always involve saying and/or writing something that is not polished and perfect. Please be charitable to your fellow students. You are expected to come to class prepared; please complete writings and readings before coming to class, bring appropriate course materials, and contribute thoughtfully to class discussions and activities.

### Disclaimers:

#### Ethics and Academic Integrity

In accordance with MSU's policies on "Protection of Scholarship and Grades" and "Integrity of Scholarship and Grades," students are expected to honor principles of truth and honesty in their

academic work. Academic honesty entails, among other things, that students will not plagiarize. This means (1) students will not submit someone else's work as their own, nor will they hand in a paper copied from the web or another published source. Academic honesty also means students (2) will not knowingly permit another student to copy and submit their work as that student's own and (3) will not use unacknowledged quotations or paraphrases as part of their work. As provided by university policy, such academic dishonesty or plagiarism may be penalized by a failing grade on the assignment OR for the course. Failure in a course as a result of academic dishonesty will also result in written notification to the student's academic dean of the circumstances. Additional discussion of academic integrity is available on the Ombudsman's webpage.

### **Limits to Confidentiality**

Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues to protect the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices (including the [MSU Police Department](#)) if you share it with me:

- Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
- Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and
- Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the [MSU Counseling Center](#).

Additional resources are below:

- [Mandatory Reporting Information](#)
- [How to Make a Report](#)
- [Title IX-related resources](#)
- [Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)
- [MSU's Sexual Assault Program](#)
- [How to get involved with the Title IX program](#)

### **Turnitin OriginalityCheck in D2L**

Consistent with MSU's efforts to enhance student learning, foster honesty, and maintain integrity in our academic processes, instructors may use a tool in D2L called Turnitin OriginalityCheck to compare a student's work with multiple sources. The tool compares each student's work with an extensive database of prior publications and papers, providing links to possible matches and a "similarity score." The tool does not determine whether plagiarism has occurred or not. Instead, the instructor must make a complete assessment and judge the originality of the student's work. All submissions to this course may be checked using this tool. Students should submit assignments to be screened by OriginalityCheck without identifying information included in the assignment (e.g., the student's name, PID, or NetID); the system will automatically show identifying information to the course faculty when viewing the submissions, but this information will not be retained by Turnitin.

**Resources:****Accommodations**

MSU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued an Accommodation Letter. Please present this letter to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date may not be honored.

Please let me know how I can help you succeed in this course. Below are additional resources for students needing various accommodations:

- [Disability Access](#)
- [Grief Absences](#)
- [Religious Observances](#)

**D2L & Technology**

Please note that if you have any issues with D2L, contact MSU IT Service Desk directly. They will notify me if a technical issue has occurred that prevents you from submitting an assignment and provide the time stamp for the problem. Do not wait until the last minute – failed internet connection is not a valid reason for late work. As all of our course texts are online, you are allowed to use laptops/tablets/cellphones to access course materials during class. However, if the device becomes a distraction I can ask you to put it away.

**Writing & Research Help**

Writing Center: <http://writing.msu.edu>

Libraries: <http://www.lib.msu.edu>

Computer Labs: <http://tech.msu.edu/computerlabs/>

**Acknowledgement:**

This syllabus is based on and borrows from the syllabus created by Dr. Emily Yates for ENG 218 in Fall 2019.