

TERM: Spring 2025

COURSE NUMBER & CATEGORY: ENGL 3100: Pre-1800 Literature

COURSE TITLE: SHAKESPEARE'S POWER PLAYS

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: MW 11:50 am-1:30 pm

INSTRUCTOR: DR. JUDY H. PARK

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

Literary observers and spectators of the theatre in Shakespeare's time were concerned not simply with the meaning of literary works, but with the possibility of literature to affect its audiences. Monarchs and other figures of authority thought drama to wield such powers of influence that theatres and plays were at once censored and exploited so as to suppress as well as to harness their effects. Underlying the impulse of authority to regulate the theatre was the implicit belief in the political nature of drama and performance, in particular their capacity to subvert or to affirm existing hierarchies and social relations. The potential of drama to enact the opposing forces of repression and insurrection led to such contradictory claims that plays could, on the one hand, instruct subjects to obey their rulers by showing them the ultimate downfall of those that have ventured "tumults, commotions and insurrections" (Apology for Actors) and, on the other, inspire the contempt of subjects for their rulers by making the figure of monarchs appear ridiculous on the stage. How is drama political, and how do plays reveal the workings of power and authority? We will explore these questions and others through the study of Shakespeare's plays.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students who successfully complete this course will acquire greater familiarity with several of Shakespeare's most canonical dramatic works and their social contexts. They will strengthen their ability to engage analytically with dramatic texts, and they will develop their understanding of how the elements of drama (such as plot, characterization, setting, speech, movement, and theme) interact to produce meaning.

CLASS LEVEL RESTRICTION:

Junior/Senior Only

RECOMMENDED/PREREQUISITES:

N/A

COURSE ATTRIBUTES:

OLD CURRICULUM

- GENRES (LD)
- HISTORIES (LD)
- AUTHORS (UD)
- CRITICAL/THEORETICAL (UD)
- COMPARATIVE (UD)
- CREATIVE/ARTISTRY

NEW CURRICULUM

- DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH (LD)
- HISTORY OF LIT, MEDIA, AND CULTURE (LD)
- READING AND WRITING GENRES (LD)
- THEORY, POWER, AND RHETORIC (LD)
- PRE-1800 (UD)
- CREATIVE ARTISTRY (UD)
- RACE, INTERSECTIONALITY, AND POWER (UD)
- UPPER-DIVISION ELECTIVE (UD)
- 5000-LEVEL SEMINAR (UD)