

Humanities 311: Major Works of Literature before Modernity

Shakespeare: The Renaissance and Italy

Instructor: Kelly Todd Brewer

Office Hours: Wednesday, 11:00-12:30 (or by appointment)

Lecture: Wednesday, 2:40-4:30

Discussion: Tuesday, 2:40-3:30

Humanities 311 this semester will focus on William Shakespeare's fascination with Renaissance Italy and how he dramatized social relations in the age of political, economic, artistic, philosophical and, therefore, moral change. Shakespeare's fascination with Renaissance city states led him to adopt many literary conventions from Petrarch, such as the sonnet, stanzas and alexandrine verses and incorporate them deftly into some of his most famous tragedies and comedies, which this course will canvass. In addition, the course considers the historical backdrop of the Renaissance as the bridge between the Middle Ages and Modernity. In this regard, most of the texts selected for the course underscore what Immanuel Wallerstein coined the "World-systems," a multi-cultural, interdisciplinary approach to world history and social change beginning in the 16th century. In our course, we will observe and discuss how Shakespeare constructed a dramatic world in a time of great social change while underscoring the frailty of the human condition.

The Goal of the Course

By the end of the course, students will 1) have broad range of knowledge of the Renaissance in Italy, 2) understand the interdependent relationship between the Renaissance, multiculturalism and global expansion, 3) have an understanding of how the Renaissance and the rise of global commerce changed long-standing understandings of self and other and 4) demonstrate a comprehension of the materials through a series of short papers.

Course Requirements:

Students attend ALL classes having done the necessary preparatory work. Class participation is a substantial portion of the final grade. This is a seminar, which means that your regular, active participation is expected. Attendance is compulsory in lectures and discussion sections. Failure to attend more than two times will result in a reduction of points from the overall grade. Students who miss more than 9 hours of classes/discussions in total will automatically lose the participation grade. Medical reports are subject to the approval of the instructor. The instructor retains the right to decline a medical report.

PFD files are available in the resources section of the course on SUCourse.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you are suspected of submitting work that is not your own, you will be either asked to do an oral exam, fail the assignment (potentially the course) or be brought up before the ethics committee of the university.

Students with disabilities will be accommodated according to their special needs. In such cases, students should write to (specialneeds@sabanciuniv.edu) in order to arrange for accommodations.

Breakdown of grades:

30 % Response papers (10 points each) 20 % Midterm Exam
35 % Final Exam
15 % Participation and attendance

Letter Grade Scale:

Average	59	64	68	72	76	80	84	88	92	96
Grade	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A

October 4/5: Introduction to the Renaissance in Shakespeare

October 11/12: *The Taming of the Shrew*

October 18/19: *The Taming of the Shrew*

Response Paper I

October 25/26: *Romeo and Juliet*

November 1/2: *Romeo and Juliet*

Response Paper II

November 8/9: *The Merchant of Venice*

November 15/16: *The Merchant of Venice*

November 22: Midterm Exam

November 29/30: *Othello*

December 6/7: *Othello*

December 13/14: *The Tempest*

December 20/21: *The Tempest*

Response Paper III

December 27/28: *Much Ado about Nothing*
January 3/4: *Much Ado about Nothing*

Final Exam scheduled by Student Resources