

Course number and section: English 352.001
Course Name or Topic: Shakespeare: Earlier Works
Credits: 3
Term: Winter T1, 2020 (Sept.-Dec., 2020)
Instructor: Sean Lawrence

Course Description:

Prior to 1599, Shakespeare had yet to write the great tragedies associated with his name. In fact, his name was only just beginning to appear on cover pages as a selling point. Prior to about 1594, in fact, he wasn't even a share-holder in his own theatre. This is a period of experimentation (sometimes complete dead-ends), and collaboration (often contested among editors) but also of growing confidence and early brilliance. In his minor epics, Shakespeare explores mythology and the limits of the human. In his history plays, he learns to show multiple perspectives and to use his whole company. In his early comedies, he takes over Roman models, and uses them as the frameworks for slapstick and Bergsonian humour.

Method of Course Delivery:

This course will run online with both real-time (synchronous) sessions and self-guided (asynchronous) materials. For a fuller description of synchronous and asynchronous, see below.

Tentative Reading List:

We'll mostly use the Oxford Shakespeare individual texts. I don't think that they're the best, but they are the cheapest, and they're often idiosyncratic, so we should stick with them. The following are our likely texts:

“Venus and Adonis” in *The Narrative Poems*. Penguin, 1999.

Merry Wives of Windsor (Oxford)

Comedy of Errors (Oxford)

Titus Andronicus (Oxford)

King John (Oxford)

Richard III (Oxford)

Synchronous: Some or all of the scheduled class hours are spent in a real-time, online virtual classroom, with the instructor and registered students in attendance; these class hours may be devoted to lecture, discussion, group work, or other real-time virtual learning activities. Consult your instructor for specifics.

Asynchronous: Refers to course instruction delivered in the form of materials that can be accessed and worked through at the student's own pace; these materials might include recorded lectures or power point demonstrations, required readings, etc. Consult your instructor for specifics.