

Instructor: Dr. Martha Reid  
Office: Zinzendorf Hall 306  
Phone: (O) 610 861-1642 (H) 610 838-0910  
FAX: 610 625-7919  
E-mail: [reidm@moravian.edu](mailto:reidm@moravian.edu)  
Office hours: TR, 10:30-11:30 a.m. and 2:30-3:30 p.m.; also by appointment

Course Objectives

- To study selected plays of the early modern period in England that pose moral problems for the characters
- To investigate in these plays, and especially in their characters, issues of race, ethnicity, religion, and gender, as well as other concerns that create or compromise the moral life as it is experienced in the modern world
- To enhance the literary and theatrical study of this dramatic literature by drawing upon complementary or rival perspectives, including the historical, psychological, philosophical, and theological, as well as the always helpful view of the fine arts
- To identify and understand better the personal values each reader or audience member brings to his or her judgment of a play or a character
- To develop analytical, oral, and writing skills
- To strengthen the listening and viewing skills of a practiced audience member through readings and performances

Required Texts

Beckerman, Bernard, ed. Five Plays of the English Renaissance. New York: Penguin, 1993.

Shakespeare, William. Measure for Measure: Texts and Contexts, ed. by Ivo Kamps and Karen Raber. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Merchant of Venice: Texts and Contexts, ed. by M. Lindsay Kaplan. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2002.

\_\_\_\_\_. Othello: Texts and Contexts, ed. by Kim F. Hall. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007.

Note: The Beckerman anthology is out-of- print. The College has acquired a sufficient number of used copies in good condition that will be loaned to the students for the duration of the course. The Shakespeare texts are available in the College Bookstore.

## Course Requirements

- Attendance. Students are expected to attend class regularly on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:50 to 10 a.m. Attendance is also expected at a screening of the film “Shakespeare Behind Bars” at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, October 8, in Prosser Auditorium, followed by a discussion in the Snyder Room with Curt Tofteland, founder of the critically acclaimed Shakespeare Behind Bars program at Luther Luckett Correctional Complex in LaGrange, Kentucky.
- Journal. Each student will keep an electronic journal of her or his reactions to the readings and videos for the course, writing at least 250 words each week, except for the week of fall break, for a total of 14 responses (two for each play studied). Each response will be e-mailed to student colleagues in the course and to the instructor at any time during a given week but no later than midnight on Saturday. Each response can earn 5 points (one point each for being on time, being at least 250 words long [include a word-count at the end of each response], focusing on a specific moral issue [include it as a title or heading], quoting a relevant passage from the text supporting/illustrating your insight, and demonstrating thoughtful consideration) for a total of 70 points. At the end of the semester, the entire journal and a 30-point, 500-word response rebutting a moral position taken by another student in a previous posting [include the posting] or offering an alternative to the other student’s analysis of a play’s moral content will be compiled and submitted to the instructor in hard copy on December 9 for a grade worth 20% of the final grade.
- Quizzes. After the first class meeting, quizzes will be a feature of most class meetings except September 9 and October 2 and 9. Each class member will sign-up for a class meeting on which to serve as “quizmeister.” The quizmeister will prepare, administer, and grade a five-question quiz on the assigned reading for the day and, no later than the next class meeting, submit to the course instructor a copy of the quiz questions and correct answers, the list of quiz scores, and the graded quiz sheets. Quiz questions may be posed in a variety of forms: identification, multiple-choice, true-or-false, fill-in-the-blank, or short-answer. They may be projected on a screen for the quiz administration, read aloud to the class, or duplicated and distributed to the class. The average of quiz scores will count as 20% of each student’s final grade, so quizmeisters are expected to prepare testing instruments that are substantive and fair and to administer and grade them responsibly.

Each quizmeister will also be responsible for offering a brief (no more than 5 minutes) interdisciplinary insight on the play under consideration. An interdisciplinary insight will be an idea about or understanding of some aspect of the play from the perspective of a discipline other than literary analysis or theater study.

- Mid-term examination. A mid-term examination on October 2 will be worth 20% of the final grade. There will be no final examination.

- Paper. A research paper dealing with a moral issue in a play studied for the course will be due on December 4. Each student will identify at least three critical essays addressing the issue. The citation (in MLA style, as it will appear on the works-cited page of the finished draft of the research paper) and a brief summary (100 words) of one critical essay will be due on September 18, a second on October 16, and a third on November 13. Using the three critical essays as a base and a minimum of two additional sources, a student will develop a paper that discusses the moral issue in question. The final paper will be 8-10 word-processed, double-spaced pages in length, including documentation in the MLA format, and will count as 20% of the final grade.
- Visual or Critical Analysis of a Character. Each student will choose a character from the play under consideration at the class meeting to which the student has committed on the sign-up sheet circulated for the purpose of scheduling oral presentations. The student will present orally to the class
  - a. **either** a visual analysis of the nature, behavior, moods, motives, feelings, etc., involved in that character's moral life, using a non-representational painting to illustrate the analysis
  - b. **or** a critical analysis of the character's moral life, based on what the character says, what he or she does, and what other characters say about the character.

The visual or critical analysis should not exceed 15 minutes. A companion essay—two word-processed, double-spaced pages of written analysis summarizing the oral presentation—will be submitted to the instructor immediately following the oral presentation. The student will conclude the activity with a practiced reading of a speech by the character, selected for its illustrative and/or revelatory significance. This activity will be worth 20% of the final grade.

### Grading

The final grade will, in general, be computed according to the percentages noted above. Late work will be penalized. Missed quizzes cannot be re-scheduled, but a mathematical adjustment will be applied if a quiz is missed for a valid, documented reason (a medical or family emergency or a college-related commitment approved by the instructor by prior arrangement). A mid-term examination missed for a valid, documented reason may be re-scheduled at the discretion of the instructor. Absences will be noted and may negatively affect a final grade. In addition to formal oral presentations, contributions to class discussions and participation in other class activities will be considered in assigning the final grade. The instructor will apply both quantitative and qualitative judgments in determining grades for individual assignments and for the course.

Grading equivalents:

A+	98	B+	88	C+	78	D+	68
A	95	B	85	C	75	D	65
A-	92	B-	82	C-	72	D-	62
						F	55

Academic Honesty

Students in this course should refer to the statement on academic honesty at Moravian College in the current *Student Handbook*, also available online at <http://www.moravian.edu/StudentLife/handbook/academic2.htm>

Students must retain copies of all written work submitted to the instructor, as well as all notes, drafts, and materials used in preparing assignments. These are to be made available for inspection by the instructor at any time.

Questions about appropriate collaboration, proper documentation, and other honesty issues can be confusing. If in doubt, ask the instructor.

N.B.

- This syllabus, including the schedule of readings and written assignments that follows, is subject to change.
- To be successful, students should expect to work at least six hours per week outside of class preparing for this class.
- Students who wish to request accommodations in this course for a disability should contact Mr. Joe Kempfer, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street (extension 1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the office of Learning Services.

Schedule of Assignments

See next page.

Journal responses are due electronically by midnight on August 30; September 6, 13, 20, and 27; October 4, 18, and 25; November 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29; and December 6. Hard copies of responses and the final essay are due in class on December 9.

A visual or critical analysis of a character (oral presentation and accompanying paper) is due on the date for which a student signed up.

Each student is responsible for administering a quiz and delivering an interdisciplinary insight on the date for which she or he signed up.

<b>Aug.</b>	26	Introduction to the course
	28	Christopher Marlowe, <i>Doctor Faustus</i> , Acts I-II
<b>Sept.</b>	02	<i>Faustus</i> , Acts III-IV
	04	<i>Faustus</i> , Act V and Appendix
	09	Lecture by Dean James V. Skalnik on the historical context of the plays
	11	William Shakespeare, <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> , Acts I-II
	16	<i>Merchant</i> , Acts III-IV
	18	<i>Merchant</i> , Act V; <b>summary of first critical essay due</b>
	23	William Shakespeare, <i>Othello</i> , Acts I-II
	25	<i>Othello</i> , Acts III-IV
	30	<i>Othello</i> , Act V
<b>Oct.</b>	02	<b>Mid-term examination</b>
	08	Special Wednesday evening event at 8: Shakespeare Behind Bars
	09	Conversation with Shakespeare Behind Bars founder Curt Tofteland
	14	William Shakespeare, <i>Measure for Measure</i> , Acts I-II
	16	<i>Measure</i> , Act III; <b>summary of second critical essay due</b>
	21	<i>Measure</i> , Act IV
	23	<i>Measure</i> , Act V
	28	Ben Jonson, <i>Volpone</i> , Acts I-II
	30	<i>Volpone</i> , Act III
<b>Nov.</b>	04	<i>Volpone</i> , Act IV
	06	<i>Volpone</i> , Act V
	11	John Webster, <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i> , Acts I-II
	13	<i>Duchess</i> , Act III; <b>summary of third critical essay due</b>
	18	<i>Duchess</i> , Act IV
	20	<i>Duchess</i> , Act V
	25	John Ford, <i>'Tis Pity She's a Whore</i> , Acts I-II
<b>Dec.</b>	02	<i>'Tis Pity</i> , Act III
	04	<i>'Tis Pity</i> , Act IV; <b>research paper due</b>
	09	<i>'Tis Pity</i> , Act V; <b>journal due</b>

