

Instructor: Dr. Martha Reid
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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
- English 360 meets the U2 (Moral Life) requirement for LinC and satisfies the English major requirement of a course dealing with a genre. It may also serve as an English elective in the major.

Required Texts

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

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

_____. *The Merchant of Venice: Texts and Contexts*. Ed. M. Lindsay Kaplan. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2002.

_____. *Othello: Texts and Contexts*. Ed. 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 fair 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

- Quizzes. Short quizzes will be administered, unannounced, at the start of ten class meetings. A quiz will assess basic familiarity with the assigned reading for that day. Quiz questions may be posed in a variety of forms: identification, multiple-choice, true-or-false, fill-in-the-blank, or short-answer. Each quiz will be worth 10 points, and the combined total of points earned will be worth 10% of the final course grade.
- In-class responses. Impromptu responses will be written at the start of ten class meetings. Each student will write a brief, thoughtful commentary on a short text selected by the instructor from the assigned reading for that day, focusing on a moral issue addressed in the text. Each written response can earn up to 10 points, and the combined total of points earned will be worth 10% of the final course grade.
- Interdisciplinary insight. Each student will sign up for a date on which to make a brief oral presentation (no more than 5 minutes) of an interdisciplinary insight into the play under consideration. An interdisciplinary insight will be information or an understanding about some aspect of the play from the perspective of a discipline other than literary analysis or theater study. Both value of information and quality of communication will be considered in assigning up to 10 points for this presentation, which may be substituted for any one quiz or in-class response grade, at the direction of the student.
- Visual Analysis of a Character. Each student will sign up for a date on which to present orally to the class a visual analysis of a character chosen from the play under consideration at that class meeting. Using a non-representational painting both to drive and to illustrate the analysis, the student will explore the principles, behavior, moods, motives, ideas, feelings, etc., involved in that character's moral life. The presentation, including an opportunity for audience questions, 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. Both value of analysis and quality of communication will be considered in assigning a grade that will encompass both the oral and written aspects of the visual analysis, and the grade will be worth 20% of the final course grade.
- Mid-term examination. A mid-term examination on October 6 will be worth 25% of the final course grade. There will be no final examination.
- Performances. Each student will randomly draw a date—November 29, December 1, or December 6—on which to offer a practiced reading of a speech by any character from any play studied during the semester. The speech will be read twice, preceding and following a brief explanation of its significance with regard to an understanding of the character's moral life. The two readings and explanation together must not exceed 10 minutes, and the performance will be worth 10% of the final course grade.

- Paper. A research paper addressing the moral relevance of a play studied for this course to today's reader or audience will be due on December 16 at 8:30 a.m. (the final exam period assigned to this course). Throughout the semester, each student will identify three critical essays about the play or serious reviews of specific productions that, in some way, support or dismiss its contemporary moral value. A 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 (no more than 100 words) of the significant argument of one critical essay will be due on September 29, a second on October 27, and a third on November 29. At least two additional sources (for a minimum of five total secondary sources) will ultimately contribute to the development of the paper's thesis. The final paper will be 8-10 word-processed, double-spaced pages in length, including documentation in the MLA format, and will count as 25% of the final course grade.

Guest Speaker

On Tuesday, September 13, Dean James V. Skalnik, historical scholar of the early modern period in Europe, will provide an historical context for our study.

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 (for example, 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:

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|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 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 are expected to adhere to the accepted practices of academic honesty such as those outlined in the statement on academic honesty at Moravian College in its current *Student Handbook*, available online. (Search AMOS, keywords "honesty policy.")

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.
- Assigned readings should be completed prior to the class meeting noted on the following schedule.
- To be successful, students should expect to work at least six hours per week outside of class in preparation.
- In preparation for creating an English Major Portfolio in the senior capstone seminar, English majors are advised to save both digital and hard copies of work written for English 360, including drafts with peer and instructor comments.
- 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 Readings, Examinations, and Written Assignments

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|--------------|-----------|---|
| Aug. | 30 | Introduction to the course |
| Sept. | <u>01</u> | Christopher Marlowe, <i>Doctor Faustus</i> , Acts I-II |
| | 06 | <i>Faustus</i> , Acts III-IV |
| | <u>08</u> | <i>Faustus</i> , Act V and Appendix |
| | 13 | Lecture by Dean James V. Skalnik on the historical context of the plays |
| | <u>15</u> | William Shakespeare, <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> , Acts I-II |
| | 20 | <i>Merchant</i> , Acts III-IV |
| | <u>22</u> | <i>Merchant</i> , Act V |
| | 27 | William Shakespeare, <i>Othello</i> , Acts I-II |
| | <u>29</u> | <i>Othello</i> , Acts III-IV; summary of first critical essay due |
| Oct. | 04 | <i>Othello</i> , Act V |
| | <u>06</u> | Mid-term examination |
| | <u>13</u> | William Shakespeare, <i>Measure for Measure</i> , Acts I-II |
| | 18 | <i>Measure</i> , Acts III- IV |
| | <u>20</u> | <i>Measure</i> , Act V |
| | 25 | Ben Jonson, <i>Volpone</i> , Acts I-II |
| | <u>27</u> | <i>Volpone</i> , Acts III-IV; summary of second critical essay due |
| Nov. | 01 | <i>Volpone</i> , Act V |
| | <u>03</u> | John Webster, <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i> , Acts I-II |
| | 08 | <i>Duchess</i> , Acts III-IV |
| | <u>10</u> | <i>Duchess</i> , Act V |
| | 15 | John Ford, <i>'Tis Pity She's a Whore</i> , Acts I-II |
| | <u>17</u> | <i>'Tis Pity</i> , Acts III-IV |
| | <u>22</u> | <i>'Tis Pity</i> , Act V |
| | 29 | Performances; summary of third critical essay due |
| Dec. | <u>01</u> | Performances |
| | <u>06</u> | Performances |
| | <u>16</u> | Research paper due at 8:30 a.m. in Zinzendorf 306 |