

Spring 2026 EN415-DDN – Shakespeare

Course: EN415-DND Shakespeare (Blended)  
Credit: 3 semester hours (16 Weeks)  
Semester: Spring, 2026  
Time: MF, 1-2:20pm  
Location: East Ed 120  
Instructor: Becca Howell, M.A. English  
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**\*About This Class:** *This is a blended class, meaning that both campus and online students take this class together. Campus students attend the classes in person, online students attend the classes via the online classroom. All interaction and assignments for campus and online students are done in the online classroom.*

**\*About Changes to this Syllabus:** *The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time during the course, but any changes made will only be done after clearly communicating the need for the change and the specific change to be made via in-class announcement and Canvas announcement.*

**I. Description**

This course will focus on the Elizabethan world, authorship, language, and representative plays from the history, tragedy, comedy, and romance genres of the Shakespearean canon. The class will read and discuss these plays and watch actual performances. (Prerequisite: EN113 and a 200-level Literature Course)

**II. Objectives**

- A. General competencies to be achieved. The student will be able to:
1. Become familiar with the language of Shakespeare and the structure of his poetic verse. (PLO 1) (Assignments A,B)
  2. Become familiar with the Elizabethan world in which Shakespeare lived. (PLO1-3) (Assignments A,C)
  3. Become familiar with the dramatic content of six Shakespearean plays (PLO 1) (Assignments A-D)
  4. Evaluate Shakespeare through a historical/cultural/biographical lens. (PLO 1-3) (Assignments A-D)
  5. Consider how to appreciate Shakespeare from a Biblical worldview. (PLO 3) (Assignments A-C)
  6. Imaginatively evaluate Shakespeare's possible observations about the world and humanity. (PLO 1-3) (Assignments A-D)
- B. Specific competencies to be achieved. The student will be able to:
1. Demonstrate an ability to analyze specific acts of Shakespearean plays. (PLO1, 2, 3)
  2. Demonstrate an ability to reflect on the characters, story, and impact of specific play productions. (PLO 1, 2)

3. Demonstrate the ability to pursue a line of questioning about a specific play, conduct research, and present the analysis and outcome of the specific line of inquiry. (PLO 4)

### III. Required Materials

#### A. Textbooks:

1. **The Bible** is a required textbook in every course at Calvary University. To facilitate academic level study, students are required to use for assignments and research an English translation or version of the Bible based on formal equivalence (*meaning that the translation is generally word-for-word from the original languages*), including any of the following: New American Standard (NASB), English Standard Version (ESV), New King James (NKJV), or King James (KJV). Other translations and versions based on dynamic equivalence (*paraphrases, and thought-for-thought translations like NLT and NIV*) may be used as supplemental sources. Please ask the professor if you have questions about a particular translation or version.

2. **Annotated Shakespeare Anthology:** Bate, Jonathan, Rasmussen, Eric, The RSC. Shakespeare: The Complete Works. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Modern Library. (Hardcover) ISBN: 978-0593230312. \$46.99 new, \$19.99 Kindle ([Amazon Link](#))

**\*Important note!** This book is available in E-format from the publisher for only \$19.99 on Google Play, Kindle, Apple Books, and other sources. I HIGHLY recommend this approach not only because it is cheaper, but because the annotations are hyperlinked making it VERY convenient to look up text explanations with a tap. To see electronic purchase options, follow this link to the publisher: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/164765/william-shakespeare-complete-works-by-william-shakespeare/>

**\*\*** Please note that there is content in the plays of Shakespeare and the textual notes of this edition that may be offensive. Most of the questionable material is in the form of double entendre and word play, and we will not dwell on this content in class, but I do not want to disguise the fact that it is there. It was an integral part of the acceptance and popularity of these plays in the Elizabethan world. Shakespeare is widely accepted as the world's greatest playwright and poet. We choose to study his work to enjoy some of the greatest literary beauty Western civilization has to offer. On the journey, however, we will encounter (but not dwell on) sexual themes and innuendo. If you feel that this material may be offensive to you, please reconsider taking this class.\*\*

3. **Shakespeare: Invention of the Human:** Bloom, Harold. Riverhead Books, 1999. ISBN: 978-1573227513. Amazon: \$32, although often on sale. [Used from \\$2.71](#). There is also **currently a free pdf** of the book online, but that may not be a permanent resource. [Online PDF Copy Bloom Shakespeare](#)
4. **Video Rentals of Plays:** Please plan to set aside roughly 35 dollars to spend on online video rentals of plays. I do my best to find free legal sources, but there

will be several plays that will require rental. Links and options will be provided as class progresses.

#### **IV. Requirements**

- A. Play observations. Each week, students will be required to watch specific film and stage renditions of the plays we study and subsequently write an analytical reflection.
- B. Reading and Textual Analysis. Students will not be required to read each play in its entirety but will be given segments to read. One of these segments will be chosen for a “deep dive” textual analysis.
- C. Classroom Discussion: After watching each play, a classroom discussion will be held. Students are required to participate, including online students, who will respond in written form to the questions posed.
- D. Final Paper: A final paper will be assigned which will include an in-depth analysis of a particular play, or an analysis of a theme across several plays.

#### **V. Other Assignment Policies**

- A. *Style Guide*: All class papers must follow the MLA style according to the *MLA Handbook*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition.
- B. *Plagiarism* is defined as copying any content without identifying the source. This also includes taking another person’s or AI entity’s ideas or constructs and presenting them as your own. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Most assignments at Calvary require the student to produce original work. Therefore, unless specifically permitted by the instructor, the use of AI-generated content is prohibited (even if cited) as it does not represent original work created by the student and is an unreliable aggregate of ideas from other sources. AI, however, may be utilized in cases where the instructor has explicitly permitted its use to accomplish specific tasks. It is only in these cases that AI-generated (or modified) content may be submitted by the student. If there are any questions as to the permissibility of AI use for an assignment, please ask your instructor for clarification.  
*Other forms of cheating* include copying another student’s work, allowing a student to do your work, using notes instead of reading the literary works, basing your research essay on another essay, bringing cheat sheets or written information to a quiz or an exam, and working collaboratively with another student on individual assignments. This also includes handing in one essay for assignments given in two different courses to reduce the amount of student work. Please check with the professor if you have concerns or doubts about the academic approach you plan to take for an assignment.
- C. *Originality*: Students may not hand in one paper from two different courses – even if the paper has been altered. Students may not hand in a paper written for another class in previous courses. All work must be completely new and written solely by

the student.

- D. *Late work*: - This course is designed for you to do the work as you progress. Assignments are due on their due date in Canvas, but they are available for several days after that. I deduct 10 points for each day late after the due date. Once the “available date” has passed, the assignment is closed. Please watch this carefully.

**VI. Methods**

- A. Watching full Shakespearean performances
- B. Reflection and analysis
- C. Selective readings
- D. Class discussion
- E. Group Activities

**VII. Grading**

- Weekly Attendance/Participation 25%
- “Watch and Reflect” Assignments 35%
- “Read and Reflect” Assignments 25%
- Final paper 15%

**VIII. Tentative Class Schedule (\*\*Subject to change at instructor’s discretion\*\*)**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
1	Shakespeare, Introduction and Context. Sonnets and Poetic Rhythm.	Sonnet analysis
2	Romeo and Juliet: Background and introduction How to conduct literary analysis.	Watch play Analysis of one act
3	Reflective discussion of R&J Hamlet: Background and introduction	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act
4	Reflective discussion of Hamlet Macbeth: Background and analysis	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act
5	Reflective discussion of Macbeth Midsummer Night’s Dream: Background and analysis	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act
6	Reflective discussion of Midsummer Night’s Dream Henry V: Background and analysis	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act
7	Reflective discussion of Henry V Much Ado About Nothing: Background and analysis Final Paper Introduction	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act

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8	Reflective discussion of Much Ado Othello: Background and analysis Final Paper Topic Selection Due	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act
9	Reflective discussion of Othello Twelfth Night: Background and introduction	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act
10	Reflective discussion of Twelfth Night Merchant of Venice: Background and introduction	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act
11	Reflective discussion of Merchant of Venice A Winter’s Tale: Background and introduction	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act
12	Reflective discussion of A Winter’s Tale Taming of the Shrew: Background and analysis	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act
13	Reflective discussion of Taming of the Shrew: Background and analysis	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act
14	Reflective discussion of Taming of the Shrew King Lear: Background and analysis	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act
15	Reflective discussion of King Lear The Tempest: Background and analysis	Watch play Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act
16	Watch Party: The Tempest Discussion: “the Tempest” Final Paper Due	Reflective Q&A Analysis of one act

**IX. Resources:**

- A. Disabilities:** Students with disabilities have the responsibility of informing the Accommodation Support Coordinator ([ASO@calvary.edu](mailto:ASO@calvary.edu)) of any disabling condition that may require support.
- B. The Clark Academic Center** (email: [learning@calvary.edu](mailto:learning@calvary.edu)), located in the library building, is dedicated to providing free academic assistance for all Calvary University students. Student tutors aid with all facets of the writing process, tutor in various subject areas, prepare students for exams, and facilitate tests. Please take advantage of this free service.