



DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND EDUCATION

COURSE OUTLINE – WINTER 2016

EN4103F (A3) Genre Series - Shakespeare on Film – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours

INSTRUCTOR: George Hanna **PHONE:** 780-539-2090
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OFFICE HOURS: Tues. and Wed., 3-4:30—or alternate times by appointment.

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE: Six credits of Junior UT English

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:

As EN 4103F is a film course, there are *no* required textbooks. Films will be screened partly in class, with students required to screen and /or review the films outside the class. As copies are strictly limited, students will be encouraged to work cooperatively, screening the film adaptations in small groups.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

A variable-content seminar course on specific literary themes or genres such as the Faust figure, the motif of survival in Canadian literature, the frontier as a recurrent idea in American literature, comedy, tragedy, Romanticism, Neoclassicism, and writing by women. Students may take different-genre, different-theme versions of this course.

This term, the variable-content EN 4103 will focus on film adaptations of Shakespeare's work.

***An extended course description is at the end of this document.**

CREDIT/CONTACT HOURS: 3 credits / 3 hours per week

DELIVERY MODE: The course work includes lectures, instructor-led seminars, in-class assignments and group oral presentations.

OBJECTIVES:

EN 4103F has been designed to improve students' knowledge of Shakespeare on film, with a close study of representative film adaptations of Shakespeare's comedies, tragedies and histories. To this end, students will discover the many points of intersection between the page, the stage and the screen.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

- evaluate the cinematic techniques used by film directors in order to adapt Shakespeare for the big screen;
- recognize film directors' effective use of cuts to improve cinematic flow, coherence or momentum;
- identify the films' inclusion of new dialogue or invented scenes;
- critique the introduction of bold, imaginative plot twists or anachronistic details to enhance the production's originality and relevance for modern audiences;
- identify well-constructed interior sets and effective use of outdoor landscapes or physical settings to accentuate Shakespearean motifs;
- point out effective use of original scores or more traditional music to heighten audience mood or intensify atmospheric effects;
- grasp the importance of different acting styles required in films as compared to stage productions;
- acquire an overview of critical approaches to Shakespeare on film.

TRANSFERABILITY: UA, UC, UL, AU, KUC, Concordia UC, Canadian UC*

* A Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability—particularly since all transfer arrangements are subject to change. GPRC has transfer agreements with the University of Alberta, University of Calgary, Athabasca University, University of Lethbridge, Concordia University College, King's University College and other institutions.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Grande Prairie Regional College uses the alpha grading system and the following approved letter codes for all programs and courses offered by the College. All final grades will be reported to the Registrar's Office using alpha grades. Alpha grades will be converted to four-point equivalence for the calculation of grade point averages.

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
GRADING CONVERSION CHART

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Designation
A ⁺	4.0	90 – 100	EXCELLENT
A	4.0	83 – 89	
A ⁻	3.7	80 – 82	FIRST CLASS STANDING
B ⁺	3.3	76 – 79	
B	3.0	72 – 75	GOOD
B ⁻	2.7	69 – 71	
C ⁺	2.3	66 – 68	SATISFACTORY
C	2.0	63 – 65	
C ⁻	1.7	59 – 62	
D ⁺	1.3	55 – 58	MINIMAL PASS
D	1.0	50 – 54	
F	0.0	0 – 49	FAIL
WF	0.0	0	FAIL, withdrawal after the deadline

* Percentages will be converted into four-point letter grades and assigned 4-point numerical equivalents (see above chart) in order to help determine your final standing in the course.

* Percentages, then, are **not** used to determine your final grade.

EVALUATIONS:

Short Take-Home Paper	10%
First Major Paper	20%
Second Major Paper	20%
In-Class Group Assignments	10%
Individual Oral Participation	10%
Final Exam	30%

* The final exam will be scheduled during the official exam period, April 15-26. As you will not be allowed to write an early or deferred exam, do **not** book travel, work or other activities during the college-wide exam period.

EVALUATION & ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

- Short Paper—A brief Take-Home writing assignment will be distributed Thurs., January 21.
Minimum length: 500-600 words (about 2 typed pages).
Weighting: **10%** of the course grade. Due Thurs., January 28.
- 1st Major Essay Due Thurs., February 11: Weighting: **20%** of the course grade. 2000-2500 word paper (about 8-10 typed pages)
- 2nd Major Essay Due Thurs., March 24: Weighting: **20%** of the course grade. 2000-2500 word essay (about 8-10 typed pages)
- In-Class Group Assignments—Weighting: **10%**—with a cumulative grade assigned at the end of the course.
- Individual Oral Participation— Weighting: **10%**—with a cumulative grade assigned at the end of the course.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Please refer to the online 2015-16 GPRC Calendar—

https://www.gprc.ab.ca/files/forms_documents/Student_Misconduct.pdf

STUDENT CONDUCT:

Rules of Engagement are as follows:

- No texting during lectures or class discussions.
- No listening to iPods
- No engaging in side conversations while the instructor or other students are speaking.
- No arriving late.

ATTENDANCE

Excessive absenteeism—defined as **two or more unexcused absences** per term—may adversely affect your grade. Students with more than three unexcused absences may be debarred from writing the Final Exam.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and there will be penalties. For a more precise definition of plagiarism and its consequences, refer to the Student Conduct section of the College Admission Guide at <http://www.gprc.ab.ca/programs/calendar/>

Or the College Policy on Student Misconduct: Plagiarism and Cheating at <http://www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/>

****Note:** all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

Instructors reserve the right to use electronic plagiarism detection services on written assignments. Instructors also reserve the right to ban the use of any form of electronics (cell phones, Blackberries, iPods, tablets, scanning pens, electronic dictionaries, etc.) during class and during exams.

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:**EN 4103F—Shakespeare on Film—FILM LIST Winter 2016**

- Course Introduction / *The Merchant of Venice* (2004). Thursday, January 7
- 1. Michael Radford's *The Merchant of Venice*. January 7-12-14
- 2. Kenneth Branagh's (1993) versus Joss Whedon's (2012) film adaptations of *Much Ado About Nothing*. January 19-21-26-28
- 3. Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* (1968) versus Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet* (1996). February 2-4-9-11
- 4. Laurence Olivier's (1955) versus Richard Loncraine's (1995) film adaptations of *Richard III*. February 23-25-March 1-3
- 5. Franco Zefferelli's (1990) versus Kenneth Branagh's (1996) versions of *Hamlet* (1990). March 8-10-15-17
- 6. Kenneth Branagh's Shakespeare spin-off comedy, *A Midwinter's Tale* (1995). March 22-24
- 7. Julie Taymor's *Titus* (1999), an adaptation of *Titus Andronicus*. March 29-31.
- 8. Julie Taymor's film adaptation of *The Tempest* (2010). April 5-7-12

- Last Shakespeare on Film class: April 12, 2016

EXTENDED COURSE DESCRIPTION:

As dramas written and conceived for Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre, Shakespeare's plays rely on the power of words spoken aloud by trained stage actors. Film, by contrast, is a highly visual medium. About one hundred years ago, cinema directors began adapting Shakespeare texts for mass audiences. For the last six decades, directors from Laurence Olivier to Franco Zeffirelli and Kenneth Branagh have brought Shakespeare's plays to life on the big screen.

As an academic course, "Shakespeare on Film" examines the many points of intersection between the page, the stage and the screen. As a participant in weekly seminars, you will appreciate the astonishing versatility of Shakespeare's plays, which, increasingly, are being translated into powerful cinematic texts.

This course examines up to **twelve** film adaptations of **seven** Shakespeare plays:

1. *The Merchant of Venice*

- Michael Radford (2004) 138 min.

2. *Much Ado About Nothing*

- Kenneth Branagh (1993), 111 min
- Joss Whedon (2012), 109 min.

3. *Romeo and Juliet*

- *Romeo and Juliet* (1968). Directed by Franco Zeffirelli, 138 min.
- *Romeo + Juliet* (1996). Directed by Baz Luhrmann, 120 min.

4. *Richard III*

- Laurence Olivier (1955), 161 min.
- Richard Loncraine (1995); [starring Ian McKellan]

5. *Hamlet*

- Franco Zeffirelli (1990), 130 min.
- Kenneth Branagh (1996), 242 min.
- Kenneth Branagh, *A Midwinter's Tale* (1995). 99 min.

6. *The Tempest*

- Julie Taymor (2010), 110 min.

7. *Titus Andronicus*

- Julie Taymor *Titus* (1999)

Why study "Shakespeare on Film"?

At the centenary "Shakespeare on Screen" conference in Málaga, Spain, in September, 1999, Shakespearean scholar Kenneth Rothwell readily conceded that "cinema [has] pushed Shakespeare back into the realm of popular entertainment after centuries of academic reverence" Kerr, Darren. "An Interview with Kenneth Rothwell." *Early Modern Literary Studies* 6.1 (May, 2000): 6 <URL: <https://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/06-1/rothinte.htm>>.

To what extent has this new development proved desirable? In the words of Charles H. Shattuck,

In . . . [the twentieth] century the most significant mutation of Shakespeare has been from stage to film, a phenomenon which, with the growth of film technology (*movement plus sound plus color*), has given us increasing pleasure. In recent years, however, as film esthetics have grown more sophisticated - as strong-minded directors have introduced more avant-garde camera techniques and imposed upon the texts more insistently "modern" interpretations - filmed Shakespeare has provoked heated argument among the critics, sometimes even sharp hostility. . . . (*The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd.ed. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997, Appendix A, p. 1925).

Indeed, Shakespeare films by non-Anglophone directors, Shakespeare derivatives, and Branagh productions have relocated, modernized, or recontextualized the plays' settings. As the production of Shakespeare films becomes more international, Shakespeare scholars agonize over what constitutes an authentic Shakespeare film. Robert Shaughnessy, for example, explores the implications of viewing "Shakespeare on film . . . as a popular cultural phenomenon":

Viewed from this perspective, Shakespeare's place within film culture loses its status of distinctive privilege, and becomes subject to, and analysable within, the terms of popular film genres, encompassing a seemingly inexhaustible variety of instances of parody, quotation, displacement, translation and travesty (*Contemporary Essays*, p. 5)

As Shakespeare films become increasingly global, Shakespeare's plays will be filmed in languages as diverse as Maori and Inuktitut, and, in keeping with this tendency, there will be even more spin-offs. Far from diminishing Shakespeare's stature, these films will accelerate the process through which Shakespeare will "bestride the narrow world / Like a colossus" (*Julius Caesar*, 1.2. 135-136).

With varying degrees of success, directors from Franco Zeffirelli to Baz Luhrmann and Kenneth Branagh have exploited the full potential of film as a highly visual medium. In adapting Shakespeare plays for television or feature-length films, directors bring to bear a wide range of techniques:

- effective use of cuts to improve cinematic flow, coherence or momentum;
- inclusion of new dialogue or invented scenes;
- introduction of bold, imaginative plot twists or anachronistic details to enhance the production's originality and relevance for modern audiences;
- well-constructed interior sets and effective use of filmed outdoor landscapes to accentuate particular Shakespearean motifs;
- effective use of original scores or more traditional music to heighten audience mood or intensify atmospheric effects;
- technical expertise in directing films.

The course will require three hours of instruction per week plus required weekly screenings. Although we shall consider the relationship between the Shakespeare plays and their respective film adaptations, we shall also, as a matter of course, examine these films as works of art separate and distinct from Shakespeare's plays.