

Shakespeare Through the Ages

Offered to: All UG Programmes

Course Category: Minor

Schedule of Offering: Semester II/IV/VI

Course sub-category: Skill Development

Course Credit Structure: 3

Course Code: LL175

- **Lecture: 3**
- **Tutorial: 0**
- **Practical: 0**

Contact Hours per week: 3

Instructor: Saurabh Singanapalli

Stream: Literature and Linguistics

Maximum Intake: 20

1. Introduction

William Shakespeare remains the writer whose name is synonymous, even more than four centuries after his death, with English literature. His body of work is more than just a collection of plays, sonnets and poems; it is the accomplishment of a writer who “breathed upon dead bodies and brought them into life” (R.W. Emerson). This course will familiarise students with the writing of William Shakespeare. Through a study of his writing, it will discuss his enduring influence on literature and cultural traditions throughout the world.

The course will be taught in English. Apart from its primary objective of making students read and enjoy the work one of the world’s foremost writers, it aims to help learners develop their skills of close textual reading and analysis, and critical appreciation, which are essential for scholars in the Humanities, particularly those looking to pursue the study of literature.

2. Course Objectives

This course aims to:

- 1) introduce to students the works of William Shakespeare
- 2) discuss his literary style and what makes him unique
- 3) discuss his works within the context of the age and times that he wrote in
- 4) discuss how Shakespeare has influenced the development of the English literary tradition over time
- 5) discuss how Shakespeare has influenced the English language
- 6) inculcate in students a sense of the continuing importance of Shakespeare’s works and how they are incorporated in different media today

3. Course Outcomes

- 1) Students will be able to recognise William Shakespeare's plays through their narratives
- 2) Students will be able to recognise and analyse Shakespeare's writing style and the most famous lines from his plays and sonnets
- 3) Students will be able to explain and discuss Shakespeare's influence on English literature
- 4) Students will be able to explain and discuss Shakespeare's influence on popular media in the world today
- 5) Students will be able to discuss and critically analyse Shakespeare's writing with a knowledgeable group of peers

4. Pre-requisites

There are no prerequisites. Students must be willing to read a lot, and actively engage in discussing their reading and their own analyses in class.

5. Readings

Primary Texts:

1. Shakespeare, W., & Craig, W. J. (1905). *Complete Works. Edited, With a Glossary, by WJ Craig.*
2. Bloom, H. (Ed.). (1987). *Shakespeare's sonnets.* Chelsea House.
3. Lamb, C., & Lamb, M. (2007). *Tales from Shakespeare.* Penguin.
4. Shakespeare, W. (2010). *The Arden Dictionary of Shakespeare Quotations.* A&C Black.

Recommended Reading:

1. Henderson, D. E. (Ed.). (2008). *A concise companion to Shakespeare on screen* (Vol. 20). John Wiley & Sons.
2. Wells, S. (Ed.). (1986). *The Cambridge companion to Shakespeare studies* (pp. 17-34). Cambridge University Press.
3. Dobson, M., Wells, S., Sharpe, W., & Sullivan, E. (Eds.). (2015). *The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare.* Oxford University Press, USA.
4. Maguire, L. (2007). *Shakespeare's names.* Oxford University Press.

6. Module-wise topics

Module 1: Introduction (5 sessions)

- William Shakespeare's life and times
- Shakespeare's literary contemporaries
- The Globe theatre and the Elizabethan audience
- Exploring Shakespeare's style

Module 2: Reading Shakespeare's Plays (15 sessions)

- The Comedies
- The Tragedies
- Historical plays
- The sources for Shakespeare's plays
- Famous characters and quotes

Module 3: Reading Shakespeare's Poetry (7 sessions)

- The Shakespearean Sonnet
- Shakespeare's verse
- Songs in Shakespeare's plays
- Reading a selection of Shakespeare's poetry

Module 4: Shakespeare across borders (7 sessions)

- Influence on English literature
- Influence on World literature
- Influence on the English language
- Shakespeare in India

Module 5: Shakespeare in Modern Media (7 sessions)

- Performing Shakespeare through the ages
- Shakespeare in cinema
- Shakespeare in comics and graphic art
- Other experiments

Module 6: Conclusion (4 sessions)

- Reviewing Shakespeare's plays and poetry
- Reviewing Shakespeare's style and influences
- Envisaging a future with Shakespeare

7. Pedagogy

The teaching in this course will be through a combination of lectures and classroom discussions. The instructor will introduce concepts and reading material, drawing attention to various facets of Shakespeare's writing, and highlighting his contributions to English language and literature. Some sections of Shakespeare's plays and sonnets will be discussed in detail in class, while for others, students will be expected to read a particular text and make presentations in class, followed by individual or group analysis.

8. Evaluation Pattern

- Weekly Quizzes (10) (10%)
- Monthly Class presentations (3) (30%)
- Monthly Assignments (2) (20%)
- End-semester exam (40%)