



Hirschfeld's drawing of Edwin Booth as Hamlet

Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

From Text to Stage

Senior English
Mr. Grunner

First Trimester 2018

Course Description

“To be or not to be—that is the question.” “Alas, poor Yorick!” “The play’s the thing!” “The lady doth protest too much, methinks.” Any of these sound familiar? The Shakespeare scholar Marjorie Garber remarks that the “experience of *Hamlet* is almost always that of *recognition*” and that “one never does encounter *Hamlet* ‘for the first time.’” And she’s right: the most famous of Shakespeare’s tragedies is a 400-year-old cultural echo chamber filled with turns of speech, character types and philosophical ideas that structure and frame the world we still live in today. Adopting a model of slow-reading, we will spend the entirety of our trimester together closely reading *and* staging each scene of Shakespeare’s “poem unlimited” to learn for ourselves what the hype around *Hamlet* is all about. Secondary texts and other resources (films adaptations, stage productions, visiting actors, etc.) will supplement our journey and aid us in delving as deeply as possible into the play.

Methodology

Class discussion; student performances; the occasional lecture; visiting artists; and, of course, an excursion to the theater!

Number of Class Sessions

Ideally, we will meet three times (3x) per cycle for forty-minute sessions, save for the classes that fall on a Tuesday which will be canceled for Christian Service.

Expectations

Homework: Students are expected to come to each class session (1) having read every last word of an assigned text and (2) prepared to discuss the text with the class. The success of this endeavor rests upon your shoulders.

Writing: Through the course of the trimester, students will compose two long form essays.

Final Performance Project: Details to be announced.

Final Grade Breakdown

Essays (60%)
Final Performance Project (40%)

Miscellaneous

In my experience, laptop computers are more likely to tempt a student into distraction than to aid him in his learning and note-taking. Thus, use of a laptop computer will not be permitted during class discussion. After all, when coming together as a group to discuss a piece of literature, which we have all spent time reading and thinking about, there is absolutely no need to use a laptop. Furthermore, cell phones should remain on silent and, ideally, should be left in your bags.

Reading Schedule

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Teacher Availability

While my official office hours will be held on Monday afternoons from 3:15-4:15, I'm available most days in the ERC both before and after school. Please email me (dgrunner@regis.org) or speak to me after class if you'd like to set a time to meet.

Reading Schedule

This schedule is subject to change! Keep abreast of all changes in class (and on Moodle)

9/10 A: Introduction

9/12 C: I.i.

9/13 D: I.i.

9/18 A: I.ii.

9/19 C: I.ii

9/20 D: I.iii

9/25 A: I.iv

9/27 C: I.v

9/28 D: II.i

10/2 A: II.ii

10/4 C: III.i

10/9 D: III.ii

10/12 A: III.iv

10/17 D: IV.i-iii

10/19 A: IV.iv-v

10/24 D: IV.vi-vii

10/29 A: V.i

10/31 C: V.i

11/1 D: V.ii

11/5 A: V.ii

11/7 C: TBD

11/8 D: TBD

11/13 A: TBD

11/15 C: TBD

11/16 D: TBD

11/20 A: Final Performances