

Sarah Kennedy
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ENG 315 Early English Drama

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

All the texts below are individual New Mermaid Editions from Methuen Drama. Please buy the paperback versions:

Three Late Medieval Morality Plays ISBN: 978-0-7136-6661-8

The Spanish Tragedy ISBN: 978-1-408-11421-6

Dr. Faustus ISBN: 978-0-7136-7376-0

Volpone ISBN: 978-0-7136-5433-2

The Revenger's Tragedy ISBN: 978-0-7136-8284-7

'Tis Pity She's a Whore ISBN: 978-0-7136-5060-0

***BE SURE TO CHECK FOR FILMS TO SUPPLEMENT YOUR READING IN FILMS ON DEMAND THROUGH THE GRAFTON LIBRARY**

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

ENG 315 is a discussion course focused on Medieval and Renaissance English Drama, excluding Shakespeare. We will read a sample of plays, and you will learn how to access information from a variety of sources in order to produce three research projects.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- ❖ To develop your understanding of how to use primary and secondary research (including field research) to gain knowledge and understanding of the English theatre.
- ❖ To cultivate your research skills, including proper documentation and citation of sources. You will learn how to use and manipulate various rhetorical strategies for writing about plays, which were, of course, written to be performed.
- ❖ To enhance your critical reading skills. The play texts will introduce you to the variety of cultural traditions from which English dramatists drew.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS (WRITING ASSIGNMENTS):

- ❖ Three research projects (750-1000 words each), including at least one field research and one library research project. Please see the Topics List on Canvas (they are also listed at the end of this syllabus) for details on topics. Your final project will be turned in as part of your final portfolio.
- ❖ Regular postings on the Discussions site (see schedule below). You must post your

responses and questions to the Discussions during the weeks that they are due. Please note that this course is organized by modules, and you will not be able to move to the next module until you complete its prerequisite.

GRADING:

Research Projects One and Two:	30%
Discussion Postings:	30%
Final Portfolio (to include Three Research Projects and a 250-word introduction):	40%

COURSE POLICIES

Online Discussion: Students will review course materials and post and respond to Canvas questions for each reading lesson and will do the assigned writing assignments according to the syllabus schedule. Regular and active participation are essential to your success in this course. Your posts must be at least 150 words each and must contain at least two direct, cited quotations from the text(s).

The student will be expected to

read all assignments and to turn in all assigned written work;

respond to Dr. Kennedy's initial discussion topics for each site;

read all postings to Canvas for the semester.

Discussion grades will be assigned for the responses posted. Any Discussion postings done beyond the week specified for the reading on the syllabus will receive reduced points or, after one week, no points.

Paper Format: Formal essays must be submitted to the Assignments on Canvas. Please double space, number the pages of, and title each essay. Please put a standard four-line header in the top left-hand corner of all drafts and papers (your name, the course, the date, and my name). You are responsible for keeping a copy of every essay you submit.

Please do not email papers to me. All papers must be submitted by the due date on Canvas.

Late Work: Any late assignments will be penalized a letter grade for every calendar day that they are late. Assignments turned in more than one week late will receive a grade of 0.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism, submitting someone else's ideas or words as though they were one's own, is an honors violation at Mary Baldwin University (see the *Student Handbook*.) To avoid even accidental plagiarism in this course, please adhere to the following guidelines and/or consult the instructor with your questions if you are ever in doubt.

You will also find substantial help with proper quotation and MLA citation form (as well as punctuation, sentence structure, paragraph development, etc.) online at the OWL (online writing lab) at Purdue: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu> (select Non-Purdue Instructors & Students and select General Academic Writing or MLA Formatting & Style Guide).

ET Requests: An ET for this course will be allowed if the student has completed all of the Discussion postings and at least two of the three research projects. Responses for ET work will be submitted directly by email to the instructor.

Course Schedule

Please Note: Weekly Postings and Assignments Are Due on Sundays at Midnight

Week One (May 26-31):

Introduction to the course

The Second Shepherds' Play (See Discussion Board for access to the complete play)
Mankind

Week Two (June 1-7):

Mankind continued

POST: ON DISCUSSIONS by MIDNIGHT SUNDAY: PROJECT ONE TOPICS

Week Three (June 8-14):

The Spanish Tragedy Acts I and II

Week Four (June 15-21):

Spanish Tragedy Acts III through end

POST: ON ASSIGNMENTS by MIDNIGHT SUNDAY: RESEARCH PROJECT ONE

Week Five (June 22-28):

Doctor Faustus Acts I and II

Week Six (June 29- July 5):

Doctor Faustus Act III through end

Week Seven (July 6-12):

Volpone Acts I and II

POST: ON DISCUSSIONS by MIDNIGHT SUNDAY: PROJECT TWO TOPICS

Week Eight (July 13-19):

Volpone Act III through end

Week Nine (July 20-26):

The Revenger's Tragedy Acts I and II

POST: ON ASSIGNMENTS by MIDNIGHT SUNDAY: RESEARCH PROJECT TWO

Week Ten (July 27-Aug 2):

Revenger's Tragedy Acts III through end

POST: ON DISCUSSIONS by MIDNIGHT SUNDAY: PROJECT THREE TOPICS

Week Eleven (Aug 3-9):

'Tis Pity She's a Whore

Week Twelve (August 10-14): Note that this is a short week that ends at midnight on Friday

'Tis Pity

Discussion of Final Portfolio Materials

Please note that the Discussions close on Friday, August 14, at midnight, and no posts after that time will receive credit.

FINAL PORTFOLIO OF RESEARCH PROJECTS (with 250-word introduction and all revised papers) DUE: POST ON ASSIGNMENTS by MIDNIGHT SUNDAY AUGUST 16

ENG 315: Research Topics

Your research projects must be presented in MLA format.

1. Research the performance methods and stage conventions of medieval drama in England. You may focus on either the morality play or mystery play tradition; you may also compare and contrast them. Find out what venues were used for these plays, where and when they were performed, and how they evolved into the Renaissance theatre with which we are more familiar. Use scholarly sources for this project; these may include contemporary recreations of medieval drama (if you can find any). 1000 Words Minimum.

2. Write a review of the literature on a significant problem, problem scene, or character in English Renaissance Drama. You may use a play that we are not covering in class, but your choice must come from the period—and do not use Shakespeare. You need not come to a conclusion, but you do need to lay out the opposing positions on the problem. You should use only scholarly or professional sources for this project. 1000 Words Minimum.

Some examples of "problems" might include (but are not limited to) the nature of "Hell" in *Doctor Faustus*; the use of comedy and/or "vulgarity" in the mystery or morality plays; allegory as a vehicle for comedy; the moral implications of "revenge" in revenge tragedies. You can also consider a practical "problem" if you are a director or actor: how does one stage a particular murder? How does one build empathy into a character like Giovanni in *'Tis Pity*?

Remember that you need not take a position on this paper, but you do need to outline the various ways that scholars, actors, and/or directors have responded to it.

3. Write a position paper, making use of scholarly sources, on a significant issue of text, staging, or performance in Early English Drama. If you write on the text of your chosen play, you must use scholarly sources. If you choose to write on staging or production, you may include, in addition to scholarly sources, reviews from popular sources, as well as interviews of directors and/or actors who specialize in Early English drama. 1,500 words Minimum.