

Literary Genres – Shakespeare Studies
2018 – 2019
Davidson

Policies and Procedures

This course is designed to serve as either an English elective or an “advanced English course” that can replace a traditional English IV credit. It also helps to fulfill the requirements for an English endorsement in the Arts & Humanities graduation plan.

In addition to traditional English instruction (designed to foster analytical skills that have a variety of real world applications-- such as finding patterns, making claims, locating evidence for those claims, and being able to explain how evidence justifies those claims), the nature of the course subject also means a substantial focus on both history and theater (especially the way that acting choices help to construct meaning in theatrical production).

As of right now, the plan is to read six plays over the course of the year (*Titus Andronicus*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Measure for Measure*, *Macbeth*, and *The Winter’s Tale*). The order is chronological (from early to late) with at least one play representing every major genre in which Shakespeare worked (with the exception of an English history play). As such, students will understand Shakespeare’s artistic trajectory over the course of his entire career.

Reading will primarily be done in class, and there will not be a heavy homework requirement. This is to honor the fact that this class is not in the AP track and that many students are taking it as an elective. As such, it should not be overwhelming, even for those concurrently taking AP English.

Grading

From the SBISD *Student/Parent Handbook*:

| | | |
|---|----------|--------------------|
| A | 90-100 | Excellent Progress |
| B | 80-89 | Good Progress |
| C | 75-79 | Average Progress |
| D | 70-74 | Poor Progress |
| F | Below 70 | Failure |

I take the Handbook at face value, which is to say, A’s are reserved for **excellent** work-- not **good** work and certainly not **completed** work. There is no such thing as a completion grade in this class. Each assignment will be graded on its merits.

I do not assign grades. You earn grades. If you put forth a minimal effort, expect a minimal grade. Just doing an assignment is not enough to pass, and if you want to make an A, you must **consistently** produce excellent work. That said, students are not receiving an extra grade point for this class (as they would for a pre-AP or AP class), so my standards for excellence here are not the same expectations that I have for my AP classes.

Grading Categories

There will be one grading category in Skyward, and assignments will be weighted according to difficulty and estimated time taken to complete them. Thus, a relatively minor grade will be entered once (usually something completed in class in one class period), a typical assignment will be entered

twice, and projects and essays will be entered six to eight times. The reasoning for this system is straightforward: studies show that students learn and retain information better with a series of low stakes assessments than a small number of high stakes ones, and weighting grades against each other forces students to take the daily assignments seriously. To analogize, for a musician the time spent practicing is as important as the performance because that is where the growth as an artist truly occurs.

“Major” grades will consist of quizzes, projects, and (especially) longer papers.

Make-Up and Late Work

You are responsible for every assignment. If you were not in class, ask me for a copy of what you missed. I might remember to give you a copy without asking for it, but do not count on it. Again, **YOU** are responsible for every assignment. You have one week to complete the assignment and return it to me, after which point it is considered late.

If you are absent for an extended amount of time (hospitalizations, short jail stays, etc.), I might be willing to negotiate how much work to make up. Talk to me before or after class.

Daily work is due at the end of class. If you do not finish, you may take it home and complete it for homework. What is not cool, however, is doing nothing in class and completing everything at home.

Homework is due at the beginning of class, after which time it is late. I do not anticipate a heavy homework component unless you have difficulty finishing assignments in the allotted time.

Late work will be accepted for one week after the due date. There may be an academic penalty for not turning in work on time.

Web-Site and Chrome Books

Assignments will be posted at <https://www.davidson-eng.net/> .

This will become a much bigger deal once students get their Chrome Books in October. After that, students will only receive electronic copies of readings and assignments (unless you have made prior arrangements to receive paper copies).

Office Hours / Tutorials

I am here after school every day. If nobody shows up by around 4:00, I will go home, so if a student has to be somewhere else before planning on seeing me for tutorials, let me know. I am also available at lunch at all times when I do not have meetings or duty (the second half of lunch on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday). If you need a place to work during a time when I am in a meeting or on duty, just make sure that you're in my room before the second half of lunch starts (so I don't lock you out).

I am here at **YOUR** convenience, not the other way around. I will always be glad to help you-- either with the work from class or with extra assignments if you think you need extra help. I am also willing to help you with reading and writing assignments for other classes.

Final Words

I am always open to reasonable suggestions and/or complaints. If you see no value in what we do in class, just ask me to clarify, and I'll be happy to oblige. I look forward to a productive year.