Shakespeare
English 127.4
Spring 2002
Meeting: MWF 12:20-1:10 in TBA

Instructor: Michael N. García
Mailbox: 252 Goldwin Smith
Office: 352 Goldwin Smith
Email: mng7@cornell.edu
Office Hours: TBA

Course Description
This writing seminar will help you develop critical reading and writing skills that you will find indispensable to the rest of your college career and beyond. We will explore the notion of “what you say” (content) vs. “how you say it” (style)—and through your own writing experience and learning to write as good readers you can come to your own conclusions and attack or defend my argument that “what you have to say IS how you say it.” What you have to say is so inextricably intertwined with how you say it that you can’t have one without the other—content (great ideas) cannot be delivered unless it is conveyed by (and packaged in) the vehicle of language. This statement is similar to the statement that there are no true synonyms; every synonym is a different word, with its own nuances of meaning. On the phrase, sentence, paragraph, and essay levels the phenomenon is magnified. Minor revisionary changes in sentence structure, diction, grammatical choices, and concision deliver a different constellation of meaning to the reader. I might have been more specific in the wording of my slogan, addressing what we will be focusing on in this class, which is how you “write” it rather than how you “say” it, but I made a decision based on the connotative power of the phrase “how you say it.” You might also notice that I purposely opted to use the passive voice in the sentence that contains the phrase “conveyed by.” This is an example of the close attention that we will give to writing and reading in this course, through lively discussion as well as through our writing.

Texts (available at the Campus Bookstore, Signet Classic editions)
A Midsummer Night’s Dream
Romeo and Juliet
Twelfth Night
Othello
Titus Andronicus
Antony and Cleopatra

Course E-reserves
From the library catalog’s main search page click on Course Reserves. Search for Engl 127.5. You will be required to read all materials on course e-reserve.

Writing Assignments
You will write six essays, totaling a minimum of 30 pages of writing. For two of these papers (papers 2 and 6) you will make substantial revisions. There will also be some informal writing assignments during class.

Formatting Formalities
All assignments to be handed in must be typed and double-spaced, 12 point font, paginated, and printed on laser jet or bubble jet. Papers are to be written in the MLA style. Assignments must be handed in (IN CLASS) on the day that they are due. Late assignments will drop one letter grade for each day that they are late. Keep copies of all your work to be handed in as a portfolio (also part of your grade) at the end of the semester.

Course Objectives. In this course you will learn to:
Freewrite, brainstorm, and mindmap
Develop a clear, precise, and well-defined thesis statement
Paragraph unity and keeping only paragraphs that relate to your thesis
Read a text closely and write papers as your own toughest reader
Develop and support your thesis with apt examples and persuasive reasoning
Structure your paragraphs optimally with clear and smooth transitions
Master the nuances of diction
Be mindful of the mechanics and grammar of formal written English
Revise as re-vision—writing as a process of discovery and critical thinking

Grades
75% Papers and exercises
20% Attendance, class participation, and pop quizzes
5% Portfolio

Class Participation
This is a seminar class, not a lecture class, making it imperative that all students come to class prepared to talk about the text. Reading the text closely and engaging in mock dialogue with the text as you read (asking questions of the text as you read) will, no doubt, bring you to class full of questions, observations, and arguments for the text and the community of literary critics, readers, and writers that the class will provide.

I may occasionally require that you write 150-200 word pre-discussion notes (to hand in before class). I will often ask you to bring to class one or two questions to be queried of the text.

Pop quizzes may be given at any time. As long as you have read the text the quiz will be easy, though I might ask a detailed question that is readily answerable if you have
carefully read the text but not something that would be provided in a Cliff’s Notes or website summary, etc..

Citing and Potential Plagiarism
You are required to read the chapter “The Code of Academic Integrity and Acknowledging the Work of Others” (approximately pages 54-60) in Cornell’s Policy Notebook for Cornell Community. Every student was issued one of these booklets as part of orientation. Having read this there is no excuse for unintentionally failing to cite a source when required. There are gray areas as to when to cite and when a paraphrase is adequate, but we all recognize blatant intended plagiarism when we see it. In such cases the paper will receive an immediate grade of F and the student will be referred to the College Academic Integrity Hearing Board.

We all stand on the shoulders of (collective) giants; we all benefit from the ideas of others. The issue of plagiarism has a lot to do with my earlier statement: “what you have to say IS how you say it.” Many of our best ideas are common knowledge, societally and globally shared. It is hard to imagine an idea that has not been thought, a phrase that has never been uttered or written, a great idea that did not have its seeds in someone else great (or less than great) idea. This class will be largely about finding your own voice. When you write down the great ideas that have undoubtedly been thought before you should do so in your unique voice. If your great idea (or agreement with a great idea, or realization that somebody else has stolen your own idea before you ever thought it) was inspired by a passage in a book you just read five minutes ago you will have to be more mindful of your wording, making sure that you are writing with your own voice and nuance and not having your thought and writing overshadowed by the phraseology of the author. When in doubt, cite. When you must acknowledge a true debt, cite. When your paraphrase can’t run the risk of deviating too much—perhaps because the kernel of truth to be gleaned cannot exist independent of the (other person’s) language that it is wrapped up in—then cite your source (parenthetically—pardon the pun—or otherwise).

Student Conferences
I will hold conferences with each of you at least twice this semester. The first set of conferences will be at the end of September and the second set the first week of November. I will hand out sign-up sheets a week or so prior to each conferencing period. Everyone must sign up for a time slot. Failure to attend the time you have signed up for will negatively affect you Participation grade.

Writing Center and other Resources
Cornell boasts one of the top writing programs in the country. The John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines provides one-on-one assistance with writing. The writing center is located in 174 Rockefeller Hall, 255-6349.

Uris library has several useful handouts: MLA Citation Style; Research Strategy: Finding Information Efficiently; How Literature is Structured; English Literature: A Reference Bibliography.
Website
I have created a website for this course. The website has many useful links to Shakespearean and other sites. One of the links is to an MLA style guide. I will e-mail direction to all students about how to enroll in the course website.

Course Reserves
URIS 2-DAY RESERVES:
   Olin PR2987.E64
   PE1408.L68x 1997
Muir, Kenneth and Schoenbaum, S. *A New Companion to Shakespeare Studies*.
   Uris PR2890.M95
   Uris PR2754.G74 1997
   Uris PR428.T57 1958
   Uris PE1421.W545x 2000

E-RESERVES:
Bogel, Rick. “Beyond Rhetoric.” Ithaca Times
Grossenbacher, Laura. “Some Basic Guidelines for Reading Literature.”
   [http://uwc.fac.utexas.edu/stu/handouts/reading.html](http://uwc.fac.utexas.edu/stu/handouts/reading.html) 7/15/01.
Schedule

The date that an item appears on the syllabus is the date that it is due in class. The first writing assignment is due the third day of class, Friday, the 25th of January. Reading assignments are usually listed first on each day.

I recommend that you read each play in its entirety by the date that we discuss Act I. This first reading can be a faster reading that acquaints you with the text. Since so much of what happens later in the play informs our understanding and perception of earlier events in the play it is hard to discuss the exposition, for example, without making references to later events in the play. Consider that often the major difference between a tragedy and a comedy is how the play ends. We would read *Twelfth Night* much differently had Orsino killed Viola/Cesario in the end, as he threatens to do.

January

Week 1 21 M Intro, Sonnet discussion; Write two page pro or con on Diamond
W Uris Library visit, meet in Uris lobby
F *Titus Andronicus*; “Shakespeare: an Overview”;
   Discuss Diamond; Paper 1 (2pp)

Week 2 28 M Titus, Introductory material, Acts I-III
   Thesis statement exercise
W Titus, Act IV; Thesis Paragraph for Paper 2 (200-300 words—1pp)

February

1 F Barnet (CP); Stoloff (CP); Titus film (Julie Taymor)

Week 3 4 M Titus Act V; Draft of Paper 2 (3pp)
   **T Student Conferences (sign up for a time between 10a-2p)
   W *Romeo and Juliet*, Introductory material, Act I
   F Romeo, Act II; Grossenbacher (CP); Final Version of Paper 2 (3pp)

Week 4 11 M Romeo, Act III; “The Write Attitude” (CP)
   W Romeo, Act IV; Dunbar-Odom (both chapters) (CP)
   F Romeo, Act V; Marius (e-reserve)

Week 5 18 M *Antony and Cleopatra*, Introductory materials, Act I; Paper 3 (2pp)
   W Antony, Act II; Bogel (CP)
   F Antony, Act III; Baker (both chapters) (CP)

Week 6 25 M Antony, Act IV; Draft of Paper 4 (3-4pp) for peer editing in class
   W Antony, Act V

March

1 F Antony (capstone discussion); Final Revision of Paper 4 (4pp) due
Week 7
4 M *Othello*, Introductory materials, Act I
W *Othello*, Act II
F *Othello*, Act III;

Week 8
11 M *Othello*, Act IV; **Paper 5 (2pp)**
W *Othello*, Act V
F Bogel (CP); *Othello* discussion

*Portfolio with final versions of Papers 1-5 due*

18 M Spring Break
W Spring Break
F Spring Break

Week 9
25 M *Othello* film (Oliver Parker, dir.); “Generating a Paper Topic”
W *Othello* film; “Narrowing Down Early Paper Topics”;
F *Othello* film; “Composing a Working Thesis”; “Writing as Discovery”

April

Week 10
W Twelfth, Act II; “Titles and Epigraphs”
F Twelfth Act III; “Peer Editing at the Conceptual Level”

*Three copies of draft of Paper 6 (5-6 pp) for Peer Editing*

Week 11
8 M Conference with peer editors
**T Conference with Instructor (sign up for time slot between 10a-2p)**
W Twelfth, Act IV; Freedman, “Improving Sentences” (e-reserve)
F “Final Peer Editing: Style”; Fakundiny, “Talking About Style” (CP);

*Bring one copy of revised draft*

Week 12
15 M Twelfth film (Trevor Nunn, dir.); Conference with Peer Editors;
W Twelfth, Act V; film; Trimble, “Readability” (e-reserve)
F Twelfth film

Week 13
22 M, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream (MND)*, Introductory material, Act I
W MND, II
F MND, Act II

Week 14
29 M MND, Act IV

May

1 W MND, Act V
3 F Final Version of Paper 6 (5-6pp) due in class