

SYLLABUS

**ARTS 681 SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGIC COUPLES: ROMEO AND JULIET,
ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA, MACBETH AND LADY MACBETH**

Professor: Smith, Gay

Dates & Time: 09/13/2011-12/06/2011 Tuesday 07:00 PM-
09:30 PM

Places: Wasch Center and Downey House Lounge, See
Schedule

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

"To bed, to bed, to bed . . . ," Lady Macbeth whispers and later cries as she exhorts her husband to come to bed. The bed on stage, in several of Shakespeare's plays, serves as a central image for the raveling and unraveling of these three tragic love stories: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Macbeth*. How has Shakespeare crafted structure, language, and sensory images, sight and sound, to deepen and elevate the audience's empathy for these tragic characters? How do the plays in performance orchestrate rising tension, suspense and opposition?

Great plays pose and explore dramatic questions; and these plays question the impact of different kinds of love, young and old, creative and destructive, erotic and chaste. Have attitudes toward, and evaluations and theories of love changed over the centuries? In terms of morality and ideology do we as modern audiences respond to Shakespeare's representation of love's passion in these tragedies any differently from how his audiences may have responded?

This course, "Shakespeare's Couples," focuses on the plays as scripts for performance, rather than literature to be read. It gives the students experience in analyzing and interpreting them through discussion, writing, and most importantly, scene enactments.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Syllabus: Shakespeare's Tragic Couples

Two response papers, two pieces of scene work, and participation in discussion will form the basis for a final grade. See Schedule below for specifics.

SCRIPTS, TEXTS:

Required:

Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*

Macbeth

Romeo and Juliet

Recommended:

Barton, John. *Playing Shakespeare*

De Rougemont, Denis. *Love in the Western World.*

Plutarch, *The Life of Marcus Antonius.*

Schiff, Stacy. *Cleopatra.*

Stendhal, *Love.*

SCHEDULE:

9/13 Wasch Ctr. Visions of Cleopatra. View film selections

9/20 Wasch Ctr. Select scenes from *Antony and Cleopatra*

9/27 Downey House: Staged readings of scenes

10/4 Wasch Ctr. 5-7 page written critiques due

10/11 Wasch Ctr. Select scenes from *Macbeth*

10/18 Downey House: Staged readings of scenes

Syllabus: Shakespeare's Tragic Couples

10/25 Fall Break

11/1 Wasch Ctr. 5-7 page written critiques due

11/8 Wasch Ctr. Select scenes from *Romeo and Juliet*

11/15 Downey House: Staged readings of scenes

Schedule, cont.

11/22 Wasch Ctr. View film selections

11/29 Wasch Ctr. 5-7 page written critiques due

12/6 Last class: Wrap-up

GRADE

Three Scene Readings @ 20 points
each.....60%

Two out of three Critiques @ 20
each.....40%