Unit Outline – School of Arts & Sciences (QLD)

Campus: McAuley at Banyo
Semester: Semester 2 2006
Unit Code: PERF 214
Unit Title: Shakespeare’s Theatre
Credit Points: 10
Prerequisites: One Drama unit at introductory (100) level
Lecturer-in-charge: Dr Tracey Sanders
Tel: 3623 7187
Fax: 3623 7245
Email: t.sanders@mcauley.acu.edu.au

Lecturers/Tutors: No

DESCRIPTION
This unit examines the theatre of Shakespeare in its historical and contemporary performance contexts. Through a detailed study of plays by Shakespeare, students will become aware of the theatrical conventions of the period and of various approaches directors take to staging these plays today. Practical workshops will complement textual study.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

On completion of this unit students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with a variety of plays by Shakespeare
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the stylistic and theatrical elements of Shakespeare’s Theatre
3. Experiment with various styles of Shakespearean performance
4. Demonstrate a refined understanding of Elizabethan theatre
CONTENT

The unit will focus on areas such as:

- The basic principles of Shakespeare’s theatre
- Ideological perspectives of Shakespeare’s theatre
- Shakespeare’s language
- Characterisation and themes in Shakespeare’s theatre
- Performing Shakespeare’s monologues

TEACHING ORGANISATION

Lectures, workshops, performance, seminar

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

These will include the following:

- Individual seminar presentation  30%
- Practical performance  50%
- Essay  20%

Written requirements will not exceed 3000 words

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

1. Individual Seminar Presentation

   Due Date: Friday in class time (Research topic will be allocated before the intensive week)

   Weighting: 30%

   At the end of the intensive week on Friday 7 July, you will present a seminar of 20 minutes duration. You have been allocated one of Shakespeare’s plays via mail. There is no negotiation on this. You must present an interesting and creative seminar to the whole group covering the following aspects:

   - When the play was written and the particular style and theatrical elements most important in the play
   - The story and characters in the play
   - The prominent themes or issues most significant in the play
   - The style of language dominant in the play (e.g. repetition, asides, antithesis etc)

   N.B. Some time at the end should be made available for questions if possible.

   Criteria individual assessment:
   - Ability to communicate to the group with clarity, projection and articulation /5
   - Knowledge of area selected for individual input /10
   - Selectivity and depth of analysis and synthesis /10
   - Style of presentation /5
2. Practical Performance

Shakespeare’s ‘Romeo and Juliet’

Due Date: Public Performance (Wk 6) One public performance

Weighting: 50%

This semester in ‘Shakespeare Theatre’ we will be performing an abridged version of the play ‘Romeo and Juliet’ by William Shakespeare. This play requires a reasonable cast but there will also be the need for backstage crew and a stage manager for those who prefer to stay ‘behind the scenes’. There will be separate marks allocated to actors and backstage crew. Those who choose to be part of the production crew must keep a production book of their efforts – this stands as an ebullient task to those who must learn lines for the production.

Criteria for performance assessment will include: (Percentage weighted over all criteria. See criteria sheet)

- Control of the form
- Security of lines
- Use of interesting and effective theatre techniques
- Pace and timing
- Costuming, lighting and use of props
- Effective use of script
- Use of voice: audibility, clarity, modulation
- Sense of role

Criteria for production crew will include: (Percentage weighted over all criteria. See criteria sheet)

- Overall commitment to the task
- Reliability and punctuality
- Focus and energy for task
- Effort and creativity
- Ability to organise effectively
- Understanding of the dynamics of theatre production

Production Book (Backstage crew)

If you choose to take a backstage (or front of house) role, you will need to keep a production book. This is lieu of learning lines and should not be considered a minimal contribution. The production book should be dated and begin at the beginning of production. You should keep a detailed description of everything that you do and communication with cast, crew and director. This book must be a professional record of your roles and duties associated with the performance and must include the following:

- Illustrations of costumes (if this is your area of responsibility)
- Lighting and sound effect design
- Blocking of the play (if you are stage manager)
- Props inventory
- Set design
- Poster/ticket design
- Song inventory (if applicable)

The production book is not an essay. Rather, it provides a detailed overview in short discussion form and possible illustrations of what you have done during the performance as a back stage crew member. It must be handed in after performance week.

Special Note: It is usually my practice in drama units to ask students to do a self-evaluation of their efforts after the final performance (both backstage and actors). After completion, I take this evaluation and moderate it with my own marks and comments about your work and award you an
appropriate mark that I believe reflects both your own perspective and mine about your work in the performance.

3. Essay (1500 words)
   **Due Date:** End of Week 6 Friday (25 August)
   **Weighting:** 20%

**Criteria for performance assessment will include:**
- Selectivity and diversity of research /10
- Ability to organize discussion intelligently and perceptively /10

**You may select from the following essay questions:**

1. How does the suicidal impulse that Romeo and Juliet exhibit relate to the overall theme of young love? Does Shakespeare seem to consider a self-destructive tendency inextricably connected with love or is this a separate issue?
2. How does Shakespeare treat death in Romeo and Juliet? Frame your answer in terms of legal, moral, familial and personal issues. Bearing these issues in mind, compare the deaths of Romeo and Juliet, Romeo and Mercutio and Mercutio and Tybalt.
3. Many references are made to time in the play. Discuss the passage of time throughout Romeo and Juliet.
4. Apart from clashing with Tybalt, what role does Mercutio play in the story? Is he merely a colourful supporting character and brilliant source of comic relief or does he serve a more serious purpose?
5. Romeo and Juliet are referred to as “star-crossed lovers”. Discuss the concept of predetermined destiny and how it relates to the play?
6. Compare and contrast the characters of Romeo and Juliet. How do they develop throughout the play? What makes them fall in love with each other?

**PRESCRIBED TEXTS**


**REPRESENTATIVE REFERENCES:**


ATTENDANCE

Marks shall not be awarded for attendance. However, students who do not meet the minimum attendance requirements as set out by the lecturer in the Unit outline will not meet the criteria to pass the unit. Where a student is unable through illness, or another cause, to attend a class in which an assessment task is scheduled, they must provide the Lecturer in Charge either a medical certificate, in the case of illness, or substantive evidence in writing within seven days. (Guidelines for Assessment, Faculty of Arts and Sciences.) *Shakespeare’s Theatre demands active participation and regular attendance of students. Rehearsals are deemed part of this attendance. If you encounter problems of any kind which affect your attendance you must consult with your lecturer – neglecting to do this could result in failure of the unit.*

Intensive Program

Each day will run in three distinct session blocks.

**SESSION 1**
9am-10.30am Formal Lecture
10.30am-11am Morning Tea

**SESSION 2**
11am-12.30pm Workshop
12.30-1.30pm Lunch

**SESSION 3**
1.30pm-4pm Video/Lecture

*On Thursday, we will begin to look at the production of the play ‘Romeo and Juliet’. Thursday afternoon and Friday will be devoted entirely to seminars. On Friday afternoon there will be a chance for students to audition for ‘Romeo and Juliet’.*

Lecture topics will include:
- Shakespeare the man – His life and Times
- Understanding the ideological perspectives that underpin the theatre of Shakespeare
- The language of Shakespeare
- Characterisation in Shakespeare
- Themes/Story in Shakespeare’s Theatre
- Dramatic Effect in Shakespeare’s Theatre
- 20th century Shakespeare

In the weeks following the intensive course there will be a number of rehearsals to process the work into the play ‘Romeo and Juliet’. These rehearsals are seen as part of the unit and should be
attended. YOU MUST NOT COMPROMISE OTHER UNITS DURING THE SEMESTER IN PREPARATION FOR THE PERFORMANCE.

Rehearsal Dates

Friday 14 July 5pm-9pm
Friday 21 July 5pm-9pm
Friday 28 July 5pm-9pm
Sunday 6 August 10am-4pm
Friday 11 August 5pm-9pm
Sunday 20 August 10am-4pm
Friday night 25 August 6.30pm. PERFORMANCE

SEMINAR PROGRAM FOR THE 12 WEEK NORMAL SEMESTER (PLEASE DON’T CONFUSE WITH THE INTENSIVE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>LECTURE</th>
<th>WORKSHOP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Shakespeare’s Time/Elizabethan era</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Principles of Shakespeare’s Theatre/Seminars begin</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ideological perspectives</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Shakespeare’s language</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>‘Story’ in Shakespeare’s Theatre</td>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Characterisation in Shakespeare’s Theatre</td>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Analysing themes in Shakespeare’s Theatre</td>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MID SEMESTER BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Dramatic Effect in Shakespeare’s Theatre</td>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Shakespearian Industry</td>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Performance Week/Rehearsal</td>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
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SHAKESPEARE’S THEATRE
PERF 214
SEMINAR (INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION)
CRITERIA

Weighting: 30%

NAME OF STUDENT: ___________________________________________

DATE: ______________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Possible Result</th>
<th>Your Result</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Knowledge of area selected – depth of understanding. Ability to show an understanding of the content rather than recitation of the information</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Selectivity and depth of analysis and synthesis.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Communication to group Audibility and modulation (voice). Eye contact with group, Energy and poise</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Style of presentation Ability of present a scholarly organized and sequential seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30%</td>
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Additional Comments:
SHAKESPEARE’S THEATRE
PERF 214
PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
(Actors)

Weighting: 50%

NAME OF STUDENT: ___________________________________________

DATE: ______________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Possible Result</th>
<th>Your Result</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Control of the form (Shakespeare’s theatre)</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates a refined ability to handled the elements and techniques associated with the selected form</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Stagecraft</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Security of lines, pace and timing, sense of role, use of theatre space, use of voice, stage presence</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Use of costume and make-up</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selectivity, analysis and synthesis of selected area</td>
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<td>4. Other contributions to the overall production.</td>
<td>10</td>
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Overall Result 50%

Additional Comments:
Weighting: 20%

NAME OF STUDENT: ___________________________________________

DATE: __________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Possible Result</th>
<th>Your Result</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Selectivity and diversity of research</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clearly shows comprehensive research and precise analysis and synthesis of topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Ability to organize discussion intelligently and perceptively</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion is logically sequenced, reads intelligently and is carefully planned. Careful proof reading evident.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Additional Comments:
SHAKESPEARE’S THEATRE
PERF 214
PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
(BACKSTAGE)

Weighting: 50%

NAME OF STUDENT: ___________________________________________

DATE: ______________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Possible Result</th>
<th>Your Result</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ability to organize responsibilities effectively and with understanding</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates a refined ability to handled requirements of the role with maturity and understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Understanding of the dynamics of theatre production</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>A demonstration of appropriate skills and organization needed in the selected production role</td>
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<td>3. Production dynamics</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication with director and group, punctuality, reliability throughout the production process</td>
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<td>4. Production book</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accurate recording of tasks in a production book</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Result</td>
<td>50%</td>
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Additional Comments:
Dear

You are enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts intensive unit ‘Shakespeare’s Theatre’ that runs from July 3-7 2006. Part of the assessment of this unit is an individual seminar. As the intensive program is only one week long and the seminar will be assessed on the Thursday afternoon and Friday of that week, I am sending you your topic in advance for early preparation. Below is the assessment task and all the details you need to get started.

**Individual Seminar Presentation**

**Due Date:** Thursday afternoon and Friday in class time  
**Weighting:** 30%

At the end of the intensive week on Friday 7 July, you will present a seminar of 20 minutes duration. You have been allocated one of Shakespeare’s plays via mail. There is no negotiation on this. You must present an interesting and creative seminar to the whole group covering the following aspects:

- When the play was written and the particular style and theatrical elements most important in the play
- The story and characters in the play
- The prominent themes or issues most significant in the play
- The style of language dominant in the play (e.g. repetition, asides, antithesis etc)

N.B. Some time at the end should be made available for questions if possible.

**Criteria individual assessment:**

- Quality of research into selected play /10
- Quality of overall presentation /10
- Ability to communicate to the group with clarity, projection and articulation and to meet specific time allocation /10

The play allocated to you is

The main play for performance and study this semester will be an abridged version of *Romeo and Juliet*. (available in bookshop). There will be the opportunity to audition for this play at the end of the week so you should also think about this and prepare an audition piece for the character you would like to play. The performance will be in Week 5/6 of the main semester with rehearsals scattered in between. This will be a contemporary version and I would invite you to think about how it might be set and staged (e.g. grunge, hip hop, gothic etc) This audition will happen on the Friday afternoon of the intensive program so please allow for a 5.30pm finish that day.

Should you have any questions regarding this assessment please contact me on 36237187 or t.sanders@mcauley.acu.edu.au.

Looking forward to working with you

(Dr.) Tracey Sanders  
Lecturer in Drama