

**The College of the Humanities
Humanities Program**

HUMS4903: A Seminar on Renaissance Theatre, Justice, and the Common Good

Professor Donald Beecher

Thurs. 2:30-5:30, 112 Paterson Hall

Office: 1908 Dunton Tower / Office Hours: Thurs. 9:00-10:00

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Justice is one of the great ideas, a concept pertaining both to principles and particulars regarding the regulation of the lives of persons living in groups according to notions of equity and fairness. Insofar as plays are by definition about members of social communities in conflict, they will imply, if not discuss openly, ideas concerning rights, duties, restitution or compensation, reciprocity, and the justice that individuals seek within those groups. Such matters need not always be conducted in relation to courts, magistrates, and written laws. Yet plays often function as courts in relation to expectations and mores. Societies as entities also seek advantage in a competitive environment, and demand sacrifices of individuals for the sake of the whole. Those matters too are under constant negotiation. Both societies and individuals employ rhetoric, leverage, gossip, even deception and trickery, and targeted segments, whether groups or individuals, react through consultation or counter strategies in order to return to a state of productive stasis. Plays serve justice and the common good as representations of such conflicts, and employ their own orders of plotting to assign rewards and punishments, to exonerate, to exclude and ostracize, to contain malefactors, to humiliate and shame, or to contain by exposure. These too are acts of justice based on a meta-conscious awareness of necessity, productivity, urbanity, and reciprocity which allows groups to function. We will investigate seven plays from England, Spain, France, and Italy, all of which touch, in various ways, upon matters of legality, honour, the family in society, revenge, equity, criminality, divine justice, and the law of talion.

I will introduce the plays briefly, raise theoretical questions, and then open the seminar to discussion. But I will be very much relying upon you to have noted down questions, insights, and principles at issue during your reading of these works, and I will try to call upon each of you regarding each play, to express your views and insights—all of which will be conducted according to the highest standards of genteel discourse.

To abet this process, each of you will be called upon to give two 15 minute presentations (on different plays), and to lead a ten minute discussion on the ideas you present. These will count for 20% each of your grade, totally 40%. The remaining 60% will be determined by two micro-term papers of 6-8 pages each, at least one of them on a play other than the one on which you made your presentations in class. These will be due on the last day of class. Please plan ahead.

The plays to be read are:

Annibal Caro, *The Scruffy Scoundrels*, CRRS Publications, Toronto.
Calderon de la Barca, *The Phantom Lady*, CRRS Publications
Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*,
Shakespeare, *All's Well that Ends Well*
Ben Jonson, *Volpone*
Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*
Fronton du Duc, *La Pucelle d'Orleans*, CRRS Publications

Reading Schedule :

Jan. 7 Intro.
Jan. 14 *Scruffy Scoundrels*
Jan. 21 *Measure for Measure*
Jan. 28 *Measure for Measure*
Feb. 4 *Volpone*
Feb. 11 *Volpone*
Feb. 25 *The Phantom Lady*
Mar. 4 *All's Well that Ends Well*
Mar. 11 *All's Well*
Mar 18 *The Spanish Tragedy*
Mar 25 *La Pucelle d'Orleans*
Apr. 1 *La Pucelle*

Regulations: For all official university regulations on deadlines, plagiarism etc. see the Calendar.

Course work: Both seminars must be presented and all written work must be submitted in order to receive a final grade.

Plagiarism: Don't. A matter of justice, equity, and the common good! It's unprofessional and dishonest, and the price can be big if you get nabbed. But there are the finer points involving normal citation practice and customs for acknowledging the materials you employ that original with others. It's good to get a clear sense of how this works.

Deadlines: Are firm, unless official accommodation is granted by the University Registrar.

Research: Beware of the materials on the net, to be used with caution or not at all given that little of it is vetted in the usual ways pertaining to academic research. Academic journals on line, of course, are fine.

Early Feedback: I'm always prepared to give impressions of your work, particularly regarding the seminars, and particularly if you check with me when our memories of the paper are still fresh!

REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in “*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*”

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They range from a mark of zero for the plagiarized work to a final grade of “F” for the course, and even suspension from all studies or expulsion from the University.

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100 (12)	B+ = 77-79 (9)	C+ = 67-69 (6)
A = 85-89 (11)	B = 73-76 (8)	C = 63-66 (5)
A - = 80-84 (10)	B - = 70-72 (7)	C - = 60-62 (4)
D+ = 57-59 (3)	D = 53-56 (2)	D - = 50-52 (1)

F	Failure. No academic credit
WDN	Withdrawn from the course
ABS	Absent from the final examination
DEF	Official deferral (see “Petitions to Defer”)
FND	Failure with no deferred exam allowed -- assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from Fall term courses is November 16, 2009. The last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter (full year) and Winter term courses is March 12, 2010.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you **only** require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by the last official day to withdraw from classes in each term. For more details visit the PMC website: http://www.carleton.ca/pmc/students/acad_accom.html

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>

PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to complete a **final** term paper or write a **final** examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control or whose performance on an examination has been impaired by such circumstances may apply in writing within five working days to the Registrar's Office for permission to extend a term paper deadline or to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully and specifically supported by a medical certificate or other relevant documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Classics and Religion Office 520-2100	2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500	300 Tory
Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608	500 Unicentre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-6632	4 th floor Library
Learning Commons 520-1125	4 th floor Library