Course Information: Shakespeare II: Histories and Tragedies (English 324) – Cornell College

Professor Katy Stavreva and Consulting Librarian Michelle Holschuh Simmons.

The course consists largely of English and/or Theatre majors. Many of these students are juniors or seniors. The course focuses on five of Shakespeare's histories and tragedies and involves language, literary, and performance analysis.

Type: Paper

Level: 300

Block Plan Context:

	S	M	T	W	R	F	S
1							
2							
3							
4							

Important Features of the Assignment:

- The **staging** of the assignment allows students to proceed through the assignment in a logical and research-minded manner.
- Students have the opportunity to address problems with finding information on a potential word or words and understand different elements of the **research process**.
- The **Block Plan** allows for a singular focus on the assignment, as students are able to take part in both **discipline-specific** and in-depth research.
- The use of both print and online technology emphasizes the importance of finding appropriate and **discipline-specific** information.
- The assignment requires **critical thinking**, as students use their research to postulate about the effects of Shakespeare's language choices on Renaissance and contemporary audiences.
- The assignment requires students to use **scholarly evidence** to support their ideas.

Description of Assignment:

The assignment focuses specifically on the language used by Shakespeare in his plays. Students choose a pre-selected word or combination of cognate words and use the *Oxford English Dictionary* to trace the meaning of the words back to 16th-17th century England. Students then use a Shakespeare concordance to search for the occurrences of their chosen words within a particular play. Using the results of both searches, students discuss local variations in the usage of these words and pose questions about what the words may indicate about the culture of the time. Subsequent formal assignments invite students to apply the information literacy skills of investigating historical language, targeted in this assignment.

Timeline:

Wk	*Monday*	*Tuesday*	*Wednesday*	*Thursday*	*Friday*	*Weekend*
1		Instruction session with librarian.			Paper due.	