COURSE OVERVIEW. Like all popular entertainers, Shakespeare, his competitors, and his successors responded to their audience’s fascination with and anxieties about the performance of gender and politics in their own lives and in the London society in which they lived. In this course we will explore the intersections of gender, politics, and performance (while not ignoring other issues). in plays by several London dramatists whose plays were performed between 1585 and 1625, with help from recent critical scholarship on the plays and the issues involved.
Syllabus

1. Objectives. The principal objectives of the course are as follows:
   - to introduce you to early modern English drama, via the topic of the staging gender and politics
   - to engage you in thoughtful reflection and discussion of the issues raised by the plays

2. Books. There are two set books:
   - David Bevington (gen ed.), *English Renaissance Drama*, Norton, 2002

3. Attendance. The work we do in class, including lecture and participation, is essential for this course. Attendance will be taken at every class. “Absent” means not attending at all or attending for less than 30 minutes. “Half absent” means you attend for only half the period. Six absences, for whatever reason, will result in your grade being reduced by one letter (e.g., from A to B). Additional absences will result, at my discretion, in your grade being reduced further, up to and including an F.

4. Code of conduct. Every member of the class is expected to enter fully into the spirit of the course and to comply with the following code of conduct:
   - Avoid absences.
   - If you miss a class, in whole or in part, try to let me know in advance. Do not wait until the next class before you get the notes and handouts. Obtain them from another member of the class, or ask me for any handouts you missed.
   - Arrive in class punctually and remain until the end of the period.
   - Be attentive and alert throughout the period.
   - Treat everyone in the classroom with civility and respect.
   - Refrain from private conversation – even if it is about the works on the syllabus – and from any other activity that interferes with the concentration of anyone in the room or disturbs the class as a whole. (Please keep all mobile phones, pagers, alarms, etc., turned off in class.)
   - Do the homework and be ready to discuss the assigned readings and study questions in class.
   - Carry out all classroom exercises and contribute constructively to discussion.
   - Hand in assignments on time.
   - Stay in touch with me and with the course.
   - Keep current with all information and instructions pertaining to the course, including possible changes to this syllabus and schedule.

5. Formal assignments. There will be two short papers: the first based on the plays written before 1593, the second based on the plays written after 1593. There will also be a research paper of 8-10 pages. In addition, there will be a Blackboard posting and responses to two other postings for each play. There will be no midterm or final exam.
6. **Grade.** Your grade for the course will reflect the standard scale: A = 90-100%, B = 80-89%, C = 70-79%, D = 60-69%, F = 0-59%. The grade will be calculated as follows: 20% for each of the two short papers; 40% for the research paper; 10% for postings; 10% for participation and general conduct (see point 4). Furthermore, excessive absences and academic dishonesty will reduce your grade (see points 3 and 7).

7. **Academic dishonesty.** We can all learn from each other, and you are encouraged to discuss the course with fellow students and with others. However, in the final analysis, the work on which you are graded must be your work. It is University policy to prohibit all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism: taking credit for someone else’s ideas or work. This policy applies not only to the student who is academically dishonest, but also to anyone in the course who knowingly aids and abets such dishonesty. Any violation of this policy will result in an F for the assignment in question. Two such violations will result in an F for the course.

8. **Contact.** My office is N-427, on the fourth floor of the N wing. Office tel: 773-298-3233 (24-hour voicemail). Email: boyer@sxu.edu. Web page: http://english.sxu.edu/boyer. Office hours are Monday and Tuesday, 2:30-4:00. I am available at other times by appointment.

**Schedule**  
(subject to change)

1 (Aug 26): preliminaries and introduction  
3 (Sep 7, Sep 9): Marlowe, *Tamburlaine*, Part 1 (1587); pp xxii-xxvi  
4 (Sep 14, Sep 16): Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus* (1588-89); pp xlv-lvii  
5 (Sep 21, Sep 23): Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta* (1589-90); pp xxv-xxxv  
6 (Sep 28, Sep 30): Greene, *Friar Bacon & Friar Bungay* (1589?); pp xxxvi-xliv  
8 (Oct 12, Oct 14): introduction to remainder of the course  
11 (Nov 2, Nov 4): Middleton?, *The Revenger’s Tragedy* (1607)  
12 (Nov 9, Nov 11): Webster, *The White Devil* (1612)  
14 (Nov 23, -): *Bartholomew Fair*  
16 (Dec 7, Dec 9): class presentation of term papers

Blackboard posting due by 11 am Thursday; 2 responses by midnight Sunday

Midterm paper due: Oct 19 (in class)  
Research paper due: Dec 13 (12 noon in my office)  
Final paper due: Dec 17 (12 noon in my office)  

Class does not meet on November 25 (Thanksgiving)