

ENGL 2221
 CRN 3325
 Spring Quarter, 2019
 T & R 2:00 – 3:50 pm
 Nagel Hall 102
<https://canvas.du.edu/login/ldap>

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 Office Hours: by appointment

Commonplace Book Prompts

Commonplace Book—that is, a handwritten notebook—in which you engage consistently with our work, responding to in-class prompts as well as following your own path through the course. Between 75 and 100 words per response for each day of our scheduled class meetings. Some of these passages will be written during class; others, between meetings. You should be prepared to read aloud from these passages (upon request) during class meetings. In addition, you will occasionally be required to post transcriptions of and elaborations upon some of these passages in discussion forums via Canvas; and you should also be prepared to read aloud from those texts (upon request) during class meetings. Guidelines for all of your Commonplace Book activities will be provided during class meetings and also in writing (after each class meeting).

- For your first Commonplace Book passage, please write your description of the key elements (of character, or plot, or motif, or setting, or media, etc.) that are absolutely essential to the story of *Hamlet*.
- Extrapolating from your first CPB passage (about key elements in *Hamlet*) invent your own story about Shakespeare. What do those key elements in *Hamlet* suggest to you about Shakespeare's life and times? Invent your own micro-fiction for WS).
- Select three of your favorite words from the play text of *Hamlet*. Find them in the Oxford English Dictionary, <https://library.du.edu/>, and write your CPB passage in response to what you learn about those words. How does each word's etymology and various meanings amplify and complicate your interpretation of the moments in *Hamlet* where those words appear?
- Considering the differing presentations of the “To be, or not to be” passage in the 1603 and 1604 quarto texts and in the 1623 Folio text, how would you direct or manage or perform this key moment from *Hamlet*? How would you adapt the text? Which stage directions would you include or exclude or invent anew? How would you design the set? What would you do and why or why not?
- In preparation for our 4/23 class meeting with Rick Barbour, choose a key moment or scene (or an element of character or plot) from *Hamlet* that you have not yet addressed in these prompts. If you were directing a production (and keeping in mind reasonable limitations on budget and time) which choices would you make in those instances and why?
- In preparation for our 4/25 class meeting with Shannon McKinney, choose a key moment or scene (or an element of *mise-en-scène*) from *Hamlet* that you have not yet addressed in these prompts. If you were designing a production (and keeping in mind reasonable limitations on budget and time) which choices would you make in those instances and why?



- Choose at least one moment from *Hamlet* and discuss via-a-vis your reflections upon at least three of the cosmological texts represented by Danielson's *Book of the Cosmos*, Rovelli's *Seven Brief Lessons on Physics*, and Rivers's *Classical and Christian Ideas in English Renaissance Poetry*.
- Describe and illustrate or draw your map of the cosmos for Hamlet's multiverse; and be prepared to share this in class. For example, try to map the orbits and retrograde motions for some (or for all) of the characters in the play!
- From the concluding moments in *Hamlet* 3.4 through the end of 4.7 lots of important action takes place behind (and between) the scenes. Which of those sub-plots are most interesting to you, and why? How do those sub-plots inform and/or disturb what takes place on stage (as well as on the page)?
- Choose a moment (or more than one) from *Hamlet* and write (or sketch or outline) your own counter-story. You could think of this counter-story as an adaptation, or an intervention, or a sub-plot, or a translation, or a long-lost but recently rediscovered source document; or as a way to introduce a new character or dialogue or event or motif or prop or setting or meme or GIF or whatnot of infinite jest for elsewhere & otherwise.



William Kempe (died 1603), “commonly referred to as **Will Kemp**, was an English actor and dancer specializing in comic roles and best known for having been one of the original players in early dramas by William Shakespeare.”
Image and text source: Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Kempe