This special topics course is designed to work in co-ordination with the visit of the Shakespeare First Folio traveling exhibition which A&M will host in March 2016 and the ongoing exhibition at the Cushing Library on Shakespeare’s contemporaries. It is divided into three sections derived from Shakespeare’s time in the commercial London theatre and is organized by dramatic genre: Early Comedy; Middle Tragedy; and Late Romance/ Tragicomedy. We will read 1-2 plays by Shakespeare in each section and look at other plays being staged during that period for a comparison of anxieties/themes/genre issues and to consider as well issues of early modern playwriting and publishing as collaborative events as well as occasions for rivalries. The student will through a series of short response papers and critical reviews of journals discover a topic of their choosing and spend the last part of the seminar writing a research paper 6000-7000 words which can form the basis for conference presentation and/or publication draft. The seminar will conclude with a brief formal presentation of this work.

Some of the primary texts we may be reading include

**Early: Comedy:** Shakespeare, *Taming of the Shrew*; Anon, *Taming of A Shrew*, John Fletcher *The Tamer Tamed*; Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton, *The Roaring Girl*

**Early/Mid: Tragedy, Domestic and Senecan:** Christopher Marlowe, *Edward II*; Anon (with Shakespeare), *Arden of Faversham*; Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus* and *Hamlet*; Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*; Thomas Middleton, *The Revenger’s Tragedy*

**Late: Masques, Romance/Tragi-Comedy:** Shakespeare, *The Winter’s Tale*, (with Fletcher) *Two Noble Kinsmen*; Ben Jonson, *The Speeches at Prince Henry’s Barriers*, *Oberon, the Faery Prince*; Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, *A King and No King*

Some of the secondary criticism we will be using include works by the guest speakers visiting during the First Folio exhibition