THE 421
Shakespeare: Stage and Film

Spring 2021, Session B: March 8 – April 23

Instructor Information

Jesse Saywell
jsaywell@asu.edu
Office Hours: By Zoom appointment
Zoom Room:  https://asu.zoom.us/j/8053166656
Course Description

Shakespeare: Stage and Film is a 7 week course devoted to exploring how Shakespeare’s plays, which we will first encounter as printed texts, are transformed into stage and film productions. We will read the plays as published texts, yet also consider how theatre and film artists make thoughtful dramaturgical choices as they bring the texts to life on stage and screen. Pending availability, we will watch several films and staged versions in their entirety, and also look at shorter scenes. The goal is for students to analyze the choices made in staging the plays to determine the meanings made. The course is divided into Five Acts that contain readings, quizzes, viewings, discussions, and essay assignments. Please note that the Acts overlap; you will be completing one Act as you begin the next. You will also study for and take a final exam during the last week of the course.

Act I: Introduction to Shakespeare, his theatre, and his texts 3/8 – 3/19
Act II: Reading a stage production, reading a film 3/15 – 3/26
Act III: Shakespeare’s characters 3/22 – 4/2
Act V: Putting it all together 4/5 – 4/16
Final Exam Week 4/16 – 4/23

Course Overview

In this course, we will be looking at the differences between stage and film productions of Shakespeare. The materials that we will be viewing have been made for different purposes, and it is important to notice the differences in style and intention:

• In some cases, we will be looking at recordings of actual stage productions. Though the production quality of these recorded stagings have improved in recent years, it is important to keep in mind that watching a recording is not the same as seeing a stage production live. Directorial choices about the recording (where to focus the camera, when and where to use close ups, how to capture the audience response, etc.) alter the experience of being an audience member in the theatre.

• Film versions of Shakespeare were conceived directly for film, using all the tools of filmmaking to create a cinematic version of Shakespeare’s play. These films tend to make great use of visual equivalents for Shakespeare’s dialogue, and offer a different means of bring the play’s physical world(s) to vivid life.

In general, stage productions use the highest percentage of Shakespeare’s text, while television versions use less, and films even less than television (sometimes using only about 30% of Shakespeare’s dialogue), substituting visual elements for language wherever possible. It is therefore important to consider the kind of recording you are watching: stage, television, or film, and to understand the tools and conventions of each medium. We will explore these differences as we go along.

This is an upper-level, 3-credit L course that is condensed into 7 weeks. It is intense, and it is your job to pay attention to the schedule and meet the deadlines. You are expected to read the lectures and each of the plays in their entirety BEFORE watching the different viewings. It is important for you to analyze the play texts on your own so that you can see the interpretive decisions of the directors. You should expect to spend a significant amount of time on this class during each of the weeks (if a 15 week three-credit course requires approximately 9 hours of work each week (3 in class and 6 outside of class), you can expect to roughly double that in the condensed time frame).
Required Readings

Shakespeare’s texts are readily available in the library and online. If you choose to read online, I recommend the Folger Digital Texts. They are easy to read, offer helpful synopses and textual introductions, and are searchable. They do not, however, contain the footnotes and annotations that can help make Shakespeare a bit easier to understand. You may want to purchase or check out of the library print copies of the plays with these annotations. The Folger and The Arden print versions are recommended, but many other editions are also sufficient. Because you are not required to purchase the texts, you may have to rent the film versions that are assigned. Some will be available to stream through the library, and others must be rented for a small fee through streaming services such as Netflix or Amazon Prime. You are also expected to read the lectures and any engage with all additional materials that may be assigned over the course of the session.

Plays | Recorded Versions (year released, director)
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Titus Andronicus | Titus (1999, Taymor)
Much Ado About Nothing | Student’s choice: (2019, Leon; 2013, Whedon; 2011, Rourke (Delamere); or 1993, Branagh)
Twelfth Night | Twelfth Night (2012, Carroll)
Macbeth | Throne of Blood (1957, Kurosawa)

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will gain familiarity with the plays of Shakespeare, reading five of his canonical texts.
2. Students will think critically about the texts of Shakespeare, and consider the meanings made through different stage and film productions.
3. Students will consider the dramaturgical decisions made in bringing a Shakespearean play to life, either on stage, television, or film.
4. Students will enhance their critical inquiry skills through written communication, crafting thoughtful essays that analyze the works of Shakespeare and offer corroborating evidence in support of an argument.

Assignments

You will have assignments due every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of this course. Quizzes are due Mondays, Discussion Posts/YellowDig Pins are due Wednesdays, and Essays are due Fridays. The Final Exam is due by the final Friday of class.

Critical Essays: At the conclusion of each Act of the course, you will be asked to select an essay question to answer. You will be asked to write a 2-3 page essay (more is allowed) that offers a substantive response to the question, with a gripping introduction, a clear thesis statement, a line of argumentation, corroborating evidence, and a thoughtful conclusion. You must cite from the texts, the viewings, and any outside scholarly sources (Wikipedia is NOT okay) you reference. Please refer to the writing rubric for more specific guidelines. In the event of a problem with the file upload, please save a copy of the assignment and the confirmation code you receive with the upload. These essays will be due on Friday nights by 11:59 p.m., no exceptions. Essays are worth 100 points each.
Critical Discussion Posts: During two Acts of the course (see course schedule), you will participate in a discussion with your classmates. These are meant to be critically rigorous, intellectual engagements with each other. For each discussion prompt, post a substantive response that fully answers the discussion question and is corroborated by evidence from the text, viewings, or outside scholarly sources. Your response should be a full paragraph, approximately 400-500 words long (more is allowed). You will also respond meaningfully to two of your classmates’ posts. These responses should engage in a dialogue, picking up an idea that your classmate presents. Your response should be 100-200 words long (more is allowed). So, you will need to say more than, “Great point, thanks for a great post!” Please note that if you ONLY do your own post and fail to respond to a classmate, you will not pass this assignment category. Discussion posts will open on Thursdays at 12:00 a.m. and will stay open until Wednesday of the following week, closing at 11:59 p.m. You will need to complete your own post and your response within that timeframe, no exceptions. Critical discussion posts are worth 50 points each, and each response is worth 12.5 points, for 75 points total.

YellowDig Pins: YellowDig assignments are all about student engagement. This is a low-key, fun spot for you to get to know each other. I will read all of your posts and respond to general issues that arise, but grading is based on your interactions with your peers. These assignments are designed to allow for more creative responses to the material. As opposed to the critical writing that occurs on the discussion posts and in the essays, here you can be casual. Your YellowDig pins include a visual and a brief written discussion of 250 words (more is allowed), and you should write five peer responses (these can be to five different people, or multiple conversational responses on your own or a peers’ pins). These responses should be 50 words long (more is allowed). For Acts with YellowDig pins (see course schedule), I will post the prompt to the announcements on Thursday mornings and also pin the week’s prompt at the top of our YellowDig board. You will need to complete your own pin and your peer responses between Thursdays at 12:00 a.m. and the following Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. However, if you do not complete all of the peer responses, you can make these up by continuing to comment throughout the session. YellowDig posts are worth 25 points, and each of your 5 responses is worth 5 points, for 50 points total.

Quizzes: With each Act, you will take a review quiz. These T/F questions are based on the classroom lectures. They will help you solidify your understanding of the material, and will also serve as excellent study guides for the final exam. Quizzes will be due on Monday nights by 11:59 p.m., no exceptions. Quiz questions are worth 2 points x 10 questions, for 20 points total. There is an extra credit question added into each quiz, so it is possible to earn 22/20 on these.

Final Exam: At the end of the session, you will take a comprehensive final exam. The final exam consists of 50 multiple choice questions based on the readings, films, and additional assigned material. Once you open the exam, it will be timed to automatically shut down after two hours. Exam questions are worth 2 points x 50 questions, for 100 points total.

Extra Credit: An extra credit YellowDig post will be available during the final week of class. Just as with other YellowDig posts, students can earn up to 50 points extra credit for this post.

All assignments have strict due dates and late work for written assignments is not accepted without prior permission. It is your responsibility to ensure that your work is well-crafted, carefully proofread, and submitted on time.
Grading Breakdown and Scale

Please see https://students.asu.edu/grades for grade definitions.

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Grading Policy

It is my policy to have everything graded within 1-2 weeks from the due date. Because this is an accelerated online course, I will stick as close to 1 week as possible. Once I have given you feedback, I expect you to incorporate my suggestions into your writing (I understand that, due to the grading period, you may not be able to address my feedback until the third essay and critical discussion post).

I am a tough grader, and I am so because I want you to become better thinkers and better writers (this is an L class, after all). Critical thinking is perhaps the most valuable skill you can hone in college, so I will expect you to offer analyses (not plot summaries) backed with evidence in all of your writing, including the critical discussions. To earn an A on any assignment, your work should be excellent. Please be sure to review the writing rubric, which applies to both essays and discussions.

I am tough, but I want to see you all succeed. I do not like failing people. Generally, if you do your work to the best of your ability, you will pass the class. I have also built an extra credit opportunity into the class. I get that we are all human beings here, and sometimes things happen. If you have concerns about this, my door – at least the virtual one – is always open. I am a resource to you and will do all that I can to help you achieve in this class.

Course Schedule

Act I: 3/8 – 3/19

- Read lecture material, introductory guide, and Titus Andronicus.
- Watch Titus, directed by Julie Taymor. This will be available to stream through our course reserves.
- TRIGGER WARNING: Sections of this play are inspired by ancient myths and plays. The play and film contain scenes of violence, rape, and mutilation.
- Complete Act I Quiz by Monday, March 15 at 11:59 p.m.
- Complete YellowDig post Make a Meme!; post opens Thursday, March 11 at 12:00 a.m. and closes Wednesday March 17 at 11:59 p.m. You must complete your post and your peer responses during that time and can earn up to 50 points this week.
- Complete essay of Titus Andronicus by Friday, March 19 at 11:59 p.m.
Act II: 3/15 – 3/27

- Read lecture material, introductory guide, and *Much Ado About Nothing*.
- Watch clips from four different versions of the play: the Public Theater’s Summer 2019 theatre production for Shakespeare in the Park, directed by Kenny Leon; the 2013 film version directed by Joss Whedon; the 2011 theatre production for a West End production, directed by Josie Rourke (live recording directed by Robert Delamere); and the 1993 film version directed by Kenneth Branagh (clips of the Public Theater version are [here](#); please be sure to watch all six of these. Clips of the other versions are largely accessible on YouTube). After watching several clips from all four versions, select one (or more, if you are interested) to view in its entirety. I will provide a link to the Kenny Leon version. (If you have a subscription to PBS (or have the password of a friend or family member who has a subscription to PBS), you can watch it there as well. The Josie Rourke (Delamere) version is currently available for free on YouTube, and also to rent through Digital Theatre. The film versions are available to rent through Amazon Prime. Recommended: listen to the *Shakespeare Unlimited* podcast with director Kenny Leon.
- Complete Act II Quiz by Monday, March 22 at 11:59 p.m.
- Complete YellowDig post *Which Ado Did You Choose?* post opens Thursday, March 18 at 12:00 a.m. and closes Wednesday, March 24 at 11:59 p.m. You must complete your post and your peer responses during that time. You can earn up to 50 points this week.
- Complete essay on *Much Ado About Nothing* by Friday, March 26 at 11:59 p.m.

Act III: 3/22 – 4/2

- Read lecture material, introductory guide, and *Twelfth Night*.
- Listen to assigned podcasts about Shakespeare: *African Americans and Shakespeare* and *Redressing the Balance: Gender in Shakespeare*.
- Watch the *Hamlet* clips posted to the assignment page.
- Watch the Royal National Theatre’s *Twelfth Night*, available through the course reserves. Please also watch the National Theatre’s [nine-segment series](#) on *Twelfth Night* on YouTube; watch *Viola/Cesario and Olivia’s First Encounter* and *I am the Man* from Trevor Nunn’s film version of *Twelfth Night*; and, just because I love the depth of sadness that Dame Judy Dench is able to evoke while sitting on a conference stage in regular clothes, watch this [clip](#). Watch your own selected scenes from *Twelfth Night at the Globe*, which emulates original Shakespearean performance practices and features an all-male cast. You must be logged on with your asu.edu ID to access the link.
- Complete Act III Quiz by Monday, March 29 at 11:59 p.m.
- Complete discussion post (on the course shell, not YellowDig) on *Much Ado About Casting*; post opens Thursday, March 25 at 12:00 a.m. and closes Wednesday, March 31 at 11:59 p.m. You must complete your post and your response during that time.
- Complete essay on *Twelfth Night* by Friday, April 2 at 11:59 p.m.

Act IV: 3/29 – 4/9

- Read lecture material, introductory guide, and *Macbeth*
- Watch [Jan McKellen](#) on analyzing Shakespeare’s text; watch the trailer and the behind the scenes at Chicago Shakespeare’s production of *Macbeth*, directed by Aaron Posner and Teller; watch YouTube clip with [five different adaptations](#); watch *Throne of Blood*, which is available to stream through the ASU library on Kanopy (you will need to set up an account at Kanopy) or can be rented through Amazon Prime. Please note that several of the versions featured in the clips are also available to rent through Amazon Prime if you are interested in watching more, though your
essay for the week will focus on *Throne of Blood*. Recommended: YouTube video of different versions of *Macbeth’s soliloquy*, documentary on filmmaker Akira Kurasawa (this is available through the ASU library in the Films on Demand infobase).

- Complete Act IV Quiz by **Monday, April 5 at 11:59 p.m.**
- Complete YellowDig post **Who Would You Cast?**; post opens **Thursday, April 1 at 12:00 a.m.** and closes **Wednesday, April 7 at 11:59 p.m.** You must complete your post and your peer responses during that time. You can earn up to 50 points this week.
- Complete essay on *Throne of Blood* by **Friday, April 9 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Act V: 4/5 – 4/16**

- Read lecture material, introductory guide, and *Richard III*
- Read “Richard III: Laurence Olivier’s melodramatic baddie is seriously limp” from *The Guardian*; watch clips from Laurence Olivier’s *Richard III* (*opening soliloquy* and *Order Now!*); watch Richard III directed by Richard Loncraine, available to stream through our course reserves. Recommended: watch *Looking for Richard*. This is available to rent through Amazon Prime and other streaming services.
- Complete Act V Quiz by **Monday, April 12 at 11:59 p.m.**
- Complete discussion post (on the course site, not YellowDig) **Character Analysis**; post opens **Thursday, April 8 at 12:00 a.m.** and closes **Wednesday, April 14 at 11:59 p.m.** You must complete your post and your response during that time.
- Complete essay on *Richard III* by **Friday, April 16 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Final Exam Week: 4/16 – 4/23**

- Complete Final Exam by **Friday, April 23 at 11:59 p.m.** Herberger Online uses strict anti-cheating protocols. Make sure that you take the exam in one sitting, with only one internet browser open, and only one tab open, using only one device. If you navigate away from the exam page for any reason, the test will lock, and you will need to contact Herberger Online for an exam reset (see note below in Technical Requirements). The instructor cannot issue exam resets.
- Complete extra credit YellowDig post **My Favorite Shakespeare Passage**; post opens **Thursday, April 15 at 12:00 a.m.** and closes **Friday, April 23 at 11:59 p.m.** You must complete your post and your peer responses during that time.

**Guidelines for Written Work**

- Double space, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1” margins.
- Follow the MLA Style guide, especially for your in-text citations and your Works Cited page. A free version is available at the Purdue Owl website. You must list sources in a works cited page, and the works cited page does not count toward your page requirements.
- Title your essays (and title them something other than the title of the play – Shakespeare already wrote those). Try to come up with something succinct and evocative that reflects your argument.
- You can cite Shakespeare’s texts by act, scene, and line number, marking where the verse lines end with a forward slash: “If music be the food of love, play on; / Give me excess of it, that surfeiting, / The appetite may sicken and so die.” (*Twelfth Night*, 1.1.1-3).
When citing dialogue between two or more characters, block quote and make sure it is legible and appears as it does on the printed page:

BENEDICK: Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?
BEATRICE: Yea, and I will weep a while longer.
BENEDICK: I will not desire that.
BEATRICE: You have no reason. I do it freely. (4.1.255-8)

Save your assignment in .doc, .docx. or .pdf format.
Edit and carefully proofread your document before you submit it.

How to Excel in this Course

This course moves very quickly, and requires that you complete the work of one Act while beginning the work of another! Do not let yourself fall behind! This is an upper division course, which means that you will be responsible for critically engaging with the material. This is not a class where you passively wait for me to tell you what Shakespeare means; you are to be an active learner, interrogating how meaning is made in stage and film productions. Moreover, it is up to you to meet the deadlines – these are all set here, in the syllabus, and I will not send out reminders. Be sure to check the course announcements and your ASU email frequently.

To do well in this course, here is a sample plan of work to follow each week:

Monday: Course materials open on Mondays. Click on the appropriate Act and read the lecture materials. You must read all of the lecture (many have multiple Scenes). Take notes on the reading, keeping track of key concepts and ideas that stand out.

Tuesday: Read the assigned play and the introductory guide. Take notes on the reading, paying attention to recurring themes, images, and metaphors. Also note passages that you find particularly meaningful. Consider what you think the overall meaning of the play to be, and think about how you would stage or film it.

Wednesday-Saturday: YellowDig posts and discussion posts are due on Wednesdays. That means you should start them BEFORE they are due, so that you can respond to your peers. Be sure to look at the discussion forum and draft your answer. I recommend proofreading and posting by Friday. Watch the assigned film/clips/recordings, again taking notes. Think about the different dramaturgical, design, and aesthetic choices made, and how that impacts the meaning the audience takes from the production. Set a writing schedule that will allow you to draft your essay, take some time away from it, edit, carefully proofread, and submit the essay by the due date.

Friday-Monday: Review your peers’ YellowDig and discussion posts and respond. Continue developing and editing essays to hand in by the due date.
Technical Requirements & Support

Please do not contact your instructor for technical support.

- You will need a standard laptop or desktop computer to access your classes. A mobile device, tablet, or netbook will likely not provide the access and functionality necessary for ASU Online courses.
- High-speed internet is needed, as most ASU Online courses use multimedia tools.
- You should have at least two browsers on your computer. Any browser will work, though preferred browsers are Chrome and Firefox, which can be downloaded for free online.
- ASU students have access to Google Drive (My Drive via MyASU), where you can create and share Google documents, presentations, spreadsheets and more. You will also have access to additional software provided at no cost through My Apps at MyASU.
- Be sure to take time to explore MyASU. This will be critical to your success as a student.

All questions regarding logging into the Herberger Online site or technical difficulties when accessing or submitting assignments or exams should be directed to holsupport@asu.edu. You can also go to http://herbergeronline.asu.edu/help. Herberger support is only available Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Exam Resets: If you have technical difficulties during the exam do not submit the exam. Instead, close your internet browser without submitting the exam and re-open the Herberger Online website and log back into the exam. The system will then allow you to reset the exam and you will be given a completely new exam to complete. Only one student reset per exam is allowed.

Other Policies

Students must abide by all the requirements stated in this syllabus. In addition, all students should be aware of their rights and responsibilities at Arizona State University. Please reference the college catalog and student handbook for student rights and responsibilities. Students are expected to adhere to the ASU Student Code of Conduct.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is UNACCEPTABLE! Plagiarism is defined as deliberately passing off someone else’s words or ideas as your own. All necessary and appropriate sanctions will be issued to all parties involved with plagiarizing any and all coursework. Plagiarism and any other form of academic dishonesty that is in violation of the Student Code of Conduct will not be tolerated.

Students are responsible for knowing the rules governing the use of another’s work or materials and for acknowledging and documenting the source appropriately. To avoid charges of plagiarism, remember to cite all sources, including the content within the course website. Be warned that your work will be checked by anti-plagiarism software. All necessary and appropriate sanctions will be issued to all parties involved with plagiarizing any and all course work. Plagiarism and any other form of academic dishonesty that is in violation of the Student Code of Conduct will not be tolerated. Students caught plagiarizing may fail the course and receive a permanent mark of XE on their transcript. For more information, please see the ASU Student Academic Integrity Policy.
Besides academic performance, students should exhibit the qualities of honesty and integrity. Every student is expected to produce his/her original, independent work. Any student whose work indicates a violation of the ASU Academic Misconduct Policy including cheating, plagiarism, and dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action.

Arizona State University and the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts expect the highest standards of academic integrity from all students. Failure to meet these standards may result in suspension or expulsion from the university or other sanctions as specified in the University Student Academic Integrity Policy. For more information, please see the ASU Student Academic Integrity Policy: http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity.

Per ASU policy, a student may not avoid the consequences of academic dishonesty by withdrawing from a course and may be placed back in the course in order to face sanctions resulting from academic integrity violations. You are responsible for abiding by this policy.

In addition, ASU adheres to a university-wide Student Code of Conduct. The philosophy behind this policy states: The aim of education is the intellectual, personal, social, and ethical development of the individual. The educational process is ideally conducted in an environment that encourages reasoned discourse, intellectual honesty, openness to constructive change and respect for the rights of all individuals. Self-discipline and a respect for the rights of others in the university community are necessary for the fulfillment of such goals. The Student Code of Conduct is designed to promote this environment at each of the state universities.

The ASU student academic integrity policy lists violations in detail. These violations fall into five broad areas that include but are not limited to:
1. Cheating on an academic evaluation or assignment.
2. Plagiarizing.
3. Academic deceit, such as fabricating data or information.
4. Aiding academic integrity policy violations and inappropriately collaborating.
5. Falsifying academic records.

Student Conduct
You are expected to treat your instructor and your fellow classmates with respect and kindness. In all correspondence and in Discussion Board postings, you should show respect for the viewpoints of others who may disagree with you or see things from a different perspective. Criticizing, ridiculing, insulting, or belittling others will not be accepted. Keep in mind that electronic communications do not have the advantage of nonverbal cues that are so much a part of interpersonal communication. Humor or satire can sometimes be misinterpreted in strictly electronic communication forums.

Online Activity Logs
All course activity is logged by the Herberger Online servers, and those logs are regularly reviewed by Herberger Online during the course of normal business. These logs contain all requests you make while visiting the site: every image, video, web page, etc. Each request is logged with the time, down to the second, when it was made. If you contact your instructor, or Herberger Online, about a technical issue, these logs will be reviewed as part of that process.

Disruptive, Threatening or Violent Behavior
Threatening, violent, or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated in this class and will be handled in accordance with ASU policy.
Title IX
Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources here.

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services is available if you wish to discuss any concerns confidentially and privately.

Netiquette (Online Etiquette)
Netiquette, a social code that defines “good” online behavior is something to keep in mind during your online course interactions. Writing may be the only means of communication you have with classmates and instructors, so it is especially important to do this effectively. Follow the guidelines below to leave your mark as a knowledgeable, respectful and polite student who is also positioned to succeed professionally. Tips for appropriate netiquette can be found here.

Student Services & Resources
Student resources, including advisement, registration, financial aid, disability services, counseling, tutoring, library, and more, can be found here.

Special Accommodations
Students with disabilities must have an equally effective and equivalent educational opportunity as those students without disabilities. Students experiencing difficulty accessing course materials because of a disability are expected to contact the course instructor so that a solution can be found that provides all students equal access to course materials and technology.

Your instructor is willing to make any reasonable adaptations for limitations due to any documented disability, including learning disabilities. You must contact the Disability Resource Center to process the paperwork for special course accommodations. This is a very important step as accommodations may be difficult to make retroactively. Please present DRC documentation to me no later than the end of the first week of the semester so that your needs can be addressed effectively.

The Writing Center
Students have access to Academic Support Programs including tutoring and the writing center.

Counseling & Consultation
Students have access to Counseling & Consultation services.

Health and Wellness
Students have access to Health and Wellness services.

Data Privacy
View information on ASU Privacy statements here.