For centuries readers and audiences have used Shakespeare's works as a way to think about the past and the present. Designed to introduce students to the workings of Shakespeare’s plays and poetry, this class will use Shakespeare's texts, along with movies and other media, to consider how Shakespeare speaks to us today. Closely attending to the language, this class will investigate how Shakespeare constructed his works, what and how they signified in his time, and how they continue to engage us in our own times. We will be focusing especially on topics of space and identity, including how different spaces construct different identities, how race was conceived of during the Renaissance, and how sexuality and gender expressed themselves. Works to be read may include: Richard II, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, King Lear, and the sonnets.