

## **The Hall of Shakespearean Science**

Length: Five 11”x17” posters

Material: Foam core, printed and mounted

Font Size: 14

This one’s fun . . . and interesting to the campus community!

On the third floor of Norlin Library, near the Special Collections Reading Room, you’ll find the Hall of Shakespearean Science, which currently features your predecessors’ work. This semester, it will feature yours. Inspired in 2016 by a national tour called *First Folio! The Book That Gave Us Shakespeare*, The Hall of Shakespearean Science is an ongoing exhibit curated by the members of this class.

In groups of three or four, you’re going to research science in or around the lifetime of Shakespeare—from about 1500 to 1700 (this is often called the early modern period). How you choose to present your research is up to you—a story, an expository essay, a combination of the two, another genre entirely. Consider the rhetorical situation. People—students, faculty, staff—will be walking by these posters in hasty oblivion, so you need to choose a mode of presentation that you believe will grab and hold their attention while offering them an interesting learning experience.

The topic is up to you as well. You might wonder what would happen to an early modern Englishman who contracted syphilis. What medical treatments would he undergo? What were the social stigmas associated with this condition? What theories did doctors or clergymen develop to explain the disease? Follow this hypothetical patient’s story. Or you might take a different approach. What if you, in 1600 Istanbul (or was it Constantinople?),<sup>1</sup> wanted to study the stars? What tools—physical or intellectual—were available to you? Where would you go to get them? How much would they cost? Could you make your own? Did you know how to write? If you made some interesting discoveries, where would you publish them, or could you? Tell us your story. I could go on and on. Point is, teach your audience how science was different (or similar) during or around the Bard of Avon’s lifetime. Doing so will teach you why scientific research matters.

This project will require a fair amount of research. I want you to have a total of three sources per group member, though more is of course encouraged. At least half of your total sources should be primary sources, found either in Special Collections or through the primary-source databases. You will list these sources in your bibliography, which will appear on your fifth and final poster. You will also use in-text citations in your poster. MLA, APA, Chicago—the choice is yours; just be consistent. Susan Guinn-Chipman from Special Collections, Archives, and Preservation will teach you how to use several primary-source databases.

We will watch David Underwood’s videos on graphic design in class, and Andrew Violet, an arts professional from Norlin Library, will lend his expert eye to your projects, helping you transform them into fine things indeed.

Have fun with these, *discipuli extraordinaria*. Really dig in.

Off you go!

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<sup>1</sup> I’m not just being facetious here. While conducting your research, you will find that the names for many things have changed since the early modern period. For example, before 1653, syphilis was often called “the French disease” (*OED Online*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., adj. and n., “French,”).