

## Shakespeare's Comic and Tragic Modes (MAB2)

**Time:** Spring 2025. Mon. 11:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. (Feb. 03 – Apr. 14; Pres. Day Feb. 17, Spr. Break Mar. 17-23.)

**Location:** Maryland Pkwy campus, 4350 S. Maryland Pkwy. MAB2. Room to be determined.

**Instructor:** Alfred J. Drake, Ph.D.

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**Recommended Texts** (\*These editions can often be bought used at lower cost. Consider also Folger paperbacks.)

Shakespeare. *A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Norton Critical Ed.* Norton, 2018. ISBN-13: 978-0393923575.

Shakespeare. *Twelfth Night: A Norton Critical Edition.* Norton, Jan. 2025. ISBN-13: 978-0393264258.

Shakespeare. *Julius Caesar: A Norton Critical Edition.* Norton, 2012. ISBN-13: 978-0393932638.

Shakespeare. *King Lear: A Norton Critical Edition.* Norton, 2007. ISBN-13: 978-0393926644.

Or, you may prefer the Norton genre set: Greenblatt, Stephen et al., eds. *The Norton Shakespeare.* 4-vol. bundle. 3rd edition. New York: W. W. Norton, 2015. ISBN-13: 978-0393265460. (Used editions are sometimes available for \$60-\$70 online. New, the set costs about \$120. Folger and Arden paperbacks are also excellent.)

We will examine two of Shakespeare's comedies and two tragedies. Both *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Twelfth Night* pay tribute to the chaos inherent in the love pursuit. The main characters try to shape their destiny, but the happy outcomes they enjoy depend on powers beyond their efforts. *Julius Caesar* and *King Lear* deal with the consequences of attempts to settle the affairs of mighty realms. Brutus and Cassius believe that with Caesar slain, Rome's slippage into tyranny will end, but events prove them wrong. Lear tries to forestall "future strife" by dividing his authority among three daughters, but in doing so, he unwittingly unleashes a wave of violence that nearly destroys his kingdom.

**\*Note:** We will watch film segments, which may contain material that some viewers find distressing.

### Schedule (Subject to change)

Week 1	Feb. 03	Course Intro; <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> , Acts 1-2.
Week 2	Feb. 10	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> , Acts 3-5.
Week 3	Feb. 17	Presidents' Day Holiday—No classes.
Week 4	Feb. 24	<i>Twelfth Night</i> , Acts 1-2.
Week 5	Mar. 03	<i>Twelfth Night</i> , Acts 3-5.
Week 6	Mar. 10	<i>Julius Caesar</i> , Acts 1-2.
Week --	Mar. 17	Spring Break—No classes all week.
Week 7	Mar. 24	<i>Julius Caesar</i> , Acts 3-5.
Week 8	Mar. 31	<i>King Lear</i> , Act 1.
Week 9	Apr. 07	<i>King Lear</i> , Acts 2-3.
Week 10	Apr. 14	<i>King Lear</i> , Acts 4-5 and course retrospective.