



William Shakespeare

{LIT 111D, Summer '23}

Tuesdays & Thursdays
9:00am to 12:30pm
August 1 to August 31

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Description ~ This summer, we will make a deep dive into *King Lear*, Shakespeare's most sobering tragedy. Topics will include the purpose of tragedy; the nature of Nature and the place that humanity occupies in the cosmos; the meaning of human suffering; the way that Shakespeare understands the role of the theater in transmitting, upholding, and questioning conventional morality; and his perspective on authority and rebellion, especially in the context of the family. To supplement our study of these plays and enrich our discussion about them, we will sample Shakespeare's sources, criticism, and modern productions. We will also attend performances of *King Lear* at Santa Cruz Shakespeare, free of charge to you. No knowledge of Shakespeare is necessary. All are welcome.

Required Texts ~ I ordered the Pelican edition of Shakespeare's *King Lear* that we will be reading from in class. You will be able to find it under its ISBN (978-0-14-312855-7). This edition combines into one play text the 1608 Quarto edition of *King Lear* with the 1623 Folio edition. *You must either purchase this edition or check it out from the library, and you must bring it with you to every class meeting.* We will be doing a fair amount of reading aloud from the play, and you

cannot participate in discussion if you do not have a text open for reference. I will provide all other readings on Canvas. You will find much more information about *King Lear*, its sources, its two different versions, and its afterlife [here](#).

Basic Requirements ~ Do all assigned reading before we meet to discuss it. Come to all scheduled meetings punctually, with print copies of the required texts. Make the discussion lively and be generous to each other. Complete the graded assignments.

UC Regulations ~ A five-credit course at the University of California is equivalent to fifteen hours of work per week. The compression of ten-week quarters into five-week summer sessions means that you are expected to spend thirty hours per week on each five-credit course you take (approximately seven hours in class and twenty-three hours on your own). That does not seem feasible to me, and I have adjusted the expectations of this course accordingly. I encourage you to spend your time outside of class meetings preparing for the seminar by reading, taking notes in your texts, re-reading, and revising your notes; discussing the reading with classmates and taking advantage of office hours; learning passages by heart; preparing to write, writing, and revising your writing; and screening stage and film productions of the plays to deepen your appreciation for them.

Graded Assignments ~ In response to the arrival of ChatGPT in higher education, I would like to experiment with a different approach to the course's graded assignments. There are four of them: a written, in-class close reading exercise (20%); a recitation of a speech from *King Lear* (20-50 lines) that you have learned by heart (20%); a 1250-word critical review of the production of *King Lear* we will attend on August 18 (30%); and an in-class exam that will ask you to identify passages and comment on them (30%). *All assignments must be completed to earn a passing grade for the course.*

Participation and Attendance ~ LIT 111D is a seminar, meaning that lively, critical participation in discussion is essential. Participating in this manner will have a positive impact on your final grade. We have the privilege of being a small group this summer, so let's make the most of the opportunity. Attendance at all class meeting is required but will not be graded. Absence from more than two scheduled class meetings will result in a failing grade. If you cannot attend class meetings and the required performances, your best option may be to withdraw from the course (see deadlines below). Assignments that are completed *in class* – August 15 and 31 – cannot be made up. You must make it your priority to be in class on those days.

Important Summer Session 2023 Deadlines ~ *To drop a course: Monday, August 7 (tuition reversal). To petition for withdrawal: Sunday, August 20 (no tuition reversal). To change grade option: Sunday, August 27.* Note that during the summer session, you will not be dropped for non-attendance or non-payment of fees. You must drop yourself. Dropping before the deadline results in a full-tuition reversal/refund. By contrast, withdrawing from a course posts a W to your transcript and full tuition is charged (no refund). For all dates and deadlines, including ‘change of grade option’ (P/NP), consult the summer academic [calendar](#). For questions about dropping, requesting a W grade for a course, or withdrawing from the summer quarter, email summer@ucsc.edu.

DRC Accommodations & Academic Integrity ~ If you have questions about exam accommodations or any other disability-related matter, email drc@ucsc.edu to make an appointment for a remote conversation. Acquaint yourself with the campus’s policies concerning [Academic Integrity](#), as cheating and plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course.

Schedule

- Tu, Aug 1 Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain* (1136): pp. 62-68.
Anon., *True Chronicle...* (1605): ln0001 - wln1791
- Th, Aug 3 *True Chronicle...* (1605): wln1792 - end
James Shapiro, “From *Leir* to *Lear*” (2015)
- Sun, Aug 6 Weekend with Shakespeare, Arboretum (optional)
- Tu, Aug 8 *King Lear* (1608/23), Act I
Emma Smith, “King Lear” (2019)
Tom MacAlindon, “What is a Shakespearean Tragedy?” (2003)
- Th, Aug 10 *King Lear*, Act II

Michel de Montaigne, “Of the Affection of Fathers to Their Children” (trans. John Florio, 1603)

Tu, Aug 15 *King Lear*, Act III
G. Wilson Knight, “*King Lear* and the Comedy of the Grotesque” (1930)
*graded in-class writing

Th, Aug 17 *King Lear*, Act IV
Colin McGinn, *Shakespeare’s Philosophy* (2006): chapter six, “King Lear”

F, Aug 18 *performance in DeLaveaga Park, 8:00pm (required)

Tu, Aug 22 *King Lear*, Act V
Samuel Johnson, “General Observations on *King Lear*” (1765)
Barbara Everett, “The New King Lear” (1960)
*theater review due in class

Th, Aug 24 *King Lear* recap

Tu, Aug 29 Field trip to Foolscap Press (412 Trevethan Avenue)
*last date to recite passage learned by heart

Th, Aug 31 *Exam, in-class