

SELF PROGRAM 2025/2026

Shakespeare and the Supernatural

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Course information

Number of credits: 6 credits

Contact hours: 30 hours

Hours taught per week: 2,5 hours

Teaching period: spring 2026

Course description:

A comparative study of the staging of the supernatural in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Macbeth*, with reference to contemporary beliefs in « otherworldly » creatures.

Both plays seem to testify to the changing culture of the time :

- *a midsummer night's dream* can be interpreted as an attempt to question Elizabethan assumptions about the status of folk tales and classical mythology.

- *Macbeth* appears to suggest the existence of a supernatural world of witchcraft in the first three acts only to denounce it in the last two.

Such a paradoxical approach might mirror a similarly complex situation in Jacobean England.

Prerequisites

None

Course objectives

A Midsummer night's dream / Macbeth – W. Shakespeare

The course will consist of a series of general lectures on the plays, which will integrate a discussion of contemporary critical approaches, together with more specific tutorials, which will focus on the technical aspects of commentary and essay writing.

Assessment:

- *Oral presentation and/or written essay on a given subject*
- *Final written exam*

Attendance:

In order to participate, students must be present. Nevertheless, a maximum of 2 (two) justified absences will be allowed. Students who exceed 2 absences will be dropped from the course.

Students absent at final exam will not receive a mark for the course

Bibliography: