**Reading Lists**

Group 1 contains eight to ten plays per list; they come from syllabi for the general Shakespeare course, English Lit 395. Selections usually represented early, middle, and late phases of Shakespeare’s work as well as the plays’ different genres. More information on genres is given in “General Information.”

Group 2 consists of plays, not always by Shakespeare, that were assigned for Topics in Shakespeare, English Lit 396. I taught all the courses listed in groups 1 and 2 in the evenings, to adult students.

Group 3 tends to contain four plays per list; they were the assigned reading for not-for-credit short courses that met for 2.5 hours once a week, for five weeks. These lists are accompanied by the course titles and descriptions, when available, which explain how the selections are related to each other.

Group 4 has six plays to be taught at the graduate level, in the Master of Liberal Arts program.

**Group 1.** Course description:

Detailed discussion of a number of plays representative of different types: comedy, tragedy, history, romance. Shakespeare as a poetic dramatist and the plays as functioning stage pieces.

Fall 1984 Fall 1985

*A Midsummer Night’s Dream A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

*Richard II Romeo and Juliet*

*1 Henry IV 1 Henry IV*

*As You Like It As You Like It*

*Hamlet Twelfth Night*

*Measure for Measure Hamlet*

*King Lear Measure for Measure*

*The Tempest King Lear*

*Antony and Cleopatra*

*The Tempest*

Fall 1987 Fall 1989

*Richard III Richard III*

*Richard II Henry V*

*As You Like It Two Gentlemen of Verona*

*Much Ado about Nothing As You Like It*

*Henry V A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

*Julius Caesar Romeo and Juliet*

*Hamlet Hamlet*

*Macbeth Macbeth*

*The Tempest The Tempest*

Fall 1991 Spring 1998

*Richard II A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

*1 Henry IV Romeo and Juliet*

*Much Ado about Nothing 1 Henry IV*

*As You Like It Henry V*

*Measure for Measure As You Like It*

*Hamlet Hamlet*

*King Lear Macbeth*

*The Tempest The Tempest*

Summer 1997 (in a compressed three-week full-credit format)

*The Comedy of Errors*

*Henry V*

*Twelfth Night*

*Measure for Measure*

*Othello*

*The Winter’s Tale*

**Group 2.** Course description:

Detailed discussion of a number of plays, including some less familiar ones. Texts may include non-dramatic poems by Shakespeare or work by his contemporaries.

Fall 1988 Fall 1990

*1 Henry IV The Comedy of Errors*

*2 Henry IV Twelfth Night*

*The Merchant of Venice The Taming of the Shrew*

*Twelfth Night Julius Caesar*

*Troilus and Cressida Antony and Cleopatra*

*Measure for Measure Othello*

*Othello The Winter’s Tale*

*Coriolanus* Chaucer’s Knight’s Tale (*The Canterbury Tales*)

*The Winter’s Tale Two Noble Kinsmen*

In addition, each student had to read one In addition, I lectured on classical Greek and

of these plays contemporary with Shakespeare Roman comedy before the first three plays,

and to present on it to the class: Plutarch’s version of Roman history before the

Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta* next two, and the genre of romance (non-

Middleton, *The Phoenix* dramatic and dramatic) before the next two.

Marston, *The Malcontent*

Jonson, *Sejanus*

Jonson, *Volpone*

Beaumont and Fletcher, *A King and No King*

**Group 3.**

Spring 1990: Shakespeare’s Romantic Comedies

*Two Gentlemen of Verona*

*Much Ado about Nothing*

*As You Like It*

*Twelfth Night*

Fall 1991: Shakespeare’s Kings

Course description: Shakespeare’s early work includes the First Henriad, four plays that depict the Wars of the Roses among rival claimants for the English throne. Years later, Shakespeare wrote the Second Henriad, which depicts the origin of this struggle. In these four later works, he brought the history play to perfection and addressed questions that still resonate today. Which confers greater authority: the legal right to power or the competent exercise of it? Which indicates character better: one’s private life or public conduct? When public and private loyalties conflict, which should come first? And what makes a war just? In this five-week short course, we will consider such questions as we read and discuss these famous history plays.

*Richard II*

*1 Henry IV*

*2 Henry IV*

*Henry V*

Fall 1992: Shakespeare’s Royal Tragedies

Course description: Hamlet should rule Denmark, but doesn’t; Macbeth shouldn’t rule Scotland, but does; and Lear shouldn’t stop ruling Britain, but does. Their public deeds destroy their private lives. Like most tragic heroes, they live long enough to regret their actions, and they die in the last act.

*Hamlet*

*Macbeth*

*King Lear*

Fall 1993: Shakespeare’s Domestic Dramas

*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

*Romeo and Juliet*

*The Merchant of Venice*

*Othello*

Fall 1994: Shakespeare’s Tragi-Comic Romances

Course description: The last four happy-ending plays that Shakespeare wrote have been variously classified as comedies, tragi-comedies, or dramatic romances. Discussion will focus both on appreciating each play in its own right and on the difficulty of classifying them. What are these late plays like? And how are they like and unlike the comedies Shakespeare had written earlier?

*Pericles*

*Cymbeline*

*The Winter’s Tale*

*The Tempest*

Fall 1995: Shakespeare’s Roman Tragedies

Course description: Rome’s history was repeatedly retold in the Renaissance for moral and political reasons. Stories from the Roman Republic or Empire provided a safe way to reflect on contemporary problems, such as the conflicts between security and freedom in the state and between a ruler’s public and private deeds. The class will discuss Shakespeare’s Roman tragedies in relation both to their sources and to the present time.

*Titus Andronicus*

*Julius Caesar*

*Antony and Cleopatra*

*Coriolanus*

Fall 1996: Shakespeare’s Silliest Comedies

Course description: The plots of *The Comedy of Errors, The Taming of the Shrew, Love’s Labor’s Lost,* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* are so ridiculously complicated that they defy summary. The characters bear almost no resemblance to real persons. And three of these plays lack the conventional happy ending. Yet they’ve been read with enjoyment, produced with success, and adapted for opera, musical comedy, and film. We’ll try to determine how and why they’re so much fun!

**Group 4.**

Summer 2001

An eight-week evening seminar for students in the Master of Liberal Arts (MLA) program. For more information, see the MLA Shakespeare Seminar document in this folder. [Fully designed but not taught.]

*Comedy of Errors*

*1 Henry IV*

*Twelfth Night*

*Hamlet*

*King Lear*

*The Tempest*