ENGLISH 190*

Introduction to Shakespeare

SYLLABUS -- Winter Term, 1989-90

INSTRUCTOR: A.I. Dust
Times: Tues./Thurs., 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

EFFECTIVE Dates:

Wednesday, January 3, 1990
Monday, February 19, 1990
Monday, February 26, 1990
Tuesday, April 3, 1990
Friday, April 6, 1990
Friday, April 13, 1990
Saturday, April 21, 1990

Texts:

- Required:

- Additional Useful Texts,
  (1) All students should have a college level dictionary (Random House Preferred)
  (2) All students must have Thomas/K, Correct Form in Essay Writing, U. of W.
  (3) Some students may need a Handbook of English, Irgess Hodges and Whitten.
  Hartlage College handbook for Canadian Writers, 2nd ed. Toronto, Hartlage.
  Bracegir, Jovanovich/ 1984.

Description:

This course is meant to be an introduction to Shakespeare, his life, his times, his works. To understand, even partially, one play, the student should be exposed to a great deal of background, which shaped the writer and his works, but which can be covered only superficially here. But, understandably, this is not a full-scale treatment, designed only for specialists; those who desire such a course can use this one as background study, either formal or informal. Since Shakespeare's works were meant to be performed, some time will be spent referring to productions of the plays, the theatrical environment and the theatrical practices of the Elizabethan era.

The knowledge in this course will be presented, as often as possible, in a cumulative fashion, so that students should find steady attendance in keeping with a build-up of knowledge. If severe illness or personal problems cause absences, please inform the instructor as soon as possible.

Written Work:

(1) Each student will write a 5-page, trial-run, personal essay concerning some aspect of theatre or about play-going. Though topics are open for individual choice, I can give some suggestions: (a) How Shakespeare was taught in High School, (b) A Shakespeare performance I saw, or (c) Any film play or performance seen, to name, out of many suggestions, some possible topics. This exercise will give the instructor some impression of your writing habits, personal ideas, and style of expression. Paper is due at the second meeting, to be returned as soon as possible. It will be weighted as 10% of the final mark.

(2) The second assignment is a more formal, less subjective paper, a scholarly 15-page typewritten paper (or its equivalent) about Shakespeare's life, or his plays, or some aspect of Elizabethan theatre. Choice of topics is open to the student. Paper is due at the earliest, MARCH 14. Such papers will receive special consideration. If an early paper, on first marking, has received a mark of C or lower, student has the option of rewriting to receive a mark no higher than one full mark above that originally given. All papers, both re-written and those being first submitted are due Thursday, November 30. This research paper will count for 40% of the final mark.

(3) There will be a final examination (time arranged later). Some pointers for this examination will be given at the final meeting of the course. APRIL 2. This is a N
Personal Conferences:

Conferences may be scheduled as often as time permits. Usually the student will request a conference; less likely the instructor may suggest that a student confer with him privately over his work. The instructor's office is Room 250, H.H.; Telephone #885-1211 Extension 3317. If the student chooses to telephone, and he finds the instructor out, he may call the Departmental Secretary, Extension 3358, who may know where he is or who can arrange for a "call back." Some students just "drop in" without an appointment.

If the instructor is not in his office, the secretary may know where he can be reached. Minor conferences can take place before or after class, and, sometimes, in rest breaks during regular class hours. In unusual circumstances, he may be reached at home: Telephone #885-1866. Such conferences are designed to bring up personal problems or individual questions and to receive personal instruction.

General Outline of the Course:

Note: Consideration of the plays occurs near the end of the course, it is, however, better to read ahead. The plays will be taken in the order they are listed at the end of this outline.

All materials of the outline will be covered, some in more depth than others. Sometimes, because of discussion, some shift may be done in length of time devoted to particular topics. If discussion takes up more than the anticipated time, some later lectures may have to be compressed to meet time limits.

In this outline, and during the progress of the lectures, you may note many non-Shakespearean items mentioned. If they are not Shakespearean, they will not be required reading. Those plays we shall read carefully are listed at the end of the outline. Titles of non-Shakespearean plays will be summarized when mentioned to increase awareness of theatrical background and other literature during and about Elizabethan times. Perhaps, if noted, you will find time beyond this course, to fill in your reading background. If not, no harm is done for you will have gained some awareness of the richness of the Elizabethan era.

List of Lecture Materials: \\

I. Orientation
A. Detailed explanation of syllabus
B. General comments on the course and methods of presentation
C. Major writing tasks: the Research Papers.

II. The Period of Antiquity
A. Rise and fall of Greek and Roman theatre
B. Development of the physical theatre in the period

III. The time between the decline of classical theatre and re-birth of theatre in the Renaissance

IV. Beginnings of theatre in England: Native Elements
A. Rise of English theatre in the medieval period
B. Staging: processional and stationary
C. Texts of plays
D. Guild system and staging
E. Movement from amateur to pre-professional or semi-professional actor
F. Correspondence of guilds and educational systems; trades vs. academic education,

V. Transitional plays: From schools and universities to public performances.
A. Transfer of classical elements
B. Gammer Gurton's Needle
C. Ralph (Rafe) Roister Doister
D. Corboedoc
E. Acting companies--boys' and public
F. Printing and authors
G. The Guild system -- actors and public plays
H. Theatres in existence at the time of Shakespeare

VI. Life of Shakespeare
A. The Elizabethan societ scene and political history
B. Royal family and its background
Plays of Shakespeare

I. The Comedy of Errors (c. 1589)
II. Richard III (c. 1593)
III. Midsummer Night's Dream (c. 1594)
IV. Twelfth Night (c. 1600)
V. Hamlet (c. 1603)
VI. Othello (c. 1604)
VII. King Lear (c. 1605)
VIII. The Tempest (c. 1611)