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M-20: Seminar in Western Codicology  
28 July–2 August, 2024, Charlottesville, Virginia

1) *Were the pre-course reading assignments useful? Are there any readings that you would like to see added or removed in future years?*

1. The pre-course reading assignments were useful, but given that this course was billed as a seminar, more advanced readings could have been included to give more depth to the issues covered in class.
2. There were two pre-course readings. *The Medieval Book: Catalogue of an Exhibition at the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University* was redundant since we also read Raymond and Graham's *Introduction to Manuscript Studies*. I think adding resources on paleography or adding a reading that might be better suited for discussion in seminar would be useful.
3. The readings recommended were no doubt useful, but not necessarily as prerequisites for the course.
4. The readings were useful in preparation for the course. I would not add other texts.
5. Pre-course assignments were very useful. I know this class didn't focus on paleography, but a list of common Latin abbreviations would have been helpful.
6. The preparatory reading set was quite limited. Some books are excellent but I would suggest reading the whole of Clemens et. al. *Intro to Manuscript Studies* not just three chapters.

2) *What are your thoughts on the course workbook and/or other teaching materials distributed during class? Was the content appropriate and useful? Will it continue to be useful for you after the course?*

1. The workbook has a very useful bibliography and glossary that I will return to. The other articles seem varied and helpful.
2. The workbook was fine, and I will use it for writing manuscript descriptions in the future most likely.
3. The best parts of the coursebook are the glossary section, the bibliography, and the set of instructions for manuscript description. Everything else is interesting but not especially useful.
4. The workbook was helpful, especially in constructing a codicological description, which I can use as a checklist in future.
5. The course packet is excellent. I'm so glad to have the glossary and the bibliography. I'm sure I'll continue to refer to it over the years.
6. The workbook is good. I look forward to reading it again more fully. The glossary, bibliography and outline for creating a manuscript description are particularly useful.

3) *Which aspects of the course were most intriguing and relevant for you as an individual? Did you walk away with any new insights, ideas, or project plans?*

1. I greatly appreciated the focus on precise terminology for the concepts we covered. This helped to sharpen my focus. In my future work with manuscripts, I'll be able (I hope) to have more precise observations.

2. I was most interested in learning about Latin scribal practices, and I definitely gleaned some insights from the section on medieval manuscript storage and cataloguing that I want to research further.
  3. I appreciated learning about terminology and best practices in manuscript cataloguing. I also appreciated the moments of discussion and brainstorming, though I definitely wish the course as a whole was more collaborative and less lecture-oriented. The title “seminar” was somewhat misleading in that sense.
  4. I was most interested in the ways to determine provenance from codicological evidence. I'm leaving the course with a firm grasp of some of the most identifiable trends.
  5. I enjoyed the whole course. It was interesting throughout and very well organized. I'm leaving the course with deeper knowledge of the way medieval manuscript books are put together. It will serve me well in my career as a subject librarian.
  6. The coverage of *mis-en-page*, decoration, and how to write a description were most relevant to me. This will be useful to me in book interpretation and creating (basic) descriptions of manuscripts.
- 4) *Did the instructors help you to acquire all the skills and information promised in the course description? Did you learn what you had hoped to learn?*
1. I learned what I hoped to learn, and MM is obviously very knowledgeable.
  2. {private response}
  3. I did honestly hope to learn more and I did expect a more advanced seminar and hands-on course experience. However, I can definitely say that I have perfected and refined the knowledge I already had. In truth, I discovered that I already knew many of the subjects covered in the course, and that was pretty affirming in itself!
  4. Yes, I would only have liked to learn more about some more traditions (Spanish, German, &c.)
  5. I learned what I had hoped to learn. I leave the course with greater confidence in my abilities to study medieval manuscripts.
  6. The course description was a fair representation of what was covered.
- 5) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*
1. I plan to use the skills and knowledge in my own research and teaching, and in improving the descriptions of my institution's manuscripts.
  2. I will take what I learned here into my manuscript research in the future.
  3. I will strive to be more precise and accurate in my manuscript descriptions.
  4. I plan to use these skills in my own projects and research on manuscripts, more fully analyzing their composition.
  5. The knowledge I gained will help me identify manuscripts that are suitable for purchase. I will also use what I learned to help students who are using medieval manuscripts in their research.
  6. To better understand the manuscripts in my collection.
- 6) *Who might benefit the most from taking this RBS course?*

1. Anyone with a general interest in codicology or paleography. The course was very accessible, and people with limited knowledge of either discipline should feel comfortable in taking the class.
  2. Someone with a bare-bones understanding of codicology or at the beginning of their academic pursuits in manuscripts. (Yet, at the same time, they would have to know the basics Latin and paleography, which are not covered in the class).
  3. Academics, librarians, curators, and dealers that have had limited experience with medieval manuscripts.
  4. This course is great for those interested in a foundational grasp of book production in major European traditions.
  5. Graduate students wanting to focus on a medieval codex as their object of study.
  6. Librarians, students working or planning to work with manuscripts.
- 7) *If applicable, what were the most original, powerful, or otherwise noteworthy educational moments in the course? Were there any "aha!" moments you'd like to share?*
1. {no response}
  2. Not particularly, although I did learn some things as I said about manuscript storage and cataloguing that I think I can take into a current research project. I did also learn a lot about Humanist manuscripts and how they modelled themselves on early medieval works, and that is something I will now be able to keep in mind should I encounter those materials.
  3. The best part of the course was the final assignment of preparing our own manuscript description. Being able to spend hours analyzing the codices in detail was extremely useful and inspiring. I could have done without all that traditional lecturing.
  4. The most powerful educational moments were when we were able to talk together about an object that raised questions for us individually.
  5. The practicum was the "aha!" moment for me. I was nervous about writing a detailed description of a manuscript, but it was an absolutely necessary part of this course.
  6. N/A
- 8) *Are there any other ways in which the course could have been improved?*
1. I would like to have worked more with manuscripts in person, though I understand this might be impossible with SC. We discussed the importance of first-hand observation manuscripts, but spent most of our time looking at digitizations in class.
  2. The professor should go into greater depth on topics, especially binding and colophon formulas; discuss paleography, at least briefly; discuss types of manuscripts and ways to identify texts; the professor could implement more discussion and engage with students, especially during the SC sections. The professor also might try to find ways to facilitate a sense of class community.
  3. Handling more actual manuscripts, more collaborative work.
  4. I would have liked more hands-on time with objects and discussion of them.
  5. A short unit on paleography.
  6. Additional content on dating and localization would have been appreciated. Scripts were not covered in course, just in the advanced reading. I would alter the time

allocated to certain topics, e.g. the content of day one, Roman libraries, the relationship between Christianity and the codex. The last day was perhaps a little lacking in terms of content?

9) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? How likely are you to recommend this course to others? On a 1-10 scale, 1 would indicate that you disagree that you got your money's worth, 5 would indicate a neutral response, and 10 would indicate that you agree that you got your money's worth.*

1. 8
2. 4
3. 6
4. 8
5. {no response} I got my money's worth. It was a lot of work for me to keep up with everything. There was so much content considering what the course cost.
6. 6

10) *If your course made any (virtual) field trips outside of the classroom or had guest speakers, do you feel that they enhanced the course experience?*

1. {no response}
2. N/A
3. {no response}
4. The visit to SC greatly enhanced the course experience.
5. N/A
6. The time in SC was very helpful. So much time one-on-one with manuscripts was a plus.

11) *Do you have any additional thoughts or advice for anyone considering taking this course in a future year?*

1. {no response}
2. This class would be great if you really had no training in codicology and are interested in primarily Latin manuscripts from Italy, England, or France and want to learn traditional codicology.
3. {no response}
4. This is a great way to solidify/clarify your grasp of Western codicological vocabulary. If you're looking for a course to ground you in the field's language, this will be helpful for you.
5. Brush up on Latin if you're rusty. Review the most common book hands. Do the pre-assigned readings. It's important to come prepared.
6. N/A

12) *If you had to sum up your RBS experience with a single sentence, phrase, or haiku, what would you say?*

1. {no response}

2. Oh, that's it?
3. {no response}
4. It's nice to be in a room where everyone cares as much about books as I do.
5. Never let the party die.
6. N/A