INF 385T
Information Science and Knowledge Systems:
STUDIES IN THE BOOK ARTS
Unique ID: 28585
University of Texas at Austin
FALL 2011

SYLLABUS

INSTRUCTOR: Michael Laird
Classroom: HRC 2.212 Feldman Room
Times: Mon. 1:00pm - 3:45pm
512-668-4621
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TEACHING ASSISTANT:
Chris Johnson
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Students will meet at the reception desk on the 2nd floor of the HRC (2.200).

GOALS:
Utilizing primary source materials from the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, the course will offer an introduction to the Book Arts. The student will become familiar with specialized research tools and techniques that are daily utilized by Special Collections Librarians, rare book dealers and collectors. The course seeks to foster a sense of connoisseurship in the Books Arts in the broadest sense, including (but not limited to) Medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, Incunabula and other early printed books, Gothic and Renaissance bookbindings, Illustrated books (15th-21st century), books from the machine press era, Victorian publisher's bindings, Modern Illustrated books. Throughout the course the relationship between the antiquarian book trade, private collectors, and Special Collections Libraries will be explored.

TEXTBOOKS:
ABC for Book Collectors / John Carter. 8th ed., revised by Nicolas Barker, New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 2004. The 8th ed. is available free of charge as a downloadable PDF file:

EVALUATION:

Grades will be based on written assignments (45%), “Executive Summaries” of the Readings (15%), “Curator’s Presentation to the Acquisitions Committee” (10%), Quiz (5%), term project (15%), and class participation (10%) as below:

¶ Assignment 1 (due Sept. 26, 2011): Description: Medieval / Renaissance Manuscript = 10%
¶ Assignment 2 (due Oct. 17, 2011): Description: Early Modern Printed Book (1460-1800) = 10%
¶ Assignment 3 (due Oct. 24, 2011): Proposal for Library Exhibition = 5%
¶ Assignment 4 (due Oct. 31, 2011): Illustration Identification = 10%
¶ Quiz (Nov. 7, 2011) = 5%
¶ Assignment 5 (due Nov. 14, 2011): Description: Modern Book (1800-2011) = 10%
¶ “Curator’s presentation to the Acquisition Committee” (Nov. 28, 2011): 5 min. oral presentation, with written notes to be distributed to the instructor and to each member of the class) = 10%
¶ Final Project: Exhibition Catalog, either printed or online (Dec. 5, 2011) = 15%. NB: topics for Library Exhibition must be approved by Instructor on or before Oct. 31, 2011 (as per above)

Executive Summaries (throughout Semester) = 15% (see below)

Class Participation (throughout Semester) = 10%

Class 1
August 30, 2011 (Monday)

Introduction / Medieval Manuscripts
Olivia Primanis (HRC Conservation):
"Proper Handling Techniques of Rare Materials"

Introduction to “Studies in the Book Arts”
Introduction to the Harry Ransom Center: Access to Reading Room / HRC Materials
Discussion of Assignment 1
NB: Selection of Ranuzzi Manuscript due Sept. 12, 2011
Sign-up for brief meeting with Instructor / TA week of August 30, 2011

Advance Readings:


September 6, 2011 (Monday)
Labor Day holiday (no class)

Register with HRC Reading Room.
Peruse HRC Card Catalog to select Ranuzzi Manuscript for Assignment 1.

Readings:

The Ranuzzi manuscripts / selected and described by Maria Xenia Zevelechi Wells.


Class 2
September 12, 2011 (Monday)
Ranuzzi Manuscripts
Book Structure Terminology

Examination and discussions of HRC Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts from the Ranuzzi Collection
Selection of Ranuzzi Manuscript to be submitted to Instructor

Advance Reading:


Class 3
September 19, 2011 (Monday)
Ranuzzi Manuscripts
Watermarks

Manuscripts from the Ranuzzi Collection

Advance Readings:

Watermarks in paper in Holland, England, France, etc., in the XVII and XVIII centuries and their interconnection / W.A. Churchill -- HRC REF (q)Z 237 C56

Watermarks, mainly of the 17th and 18th centuries / Edward Heawood. -- HRC REF (q) Z 237 H438 REF


Class 4
September 26, 2011 (Monday)
Manuscript Presentations
Introduction to Early Printed Books

Assignment 1 Due: Manuscript Observations (with brief informal oral report: 10% final grade)

Examination and discussion of Early Printed Books in the HRC
Distribution of pre-1800 teaching examples (to be returned)

Advance Readings:


A New Introduction to Bibliography / Philip Gaskell, pp. 5-56 ("Hand Printed Book," "Printing Type," “Composition”)

Class 5
October 3, 2011 (Monday)
Early Printed Books

Discussion of Collation vs. Pagination.
Examination and discussion of Early Printed Books in the HRC Collections

Advance Readings:

Printing and the mind of man: a descriptive catalogue illustrating the impact of print / Carter, John. PCL Reserves: -Q- Z 4 C3 (pp. xv-xxxiii and skim catalogue entries).

A New Introduction to Bibliography / Philip Gaskell, pp. 78-141 ("Imposition," "Presswork")
Class 6  
October 10, 2011 (Monday)  
17th and 18th-century Printed Books  
Book Illustration

Examination of Early Modern Printed Books in the HRC Collections  
Discussion of Illustration Processes

Advance Readings:

Begin: How to identify prints: a complete guide to manual and mechanical processes from woodcut to ink jet / Bamber Gascoigne -- HRC REF: NE 850 G37 1991

Gaskell, New Introduction to Bibliography pp. 154-159 ("Decoration and Illustration")

The art & history of books / Levarie, Norma. PCL Reserves: -Q- Z 4 L58 (skim pp. 168-215)


Class 7  
October 17, 2011 (Monday)  
Historic Bookbindings

Assignment 2 Due: Early Printed Books Observations (with brief informal oral report: 10% final grade)

Examination and Discussion of Pre-1800 Bookbindings in the HRC Collections

Advance Readings:


Class 8  
October 24, 2011 (Monday)  
18th-Century Illustrated Books
Assignment 3 Due: Proposal for Library Exhibition (5% final grade)

Examination and Discussion: 18th-century Illustrated Books in the HRC Collections

Advance Readings:

The Art of the French Illustrated Book 1700 to 1914 / Gordon N. Ray. HRC REF: -Q- NC 978 R37 REF

The illustrator and the book in England from 1790 to 1914 / Gordon N. Ray. HRC REF: -Q- NC 978 R37 REF

Continue: Gascoigne, How to Identify Prints

Class 9
October 31, 2011 (Monday)
18th and 19th-century Bookbindings

Assignment 4 Due: Illustration Identification (10% final grade)

Examination of 18th and 19th-century Bookbindings from the HRC Collections

Advance Readings:


Victorian Decorated Trade Bindings 1830-1880. Edmund M.B. King. PCL Reserves: Z270 G7 K46 2003

Bookbinding in America, 1680-1910 : from the collection of Frederick E. Maser. -- PCL Reserves Z 270 U5 B79 1983

Class 10
November 7, 2011 (Monday)
19th-century Book Arts

Quiz (5% final grade)

Examination and Discussion of 19th-century materials from the HRC Collections

Advance Readings:

The printed book in America / by Joseph Blumenthal. PCL Reserves -- Z 208 B58 c.2 (pp. 26-54)

Class 11
November 14, 2011 (Monday)
**The Printed Book in America**

Assignment 5 Due: Modern Books (with informal oral report: 10% final grade)

**Advance Readings:**

The printed book in America / by Joseph Blumenthal. PCL Reserves -- Z 208 B58 (pp. 55-157)

Class 12
November 21, 2011 (Monday)
**Modern Illustrated Books**

Examination and discussion of Modern Illustrated Books

**Advance Readings:**


Class 13
November 28, 2011 (Monday)
**Curator’s Presentations to the Acquisition Committee**

Assignment Due: Curator’s Presentation to the Acquisitions Committee (10% final grade). Participants deliver informal oral presentation (5 minute) to the “Acquisition Committee” in order to solicit support for major acquisition. Presentations are to be accompanied by notes which will be distributed to each “member of the Committee.” Brief discussion to follow each presentation.

**Term Paper (15% of final grade)**

Studies in the Book Arts (Exhibition Catalogue)
Due: December 5, 2011 (Monday)

Students will submit Exhibition Catalogue which illustrates and describes ONE aspect of the Book Arts that was NOT discussed in class. Suitable formats of the Exhibition Catalogue: MS WORD, PDF or website. The Exhibition will follow the Proposal that was already submitted on or before October 24, 2011
Executive Summaries (15% final grade)

In order to generate a greater degree of class participation from each student in the “Studies in the Book Arts” Seminar:

The “Executive Summary” will be consist of at least one unique question and one unique criticism of at least TWO (2) assigned readings for a particular week. Requested: evidence of insightful reading and considered deliberation regarding:

1. a specific QUESTION you might have about the reading(s)
2. a specific CRITICISM you might have of the reading(s)

Please be mindful that “Executive Summaries” are not essays, but very brief Questions and Criticisms in a list format. Quality takes precedence over length of text.

At the beginning of each weekly seminar we will discuss your questions and criticisms about the readings in a round-table format. “Executive Summaries” will be graded for content, and will count toward your fulfillment of the “Executive Summary” Requirement (10%).

Class Participation (10% final grade)

Your active participation in class will be factored into your final grade for the course. This is a seminar class, based on active, collaborative discussion; your participation is a course requirement. At the risk of stating the obvious: express your curiosity by asking questions. Your hands-on experiences with primary source materials and your interpretations of the readings provide the starting point for our discussions.

A note on Plagiarism

Please do not plagiarize, as instances of plagiarism will result in an automatic F (fail) for the entire course. Plagiarism is defined by the University of Texas at Austin:

http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/

STATEMENT CONCERNING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259.