INSTRUCTOR: Michael Laird  
Classroom: HRC 2nd Floor Denius Room  
Times: Mon. 1:00pm - 3:45pm  
512-668-4621  
laird.rarebooks@gmail.com

TEACHING ASSISTANT:  
Sarah Pfannenschmidt  
spfannenschmidt@utexas.edu  
Reading Room hours Wed. 3 - 4:45pm & Sat. 10 - 12pm.

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 (1.04MB):  

EVALUATION:

Grades will be based on written assignments (35%), “Executive Summaries” of the Readings (15%), “Curator’s Presentation to the Acquisitions Committee” (10%), Quiz (10%), term project (15%), and class participation (15%) as below:

¶ Assignment 1 (due Oct. 1, 2012): Description: Medieval / Renaissance Manuscript = 10%
¶ Assignment 2 (due Oct. 22, 2012): Description: Early / Early Modern Printed Book (1460-1840) = 10%
¶ Assignment 3 (due Nov. 5, 2012): Description: Modern Book (1840-2012) = 10%
¶ Assignment 4 (due Nov. 12, 2012): Formal Proposal for Term Paper / Exhibition Catalogue = 5%
¶ Exam (Nov. 19, 2012) = 10%
¶ “Curator’s presentation to the Acquisition Committee” (Dec. 3, 2012): 5 min. oral presentation, with written notes to be distributed to the instructor and to each member of the class) = 10%
¶ Final Project: Term Paper / Exhibition Catalogue, either printed or online (due Dec. 12, 2012 before 5pm CST) = 15%. NB: topics for Term Paper / Library Exhibition must be approved by Instructor on or before Nov. 12, 2012 (see Assignment 4, supra)

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

Class Participation (throughout Semester) = 15% (see below)

Please prepare for Class 1 by perusing Advance Readings, in anticipation of class discussion.

Class 1
September 10, 2012 (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. 17, 2012
Sign-up for brief meeting with Instructor Sept. 10 or 17, 2012
Distribution of "old books" to students

**Advance Readings:**

Scribes and illuminators / Christopher De Hamel. PCL Reserves -- ND 2920 D4 1992.

The British Library guide to manuscript illumination: history and techniques / Christopher de Hamel. PCL Reserves -- ND 2920 D39 2001.

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**Week of September 10, 2012**

Register with HRC Reading Room.

Peruse HRC Card Catalogue to select Ranuzzi Manuscript for Assignment 1

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**Class 2**

September 17, 2012 (Monday)

**Ranuzzi Manuscripts**

**Book Structure Terminology**

Selection of Ranuzzi Manuscript to be submitted to Instructor

Examination and discussions of HRC Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts from the Ranuzzi Collection

**Advance Reading:**

The Ranuzzi manuscripts / selected and described by Maria Xenia Zevelechi Wells. PCL Reserves - Z881 .A935 R358 and HRC Z881 .A935 R358 (located in Reading Room behind circulation desk)


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**Class 3**

September 24, 2012 (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
October 1, 2012 (Monday)
Ranuzzi 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

Advance Readings:


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

Class 5
October 8, 2012 (Monday)
Early Printed Books

Present selection of Early Printed Book to Instructor for Assignment 2

Discussion of Collation / 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 15, 2012 (Monday)
17th and 18th-century Printed Books
Book Illustration

Return Instructor's materials to seminar for in-class discussion

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)

The history of the illustrated book: the Western tradition / John Hartham. PCL Reserves - NC 960 H27 and HRC REF -Q- NC 960 H27 (skim Chapters 2-7).

Class 7
October 22, 2012 (Monday)
Historic Bookbindings

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

Examination and Discussion of Pre-1840 Bookbindings in the HRC Collections

Advance Readings:


Class 8
October 29, 2012 (Monday)
18th and 19th Century Illustrated Books

Present selection of Early Modern / Modern Printed Book to Instructor for Assignment 3

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
November 5, 2012 (Monday)
18th and 19th-century Bookbindings

Assignment 3 Due: Early Modern / Modern Printed Book Observations (with brief informal oral report: 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

American signed bindings through 1876. Willman Spawn & Thomas E. Kinsella. -- HRC Z 270 U5 S63 2007

Class 10
November 12, 2012 (Monday)
19th-century Book Arts

Assignment 4 Due: Proposal for Library Exhibition (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 19, 2012 (Monday)
The Printed Book in America

Exam (10% final grade)

Advance Readings:

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

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

Class 12
November 26, 2012 (Monday)
Modern Illustrated Books

Examination and discussion of Modern Illustrated Books

Advance Readings:


Class 13
December 3, 2012 (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.

Final Project: Term Paper / Exhibition Catalogue (15% of final grade)
Due: December 12, 2012 (before 5pm CST)

Students will submit Term Paper or 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 Final Project will expand upon the Proposal that was submitted on or before November 12, 2012

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 TWO (2) unique questions 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 (15%).

Class Participation (15% final grade)

Your participation (or non-participation) in class discussion will be factored into your final grade for the course. INF 385T is a seminar class founded on active, collaborative discussion and voluntary verbalizations. At the risk of stating the obvious: ask questions and seek to provide answers to questions posed by your colleagues and by the instructor.
Your experience with primary source materials and your interpretations of the readings provide the starting point for our discussions. The goal is to improve the quality of the seminar for all participants; and to develop academic communication skills in preparation for careers as information professionals.

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**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 [here](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acadint_plagiarism.php):

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**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.