ADFA 300101
Illuminated Manuscripts
The Beauty and Secrets of the Book

Fall 2016 | McMullen Museum | TH 6.15-9.15pm

Andrew A. Kuhn | Connolly House | kuhna@bc.edu | Office Hours: TH 5.00-6.00pm or by appt.

INTRODUCTION
Before Gutenberg invented the printing press in the middle of the fifteenth century, books were written by hand with quill and ink on parchment. This was the primary means of creating books for almost a thousand years from the rise of Christianity to the Renaissance. Many of these magnificent objects have survived into the twenty-first century because of the great care and reverence they were afforded over the ages, and this course will examine why and how these objects were created and why they continue to hold our fascination into the present day.

Drawing upon the vast resources of the Beyond Words exhibition, we will examine illuminated manuscripts and their historical contexts. In order to more fully understand and appreciate these objects from the Middle Ages, we will look at medieval sources, literary representations, scholarly studies, and digital tools pertaining to these treasured objects. Thought the semester we will consider the historical, philosophical, aesthetic, and technological forces that shaped the book while also thinking critically about how the digital world has transformed our relationship to the hand-written page.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Adomnan, Life of St. Columba (Penguin, 1995)
Raymond Clemens and Timothy Graham, Introduction to Manuscript Studies (Cornell UP, 2007)
Christopher De Hamel, History of Illuminated Manuscripts (Phaidon Press, 1997)
Umberto Eco, The Name of the Rose (1980)

**We will also be reading articles which will be made available on Canvas. Check the syllabus schedule for the dates of these readings.

EXHIBITION VISITS
The course will be augmented by Beyond Words: Illuminated Manuscripts in Boston Collections, an exhibition of manuscripts at three participating museums: Boston College’s McMullen Museum, Harvard’s Houghton Library, and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. We will be making frequent visits to the McMullen’s exhibition and the Burns Library at Boston College. In addition, we will attend two guided tours of the exhibition sites at Harvard (Nov. 10th) and the Gardner Museum (Sept. 29th) during our normal seminar time. Both locations are accessible by the MBTA and have parking facilities. Directions to both venues are included in the following links: Houghton Library and Isabella Stewart Gardner.

ATTENDANCE
Any absence from class will impede a student’s ability to participate in class discussion and in-class activities; therefore, students should plan to attend every scheduled class during the course of the
semester. The class depends on and looks forward to each student’s daily input, and because of the importance of participation, each absence in excess of three will lower a student’s course grade by one letter. In the instance of absence due to religious holiday, University sanctioned event, medical emergency, or other personal emergency, contact me privately about your inability to attend class. Also note that in-class writing assignments are crucial to the exploration of ideas and development of writing abilities in this course. An absence on the day of an in-class assignment will preclude a student from completing that day’s graded in-class assignment. No make-ups will be allowed.

ASSIGNMENTS

Biography of a Book
A detailed study of a manuscript which seeks to tell the story of its composition, production, publication, and reception.

Digital Scriptorium Project
A collaborative project where students will create a digital companion to manuscripts in the exhibition. Curatorial, editorial, design, and technological skills will come together to form a visually striking study of manuscript culture and its objects.

Descriptive Bibliography
A close examination of the physical attributes of manuscripts, using the identification techniques and terminology studied throughout the course.

GRADING

Final course grades will be determined by student performance on the required assignments, and each assignment will be weighted as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Book Biography</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital Scriptorium Project</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Descriptive Bibliography</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Final Grade</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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LATE WORK

Late work will only be accepted if the student notifies me twenty-four hours prior to the class period in which the assignment is due (in writing, preferably through e-mail) that he or she would like to request an extension on the particular assignment. Extensions will be granted for non-frivolous excuses such as illness, family emergency, University sanctioned events, etc, and students will receive written notification as to the status of their extension before the class in which the assignment is due. No extensions will be granted for the final project except in the most extreme circumstances. No late work without a granted extension will be accepted.

TYPESCRIPT INSTRUCTIONS

All writing assignments prepared outside of class are to be word-processed. Assignments must be submitted in hard copy. Assignments sent via email will NOT be accepted. Familiarize yourself with the various sites on campus with available printing resources.
Plagiarism

Plagiarism is an unacceptable practice in this course, and it will not be tolerated in any form. Consult the University’s Academic Policies and Procedures (http://www.bc.edu/publications/ucatalog/policy.shtml) to familiarize yourself with definitions and regulations concerning plagiarism. Also, please consult me if additional questions about plagiarism arise as you engage in the writing process for this course.

Resources

Connors Family Learning Center (CFLC): 200 O’Neill Library—One-on-one writing tutorials. This is a great resource for writers of all skill levels. Take advantage of this completely free opportunity. Your writing and grades will improve from this close attention.

Disabilities Policy: If you would like additional support because of a disability, please contact Kathy Duggan, the Associate Director for Academic Support Services (kathleen.duggan@bc.edu). If there is anything else I can do to accommodate you, please contact me in privately, and we can find a suitable arrangement.
**Schedule of Assignments**  
(Subject to Change)  
*Have readings and assignments completed on the day on which they are listed.*

**Week One**  
**Sept 1 Introduction**

**Week Two**  

**Week Three**  
Raymond Clemens and Timothy Graham, *Introduction to Manuscript Studies*, 1-64.

**Week Four**  

**Week Five**  

**Week Six**  
**Oct 6** VISIT TO ISABELLA STEWART GARDENER MUSEUM

**Week Seven**  
**Biography of a Book Due**

**Week Eight**  
**20** Midterm Exam

**Week Nine**  
"The Sound of Silence: from Medieval Source to Living Performance", a concert by Anne Azéma, Artistic Director of the Boston Camerata.

**Week Ten**  
**Nov 3** "Beyond Words Symposium" at McMullen Museum.

**Week Eleven**  
**10** VISIT TO HOUGHTON LIBRARY

**Week Twelve**  
**17** “The Secret of Kells” film and discussion.
Week Thirteen
24  Thanksgiving Holidays

Week Fourteen
Dec 1  Introduction to Digital Humanities Tools
      Digital Scriptorium Project Workshop

Week Fifteen
  8  Digital Scriptorium Project Presentation

* * Bibliography Due: Thursday, December 15th * *