THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

School of Information
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LIBR 548F (1) History of the Book

We acknowledge that UBC iSchool is on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓-speaking Musqueam people.

The mission of UBC iSchool is to enhance humanity's capacity to engage information in effective, creative and diverse ways, through innovative research, education and design.

General information
Program: MLIS
Year: Winter Session II 2021-22
Time: Mon, 2-4.45 pm
Location:
    Week 1-2: Online synchronous class (Zoom links available on Canvas)
    Week 3-13: In-person at IBLC 191 (first half) and Rare Books & Special Collections, Seminar Room (second half)
Instructor: Dr. Erik Kwakkel
Office phone: 604 822 4448
Office hours: Mon, 11 am-12 Noon (Zoom link on Canvas) or by appointment (send email)
E-mail address: erik.kwakkel@ubc.ca
Learning management website: http://canvas.ubc.ca

Course Goal & Rationale
The main focus of this course is the handwritten book (manuscript, from "manu scripta," written by hand) as it was used across Europe for the millennium between *c*. 450 and *c*. 1450 before the introduction of the printing press. The printed book only appears at the end of the course to highlight what changed when our modern printed book was born, both in material features and the impact on readers and premodern information society. Two main dynamics structure the course. The first is *production*: who made these handwritten books, how were the objects designed (material features, appearance), and how does manuscript design reflect the context or motivation of its maker. The second thread pertains to *use*: who was the anticipated user of the book (social status, level of education, line of work, experienced reader or not) and how was the book actually used (function, purpose, both on an individual and institutional level)?

By taking into account what books look like and how they were used, we also touch on more general–universal–principles in the History of the Book. What do readers across time value most in book design, and why? How did book design change in response to changing needs in finding information? What features were deemed useful in certain contexts of use? And can

we observe developments in these trends over time? What bookish elements were most prone to innovations? And why did technological changes come about? As the course unfolds, students are provided with a "helicopter" view over older premodern–holdings of a rare books and special collections library, while exploring the proper vocabulary to address all relevant aspects of these objects.

Course Objectives
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Understand the development of the book as a material object, *c.* 500 to *c.* 1600, in light of how books and information were accessed and used [1.1, 1.4];
- Understand the technologies by which books have been produced over time [1.1];
- Understand the range of objects preserved in Special Collections libraries, learn how to recognize them, and know how to properly handle them [5.1];
- Consider the social, cultural and intellectual significance of various book media (handwritten, printed, and, through the assignments, digital) [1.4];
- Reflect on topics in the History of the Book in various communication modes (writing, discussion) [2.1, 4.1].

Course Topics
- Production and use of handwritten books;
- Impact of printing;
- Emergence and rationale of new book technologies;
- Impact on book design by societal needs and how a book was used;
- Introduction to common book types in Special Collections libraries.

Prerequisites
- MLIS and Dual MAS/MLIS: Completion of MLIS Core or permission of iSchool Graduate Advisor
- MAS: completion of MAS core and permission of the iSchool Graduate Adviser

Course Format
This is a synchronously-taught online course (Week 1-2) and in-person course that blends short lectures with class discussion based on topics prepared at home and in-class. The course leans heavily on real objects in Rare Books and Special Collections (from Week 3).

Required and Recommended Reading
For the manuscript part of the course, you are required to read Erik Kwakkel, Books Before Print (Leeds: Arc Humanities, 2018). The book is available for free at Project Muse via UBC Libraries: https://muse-jhu-edu.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/book/62498. Additional readings will be made available on Canvas.

Course Assignments / Grade Distribution

Date	Assignment	Weight	Competencies
Entire term	Participation: attendance, discussion	10%	2.1, 4.1, 5.1
Feb 14	Paper 1: Design and production	30%	1.1, 1.4, 2.1
Mar 21	Paper 2: Use and users	30%	1.1, 1.4, 2.1

Apr 18	Paper 3: Why do some manuscripts look the same?	30%	1.1, 1.4, 2.1

Notes on assignments – All assignments are written on an individual basis and facilitate a learning experience regarding the physicality of books in different periods and cultural settings. They also encourage you to gauge how book design relates to readers and the manner of use, and how such considerations may vary depending on the time period, a book's contents, its user, and the setting in which the object was used. Such connections between the material and cultural will be explored during in-class hands-on sessions with real objects. For **Paper 1** and **Paper 2** you will independently undertake similar explorations based on preselected digitized manuscripts from various libraries in the world. The emphasis in these two papers is on book design (Paper 1) and how design relates to use and users (Paper 2). The topic of **Paper 3** allows you to explore a group of manuscripts of your own choice and compare/contrast them for similarities.

An extensive explanation of each assignment, and the links needed to do them, will be made available on Canvas.

Evaluation: All assignments will be marked using the evaluative criteria given on the iSchool web site.

Course Schedule (subject to modification)

Date	Topic/Readings
Jan 10	Course introduction
	No readings
Part 1: Making the Manuscript	
Jan 17	Design and production
	Books Before Print, pp. 1-28 (General Introduction). *Key reading as it provides you with the lingo to discuss manuscripts.* Erik Kwakkel, "The Architecture of the Medieval Page," Medievalbooks.nl (blog post)
Jan 24	Writing the text
	Books Before Print, pp. 30-70 (Filling the Page). Erik Kwakkel, "Doodles in Medieval Manuscripts," Medievalbooks.nl (blog post)
Jan 31	Catch-up week: no class

Feb 7	Binding and decoration
	Books Before Print, pp. 72-118 (Enhancing the manuscript).
Feb 14	Unusual book design
	Books Before Print, pp. 154-206 (The margins of manuscript culture).
	Assignment 1 due today
Reading Break (Feb 21-25)	
Part 2: Using the Manuscript	
Feb 28	Contexts of manuscript production
	Books Before Print, pp. 208-48 (Contextualizing the medieval manuscript). Erik Kwakkel, "Medieval Book Carousels," Medievalbooks.nl (blog post).
Mar 7	Use and marginal space
	Books Before Print, pp. 120-52 (Annotations, Bookmarks, and Libraries).
Mar 14	Catch-up week: no class
Mar 21	Design as historical evidence
	Books Before Print, pp. 249-52 (The Legacy of the Medieval Book). Erik Kwakkel, "Decoding the material book" (download here)
	Assignment 2 due today
Mar 28	Early printing in the West
	McKitterick, "The Beginnings of Printing" (here).
Apr 4	Manuscript vs Print

	Readings t.b.a.
*** end of course ***	
Apr 18	**Assignment 3 due today**

Attendance

Attendance is required in all class meetings. The instructor must be notified of absence beforehand if at all possible. <u>However, please contact the instructor if you live in a time zone that makes class participation challenging</u>. Up to two excused absences are allowed with prior notification. Additional absences may require you to hand in an additional assignment.

Evaluation

Your papers will be marked with the help of an evaluation sheet. These sheets and the rubrics they cover will be made available well before the due date of the papers.

Academic Integrity

The Faculty of Arts considers plagiarism to be the most serious academic offence that a student can commit. Regardless of whether or not it was committed intentionally, plagiarism has serious academic consequences and can result in expulsion from the university. Plagiarism involves the improper use of somebody else's words or ideas in one's work. The UBC policy on Academic Misconduct is available here. It is *your* responsibility to make sure you fully understand what plagiarism is. The UBC Learning Commons has a resource page on how to avoid plagiarism, with policies on academic integrity and misconduct found here. If after reading these materials you still are unsure about how to properly use sources in your work, please ask your instructor for clarification.

Policies and Resources to Support Student Success: UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here (https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success)

Other Course Policies as Relevant: All assignments must conform a citation style of your own choice (e.g. MLA, APA, Chicago), as long as you make sure to be consistent.

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