

The Catholic University of America
School of Library and Information Science
Syllabus
LSC 841: Rare Books Librarianship – 3 credits
Spring 2009

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Office: 214 Mullen Library
Office hours: Saturday 12:30-1:00 or by appointment

Course Description – This course, with an emphasis on books of the hand-press period, is designed to introduce students to all facets of the physical book as a material object encountered in rare book collections, to the scholarly and trade literature surrounding it, and to the terminology employed by rare book professionals. The course will also touch on issues relating to collecting, preserving, and cataloging of rare books.

Course Objectives – Successful completion of this course will enable the student to understand the process by which books were manufactured, to correctly identify the materials and techniques used in that process, to understand their relevance, and to intelligently communicate such features of the book to scholars and the public, whether through written descriptions, catalog records, or exhibitions.

Schedule – Class meets Saturdays at 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM in Room 214, Mullen Library (Rare Books & Special Collections Dept.) Attendance is mandatory.

Prerequisites –

- Students should be familiar with and able to interpret Roman numerals.
- Students should be familiar with the MARC bibliographical format. Those who have not yet studied cataloging may wish to consult <http://www.loc.gov/marc/umb/>

Required Texts – (available in CUA bookstore)

GASKELL. *A new introduction to bibliography*. Oak Knoll Press, 1995, reprinted 2007

CARTER. *ABC for book collectors* (8th ed.) Oak Knoll Press, 2004

On reserve – BOWERS. *Principles of bibliographical description*. Chapters 5-7 are required reading, together with Appendix I, a Digest of the Formulary. It's a good idea to start reading these ahead of schedule since they are heavy sledding and require time to digest.

See topical units for additional reserve readings.

Recommended – McKerrow. *An introduction to bibliography for literary students*. Unlike Bowers, McKerrow (also on reserve) is eminently readable, and a perusal of this work in advance of reading Bowers can make the latter more digestible.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Jan 17th: Expectations
 Syllabus
 Registration
 Parts of a Book

Handling of books
Writing surfaces intro

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

- Read: CARTER pp. 1-60
- Read: GASKELL pp. 57-77; 214-230
- Read: WOOTTON, et al. "Observations concerning the characteristics of handmade paper" <http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/bpg/annual/v15/bp15-21.html>

Jan 24th

Discuss Carter 1-60
Lecture: Paper
Dealer Catalogs

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

- Read: CARTER pp. 61-120
- Read: GASKELL pp. 1-8 ; 154-159
- Examine dealer catalog and be prepared to discuss.
- Prepare for Quiz 1

Jan 31st

QUIZ 1 on Carter pp. 1-60

Discuss Carter 61-120
Discuss Dealer Catalogs
Lecture: Paper / illustration processes

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

- Read: CARTER 121-178 (up to "Publication")
- Read: GASKELL pp. 266-273
- Prepare for Quiz 2

Feb 7th

QUIZ 2 on Carter 61-120

Discuss Carter 121-178
Lecture: Illustration processes II
Student selection of rare book for presentation due.

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

- Read: CARTER pp. 179 "publication"-end
- Read: GASKELL pp. 146-153
- Prepare for Quiz 3

Feb 14th

QUIZ 3 on Carter 121-178

Discuss Carter 179-end
Lecture: Bindings I.

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

- Read: GASKELL pp. 231-250
- Select bibliography in LOC Rare Books reading room for report.
- Prepare for Quiz 4

Feb 21st

QUIZ 4 on Carter 179-end
Student selection of bibliography due
Lecture: Bindings II

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

- Read: GASKELL pp. 9-39; 207-213

Feb 28th

Lecture: Type I
Video: Typecasting

NO CLASS March 7th!

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

- Read: BELANGER: "Descriptive bibliography". Chapter 6 in *Book collecting: a modern guide*. Jean Peters, ed. Bowker, 1977 (on electronic reserve)
- Read: GASKELL pp.; 40-56 ; 78-145 ; 160-206

Mar 14th

Lecture: Type II
Composition, imposition, presswork
Video: Format

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

- Read: GASKELL 313-360
- Read: BOWERS 193-268 (chapters 5 & 6)

Mar 21st

Lecture: Descriptive bibliography

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

- Read: BOWERS 269-311 ; 457-462 (Chapter 7 & Appendix, Digest of the Formulary)

Mar 28th

Lecture: Descriptive bibliography

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

- Read: FLEEMAN: "Introduction" and "abbreviations" from *A bibliography of the works of Samuel Johnson*. (on electronic reserve)
- Read: GASKELL 251-265; 274-310

April 4th

STUDENT REPORTS ON L.C. BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE
Lecture: Descriptive bibliography

NO CLASS April 11th!

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS: Des bib practice books

April 18th

Lecture: Descriptive bibliography

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS: Des bib practice books

April 25th

Lecture: Rare Book cataloging

IN PREPARATION FOR CLASS:

May 2nd

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS ON RARE BOOK DUE

Lecture: Review

May 9th

FINAL EXAM

Expectations and policies:

Assessment –

Course grades are formulated as follows:

40% of grade - 4 quizzes on terminology in Carter (10% each)

10% of grade - Presentation and written evaluation of 1 bibliographical source found in the Rare Books reading room at Library of Congress.

20% of grade - Presentation and written analysis of 1 rare book from RBSC collection.

30% of grade - Final exam

NOTE: A missed exam or failure to turn in assignment on time will result in a 0 (zero) for that portion of the grade. Plan ahead!

The University's grading system for graduate courses is posted at

<http://policies.cua.edu/academicgrad//gradesfull.cfm#iii>

Academic honesty –

All CUA students are expected to adhere strictly to the University's policy for academic honesty. You may review the complete texts of the University policy and procedures regarding Student Academic Dishonesty at:

<http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrity.cfm>

Other Policies or Expectations –

As noted above, attendance and punctuality at lectures is required, and is in your best interest. Any emergencies which may impact on such attendance must be communicated in advance or as soon as possible to the instructor. When absence is unavoidable, it remains the student's responsibility to secure notes for any missed lectures.

Classes are held in Mullen 214, the Rare Books Department office/reading room. Standard rare material handling and housekeeping procedures are enforced. Therefore NO FOOD, CHEWING GUM, BEVERAGES etc. are permitted in Room 214. Bottles of water may be left near the door. All coats, backpacks, etc. must be stored in closets while class is in session. Because rare and fragile materials are used during this class, **NO PENS SHOULD BE BROUGHT NEAR THE TABLE**. Additional material-handling guidelines will be explained by the instructor. Also please be considerate and turn off cellphones, ipods etc, before coming to class.

School closing –

In the event of the University's closing for inclement weather an announcement should be posted on the University's webpage <http://www.cua.edu/> . The major networks will also carry announcements in the morning. Alternatively, you may call the Campus Police (202-319-5111) or the Campus Operator (202-319-5000).

Accommodations for students with disabilities –

Any student requiring accommodation due to a disability should contact the office of Disability Support Services (at 202 319-5211, room 207 Pryzbyla Center) which coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Please visit their website: <http://disabilitysupport.cua.edu> or consult the University's Student Life Disability Accommodations page: <http://policies.cua.edu/studentlife/disabilitysvcs//disabilityfull.cfm>