MEDIEVAL STUDIES

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http://medieval.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair and Director of Graduate Studies
Ardis Butterfield

Acting Chair and Director of Graduate Studies (2018–2019)
Jessica Brantley

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Lecturer Raymond Clemens

FIELDS OF STUDY
Fields in this interdisciplinary program include history, history of art, history of music, religious studies, languages and literatures, linguistics, and philosophy.

SPECIAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS
The General Test of the GRE is required. A writing sample of ten to twenty pages should be included with the application.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE
Languages required are Latin, French, and German. Latin may be replaced with Arabic, Greek, or Hebrew when appropriate. Proficiency in Latin, Arabic, Greek, and Hebrew is tested with an examination administered and evaluated by the program during the first term. Proficiency in French and German is demonstrated by passing the departmental examinations and should be achieved by the third term. Students will design their programs in close contact with the director of graduate studies (DGS). During the first two years students take fourteen term courses, and must receive an Honors grade in at least four term courses the first year. Students take an oral examination, usually in the fifth term, on a set of three topics worked out in consultation with the DGS. Then, having nurtured a topic of particular interest, the student submits a dissertation prospectus that must be approved by the end of the third year. Upon completion of all predissertation requirements, including the prospectus, students are admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree. What remains, then, is the writing, submission, and approval of the dissertation during the final two years.

Students in Medieval Studies participate in the Teaching Fellows Program in the third and fourth years.

MASTER’S DEGREES
M.Phil. See degree requirements under Policies and Regulations. The M.Phil. degree may be requested after all requirements but the dissertation are met.

M.A. (en route to the Ph.D.) Students enrolled in the Ph.D. program may qualify for the M.A. degree upon satisfactory completion of three terms of course work. Minimum requirements include a High Pass average in courses and passing the examination in Latin, Arabic, Greek, or Hebrew.

COURSES

MDVL 536a / HIST 536a, Charters, Cartularies, and Archives Paul Freedman and N. Raymond Clemens
An examination of medieval documentation and how to use it to answer questions about medieval politics, society, and religion. Charters are single documents representing transactions, ranging from wills to grants of rights to sales contracts. Cartularies are collections of documents that show how an institution (usually an ecclesiastical institution) acquired property; and they back up and prove rights over those properties. The course looks at archives and ways in which documents end up in archives, how they are organized, and what that can tell us about the issues they focus on.

MDVL 563b / CLSS 602b, Advanced Latin Paleography Barbara Shailor
The challenges of using hand-produced Latin manuscripts in research, with an emphasis on texts from the late Middle Ages. Gothic cursive scripts and book hands ca. 1200–ca. 1500; fragments of unidentified codices; complex or composite codices with heavy interlinear and marginal annotations. Manuscripts and fragments selected largely from collections in the Beinecke Library. Prerequisite: CLSS 601 or permission of the instructor.
MDVL 571a / CLSS 601a, Introduction to Latin Paleography  N. Raymond Clemens
Latin paleography from the fourth century CE to ca. 1500. Topics include the history and development of national hands; the introduction and evolution of Caroline minuscule, pre-gothic, gothic, and humanist scripts (both cursive and book hands); the production, circulation, and transmission of texts (primarily Latin, with reference to Greek and Middle English); advances in the technical analysis and digital manipulation of manuscripts. Seminars are based on the examination of codices and fragments in the Beinecke Library; students select a manuscript for class presentation and final paper.

MDVL 650a / HSAR 591a, Visions and Art in Medieval Europe  Jacqueline Jung
From the Book of Revelation to the Showings of Julian of Norwich (d. 1423), accounts of visions in the Christian tradition were inextricably intertwined with the visual arts. Through examinations of medieval texts, images, and material culture, in conjunction with modern analyses of related phenomena, this seminar explores the range of representational practices that helped medieval Christians summon up, make sense of, and communicate extraordinary moments of contact with the divine. We address such questions as the changes in visionary experiences over time, the role of language and literacy in the communication of such experiences, the impact of gender on visions, the varieties and functions of other senses (especially touch and taste) in medieval visions, and the impact of visionary reports on the development of art. We begin by addressing the theoretical, cognitive, and anthropological facets of visionary experience before turning to medieval primary sources such as saints’ lives, accounts of otherworld journeys, miracle books, sermons, monastic chronicles, and individually composed vision books, and to modern interpretations by historians such as Caroline Bynum, William Christian, Peter Dinzelbacher, Jeffrey Hamburger, Barbara Newman, Giselle de Nie, and Jean-Claude Schmitt. Visual materials include both depictions of visions (such as Apocalypse manuscripts, paintings of the Temptation of St. Anthony, and renderings of Hildegard’s visions) and images that played a role in sparking visionary experience (such as Marian statues, crucifixes, Man of Sorrows images, and Baby Jesus dolls). Reading knowledge of German, French, and Latin is strongly recommended.