Center for Renaissance Studies
2012-2013 Graduate Seminar at the Newberry

Latin Paleography

Professor Michael Allen, University of Chicago
2:00 – 5:00 p.m. Fridays, September 28 – December 7, 2012

This seminar will emphasize the development of Latin handwriting, primarily as book scripts, from its origins to the waning of the Carolingian minuscule, ca. A.D. 1100. By mastering the foundational types of writing, participants will develop skills for reading all Latin-based scripts, including those used for vernacular languages and the subsequent Gothics and their derivatives down to the sixteenth century. Participants will:

- learn how script developed during this period
- acquire ocular flexibility for reading writing of all eras
- become familiar with abbreviations and editorial practice
- read samples of Classical and Christian Latin texts in facsimiles.

Along with the survey of the foundational types of Latin script, which participants will learn to identify and read, the class shall also have an exercise in the continuous transcription of a straightforward Gothic hand. So students will acquire practical skills in reading and presenting a text preserved in this type of writing. Participants shall work with a delightful and important medieval source, Jocelin of Brakelond’s Chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds, in the lone surviving medieval copy, London, British Library, Harley 1005, fols. 128–70 (saec.xiii med.).

Prerequisite: A course in Latin.

Enrollment is limited. Register online at www.newberry.org/renaissance. To earn optional credit you must also enroll in either a Newberry course at your campus (available at several Chicago-area schools) or an independent study. Contact the Center for Renaissance Studies consortium faculty representative at your home institution for your university’s policies and to apply for travel reimbursement. Enrollment fees are waived for consortium members.