



THE NEWBERRY

Center for Renaissance Studies

Guidelines for Proposing a Newberry Graduate Seminar

We encourage faculty members at consortium institutions to propose ten-week seminars in any medieval, Renaissance, or early modern topic strongly supported by the Newberry collections. Seminars may be team-taught by two or more scholars.

The seminars meet once a week for ten weeks, usually on Thursday or Friday afternoons, from 1:00 to 4:00 or 2:00 to 5:00. Seminars meet late September through December in the fall, and January through March in winter/spring term.

To propose a seminar, send the following as an email attachment to renaissance@newberry.org:

- A cover sheet including the name, university, academic rank, email address, and phone number for each prospective instructor
- The term (fall or winter/spring) you are available to teach
- The proposed seminar title, and a brief description suitable for web and email publicity, with any prerequisites
- A proposed syllabus, including readings and assignments
- A current CV for each instructor, including a list of graduate courses taught

Proposals are **due by November 1** each year, for programs for the next academic year. We notify proposers of the selection committee's decisions by early February.

Compensation

- Instructors are compensated by negotiating release time with their departments, and are eligible to apply for consortium travel funding from their home institutions. Visiting professors may also apply, provided the host institution is willing to grant a course release.
- The Newberry is unable to pay travel expenses for instructors coming from outside the immediate area; instructors are eligible to apply for consortium travel funding from their home institution. Check with your representative council member before submitting a proposal if this applies to you.

Seminar topics

- We seek seminars that present medieval, Renaissance, and/or early modern materials from innovative or multidisciplinary perspectives or in light of a significant, unusual, or new methodology.
- We especially welcome seminars that draw on the strengths of the Newberry collection (see www.newberry.org/medieval-renaissance-and-early-modern-studies).
- In our annual call for proposals we may ask for courses on specific topics to complement the themes of other programs we have scheduled.
- Most seminar participants are PhD students and faculty auditors (though students earlier in their graduate careers also may apply), so readings and coursework should be appropriate to that level.
- To attract the most multidisciplinary group of participants, the language of instruction in seminars must be English, although the ability to read materials in another language may be a prerequisite for the course.

Logistics

- Faculty who teach Center for Renaissance Studies graduate seminars should be tenured members of their faculties or demonstrate experience in teaching graduate seminars at their home institutions. Exceptions may be made to this rule for courses of outstanding merit or for those that make especially good use of the Newberry collections.
- Potential instructors should consult with their campus representative council members regarding their proposals before submitting them.
- An ad hoc subcommittee of the Center's representative council reviews proposals for each academic year. Once proposals have been approved, the Center schedules and publicizes the seminars.
- Consortium funds may be used to reimburse instructors and students in graduate seminars for travel to and from the Newberry, with prior authorization from the given university's Newberry committee or representative council member.

Participants and credit

- Courses offered through the Center for Renaissance Studies are designed for graduate students and faculty auditors. In practice, most participants are students in PhD programs, though master's degree students also are welcome to apply. Advanced undergraduates may be admitted only with the consent of the instructor and if space permits.
- Students who wish to earn credit also register at their home institutions in either a special Newberry course (for several universities in the Chicago area) or an independent-study course. Advanced graduate students who have completed their coursework may take seminars on a not-for-credit basis, but they are expected to complete all readings and assignments and to participate fully in the seminar. Faculty auditing is also encouraged, when space permits.
- Participants from Center for Renaissance Studies consortium schools pay no fee to the Newberry for graduate seminars. With instructor approval and when space permits, participants from other institutions may be admitted; non-consortium students pay an enrollment fee.

Recruiting students

- The Center for Renaissance Studies publicizes graduate seminars in its brochures, on its web pages, and through email announcements to members of the consortium.
- We ask our consortium representative council members to record courses in appropriate institutional schedules, to send department chairpersons copies of seminar descriptions, and to publicize seminars through listservs and other outlets at their universities.
- Students wishing to take a graduate seminar must complete and submit to the Center for Renaissance Studies, by the published deadline, an online application, available on our web page—even if they have enrolled in a cross-listed course at their home institution. Admission is by competitive application, in accordance with consortium policies.

Enrollment

- Courses may accommodate up to 18 students, except for classes that need to incorporate show-and-tell sessions using Newberry special collections materials on parchment (e.g., medieval manuscripts); in that case the maximum number of participants is 15.
- Instructors may cap enrollment at a lower number, if they prefer.

Newberry materials “show-and-tell” sessions

- The class may schedule a “show-and-tell” session with rare books during a regularly scheduled seminar session. The available group spaces in the library book up quickly, so the session must be scheduled as far in advance as possible, preferably before the term begins.
- The instructor may request up to eight items to present during the “show-and-tell” session. We need the list of titles and call numbers by two weeks before the date of the session.

Course materials, reserve shelves, and technology

- Center for Renaissance Studies staff will create a password-protected wiki website for each seminar, where we post the syllabus, list of books for students to obtain, PDFs of readings, bibliographies, and so forth, as well as information about using the Newberry collection.
- Center staff can also arrange library tours and orientation sessions upon request.
- We can place Newberry books that students will be expected to consult on a reserve shelf in the General Reading Room on the second floor. If the Newberry does not own a work you would like to place on reserve, we can usually either acquire it or obtain it through Interlibrary Loan. Please submit class reserve lists at least two weeks before the first class (earlier for items not currently owned by the Newberry). Instructors may place their own personal materials on the class reference shelf as well.
- All Newberry classrooms are equipped with built-in digital projectors with attached PC laptops for PowerPoint presentations and the like. The classrooms also have free public Wi-Fi. Bandwidth is limited, so it’s a good idea to download sound or video files rather than stream them.

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