MEDIEVAL STUDIES

Known for its excellence in diverse fields of medieval research, Fordham University offers the master of arts degree in medieval studies and a doctoral-level medieval concentration. Fordham’s intimate size and tradition of devotion to teaching offers students an intellectual climate in which faculty members, well-known and active in the scholarly community, encourage and support students in their academic pursuits. The University offers graduate assistantships and fellowships to a limited number of students.

Embracing the full sweep of artistic, literary, scholastic and cultural issues that make medieval civilization such a rich field of study, the degree programs draw on the expertise of faculty in the departments of art and music history, classics, English, history, modern languages and literature (French, German, Italian, and Spanish), philosophy, political science, and theology. Each year the Center offers several specifically interdisciplinary courses that bring together specialists in different fields, on the assumption that our understanding and appreciation of medieval civilization is particularly enriched by a multi-disciplinary perspective. Technical preparation is key to these interdisciplinary studies, so the graduate program emphasizes diverse research skills that range from examining primary documents to creating and managing databases.

The program is administered through its Director and through the Center for Medieval Studies, located at the Rose Hill campus. The Center houses a small library and discussion area available to students. The main University library is especially strong in its medieval holdings. Fordham’s location in New York City affords easy access to other major libraries (such as the Pierpont Morgan Library and the New York Public Library), museums (for example, The Cloisters and the Metropolitan Museum of Art), and other institutions of higher learning. A University-operated campus shuttle makes regular trips between the Lincoln Center and Rose Hill campuses throughout the day and evening.

The Center supports the exchange of views and information through its annual conferences, lecture series, publications, and professional workshops. Fordham faculty are also invited to address colleagues and students informally, and graduate students have also presented lectures.

For more information about Graduate-level Medieval Studies, please visit our page on the Fordham website.

Admissions

The Doctoral Certificate in Medieval Studies is available only to current Fordham students.

Completed applications to the M.A. in Medieval Studies will include each of the following items:

Resume/CV
Up to two pages in length (submit via the online application).

Official transcripts
Official degree transcripts confirming prior degree conferral should be ordered at least one month prior to the application deadline. Please ensure that they are sent directly to the Office of Admissions via secure electronic delivery. If electronic delivery is not available, please request that your transcripts be submitted directly via post, in a sealed envelope, to: Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Office of Admissions, Fordham University, 441 E. Fordham Rd., Bronx, NY 10458. Please note: you may upload unofficial copies of your transcripts to your application while the Office of Admissions awaits receipt of your official transcripts.

Statement of Intent
Up to 500 words submitted electronically via the online application. Describe your interest in the program, what you hope to gain personally and professionally from the program, and your commitment to the field. Please highlight relevant professional, personal, and academic experience.

Writing Sample
5 - 20 pages submitted electronically via the online application.

Recommendations
Three letters of recommendation submitted directly by referees via the online application.

Official GRE Scores
Should be sent directly by the testing service to the Office of Graduate Admissions, Fordham University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences – Code #2259

English Proficiency
International applicants whose native language is not English are required to complete and submit to GSAS prior to matriculation their official scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). GSAS will also consider a student’s International English Language Testing System (IELTS) – Cambridge English Proficiency Level language testing results. Official TOEFL or IELTS scores should be sent directly by the testing service to the Office of Graduate Admissions, Fordham University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences – Code # 2259.

Financial Aid

Graduate assistantships and fellowships are available to all applicants to graduate departments on a merit basis. Several of these graduate assistantships are specifically reserved for first year students in the Medieval Studies master’s program. These graduate assistantships include the tuition for 30 credit hours of coursework, a stipend towards health insurance and a stipend for nine months (currently $22,685), in return for working for the Center for Medieval Studies or another academic unit for around 18 hours a week. University, Loyola and Bennet Fellowships, awarded on a merit basis to incoming students, include higher stipends. PhD students enrolled in the Medieval Studies Doctoral Certificate program are also eligible to apply for a Senior Teaching Fellowship, which provides an additional year of funding. Graduate students in Medieval Studies are encouraged to apply for research and travel grants through GSAS. The Graduate Student Association also offers the Professional Development Grant each semester. The GSAS also offers Summer Assistantships on a competitive basis.

For more information about admissions to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, please visit their page on the Fordham website.

Programs

- MA in Medieval Studies
- Doctoral Advanced Certificate in Medieval Studies

Updated: 10-25-2019
Courses

Medieval Studies department courses

MVST 5024. Medieval Political Thought. (3 to 4 Credits)

MVST 5031. Byzantium, Islam and the West. (4 Credits)
This course is a seminar specifically designed around an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art opening in March 2012. Byzantium and Islam: Age of Transition (7th-9th century). The exhibition offers a unique opportunity to study not only the impact on the visual arts of the interaction of the Byzantine and Islamic cultures at this critical historical period, but also to examine the art of architecture of Carolingian France and Visigothic Spain from this perspective. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

MVST 5050. World of Late Antiquity: Introduction to History, Art, and Culture. (4 Credits)
This course offers an introduction to the history, art and culture of the Late Antique world from the third to the sixth century. We will explore the older narratives of decline in this period alongside powerful alternatives proposed by scholars more recently, drawing on both primary sources and monuments and critically examining the secondary literature that studies them. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

MVST 5064. The Divine Comedy: Poetry, Theology, and the Medieval Imagination. (4 Credits)
This seminar offers an in-depth study of the poetic and theological imagination of Dante's Divine Comedy. We will combine close reading of selected cantos with primary and secondary works illuminating key aspects of Dante's literary and theological invention. Issues will be discussed within the historical and ideological contexts of the relevant theological and poetic debates in Dante's time. We will consider Dante's theological influences, such as Augustine, Boethius, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Bonaventure, and explore theological topics such as medieval Christian practices of pilgrimage, scholastic debates about atonement and the afterlife, cosmology, and the relationship between erotic love and divine union in Christian mystical theology. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

MVST 5070. Manuscript Culture. (4 Credits)
Introduction to principles, materials, and study of medieval manuscripts and primary documents as well as to problems of evaluation of the cultural contexts of their production and use. Ancillary topics will include manuscript illumination, the resources of codicology and paleography, the preparation and evaluation of modern editions, the assessment of readership and patronage, material philology and the materialism of the middle ages, the development of libraries. Students will do hands-on work with primary sources at the Morgan Library, the rare book collection of the New York Public Library, and the rare books and manuscripts collection in Walsh Library. Final projects will be tailored to the students' primary research areas and expertise. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

MVST 5077. Editing Medieval Texts. (4 Credits)
This is a course in the theory and practice of editing, especially as it relates to medieval texts, with most of the examples coming from Middle English. We'll give attention to documentary, historical, and aesthetic approaches, and we will spend some time exploring digital methods and concerns. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

MVST 5078. Medvl Books & Materials. (4 Credits)
Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

MVST 5095. Medieval Pilgrimage. (4 Credits)
Pilgrimage will be conceptualized broadly, entertaining a variety of aims for travel and also considering the pilgrimage form as a purely conceptual exercise as well as a journey with more practical aims. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

MVST 5100. Cultures of Music and Sound in the Medieval World. (4 Credits)
Music and Sound enriched every facet of pre-modern life, liturgy and ritual above all. This interdisciplinary seminar introduces medievalists - especially those without formal musical education - to the cultures of medieval and Renaissance music. It should enable students from any discipline to engage music and the sonic more fully in their research and teaching. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

MVST 5101. Making Early Music. (3 Credits)
Medieval and Renaissance music's fragmentary survival has inspired scholars, performers, composers, and artists to realize what remains according to varying creative urges and ideological preoccupations. This course examines the cultures of early music as well as their living legacies. Studying musical traditions 1000-1600, we build a technical vocabulary for discussing music and seek to understand how historical change affects aesthetics, music-making, and listening from 1000-2018. We also study the reception medieval music – how it has been rejected, restored, recreated, and reimagined – to consider how "the medieval" is historically produced. No prior musical experience required.

MVST 5102. Theorizing Medieval Sound: Medieval Sonic Worlds. (4 Credits)
In this interdisciplinary seminar, we read widely and listen actively to the texts, musics, and objects of the European Middle Ages to find out just how closely we can come to encountering medieval sonic worlds. Using an electric array of primary, secondary, and theoretical works, we study medieval sound cultures and the production of sonorous meanings for medieval listeners in all their complexity. At the same time, we investigate how open-minded engagement with the sonorous Middle Ages can challenge us to rethink prevailing popular and scholarly attitudes towards the body, the senses, media, and the past.

MVST 5200. Medvl Iberian Lit & Soc. (4 Credits)
Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.
MVST 5201. The Renaissance of the 12Th Ce. (4 Credits)
This graduate seminar explores the religious, intellectual, literary, and cultural contours of the "long" 12th Century with equal weight given to the diversity of medieval sources that survive and to modern historiographic interpretations. The class will include visits to the Coisters museum and to the Morgan library. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

MVST 5202. Medieval Monsters: Terrors, Aliens, Wonders. (4 Credits)
Taught in conjunction with an exhibition of medical manuscripts at the Morgan Library & Museum, this course examines the vital role played by monsters in medieval art and culture. The course is taught by the curators will include gallery visits and meetings at the Morgan and will involve original research and work on an online exhibition.

MVST 5205. Court Culture Med Iberia. (4 Credits)
This course will explore the cultural, social, political and religious tensions that helped to form medieval Iberian courtly communities from the 10th to the 15th centuries. The unique situation of Iberia during this period, when the centralization and consolidation of sovereignty occurred in different religious and cultural contexts (Islamic and Christian) and political territories (Castile, Aragon) allows for a diverse, rich and contrasted analysis of medieval court culture. Our approach will be multidisciplinary and include literary texts, artistic manifestations, legal codes, religious writings, and chronicles. Among the courses to be studied will be the Omayyad court of the 10th century Cordoba, the Muslim kingdoms of 11th century Granada and Zaragoza, the Christian courts of Alfonso X of Castile and Jaume I of Aragon, and the late medieval court of Isabella Ferdinand. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

MVST 5300. Occitania: Language and Power. (4 Credits)
This course introduces students to the cultural world of a medieval "south": Occitania. Texts in Old Occitan include documentary writing, historical narrative, and the poetry of the troubadours. Topics include urban/rural communities, gender and power, the Albigensian crusade and its aftermath and the beginning of vernacular book production. 
Attribute: ENME.

MVST 5305. Writing East: Outremer and Identity in the Middle Ages. (4 Credits)
As the stage for the central events of the Gospel narrative, the lands of the eastern shore of the Mediterranean long occupied a central place in the collective imagination of Latin western Europe. Over the course of the Middle Ages, however, increasingly frequent encounters resulting from trade, pilgrimage, and crusade not only enriched the European image of the East, but vastly enhanced the significance to how medieval Christians approached the eastern Other. This course will trace the rise of a discourse of differences centered in what was called in England and France, "Outremer," the land beyond the sea. Together with medieval literary productions, histories, letters and travel narratives, we will read works from the growing body of scholarship on this important topic. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction. 
Attribute: ENME.

MVST 5310. Chivalric Romance. (4 Credits)
This seminar will look at the genre of the chivalric romance at the intersection of different vernacular traditions and genres. What happens to Chretien de Troyes' classics when they are adapted to the language and culture of another country? And how does the romance relate to the chanson de geste, the saint's life, the lai, or the fabliau? What if the protagonist is not a knight but rather a woman? Or a peasant? A Saracen? A pope? Or a combination of some of the above? The goal of this seminar will be to provide an overview of the wide range of romance themes and adaptations in Europe, including their reception to the present day. Students are expected to read and a well-annotated Middle English romance in the original. All other texts can be prepared in translation, while some of the class time will be dedicated to closely reading some crucial passages in the original Latin, Old French, and Middle High German. Open to seniors with a G.P.A. of 3.0 or better. Please consult your advisor.

MVST 5570. Medieval Crusades. (4 Credits)
This course adopts an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the medieval crusades in the Levant, southern France, Iberia, and the Baltic, with attention paid to the Islamic and Byzantine perspectives. The sources to be discussed include chronicles, charters, sermons, literary texts, songs, and hagiography, as well as architectural and artistic monuments and objects. Among the themes to be treated are crusader motivations, crusades and memory, European 'colonization', women and family in crusading society, crusading liturgies, the military orders, and diplomacy. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

MVST 5707. Meditation, Contemplation, and the Spiritual Senses. (4 Credits)
The late Middle Ages saw an astonishing proliferation of texts, practices, and styles of devotion seeking to draw human beings closer to God through the body. New emphasis on Christ's humanity and Aristotelian natural philosophy prompted the rediscovery of the five corporeal senses and their cognitive processes in devotional literature. In this course, we will examine the languages, knowledges, desires, and anxieties surrounding the senses in a diverse corpus of texts, probing them for their theological import as much as for their literary design. Major authors: Aristotle, Augustine, Origen, Hugh of St. Victor, Bonaventure, Richard Rolle, Chaucer, Margery Kempe, Meditations Vitae Christi. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

MVST 6209. Themes in Preconquest Lit. (4 Credits)
This course is an advanced-level seminar on the language and literature of Anglo-Saxon England. We will read (in Old English) texts including poetry, homilies, saints' lives, and chronicles. Substantial attention will also be given to Anglo-Saxon palaeography and relevant critical literature, with the aim of providing students with the resources needed for the scholarly study of OE. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.
Studies.

Aside from courses with the subject code, the following courses have the

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