



## **Library and Archives Conservation Education (LACE) Curriculum**

The Library and Archives Conservation Education (LACE) Consortium is comprised of the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation (WUDPAC); the Conservation Center of the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University; and the Patricia H. and Richard E. Garman Art Conservation Department at SUNY Buffalo State. The Consortium was founded to support the education of library conservators through the development of a shared, inter-institutional curriculum in library-related topics which enhances the individual curriculums at each of the participating art conservation programs.

Thanks to the generosity of the Mellon Foundation, LACE Fellows have access to additional funding to support their education. This includes funding for travel and accommodation for all Tier Two and Tier Three activities, as well as support for summer internships, travel to conferences, and costs associated with bringing in expert speakers on topics of specific interest.

The LACE curriculum has three tiers. Tier One is unique to each art conservation program. WUDPAC's Tier One instruction is described below. Shared Tier Two instruction addresses important material-based competencies such as historical book structures, descriptive bibliography, bookbinding skills, and working with parchment, while shared Tier Three instruction provides familiarity with issues that entry-level conservators will encounter on the job and prepares them to apply their broad knowledge in the research library/archives environment.

### **Tier One – Conservation Theory and Practice – WUDPAC Curriculum**

#### **Library & Archives MAJOR**

After their first year of block-based instruction, students in their second year continue with core theoretical and scientific coursework, as well as formal weekly conservation treatment seminars, and unstructured, apprentice-style work time in the Library Conservation Lab at Winterthur.

#### **Second-Year Major Seminars**

In addition to continued science instruction and work on the technical study, LACE fellows take the 12-credit Conservation Practice course with a concentration in library materials, paper, or photographs. Minors include paper (strongly recommended), photo, and preventive conservation. Students attend weekly seminars with their major supervisor, guest instructors, and other WUDPAC faculty.

#### **Technical Study**

Students will be expected to gain a working familiarity with a variety of instrumental analysis techniques through lectures, laboratory experiments and problem sets. Emphasis will be on data interpretation, basic principles, advantages



and limitations of each technique, applicability to conservation and curatorial questions, appropriate sample collection and preparation, and problem solving.

### **“Mini MLS” Curriculum with Winterthur Library Staff**

Second-year students attend seven sessions (approximately one hour each) with library staff over the course of the Fall semester to learn about key library functions and how conservation and preservation intersect with those priorities. Topics covered include collection development, acquisitions, cataloging, archival processing, digitization, stacks management and maintenance, and security.

### **Preventive Conservation**

Second-year students will take Preventive Conservation Research and Applications in the Spring Semester. This course provides a context in which students can carry out an in-depth preventive conservation research or practical application project. Through discussions, exercises and one on one advisory sessions, students’ research and writing skills are strengthened, and knowledge specific to the projects being undertaken by the class is developed. By the end of the course students will have experience applying preventive conservation principles in a real-life environment.

## **Library & Archives MINOR**

LACE fellows may also major in paper or photograph conservation with a minor in library & archives. The library & archives minor can be interpreted broadly to fit the educational goals of each fellow, with a focus on, e.g., album structures, electronic media, or preventive conservation.

*LACE fellows majoring in paper or photo are still required to attend all Tier Two & Tier Three shared instruction with the inter-institutional LACE cohort.* Additionally, at least one summer internship and the third-year internship must either take place in a library, archives, or historical society, or involve working with library and archival collections in another context (e.g. a regional center).

## **Tier Two – Foundational LACE Courses**

These courses are one- to four-week intensives combining classroom and hands-on learning for the inter-institutional cohort of students.

### **1. Historical Book Structures Practicum**

This course will familiarize students with commonly extant historical bookbinding structures representative of the development of the Western codex through lectures, readings, and traditional bookbinding practice. An emphasis is placed on producing historical book models using traditional tools and techniques to develop

binding skills and an understanding of how traditional structures function. Book models will include limp vellum and/or paper binding structures; multi-quire Coptic bindings; Gothic bindings; early ledger bindings; 17th- and 18th-century in-boards bindings (tight back/tight joint and hollow back/tight joint), and 19th-century case bindings.

## **2. History of Bookbinding: Description and Connoisseurship**

This five-day winter seminar will be hosted by Columbia University Rare Book & Manuscript Library in New York City every year in January. It will be taught by Alexis Hagadorn, Head of Conservation, and colleagues.

The first four days of the History of Bookbinding seminar will introduce library and archives conservation students to the evolution of the codex form and a more detailed history of bindings in the medieval and modern periods. Students will participate in guided observation of 200 individual bindings in the Columbia University Libraries' collections. Lecture sessions will illustrate important trends and concepts, including bookbinding workshop organization and changes in the style of particular structural features, such as end bands and board lacing patterns. The course also will introduce tools for uniform descriptive terminology and ways of researching bindings using databases of watermarks and decorative elements. Time will be allocated each day for hands-on, practical work in interpreting evidence and writing binding descriptions from assigned books. The course will emphasize Western bindings in the period 1200–1900 but also include binding traditions of the Near and Far East.

The fifth day of the seminar will be an introduction to paleography taught by Consuelo Dutschke, Curator of Medieval and Renaissance Collections at Columbia University's Rare Book & Manuscript Library. Students will learn how paleographers study book-based scripts and text typologies of western European Middle Ages and the Renaissance from 800 to 1500, from Caroline minuscule through early print. They will examine the main types of script according to various categories, with attention to letterforms, abbreviations, and decorative hierarchies. Students will work with digital images and a selection of actual materials in the Columbia Rare Book & Manuscript Library; they will be introduced to the basic tools for working with medieval codices and learn about aspects of manuscripts that can provide information for paleographers on localizing and dating manuscripts.

## **3. Descriptive Bibliography Seminar**

This weeklong seminar will be held at the Rare Book School (RBS) University of Virginia (UVA) campus every other year, alternating with Conservation of Parchment (*see #4, below*). The course, hosted by the RBS and taught by David Whitesell with the assistance of a laboratory instructor, will provide an introduction to the physical features of books, especially of the period 1500–1900, and to standard bibliographical methods for describing those features. The course will cover typography; letterpress printing; paper and illustration as bibliographical evidence; provenance (ownership markings, inscriptions, bookplates, and the ways in which books have been physically altered by

generations of owners and readers); and the analysis and description of book structure (format, collation, signing, pagination; edition, issue, and state), with a brief look at the uses of bibliographical evidence and some key printed and online resources. Students will gain a rich and multifaceted appreciation for the “archaeology” of books, that is, for books as physical objects, for the layers of evidence of ownership and readership that books acquire over the years, and for bibliographical approaches to the study of books. Through the course, students will improve their skills in describing books before treatment, identifying features worthy of preservation, and working more effectively with curators, custodians, and scholars of the book.

#### **4. Conservation of Parchment**

This weeklong winter seminar will be hosted by Buffalo State College every other year, alternating with the Descriptive Bibliography Seminar (#3, *above*), and will be taught by Abigail Quandt, Head of Book and Paper Conservation at The Walters Art Museum.

The seminar on parchment and vellum consists of a series of illustrated lectures, case histories, and discussions regarding the characteristics, conservation problems, and possible solutions regarding these materials. During lab time, participants will practice and demonstrate traditional and recent innovative techniques for repair, flattening, and general treatment of parchment and vellum, including the consolidation of pigment layers.

### **Tier Three – Preservation Issues in Library and Archives Conservation**

The third and final component of the LACE curriculum is a series of three online seminars addressing issues in areas of library and archives preservation that are currently of high concern to research institutions. Each online seminar consists of 3-5 modules of assigned readings and online lectures accompanied by a chat board for ongoing discussions and questions monitored/hosted by the instructor. After delivery of the final module, the students and the instructor will participate in an online video discussion seminar. Following the seminar, students will participate in a local practicum to apply the information learned.

#### **1. Identification and Care of Audiovisual Media**

This seminar was developed by Sarah Stauderman, Director of Collections at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. Students will be introduced to a wide range of existing AV media, to the problems associated with analog and digital information found in these formats, and to the complex preservation steps to safeguard this data/information.

## **2. Issues in Conserving Archival Collections**

Archival collections present unique conservation problems because of the manner in which they are collected, managed, and used. They are also frequently large and contain highly diverse materials and media. This seminar introduces students to the fundamentals of archival theory and practice, contrasting these with parallel practices in libraries and museums. Students will be introduced to the archival practices of collection, appraisal, arrangement, and description. Selected readings and discussion will focus on how these practices affect conservation decisions and overall collection preservation.

## **3. Issues in Preservation Management and Digitization in Libraries**

This hybrid seminar combines an online section modeled on the other online seminars with a two-day practical workshop hosted annually by WUDPAC. Seminar content will address the organization of preservation and conservation in libraries, planning and policy, cost analysis and contracting for services, and the role of digitization and digital preservation operations in preservation operations. Digitization plays an important preservation role through the production of surrogates that protect vulnerable originals from handling while dramatically increasing access. As digitization functions are frequently part of preservation operations, conservators increasingly play an important role in specifying digital capture processes, in defining the appropriate care of original materials before and after digitization, and in working as part of a team that specifies the long-term management of the digital files produced. The two-day hands-on session will involve a quantitative survey of a discrete collection with random sampling, analysis of results, and formulation of a proposal and project budget.

## **Internships**

### **Summer Work Projects (SWPs)**

All WUDPAC students complete an 8-week SWP during the summers after their first and second years of study. For LACE students in their first year, the 3-week Historical Book Structures Practicum in May/June counts toward the SWP, leaving time for a shorter (5 or 6 weeks) internship at a host site. For LACE fellows, at least one of the two SWPs must take place in a library, archives, historical society, or regional practice which serves such institutions.

### **Third-Year Internship**

LACE fellows are not limited to traditional libraries for their third-year internship. However, the spirit of the third year must somehow engage with library materials and/or the library context.