

Latin Manuscripts and Palaeography

Latin 10.04

Spring 2024 @ the 11

Interested? Contact jenny.lynn@dartmouth.edu



Working with manuscripts is an exciting experience that provides a tangible link to the past and its people. This course is designed to teach you to read the most important scripts that preserve Latin texts of all kinds in manuscripts written from the first century BC to the sixteenth century AD.

There is more to manuscript studies than palaeography, and more to a manuscript than the text it preserves: its script, its decorations, the material support on which it is written, the way it is bound, and the way it was used and altered by its readers all preserve information about the past.

We will meet in Rauner and will work closely with manuscripts in the College collections, supplemented with digital images of manuscripts held in other libraries around the world.

As a Humanities Lab course, we will also do hands-on work in the Book Arts Workshop to better understand the technologies of the scribe and the bookbinder, and have guest lectures from experts in book conservation, manuscript decoration, and even parchment-making.

This is a hands-on introduction to the work of the palaeographer, and students will learn to assess, transcribe, translate, and interpret manuscripts both as a means of textual transmission and as material objects that tell us about the people who made and who used them.

This course fulfills the ART distributive requirement.

Latin 10.04 is designed for students who have completed at least the Latin 1, 2, and 3 sequence here at Dartmouth, or who have come to Dartmouth having learned all the basics of Latin grammar.

Students who have already taken Latin 10.01, 10.02, or 10.03 or more advanced Latin classes are encouraged to enroll on the basis of interest.

Enrollment by Instructor Permission; contact jenny.lynn@dartmouth.edu if you are interested!



Images (front, clockwise from top left)

- British Library Cotton MS Nero D.IV folio 27r (The Lindisfarne Gospels, 8th century)
- Rauner MS 003103 folio 58r (a 15th-century French Book of Hours)
- Rauner 002286 fragment 7 (a 15th century text of Sallust, reused in a later binding)
- Rauner MS 003203 folio 79v (a repair to a corner of a 16th-century antiphoner)
- Parchment reused in a binding in an early printed text in the Rauner collection

Images (back, clockwise from top left)

- Rauner MS 003203 folio 29v (a 16th-century antiphoner)
- British Museum 1986,1001.64 = Tab. Vind. 291 (a personal letter written on wood in first century AD Britain)
- MS Vat. lat. 5757 folio 39 (a palimpsest of Cicero's de Republica, revealed under UV light)