MEDIEVAL STUDIES MAJOR

ADMISSION TO THE MAJOR

There are no requirements for admission to the medieval studies major. For information about the program, please visit our website at wesleyan.edu/medistud/.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Each student concentrating in medieval studies will be guided by a principal advisor within the field of specialization and two other faculty members from other fields of medieval studies. In some cases a consulting faculty member may be chosen from a field that is not an integral part of medieval studies but that is closely related to the student’s main area of interest (e.g., classics, linguistics). At the beginning of the fifth semester, each student is expected to submit for approval by his or her advisor a tentative schedule of courses to be taken to fulfill the requirements of the major. Subsequent changes in this schedule may be made only with the approval of the advisor.

Medieval studies majors take classes in a broad range of fields, including art history, archaeology, history, languages and literature, music history, manuscript studies, and religious studies. They are required to take 10 upper-level courses that will normally conform to the following:

- Four courses in the student’s chosen field of specialization
- Two courses in a second field of medieval studies
- One course in a third distinct field of medieval studies
- Three additional courses in any area of medieval studies, or in an outside field deemed, in consultation with the advisor, to be closely related to the student’s work in subject matter or method. For example, a student specializing in medieval history may count toward the major a course in ancient history or historical method, while a student specializing in medieval literature may include a course in classical literature or in the theory of literary criticism.

A student may take more than four courses in his/her primary area of specialization, but only four will be counted toward the major.

At least one of the courses in the primary area of specialization should be a seminar, as should at least one of the courses in either the second or third fields.

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

Medieval studies majors, through the study of methods in their chosen disciplines, will be expected to master the following skills:

- An ability to interpret intersections among the many cultures, religions, ethnicities, and identities of the European middle ages.
- The critical use of historical evidence across a range of disciplines.
- A comparative approach to medieval texts in various genres.
- The ability to construct arguments informed by ideas of temporalities and geographies that are currently debated by scholars in medieval studies.

STUDY ABROAD

Students majoring in the program are encouraged to spend at least one semester of study abroad and will be provided with assistance in planning their work abroad and in securing financial support for foreign study. Programs of study must be approved in advance by the student’s advising committee.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

All medieval studies majors are expected to have, at the latest by the beginning of their senior year, reading knowledge of at least one modern European foreign language. Latin is also strongly recommended. Ways of satisfying the language requirement can be determined by the advising committee of each student.

HONORS

Honors and high honors are awarded by vote of the medieval studies faculty to students whose coursework is judged to be of sufficiently high quality and who have done outstanding work on one or more of the following writing projects: a senior thesis, a senior essay, or a seminar paper nominated for honors or high honors by the instructor in the seminar. All writing projects will be evaluated by the individual advising committee before a recommendation for program honors is made. Students must file a statement of intent with the Honors Program and with the program chair before October 15th of the senior year. By vote of the medieval studies faculty, those who have been recommended for high honors in the program may be nominated for University Honors.

CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

Students in the program are normally expected to complete at least one long paper that may be a senior thesis, a senior essay, or a seminar paper.