

Undergraduate Course Description Packet Summer Intersession 2018

Updated: 03-19-2018

ENGL 4603, Special Topics: History of the Book

Teacher: J.B. Smith

Texts Required:

The Book: A Global History, ed. Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woodhuysen (Oxford, 2014). 978-0199679416

Description: Where do bookly standards come from? The Middle Ages? Lascivious Renaissance printers? The book industry? What *is* a book? This course invites students to learn and think critically about writing technologies, from cuneiform tablets to the Kindle. This course won't be like other English courses, as it will have a strong hands-on element. We will be spending half of our time in the Special Collections Library, examining and studying objects from our own archive, including cuneiform, papyrus fragments, medieval manuscripts, early printed books, and all manner of later books. We will learn how writing technology affects literature and literary interpretation. Our digital age, as we will see, is only just the most recent change in reading habits and the materiality of the written word

Essays, exams, and other major requirements for undergraduates: attendance; vigorous participation; one presentation; final project.