Medieval and Renaissance Studies

Medieval and Renaissance studies (MRS) provides a wide-ranging introduction to the pre- and early-modern era, spanning late antiquity to the mid-seventeenth century and reaching from Europe to cultures around the globe. It is adaptable to individual student interests, emphasizing historical traditions but also promoting reflection on the presence of the past in a fast-moving twenty-first-century world. Taught by professors from several different departments, the MRS curriculum is fundamentally interdisciplinary; students learn about literary, artistic, musical and other historical traditions; develop foreign language abilities; and acquire analytical skills applicable to both ancient and modern artifacts, ranging from manuscripts to mp3s. The MRS major offers an excellent preparation for Humanities graduate programs, but also provides a useful and well-rounded education for any student who values history, culture and the arts in their broadest sense.

The Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies (CMRS), one of the oldest and most highly developed Centers at Ohio State and one of the few that offers its own course of study, administers the MRS major. With over one hundred fifty affiliated professors in over twenty departments, the Center promotes interdisciplinary scholarship that crosses traditional historical and geographical boundaries. Featuring its own array of yearly grants and awards, lecture series and film series, conferences, and other events that bring students and faculty together from near and far, the CMRS represents a uniquely exciting resource for scholarship and community. Profiting from this rich environment, MRS students are able to study a wide range of topics within the major, touching on such diverse themes as the history, languages and cultures of Asia and the Near East; Mediterranean and transatlantic colonial trade; Christian, Jewish and Islamic philosophy and religion; and the music and dance of Renaissance Italy.

Pursuing Medieval and Renaissance Studies at Ohio State

All freshman applicants are considered within a competitive admission process for the Columbus campus; find admissions criteria at go.osu.edu/admissions.

Upon admission to the university, students can declare a major in medieval and Renaissance studies within the College of Arts and Sciences. Interested students should contact undergraduate advisors in both the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and Arts and Sciences Advising.

Medieval and Renaissance Studies Requirements

The major consists of 33 hours of course work offered by the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and its affiliated departments, including six credit hours of foreign language above the General Education (GE) requirement. Contact the associate director (the CMRS undergraduate advisor) for specific information.

Specific course choices are worked out on an individual basis and will vary according to the student’s particular interests. A concentration in a primary field will be complemented by select courses in other disciplines which will provide a solid foundation in the culture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance as well as the tools required to pursue more advanced study of these periods in a given area.

Co-Curricular Opportunities

Ohio State offers many opportunities for students to learn and grow outside of the classroom. These range from cooperative education (co-op) and internships to study abroad programs to student organizations. Co-ops and internships place students in professional environments while they are Ohio State students. Ohio State offers more than 100 study abroad programs in 40 countries around the world. In addition, there are hundreds of student organizations on campus to meet the interests of a diverse student population.

These experiences enable students to gain valuable work experience, learn about cultures and take on leadership roles before they enter the workforce. All of these experiences enhance learning and may provide an advantage in the job market.

Honors & Scholars Programs

Ohio State offers the Honors and Scholars Programs to create an environment of intellectual support and stimulation within a close-knit community of high-ability undergraduate students. Through these programs, students have access to smaller classes, undergraduate research opportunities, close working relationships with faculty, priority scheduling and unique housing options.

The Honors and Scholars Programs represent great opportunities to be part of a smaller community within a large university. For more information, visit honors-scholars.osu.edu.

For more information, check these websites:

Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies: cmrs.osu.edu
College of Arts and Sciences: artsandsciences.osu.edu
Ohio State: osu.edu
Admissions: undergrad.osu.edu
Multicultural Center: multiculturalcenter.osu.edu
First Year Experience: fye.osu.edu
Career Prospects in Medieval and Renaissance Studies

A specialist in medieval and Renaissance studies will generally pursue an advanced degree in one of the fields that comprise our affiliated disciplines. These include architecture, comparative studies, dance, East Asian studies, English, French, Italian, German, Greek, history, history of art, Jewish studies, Latin, linguistics, music history, Islamic studies, philosophy, Slavic, Spanish, Portuguese or theatre.

Specialists with an advanced degree in any of these fields could also earn a certificate in medieval and Renaissance studies as an adjunct to their field studies and would then be qualified to work in an interdisciplinary capacity in any of the occupations that are open to the specialist. These vary by field, but generally include teaching, research, writing, culture and language investigation and interpretation, as well as other tasks, which are more specific to the primary discipline. For instance, a person with an advanced degree in the history of art and a certificate in medieval and Renaissance studies would be eligible to apply for positions with museums housing medieval and/or Renaissance collections and for positions with corporate or private art collectors with a need for such a specialist. Graduates with an advanced degree in French and a certificate in medieval and Renaissance studies could apply for positions requiring knowledge of medieval or Renaissance literature in their chosen language for purposes of translation or interpretation.

Medieval and Renaissance studies also provide excellent training as a prelude to a career in law, business, library science, or museum management.

Persons with an undergraduate degree who choose not to pursue an advanced degree would be more widely versed in the humanities than the average college graduate and would find themselves in a more competitive posture in applying to positions where the traditional liberal arts background is valued.

There are no specific salary trends for the discipline. Salary would be whatever is appropriate for the field to which medieval and Renaissance studies is an adjunct.

Career Counseling and Job Placement

Students can explore career options by utilizing Career Connection as well as the Arts and Sciences Career Services Office. Providing complimentary services, Career Connection focuses on helping students establish a career direction, while the Arts and Sciences Career Services Office assists students with finding internships—experiences that are essential to testing out the suitability of career fields they are considering. Located in 48 Townshend Hall, the Arts and Sciences Career Services Office also assists seniors and recent graduates with finding entry-level career employment.

More information about both offices is found at ascCareerservices.osu.edu and careerconnection.osu.edu.

Revised January 2014. Information subject to change. For the most up-to-date information on the medieval and Renaissance studies program, visit cmrs.osu.edu and click on Curriculum.

Contact information:

Leslie Lockett | Associate Director and Advisor | 460 Denney Hall
164 Annie & John Glenn Avenue | Columbus, Ohio 43210 | lockett.20@osu.edu

Graeme M. Boone | Director | Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies
456 Hagerty Hall | 1775 College Road | Columbus, Ohio 43210 | 614-292-7495