Center for the Book

Director
• Timothy D. Barrett

Graduate degree: M.F.A. in book arts
Graduate certificate: book studies/book arts and technologies
Faculty: https://book.grad.uiowa.edu/faculty-and-staff/instructors
Website: https://book.grad.uiowa.edu

The University of Iowa Center for the Book represents a community of faculty, staff, students, and local book specialists with interests in all facets of book production, distribution, and use. Some members of the center actively research the history and circulation of the book, examining the role of books in cultural and historical processes. They also look at how changes in book production affect the way books are viewed as artifacts. Specialists in book arts and technologies study the history and technique of book crafts, including letterpress printing, typography, calligraphy, papermaking, and bookbinding. Others engage in the conservation or production of books, including artists’ books and literary fine press publications.

The center offers classes; sponsors lectures, seminars, and workshops; and encourages the exchange of ideas among individuals with interests in the book. A wide range of perspectives on the book as an aesthetic, cultural, and historical artifact is provided by associated faculty, staff, and graduate students in the Schools of Art and Art History and Library and Information Science; the Departments of History and English; University of Iowa Libraries; the Creative Writing Program (Iowa Writers’ Workshop); and other areas. This interdisciplinary membership and the center’s facilities combine to provide an exceptional environment for studying the history of the book, its evolution, and its future.

Graduate students may earn a master’s degree or a graduate certificate through the center. Undergraduate students may add dimension to their majors in English, art, journalism, history, and other disciplines by taking Center for the Book courses in book arts and book studies. They also may include an emphasis on book arts or on cultural and historical aspects of the book in the interdepartmental studies major.

Programs

Graduate Programs of Study

Major
• Master of Fine Arts in Book Arts

Certificate
• Certificate in Book Studies/Book Arts and Technologies

Courses

Center for the Book Courses

UICB:2110 Introduction to Book Arts 3 s.h.
Creative writing in context of book arts; text and image, typography, visual sequence, graphic narrative; zines, chapbooks, broadsides, and artist’s books.

UICB:2900 Book Design for Publishing 3 s.h.
Introduction to the major aspects of book design, including typography, layout, standard industry software, discussion of trends in the field. Same as ARTS:2900, ENGL:2900, WRIT:2900.

UICB:3100 Elements of Book Art 3 s.h.
Overview of book art process and techniques for nonmajors; introduction to traditional bookbinding skills, nontraditional book structures, and content development for artist books. GE: Engineering Be Creative. Same as BKAT:3280.

UICB:3380 Elements of Letterpress 3 s.h.
Introduction to letterpress printing; metal type, relief printing, page layout, and basic typography; basic use of Vandercook Proof Press; experimentation with diverse letterpress techniques; for non-book art majors. GE: Engineering Be Creative. Same as BKAT:3280.

UICB:3400 Calligraphy: Foundational Hands 3 s.h.
Fundamental calligraphic skills using Roman majuscule, Humanistic minuscule, Italic; basic layout and color theory incorporated into letter practice. Same as BKAT:3380.

UICB:3400 Calligraphy: Foundational Hands 3 s.h.
Conceptual and methodological approaches to 2-D and 3-D paper works; creation of works that couple unique properties of paper-pulp medium with personal visual ideas and clarity of intent; contemporary issues in paper pulp, medium’s relationship to larger art and craft contexts. GE: Engineering Be Creative. Same as BKAT:4100.
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<th>Course Name</th>
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<td>Introduction to Book Studies</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
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<td>UICB:4205</td>
<td>Bookbinding I: Materials and Techniques</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
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<td>UICB:4210</td>
<td>Boxes and Enclosures</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
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<td>UICB:4270</td>
<td>Bookbinding II</td>
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<td>Artists' Books</td>
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<td>Digital Design for Artists' Books</td>
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<td>Book and Publication Design</td>
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<td>UICB:4492</td>
<td>The Transition from Manuscript to Print</td>
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<td>UICB:4920</td>
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<td>UICB:4930</td>
<td>Topics in Material Analysis</td>
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<td>Islamic/Asian Papermaking History and Technique</td>
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<td>UICB:5130</td>
<td>European Papermaking History and Technique</td>
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<tr>
<td>UICB:5160</td>
<td>Studies in Papermaking</td>
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UICB:5170 Advanced Papermaking Production 3 s.h.
Independent Western- or Japanese-style projects undertaken at UICB Research and Production Paper Facility at Oakdale Campus under faculty guidance; plan, implement, and evaluate professional scale production runs using full-scale equipment. Prerequisites: UICB:5110 or UICB:5130 or BKT:5110 or BKT:5120. Same as BKT:5170.

UICB:5180 Advanced Projects in Paper 1-3 s.h.
Advanced independent projects undertaken in a classroom setting; collaborative group discussions to plan, implement, troubleshoot, and evaluate student projects. Prerequisites: UICB:5110 or UICB:5130 or BKT:5110 or BKT:5120. Same as BKT:5180.

UICB:5210 Bookbinding III 3 s.h.
Bookbinding structures based on historical and contemporary models; differences in various binding practices, how these differences affect function, why the styles developed; experience choosing appropriate structures for particular uses; emphasis on fine tuning skills and techniques required for advanced binding practices; sewn endbands, rounding and backing, sewing on varied supports, board attachments, and covering methods. Prerequisites: (UICB:4205 or BKT:4205) and (UICB:4270 or BKT:4270). Requirements: for UICB:5210—UICB:4205 and UICB:4270; for BKT:5210—BKT:4205 or BKT:4270. Same as BKT:5210.

UICB:5220 Book Conservation 3 s.h.
Practical methods, materials assessment, conservation history and evolution. Prerequisites: UICB:4270. Same as SLIS:5535.

UICB:5260 Studies in Bookbinding 3 s.h.
Topics related to hand bookbinding. Same as BKT:5260.

UICB:5280 Bookbinding IV 3 s.h.
Advanced studies in bookbinding; fine binding styles, leather paring and tooling, advanced finishing techniques, refining skills; continued look at differences in regional binding practices, how these differences affect function, and why particular styles developed. Prerequisites: UICB:5210.

UICB:5330 Letterpress III: Imagemaking arr.
Advanced work in alternative and innovative letterpress technologies as they apply to imagemaking processes for fine press printing; topics include pressure printing, photopolymer from nondigital negatives, explorations of type-high surfaces, monoprints on the Vandercook, and applying hand work to editioned prints; students complete a series of print exercises for each process, a small printed book sketch, and a longer format editioned artist book. Prerequisites: UICB:4380. Same as ARTS:5330.

UICB:5340 Letterpress III: The Handprinted Book 3 s.h.
Advanced work in fine press book design; exploration of problems in hand-printing books, choice of manuscript, editing, design, typesetting, proofreading, printing and binding; histories of printing and of the book, emphasis on 20th- and 21st-century book design and literature; issues of book design and production related to letterpress printing. Prerequisites: UICB:4380. Same as ARTS:5340.

UICB:5370 Studies in Printing 1-3 s.h.
Development of individual book projects and production of one substantial project or several smaller ones; focus on acquiring or creating a text and/or other content; project development; range of print techniques available in letterpress printing; issues involved in producing editioned artist books or fine press work; opportunity to expand on existing printing; classroom setting used to augment work sessions with in-progress critiques, readings, and visits to special collections.

UICB:5380 Letterpress IV: Advanced Projects 3 s.h.
Development and/or production of one substantial project; focus on acquiring or creating a text and/or other content; project development; range of print techniques available in letterpress printing; issues involved in producing editioned artist books or fine press work; opportunity to expand existing printing; classroom setting augments work sessions with in-progress critiques, readings, and visits to special collections. Prerequisites: UICB:5330 or UICB:5340.

UICB:5520 Studies in Book History and Technologies 0-3 s.h.
Topics related to production, distribution, and consumption of books through history and into the future. Same as SLIS:5520.

UICB:5530 Topics in Preservation 3 s.h.
Care, conservation, and preservation of cultural heritage artifacts; readings, discussion, hands-on sessions. Same as SLIS:5530.

UICB:5540 Topics in Book Arts 1-3 s.h.
Focus on particular techniques and concepts in the book arts and related fields.

UICB:5550 Special Project for Graduate Students arr.
Independent study.

UICB:5560 History of Readers and Reading 3 s.h.
Cultural nature of reading practices in historic and contemporary contexts; print and digital culture; reading communities; examples of recent scholarship; use of primary resources; seminar. Same as SLIS:5600.

UICB:6100 Book Studies Proseminar 1-3 s.h.
Independent study.

UICB:6170 Topics in Book Studies 3 s.h.
Topics relevant to book studies and special collections. Same as SLIS:6370.

UICB:6510 Book Art Seminar: History, Practice, and Critique 3 s.h.
Art-historical introduction to book arts (printing, bookbinding, papermaking and paperworks, artist bookwork, lettering arts, literary fine press and fine press artist books); influences and origins, contemporary practice, critical considerations; locating field through lenses of fine art, craft, and book history; weekly readings, observational analyses, hands-on exercises; archival research in the University of Iowa Libraries Special Collections; final research, analytical, and/or critical project.

UICB:6520 Graduate Book Arts Workshop 3 s.h.
Development of artwork and studio practice; readings and research in contemporary theory and practice; analysis of visual language; integration of creative activities and critical thinking in student’s own art practice and analysis of contemporary work in book arts; group and individual critiques, studio assignments, presentations, discussions.

UICB:6540 M.F.A. Thesis Hours arr.