Center for the Book

Interim Director

Bradley Clark Dicharry (School of Art, Art History, and Design)

Assistant Director

Kathleen Tandy

Graduate degree: MFA in book arts

Graduate certificate: book arts and book studies

Faculty: https://uicb.uiowa.edu/faculty-and-staff-0

Website: https://uicb.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, Art History, and Design, and Library and Information Science; the departments of History and English; the 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 for the Book. 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

- Master of Fine Arts in Book Arts
- Certificate in Book Arts and Book Studies

Courses

Center for the Book Courses

UICB:2100 Creative Writing for 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:2110 Introduction to Book Arts 3 s.h.
Topics related to artist books, hand bookbinding, letterpress printing, papermaking, and lettering arts. GE: Engineering Be Creative; Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts. Same as BKAT:2110.

UICB:2190 The Book in Global History 3 s.h.
Introduction to history of the book and book arts in diverse global contexts; histories of visual and verbal media, cross-cultural exchange, and the book's impact across time and space; hands-on work with historical books and book arts including papermaking, woodblock and letterpress printing, and binding. GE: Historical Perspectives. Same as ENGL:2901, HIST:2190.

UICB:2600 Graphic Design II 3 s.h.
Fundamentals of typography as a core element in visual communication; introduction to historical typographic practices as well as modern modes of designing with type. Prerequisites: ARTS:1510 and ARTS:1520. Corequisites: DSGN:2500. Same as DSGN:2600.

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:3140 Literature and the Book 3 s.h.
The relationship between literature and the book as a medium. Same as ENGL:3140.

UICB:3142 Topics in Book History 3 s.h.
Authorship, publishing, etc. within specific historical and cultural contexts. Same as ENGL:3142.

UICB:3280 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 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. GE: Engineering Be Creative. Same as BKAT:3380.

UICB:3401 Literature and Book History 3 s.h.
Investigation of literature and book history. Same as ENGL:3401.

UICB:3900 Special Project for Undergraduates arr.
Independent study.

UICB:3980 American Print Culture 3 s.h.
Exploration of a wide range of imagery printed and published in the United States during 19th century (1776-1900); fine art original prints, popular imagery in periodicals and illustrated books, scholarly literature, history of evolving technologies, variety of printed work; shifting reputation of printed art and its makers. Same as ARTH:3980.

UICB:4100 Paperworks 3 s.h.
Conceptual and methodological approaches to 2D and 3D 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.

UICB:4150 Introduction to Book Studies 3 s.h.
Theory and practice of book studies; meanings of word and image in the book format; comparative study of other media, applied study of the codex as a physical artifact. Same as ENGL:4150, SLIS:4150.

UICB:4205 Bookbinding I: Materials and Techniques 3 s.h.
Hands-on introduction to materials and techniques commonly used in bookbinding. Same as BKAT:4205.

UICB:4210 Boxes and Enclosures 3 s.h.
Hands-on techniques for a variety of book enclosures; appropriateness, aesthetic issues concerning box design; Japanese wraparound case, drop-spine box, hinged and lidded boxes, slipcase; technical skill development. Prerequisites: UICB:4205. Same as BKAT:4210.

UICB:4270 Bookbinding II 3 s.h.
Builds on skills acquired in UICB:4205; projects to complete six bindings based on historical and contemporary models; sewing styles, board attachments, endband types; nonadhesive and case-bound structures, varied materials and binding styles, their effects on structure, aesthetic considerations, further development of solid binding skills; historical development of particular binding practices. Prerequisites: UICB:4205. Same as BKAT:4270.

UICB:4280 Artists' Books 3 s.h.
Exploration of the book as a form for artistic expression; emphasis on conceptual development; relationship between content, form, and structure; how a book's structure and design can enhance and integrate part of the work's meaning. Prerequisites: UICB:4205 or BKAT:4205. Same as BKAT:4280.

UICB:4290 Historical Book Structures 3 s.h.
Historical development of book structures examined through surviving examples, construction of historical models. Prerequisites: UICB:4205.

UICB:4300 Letterpress I 3 s.h.
Mechanics of letterpress printing, typography, and design as applied to hand set metal type and edition printing; printing on a Vandercook proof press; introduction to photopolymer plates and methods of illustration related to edition printing, historical aspects of printing technology, typecasting, type classification; role of letterpress in modern private press and contemporary artist books. Same as ARTS:4300.

UICB:4370 Topics in Letterpress arr.
Rotating topics in intermediate letterpress printing; image-making, relief printing, typesetting, edition printing, print, and book production. Prerequisites: UICB:3380 or BKAT:3380 or UICB:4300 or ARTS:4300.

UICB:4380 Letterpress II 3 s.h.
Builds on skills acquired in UICB:4300; students produce an editioned letterpress printed chapbook or artist book, a poster for a public event, and an image built from metal type; exploration of hand-set metal, digital typesetting, printing from photopolymer plates, and pressure printing; press mechanics and operation; publication philosophies, manuscript acquisition, and topics specific to literary fine press and artist books; historical and contemporary context for literary fine press publications and artist book work. Prerequisites: UICB:4300. Same as ARTS:4380.

UICB:4390 Book and Publication Design 3 s.h.
Students plan, design, and produce a book using Adobe Creative Suite; page layout software, typography, page layout and design, book formatting, handling of image files, preparation of materials for print and other contemporary book media; history of book design, book design in contemporary publishing; visit to University of Iowa Libraries Special Collections. Prerequisites: DSGN:2600 or UICB:4300. Same as ARTS:4390.

UICB:4400 History of Western Letterforms 3 s.h.
History of Western letterforms, with focus on tools, materials, techniques; the major hands, their place in history, their influence on modern times; creation of letterforms using appropriate tools; hands-on approach with emphasis on understanding rather than mastery. Same as ARTS:4400.

UICB:4405 Introduction to Calligraphy Intensive 3 s.h.
Intensive, basic broad pen calligraphy; Roman capitals, lowercase Roman and italic lettering.

UICB:4415 Introduction to Classical Calligraphy 3 s.h.
Basic calligraphy with focus on the hands modern classic typefaces are inspired by (e.g., Roman capitals, lowercase Roman, italic). GE: Engineering Be Creative. Same as ARTS:4415.

UICB:4420 Introduction to Medieval Calligraphy 3 s.h.
Basic calligraphy covering several medieval hands collectively known as blackletter, from heavily vertical Textura to florid Gothic Cursive.

UICB:4490 Advanced Studies in Letter Arts 3 s.h.
Special topics and advanced projects in calligraphy and letter arts. Prerequisites: UICB:4400 or UICB:4415 or UICB:4420. Same as ARTS:4490.

UICB:4910 The Book in the Middle Ages 3 s.h.
Relation of text, decoration, function, creators, and audience in different genres of medieval manuscript books 400-1500 A.D. Same as HIST:4422, SLIS:4910.

UICB:4920 The Book in Early Modern Europe 3 s.h.
History of the book and communication in Europe 1400-1800; production, distribution, and use of texts in cultural context. Same as HIST:4429, SLIS:4920.

UICB:5100 Papermaking I 3 s.h.
Foundational papermaking; history, technique, and aesthetics. Same as BKAT:5100.

UICB:5110 Papermaking I: East Asia, Nepal, and Contemporary Practice 3 s.h.
History, technique, and aesthetics of East Asian and Nepalese papermaking, along with their respective contemporary practices. Same as BKAT:5110.

UICB:5130 Papermaking I: Central Asia, Europe, and Contemporary Practice 3 s.h.
Foundational papermaking; history, technique, and aesthetics of Central Asian, Islamicate, and European papermaking; respective contemporary practices. Same as BKAT:5120.

UICB:5140 Papermaking II 3 s.h.
Contemporary papermaking studio practice and conceptual considerations; focus on nontraditional techniques and cross-disciplinary use of paper fibers and handmade paper; handmade paper as a form of artistic expression. Prerequisites: UICB:4100 or BKAT:4100 or UICB:5110 or BKAT:5110 or UICB:5130 or BKAT:5120. Same as BKAT:5140.

UICB:5170 Papermaking III: The Papermakers 3 s.h.
Students hone skills, drawing inspiration from papermaking societies, and conduct hands-on production and research. Prerequisites: UICB:4100 or UICB:5110 or UICB:5130 or UICB:5140 or BKAT:4100 or BKAT:5110 or BKAT:5120. Same as BKAT: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 BKAT:5110 or BKAT:5120. Same as BKAT: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 BKAT:4205) and (UICB:4270 or BKAT:4270). Requirements: for UICB:5210—UICB:4205 and UICB:4270; for BKAT:5210—BKAT:4205 or BKAT:4270 or UICB:4205 or UICB:4270. Same as BKAT:5210.

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

UICB:5280 Advanced Projects in Bookbinding 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:4270.

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:5380 Advanced Projects in Letterpress 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:4380.

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 Preservation Management 3 s.h.
Responsible stewardship of collections, integration of preservation into libraries and archives systems, maximizing limited resources, establishing preservation priorities, and advocacy; appropriate care of books, paper, photographs, time-based media (e.g., audio, video, film), and born-digital objects; lectures, discussions, student presentations, and hands-on activities; for students who will be responsible for managing collections. 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:5600 Reading Culture: History and Research in Print and Digital Media 3 s.h.
What reading means, and what it means to read, have changed with time and place; cultural study of books and reading to evaluate strategies and resources involved in crafting historical interpretations of books and their readers; consideration of ways that reading has always been interdependent with other media, from needlework to social media; how researchers locate and interpret primary source material to study reading culture, and how cultural heritage organizations promote their holdings to researchers. Same as SLIS:5600.

UICB:5930 Topics in Material Analysis 3 s.h.
Analysis and description of physical book artifacts and their component parts (parchment, paper, bookbinding) and allied specialties (the lettering arts, printing and illustration techniques); reading, writing, presentations.

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

UICB:6370 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:6530 Book History Seminar 3 s.h.
Topics, theories, and methods in book history, material textual studies, material culture studies, and critical bibliography. Integration of historical questions, sources, and methods into student's scholarly and creative work. Same as HIST:6130.

UICB:6540 MFA Thesis Hours arr.