Textual Studies Program

Overview

Textual studies encompasses a broad set of disciplines in the arts and humanities concerned with the production, circulation, and reception of texts in material form. From memory to written record, manuscript to book, cuneiform tablet to tablet PC, textual studies comprehends the products of literary and documentary culture in diachronic terms, and meaning as inseparable from the medium of inscription. Its approaches, like texts themselves, cut across historical periods and geographical space. As a field of inquiry, it is at once theoretical and applied, uniting scholars and publics in critical reflection on matters fundamental to higher education: reading, writing, the library, the book.

The Textual Studies Program draws on the expertise of an interdisciplinary group of UW faculty, information professionals, and distinguished visitors to provide students with a foundation for advanced archival research and inquiry into the materiality of written culture. The program's core courses survey the interconnected histories of manuscript, print, and digital texts and acquaint students with theories of textuality that form the basis for literary and cultural study. Seminars incorporate colloquia and public events to expose students to diverse methodologies in the field as well as practical applications in the wider enterprise of editing, translation, publishing, data mining, librarianship, and alternative-academic professions. Graduate students from any UW department or school may enroll in Textual Studies courses. Doctoral students in participating departments may pursue a degree option in Textual Studies concurrently with their Ph.D. Any UW student in good academic standing enrolled in a master's or doctoral program can earn a Graduate Certificate in Textual and Digital Studies.

Contact Information

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Textual Studies Program website

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