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- Chas Firestone East
  Columbia University (2025)
- Loren Lee
Chair’s Message

Dear friends and colleagues,

Here in the northeastern US the sun is finally starting to appear again. Spring is sort of, almost, nearly here. It’s been a busy time here in the GSC, as ever! We were thrilled to meet so many graduate students at the Medieval Academy of America’s Annual Meeting in March at our social hour, sponsored session “Communities of Knowledge, Communities of Labor: Union Organizing in Higher Education,” and the Annual GSC/IDC Mentoring Lunch.

We’ve had two workshops this year, one on organizing research and another on accessing libraries and archives. You can find the latter on the MAA’s YouTube channel. On April 30th we have a third workshop called “Grant Writing: A Conversation with Recipients,” during which past grant recipients will share their advice (see Announcements below). For those of you who were unable to attend the Digital Humanities Showcase 2.0 in January, you can find recordings on the MAA’s YouTube channel as well. We’ve also provided a handy write-up of the sessions in this issue, along with links to many of the projects. Have a look over them. Reach out to the creators! You never know what new research opportunities might emerge! This spring you can also look for the GSC at our sessions at ICMS Kalamazoo and IMC Leeds. We hope you will consider signing up for our conference mentorship programs, whether you are attending the conferences or not!

I am also happy to announce that the recipient of this year’s MAA/GSC Innovation in Community Building and Professionalization Grant is “Ballintober Bonds: Introductory Community Archaeology Workshop Series” (PI Wendy H. Vencel, North Carolina State University). Congratulations to Wendy and all those involved in the project!

In previous newsletters this academic year we’ve looked to earlier articles published by graduate students. But this final issue looks to the future. At the GSC we want to better understand graduate students’ needs and create the resources that graduates feel they are lacking. We all know that humanities funding is shrinking in some sectors, yet at the same time medievalist graduates are looking to get training in more and more diverse fields or skills. The
GSC and CARA are therefore working together to find out what we can do to bring much-needed support to graduate students.

We have two surveys in this newsletter, and we would be endlessly grateful if you could take some time to fill one, or both, of them out (more information on each is available below). With our first survey, we want to find out what languages and professional skills graduates need. What does your institution provide (in terms of courses or funding)? What are you unable to find? This information is vital as we look to improve future programming and develop new ways of providing training. Second, we are looking to gather information on what graduate students need from their advisors, mentors, and supervisors. Graduate school is a challenging process, and good guidance or mentorship often sets graduate students up for a greater chance of success. We want to find out whether graduate students feel they receive the support they need. If so, what form does it take? If not, what is missing? We intend to use the results not only to improve our own mentorship programmes, but to inform faculty in the MAA and beyond so that they are better equipped to help students.

This Newsletter is my last as editor and as Chair of the GSC. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to several people and groups who have supported me and the GSC over the years. Special thanks to my colleagues in the GSC, Maria Thomas, Maggie Heeschen, Masha Goldin, Chas Firestone-East, Andrea Klassen, and Loren Lee. Nothing we have achieved this year would have been possible without their dedication and tireless effort. Thank you also to the producers of the Multicultural Middle Ages podcast, Jonathan Correa-Reyes, Logan Quigley, and Reed O’Mara for championing graduate student voices. A special thank you to Reed for making the transition into the role of chair so seamless at the end of her term. The GSC are indebted to the MAA, and we are especially thankful to Robin Fleming, Lisa Fagin Davis, and Chris Cole. Thank you also to other committees at the MAA, including (but far from limited to) CARA, the Digital Humanities and Multimedia Studies Committee, and the Inclusion and Diversity Committee. Collaboration is essential for our field to survive, and I am grateful to all committees for being so open to collaborative efforts and being such generous mentors. Finally, thank you to the graduate students.

Cheers,
Will Beattie
Chair, Graduate Student Committee

Valuing Expertise on the Middle Ages
The MAA is dedicated to building an environment that welcomes and equally values the expertise of all its members, whether they be librarians, K-12 teachers, independent scholars, curators, early-career scholars, lecturers, post-docs, grad students, first-generation scholars, or tenure-track professors. To do so, we need your help.

Whether you are a longtime Academy member or are just starting out as a medievalist, tell us if you have felt that your expertise has not been valued or that your perspectives were unappreciated in this organization. We want to hear your frank views and experiences, no matter how negative—particularly if you are a scholar of color, a person with a disability, or a member of the LGBTQ+ community and have not felt seen and valued by the MAA. Please use this link to take an anonymous, one-minute poll.

If you have suggestions as to how the Academy and I can do better, we welcome them. But you don’t have to have the solutions. That’s the job of all members of the Academy’s governance structures. We’re here to serve YOU.

**GSC Graduate Language and Professional Skills Training Survey** - contribute to the GSC and CARA’s evaluation of graduate student training, so that we can create more programming. 

In recent years the resources and funding opportunities for humanities scholars have been declining, while the cost of obtaining essential professional skills has increased. Graduate students in Medieval Studies, who need to learn ancient, medieval, and modern languages as well as many diverse skills including paleography, digital humanities tools, preservation methods, are among the most affected by these changes.

The Graduate Student Committee and CARA are gathering information on the skills that graduate students need so that we can explore new ways of providing training. To ensure that proposed solutions work for graduates, we would be grateful if you could answer this short questionnaire. We’d like to better understand what skills graduates can develop at their institutions, what skills they must go elsewhere to acquire, and what challenges they encounter in either circumstance. The survey is anonymous and takes 5-10 minutes to complete.

Have your say via the link!
**GSC Mentoring Survey** - contribute now to the GSC’s evaluation of contemporary graduate students' experiences of supervision in Medieval Studies!

For many graduate students, supervision and mentoring are a huge part of our progress through our graduate programs. It is a professional relationship as old as the very institution of the university. But how do graduate students in Medieval Studies feel about their work with their supervisors? Do graduates receive the guidance and support that they need? What is working well and what needs to be updated as this medieval student-mentor-supervisor setting moves further into the 21st century? What do students expect of an advisor? What can be done to ensure the success of this dynamic? What can senior professionals do to help graduates? These are some of the questions that we seek to examine, with your help! We have designed the (very short!) questionnaire in the link below to learn more about the experience of graduates. Our goal is to share this research with the MAA so that new tools can be developed to help senior medievalists become great mentors, and to assist with our own mentorship schemes in the GSC. The survey is anonymous and takes 5-10 minutes to complete.

Have your say via the [link](#)!

**Digital Humanities Showcase: Second Edition with the editors**

After a successful first edition in December 2022, the GSC recently held another exciting edition of the Digital Humanities Showcase (each is available in three parts on our [YouTube page](#)). This virtual gathering is a forum for medievalists to discuss and learn about, as well as celebrate, their achievements and work in the digital humanities, broadly conceived. With no less than twelve contributions the showcase was indeed a celebration, spanning an entire, truly inspiring day!

*Session 1: Mapping*

**Lucas McMahon** (University of Ottawa) has introduced us to the Digital Humanities method he has applied in his research, namely, the ArcGIS Pro cost-distance model. By defining several factors in the historical environments of Anatolia and Syria for the tool, McMahon used it to calculate the most efficient paths between the two centers. He was thus able to provide important insights into the changing routes between the tenth and the twelfth centuries, showing that the route to Syria became longer in the later period. Next up was a presentation of the “The Outremer Map Project” by **James Terrasi, Elias Holmquist, and Frances Seabrook** (Fordham University). The speakers shared some facts about the past, present, and future of the digital tool their team has developed: an online, easily navigable, interactive map of the Holy Land, based on Matthew Paris’s original (Oxford, UK, Corpus Christi College MS 2* ff.2v-3r). The map is full of information regarding the primary source and the locations it records, accessible to all in just a few clicks.
Session 2: Manuscripts and Fragments

This session further hammered the potential of digital humanities for manuscript studies. Yael Sagi (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) demonstrated how a seminar on Digital Humanities allowed her to experiment and effectively address her research question of how medieval reality was portrayed in a group of three mid-twelfth-century medieval French translations and adaptations of classical texts. By working with Transkribus, Chat GpT, CATMA, and ViS-Á-VIS, Sagi has been able to show illuminating statistics regarding the recurrence of terms that indicate how often contemporary themes were reflected in her sources. With the next presentation on “Digital Fragmentology in the Classroom” by Lisa Fagin Davis (Medieval Academy of America) the point that Digital Humanities and teaching should go hand-in-hand became even clearer. Thanks to Fragmentarium Lisa has been able to digitally reconstruct manuscripts from fragments for her research as well as to guide and collaborate with students on preparing reconstructions and making them publicly accessible online.
Elizabeth Morrison (J. Paul Getty Museum) presented the project “Pink Qur’an Digital Reconstruction” which seeks to collect data on the scattered folia of the Pink Qur’an (thirteenth century, Spain). It provides the (not only scholarly) public with a better picture of the fragmented Qur’an, its history, and provenance. With the next presentation by Lynn Dodd and Sabina Zonno (University of Southern California), we were introduced to a whole new direction in the field of medieval manuscripts’ reconstruction: namely, recreating the experience of manuscripts in their medieval set and setting. The team behind the so-called “Virtual Reality Global Library” works on offering 3D immersive environment experiences with immense potential for medievalists: with the help of a headset, users will be able to explore manuscripts with the backdrop of audio-visual effects that represent medieval spaces, with features such as removing or adding pilgrims’ badges to the pages, and more.

Session 3: Architecture
Martin Schwarz (University of Basel) presented a very promising exhibition project he initiated in collaboration with the Kunstmuseum Basel. The project suggests using 3D modeling to bring the so-called “Basel Goldschmiederisse” to life: or, in other words, to translate these Late Gothic geometric figures from the two-dimensional plane views they depict into their potential three-dimensional elevation.
From micro-architectonic plans, we moved to dealing with larger-scale buildings and spaces. Nicola Camerlenghi (Dartmouth College) presented “The Virtual Basilica Project” which provides a variety of modes for experiencing the church of Saint Paul outside the city walls of Rome, which burnt down in 1823. The software is a useful tool for teaching: one can prepare virtual tours with recorded remarks. The session concluded with George R. Bent (Washington and Lee University), whose presentation of the project “Florence As It Was: The Digital Reconstruction of a Medieval City” exemplified the many possibilities digital humanities offer for studying built environments. Providing both annotated photogrammetric and point cloud models of various sites, the project’s website is a valuable resource for studying medieval Florence.
Session 4: Texts and Editions

Anna de Bakker gave us an insight into the capabilities of the digital tool Cantus Ultimus and the Cantus Database. Using the 12th century “Gottschalk Antiphonal” as a case-study, she explored how the ability to compare chant metadata and manuscript images together in Cantus Ultimus, as well as rubrics, changes, and more is opening new possibilities for fragment analysis.

For a change of pace, Curtis Rager and Maria Carriere spoke on their experiences joining a project which was originally launched in 2018: The “Siege of Antioch Project” (SAP). This enormously collaborative enterprise (Fordham’s Center for Medieval Studies work with scholars in the UK and Italy) aims to offer an interactive editio princeps and English translation of the Old French Siège d’Antioche. As students responsible for encoding translations in XML, the presentation is a clear example of the increasing value of digital humanities and coding skills.

Session 5: Feature Presentation

The Showcase’s feature presentation was a powerful example of inter-institutional and interdisciplinary collaboration delivered by Sarah Blick and Anthony Masinton. Their project, “Storytelling with Cathedrals,” is an attempt to use virtual space to help students understand the
creation and evolving uses of medieval Christian religious space. They are creating free software, called “The Mason’s Loft,” to do just that. Anyone who has played a city-builder computer game might be familiar with the basic tools of the interface. Students can place and manipulate sections of a cathedral in a virtual sandbox as though building with Lego. The speakers discussed the inbuilt limitations of the game, which encourage students to think critically about design choices, resources, and how architectural styles changed over the centuries. Masinton develops the programming, and Blick tests it with her classes. The program has thus been responsive to the needs and experiences of students. You can find the game files and installation guides here. Please feel free to reach out to Anthony Masinton at amasinton@gmail.com if you have any questions!

[Caption for image above: Examples of student-created cathedrals in “The Mason’s Loft.”]

Announcements

Events:
30 April 2024
Grant Writing: A Conversation with Recipients The GSC invites you to hear from recipients of major grants about the application process as well other aspects of research funding. Find out further info in the flier below, and register here.
9-11 May 2024

The GSC at the 59th International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo: The GSC is sponsoring two events at this year’s Congress, which are designed to help graduates with their research and presentation. The first is a workshop, "Open-Source Medieval Studies: Digital Tools and Tricks for Graduate Student Research," led by Benjamin Albritton, which will take place on Thursday at 1:30 PM (Session 63, Sangren Hall 2110). The second is a GSC Roundtable which will take place on Friday at 3:30 PM (Session 288, Sangren Hall 2710 (hybrid), "Publishing as a Graduate Student"). Finally, please join the Graduate Student Committee for the annual ICMS Mixer on Thursday evening from 6-7 PM in the Social Room of the Kanley Chapel.

GRANT WRITING:
A CONVERSATION WITH RECIPIENTS

Join us for a conversation with young scholars who have successfully secured major funding for their research. We will delve into navigating the application process, sharing insights on how you might secure your own prestigious fellowships. We will explore questions like: How do you balance application writing with research and teaching commitments? Who can you turn to for help in this process? How do you manage funding once you have it? And how can external funding shape your work in unexpected ways?

PANELISTS INCLUDE:
Carolin Gluchowski (Oxford), Amy Juarez (UC-Riverside), Tori Schmitt (UCLA), & Emma Snowden (UTK)

30 APRIL 2024 @1:00PM (EST)

REGISTER FOR THE ZOOM TO JOIN!
1 July 2024

Community in Times of Crisis: Graduate Students in Medieval Studies and the Role of Service, A Roundtable Discussion. The GSC invites you to our sponsored session at IMC Leeds 2024 (Session 411, running from 19:00-20:00 GMT, organized by Chas Firestone East and Masha Goldin). This session brings together graduate students and scholars to explore the connection between active involvement in academic associations and organizations and building a resilient community during challenging times. How can graduate students best support each other and foster community over competition? What strategies can graduate students employ in their roles within academic organizations to encourage collaboration and mutual support? Is there a “crisis” in the academic job market for medieval studies, and how can involvement in collaborative communities help to address this crisis? What practical steps can graduate students take in their teaching, research, and service to best prepare themselves for the market as it stands? Participants include Lydia Shahan (Harvard University), Will Beattie (University of Notre Dame), and Emily Sun (Harvard University).

Deadlines:

1 May 2024

Workshop on the Public Medieval: While tenure-track positions for medievalists have declined in recent years, there has been a resurgence in public interest in medieval studies. To respond to these trends, Virginia Tech (in partnership with the University of Virginia, and with support from a Centennial Grant from the Medieval Academy of America) are hosting a 2-day workshop on 3-5 October, 2024 to mentor colleagues who are doing, or interested in doing, public-facing work. Topics covered will include considerations on doing public writing and event planning from experienced mentors. Time will also be dedicated to workshopping an idea in a small group, and in collaboration with a dedicated mentor. As the organizers state, ‘Graduate students, early career researchers, and underemployed MedievALLists, are especially encouraged to apply but all scholars in any discipline working on the medieval world, broadly defined, are welcome.’ To find out more, click here. To apply, click here.

1 May, 2024

MAA Travel Grants for Independent Scholars & Adjunct Professors: The Medieval Academy provides a limited number of travel grants to help Academy members who hold PhDs but are not in full-time faculty positions, or are adjuncts without access to institutional funding, attend
conferences to present their work. Exceptions to the PhD requirement may be made for unaffiliated or contingent scholars who are active in Medieval Studies. Awards to support travel in North America are up to $500; for overseas travel the awards are up to $750. To apply, click here.

1 May, 2024

**MAA Book Subvention Program:** The Medieval Academy Book Subvention Program provides subventions of up to $2,500 to university or other non-profit scholarly presses to support the publication of first books by Medieval Academy members. Applications for subventions will be accepted only from the publisher and only for books that have already been approved for publication. Eligible Academy members who wish to have their books considered for a subvention should ask their publishers to apply directly to the Academy, following the guidelines here.

1 May, 2024

**MAA Inclusivity & Diversity Book Subvention Program:** The Medieval Academy Inclusivity and Diversity Book Subvention Program provides subventions of up to $5000 to university or other non-profit scholarly presses to support the publication of books concerning the study of inclusivity and diversity in the Middle Ages (broadly conceived) by Medieval Academy members. Applications for subventions will be accepted only from the publisher and only for books that have already been approved for publication. Eligible Academy members who wish to have their books considered for a subvention should ask their publishers to apply directly to the Academy, following the guidelines. For more, click here.

**Resource Reminder: Medieval Latin Sight-Reading Group!**
Platinum Latin and the World Philology Union (in Oslo) are experimenting with a Medieval Latin Sight-Reading Group taught on Zoom. The group meet weekly on Fridays at 20:00 CEST (19:00 GMT; 14:00 EST; 13:00 CST). The group is aimed at intermediate Latinists, particularly those who still struggle with syntax or need a refresher. However, all are welcome! See here for more information.

**Resource Reminder: Call For Papers!**
Looking for a home for your latest seminar paper? Maybe you need an excuse to travel, especially during these summer months? Check out the Call for Papers Archives at Medievalists.net, the Medieval Studies Calls for Papers Facebook Group, and of course the Call for Papers section of the MAA’s very own Medieval Academy Blog. If you have a favorite CFP resource that we haven’t listed here, get in touch and we’ll include it in our next issue!
Resource Reminder: Medieval Jobs!
Medievalists are made for jobs, and jobs are made for medievalists. Check out the Medieval Academy Blog’s Jobs for Medievalists section to keep up with recent job postings of all flavors, tenure-track and beyond.

Resource Reminder: Professionalization Webinars!
Ever wanted to start a podcast, but just didn’t know what to do? Have you been staring down a grant application with no clue where to start? Well, you’re in luck – visit the MAA Webinars web page to catch up on any number of webinars hosted by the MAA and the GSC.

An Invitation from the Editors

In response to the diverse needs and interests of graduate students in Medieval Studies, the GSC plans to continue expanding the variety of content offered in the Newsletter. We hope to feature more narratives spotlighting the diverse experiences in which graduate students participate in their higher-ed journeys (conferences, events, workshops, travels, organizations, etc.) and when beginning their forays into the job market, whether on traditional routes, in alternative academic positions, or compatible careers.

If you have an interest in sharing your experiences and ideas as a graduate student, independent researcher, or early career scholar, please send queries and contributions to GSC newsletter editors Will Beattie (wbeattie@nd.edu) and Masha Goldin (masha.goldin@unibas.ch) or to GSC@themedievalacademy.org.

Follow the GSC on Social Media!

Get the latest news and information from the GSC on Facebook (facebook.com/GSCMAA) and X (Twitter) (@GSC_MAA).

Listen to the MAA Podcast, The Multicultural Middle Ages!

*The Multicultural Middle Ages* is an anthology-style podcast where medievalists from all professional and disciplinary tracks can come together to think and talk about the oft-unsung reality of the Middle Ages as a diverse historical and cultural period. It began as a GSC project but has now become an integral part of the wider MAA. However, we still use the podcast to champion the voices of graduates whenever we can. We offer public-facing, open access
content directed at experts and non-experts alike to offer updated, accurate, and culturally responsible accounts of the plurality of the medieval period. You can find *The Multicultural Middle Ages* on You can find us in major podcasting platforms like Spotify and Apple Podcasts, or wherever you get your podcasts, and at our website. You can also contact us at mmapodcast1@gmail.com. Series Three is currently being released!

**Speculum Spotlight**

*The Multicultural Middle Ages* is proud to partner with *Speculum* for a series of interviews with contributors to the latest and upcoming issues of the journal. One of the podcast editors sits down with a contributor and asks them about their latest research. Find out more about what goes into writing an article for a renowned academic journal like *Speculum*! You can listen to the latest episodes wherever you listen to *The Multicultural Middle Ages*. 