Medieval Studies

The Medieval Studies Program at UC Berkeley is an interdisciplinary group that coordinates and sponsors lectures, events, and visiting professorships; promotes scholarly interests common to medievalists of different academic departments; and communicates information of interest among them. The committee on Medieval Studies offers a concurrent PhD program in which candidates have both a home department and training in the core disciplines of medieval studies. The degree granted is the concurrent PhD in the departmental discipline and medieval studies (e.g., English and medieval studies, history and medieval studies). The concurrent PhD is designed to preserve an established standard of training in a major subject while broadening the student’s experience in other aspects of the field. A candidate for the concurrent PhD is expected to fulfill all the PhD requirements of the major field of study.

Admission to the University

Minimum Requirements for Admission

The following minimum requirements apply to all graduate programs and will be verified by the Graduate Division:

1. A bachelor’s degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution;
2. A grade point average of B or better (3.0);
3. If the applicant comes from a country or political entity (e.g., Quebec) where English is not the official language, adequate proficiency in English to do graduate work, as evidenced by a TOEFL score of at least 90 on the iBT test, 570 on the paper-and-pencil test, or an IELTS Band score of at least 7 on a 9-point scale (note that individual programs may set higher levels for any of these); and
4. Sufficient undergraduate training to do graduate work in the given field.

Applicants Who Already Hold a Graduate Degree

The Graduate Council views academic degrees not as vocational training certificates, but as evidence of broad training in research methods, independent study, and articulation of learning. Therefore, applicants who already have academic graduate degrees should be able to pursue new subject matter at an advanced level without need to enroll in a related or similar graduate program.

Programs may consider students for an additional academic master’s or professional master’s degree only if the additional degree is in a distinctly different field.

Applicants admitted to a doctoral program that requires a master’s degree to be earned at Berkeley as a prerequisite (even though the applicant already has a master’s degree from another institution in the same or a closely allied field of study) will be permitted to undertake the second master’s degree, despite the overlap in field.

The Graduate Division will admit students for a second doctoral degree only if they meet the following guidelines:

1. Applicants with doctoral degrees may be admitted for an additional doctoral degree only if that degree program is in a general area of knowledge distinctly different from the field in which they earned their original degree. For example, a physics PhD could be admitted to a doctoral degree program in music or history; however, a student with a doctoral degree in mathematics would not be permitted to add a PhD in statistics.
2. Applicants who hold the PhD degree may be admitted to a professional doctorate or professional master’s degree program if there is no duplication of training involved.

Applicants may apply only to one single degree program or one concurrent degree program per admission cycle.

Required Documents for Applications

1. Transcripts: Applicants may upload unofficial transcripts with your application for the departmental initial review. If the applicant is admitted, then official transcripts of all college-level work will be required. Official transcripts must be in sealed envelopes as issued by the school(s) attended. If you have attended Berkeley, upload your unofficial transcript with your application for the departmental initial review. If you are admitted, an official transcript with evidence of degree conferral will not be required.
2. Letters of recommendation: Applicants may request online letters of recommendation through the online application system. Hard copies of recommendation letters must be sent directly to the program, not the Graduate Division.
3. Evidence of English language proficiency: All applicants from countries or political entities in which the official language is not English are required to submit official evidence of English language proficiency. This applies to applicants from Bangladesh, Burma, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Latin America, the Middle East, the People’s Republic of China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, most European countries, and Quebec (Canada). However, applicants who, at the time of application, have already completed at least one year of full-time academic course work with grades of B or better at a US university may submit an official transcript from the US university to fulfill this requirement. The following courses will not fulfill this requirement:
   • courses of a non-academic nature.
   • courses that will be completed after the application is submitted,
   • courses conducted in a language other than English,
   • courses in English as a Second Language,
   • courses of a non-academic nature.

If applicants have previously been denied admission to Berkeley on the basis of their English language proficiency, they must submit new test scores that meet the current minimum from one of the standardized tests. Official TOEFL score reports must be sent directly from Educational Test Services (ETS). The institution code for Berkeley is 4833. Official IELTS score reports must be mailed directly to our office from British Council. TOEFL and IELTS score reports are only valid for two years.

Where to Apply

Visit the Berkeley Graduate Division application page (http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply).

Admission to the Program

Graduate students must be accepted for admission to a regular department (e.g., English or History) before applying for a concurrent degree in Medieval Studies.

Candidates for this concurrent degree program must fulfill the following requirements:
1. Completion of three courses, which must include:
   a. MED ST 200, a four-credit proseminar introducing the disciplinary
      resources for research on medieval topics and their use in
      interdisciplinary study.
   b. HISTORY 275B, or HISTORY 285B on a solely medieval topic
      (Other appropriate graduate courses in history may be substituted
      with the consent of the graduate adviser.) Students whose home
      department is History must take two courses in category (c),
      below.
   c. Any course from outside the student's home department,
      normally drawn from the following:
      COM LIT 212 Studies in Medieval Literature 4
      ENGLISH 205B Old English 4
      ENGLISH 211 Chaucer 4
      ENGLISH 212 Readings in Middle English 4
      FRENCH 210A Studies in Medieval Literature 4
      FRENCH 211A Reading and Interpretation of Old French Texts 4

      GERMAN 201A Course Not Available
      GERMAN 205 Studies in Medieval Literature 4
      GERMAN 273 Gothic 4
      GERMAN 276 Old High German 4
      GERMAN 280 North Sea Germanic 4
      GERMAN 282 Old Saxon 4
      ITALIAN 109 Dante's Commedia (in Italian) 4
      ITALIAN 110 Literature and Culture of the 13th and 14th
      Centuries 4
      SCANDIN 101A Introduction to Old Norse I 4
      SCANDIN 101B Introduction to Old Norse II 4
      SCANDIN 201A Old Norse 4
      SCANDIN 201B Norse Literature 4
      SCANDIN 220 Early Scandinavian Literature 4

      Other courses offering readings exclusively in a medieval vernacular
      may be substituted with the permission of the graduate adviser. Also
      with the permission of the graduate adviser, medieval versions of
      other relevant languages (such as Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, or Old
      Church Slavonic) may be accepted in fulfillment of this requirement.

2. Advanced competence in Latin, which will normally be demonstrated
   through two graduate-level or upper division courses in medieval
   Latin literature (one of which must normally be LATIN 140 or
   LATIN 155A). The Latin proficiency exams that are offered by some
   departments whose content is wholly medieval may, with
   the permission of the graduate advisers, be counted toward this
   requirement.) All courses for this requirement must be completed
   for a letter grade.

3. Reading proficiency in at least one medieval vernacular, one of which
   must be outside the major field of study. Ordinarily such knowledge
   may be demonstrated through graduate-level or approved upper
   division coursework, drawn from the following:
   CELTIC 105A Old and Middle Irish
   CELTIC 146A Medieval Welsh Language and Literature
   ENGLISH 104 Introduction to Old English
   ENGLISH 111 Chaucer
   ENGLISH 112 Middle English Literature
   ENGLISH 205B Old English
   ENGLISH 211 Chaucer
   ENGLISH 212 Readings in Middle English
   FRENCH 112A Medieval Literature
   FRENCH 112B Medieval Literature
   FRENCH 114A Late Medieval Literature
   FRENCH 210A Studies in Medieval Literature
   FRENCH 211A Reading and Interpretation of Old French Texts
   FRENCH 112A Medieval Literature
   FRENCH 210A Studies in Medieval Literature
   FRENCH 211A Reading and Interpretation of Old French Texts

5. A field statement of 30-50 pages, which situates the major area of
   interest in an interdisciplinary setting. This is not a prospectus setting
   out the specific plan of research for a dissertation, but a broader and
   more preliminary contextualizing essay, placing the student's home
department in relation to those other disciplines of medieval studies of which the student will need
   to have a sophisticated apprehension in order to conceive such a
   dissertation plan of research. This statement will be evaluated by the student's
   adviser and the Medieval Studies representative to the examination
   committee (see [6], below). The field statement must be approved
   by both the adviser and examiner at least 30 days prior to the oral
   qualifying examination. It should thus ordinarily be submitted to the relevant faculty members about six weeks prior to the date of the oral
   examination.

6. A special committee for the PhD qualifying examination. A
   representative of Medieval Studies must serve on the PhD orals
   examination committee. In the event of a failure on either the field
   statement or the Medieval Studies portion of the qualifying exam, the
   candidate may revise the field statement and/or retake the Medieval
   Studies portion of the orals in accordance with the policies of the
   Graduate Division, Policies and Procedures F.2.7.

7. Regular participation in the Medieval Studies Colloquium, and one
   presentation of dissertation-work in progress to that colloquium.

Medieval Studies
Expand all course descriptions [+]
Collapse all course descriptions [-]
MED ST 200 Introduction to Research Materials and Methods 4 Units
Terms offered: Spring 2019, Spring 2017, Spring 2015
The graduate proseminar. Basic materials and resources in fields represented in the Medieval Studies program, and in some subjects involving expertise in more than one discipline (e.g., liturgy, codicology). Emphasis on methods of interdisciplinary research, research tools, and critical evaluation of their use.
Introduction to Research Materials and Methods: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements
Prerequisites: Graduate standing or consent of instructor

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Medieval Studies/Graduate
Grading: Letter grade.

MED ST 205 Medieval Manuscripts as Primary Sources 4 Units
Terms offered: Fall 2012, Fall 2007, Fall 1998
This course explores the use of medieval manuscripts as primary sources for contemporary scholarship and as evidence of book culture in the medieval West.
Medieval Manuscripts as Primary Sources: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements
Prerequisites: Graduate standing or consent of instructor

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Medieval Studies/Graduate
Grading: Letter grade.

MED ST 210 Paleography and Codicology 4 Units
Terms offered: Spring 2019, Fall 2017, Fall 2016
Instruction in Medieval Latin paleography and/or the paleography of one or more of the medieval vernacular languages of Western Europe, emphasizing the evolution of scripts as well as practice in reading them. Ancillary instruction in the principles of codicology with attention to the process of text-making and book manufacture.
Paleography and Codicology: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements
Prerequisites: Consent of Instructor required

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Medieval Studies/Graduate
Grading: Letter grade.
Paleography and Codicology: Read Less [-]

MED ST 250 Seminar in Medieval Culture 2 - 4 Units
Terms offered: Spring 2018, Fall 2017, Spring 2010
Taught by the Distinguished Visiting Professor of Medieval Studies on a topic related to his or her specialty. In the event that the instructor is in residence for fewer than 15 weeks, the course will be offered for either 2 or 3 units of credit, in proportion to the number of actual contact hours.
Seminar in Medieval Culture: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements
Prerequisites: Graduate standing

Credit Restrictions: Course may be taken for less than 4 units on a <satisfactory/unsatisfactory> basis with consent of instructor.

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Medieval Studies/Graduate
Grading: Letter grade.

Seminar in Medieval Culture: Read Less [-]