HIST*3480 – Workplace Learning: Scottish Chapbook Project

Department of History, Winter 2018
Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Ewan
Workplace Supervisor: Melissa McAfee

Course Format: Independent work with scheduled meetings.

Course Synopsis:

This independent study course will focus on conducting research on selected chapbooks in The Scottish Chapbook Project site repository and creating an online exhibit based on this research. The Scottish Chapbook site was launched in March 2015 and is a collaborative project between the Library’s Archival & Special Collections and the History Department. Chapbooks were pamphlets of eight to twenty-four pages that were created and sold in the 18th and 19th centuries. They featured popular stories of romance, travel, comedy, politics, fairy tales, religion, social customs, and history. Chapbooks were cheap (hence the name ch(e)apbook) and served a market for reading material. They were particularly popular in Scotland, where the songs, ballads, poems, and short stories appealed to a population that was highly literate by European standards.

The student will select seven chapbooks that do not have abstracts on the site to research and create an abstract for the chapbook to contribute to the site. Based on this research, the student will develop and curate an online exhibit for the site on the Library’s Omeka platform.

During the course of the project, the student will write bi-weekly critical reflections about what they have learned during the course of the project; a primary source analysis of (pages) of selected chapbooks chosen by the student; seven 300 word abstracts of the chapbooks based on their primary source analyses to contribute to the site; and will develop and curate an online exhibit based on some or all of the chapbooks researched for the site.

Methods of Evaluation and Weights:

40% Primary source analysis and abstract of 7 chapbooks
40% Online Exhibit
10% Written critical reflections
10% Participation in meetings
Learning Outcomes:

- Knowledge of research practices
- Knowledge of interpretation and contextualization of primary sources
- Knowledge of Scottish history and the history of the book
- Knowledge of the Omeka online platform
- Knowledge of standards and "best practices for creating online exhibits"
- Knowledge of project management
- Knowledge of rare book collections in an academic research library environment

No Textbook Required

Project Timeline*

Week 1: Meeting with instructors: Guidelines will be established for selecting chapbooks, researching them in reference sources, writing abstracts, and curating an online exhibit; List of secondary and reference sources will be provided for use in researching the chapbooks. Bi-weekly meetings will be scheduled to discuss the project

Weeks 1-3: Familiarization of the Scottish Chapbook Project site and secondary and reference sources to use in researching chapbooks. Selection of seven chapbooks to research for the project; Written critical reflections due on week 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12

Week 2: Meet with instructors; training on Omeka platform

Week 3: Proposal due for chapbooks to research

Week 4: Meet with instructors

Weeks 4-8: Research chapbooks; write primary source analysis and abstracts

Week 6: Meet with instructors

Week 8: Meet with instructors

Week 9: Primary source analysis and abstracts due

Week 10: Meet with instructors

Week 10: Upload abstracts for chapbooks to site repository

Week 10-12 Develop and curate online exhibit
Week 12: Meet with instructors

Week 13: Online exhibit completed and launched on Scottish Chapbook site

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.