

The Special Collections Certificate at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign U.S.A.

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Introduction

In the Introduction to *Educational Opportunities – A Directory*, published by The Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), it was noted that Educational opportunities for rare book and manuscript librarianship are so numerous and diverse, that it is difficult to pinpoint them.¹

Many of the variety of options for special collections librarianship are discussed in other presentations in this program.

¹ http://www.rbms.info/committees/membership_and_professional/educational_opportunities/index.shtml

Special Collections Certificates

This presentation will focus on Certificates for Special Collections librarianship and refer to the other options only as they may relate to Special Collections Certificates.

The focus will primarily be on the Special Collections Certificate offered at the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science.

Providers of Special Collections Certificates

Of the programs offering “free-standing” certificates relating to special collections that can be earned independently of a formal degree program, the University of Illinois and the University of California, Los Angeles are two that are often listed in directories of providers of Special Collections Certificates that are also affiliated with an ALA Accredited LIS Master’s degree program.



The California Rare Book School

- The California Rare Book School (CalRBS) was established in 2005 as a project of the Department of Information Studies at UCLA (<http://www.calrbs.org/>) but did not offer a “Professional Certificate of Completion” in Rare Books and Manuscripts until 2013.
- This certificate is awarded after the completion of five courses in CalRBS and/or the Dept. of Information Studies.

Midwest Book & Manuscript Studies

- In 2007, The Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS) partnered with the University of Illinois Library Rare Book & Manuscript Library, directed by Professor Valerie Hotchkiss, to establish the Midwest Book & Manuscript Studies (MBMS) program to provide opportunities for continuing education of professionals and focused education on Special Collections librarianship for current graduate students and for anyone with a bachelor's degree having an interest in Rare Books and Manuscripts.
- The faculty teaching in the program are from both the University Library, from the Graduate School of LIS, as well as specialists in the RBM studies area from around the United States and from other countries.

MBMS Certificate Requirements

- To obtain the Special Collections Certificate, you must have a bachelor's degree. Most of the students seeking the Certificate are enrolled in the professional Master's degree program for Library and Information Science. But the Master's degree is not required to obtain the Certificate. Thus the program is available to anyone with an interest in studying rare books and manuscripts.
- Students are encouraged to come to campus and take at least two courses from the specially scheduled one and two-week, two-credit hour on-campus summer courses, but coursework necessary to qualify for the certificate can be taken online.



Special Collections Certificate Requirements

- The Certificate requires 12 hours of graduate course work, including one required two graduate hour course, “Rare Book and Special Collections Librarianship.” The remaining 10 hours may be selected from over 40 graduate courses in Archival Studies, Museum Studies, Library and Information Science and other related disciplines.
- The program covers a variety of topics including
 - (1) the history of manuscripts and books,
 - (2) special collections administration and management,
 - (3) bibliography, rare book cataloging, and archival management,
 - (4) public programming and exhibition work,
 - (5) collection development,
 - (6) curatorial skills, and
 - (7) the books arts.
- See: <http://www.lis.illinois.edu/academics/degrees/specializations/certificate1> for a list of the suggested elective courses.
- The slide that follows can be found at <http://www.lis.illinois.edu/academics/degrees/mbms>

Special Collections Certificate



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Midwest Book and Manuscript Studies

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GSLIS, in partnership with the [Rare Book and Manuscript Library](#) and the [Soybean Press](#) of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, has developed the Midwest Book and Manuscript Studies (MBMS) program to offer a series of courses and workshops focused on special collections and the book arts. Drawing on leaders in the field as instructors, these programs cover a variety of topics concerning (1) the history of manuscripts and books, addressing the unique skills and approaches to maintaining all types of special collections, and (2) preserving the fine art of bookmaking, including bookbinding, paper making, and letterpress printing.

Current Offerings

CERTIFICATE IN SPECIAL COLLECTIONS



MBMS Current Offerings

- **CERTIFICATE IN SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**
- The Certificate in Special Collections is a 12-credit-hour graduate certificate open to library and information science professionals and students who want to develop expertise in special collections librarianship and to other professionals interested in developing or enhancing their knowledge of special collections.
- **SUMMER INTENSIVES**
- One and two-week summer intensive courses on rare books, manuscripts, and special collections are available on a graduate credit (2 credit hours), continuing education credit, or non-credit basis and open to students, library and information professionals, and book lovers of all types.
- **BOOK ARTS AND PRESERVATION WORKSHOPS**
- Our one and two-day book arts and preservation workshops are open to all interested in the traditional crafts involved in making books by hand and in preservation topics.



Midwest Book & Manuscript Studies

- **The Apprenticeship Model:**
- Recognizing that not all learning takes place in the classroom, we're committed to making sure MBMS students get hands-on experience with special collections. Interns have been placed at the Folger, the Globe in London, the Newberry, the American Film Institute, Hebrew Union College, etc., as well as hosting over a dozen students a year in practica and internships at the Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Illinois.

Midwest Book & Manuscript Studies

- Cost of taking courses in the Midwest Book & Manuscript Studies Program is \$636 per hour, or \$7632 for all twelve hours required.
- Individuals taking courses as non-degree students or as part of continuing education activities not seeking the certificate pay the same rate per hour (\$636 per hour).
- Tuition rates are for the 2014-2015 school year and may change in future years.

MBMS Special Collections Certificate

- Since the establishment nearly 8 years ago, 286 students have earned the Special Collections certificate, including 43 students in 2013-2014. The majority of the students obtaining the certificate are students enrolled in the Professional Master's Degree program at GSLIS, but enrollment in the Degree program is not required.
- We do not have data on the impact of the Special Collections Certificate on placement of holders of the certificate in Special Collections Librarianship, but the Certificate has proved to be very popular in terms of numbers enrolled.

Special Collections Certificate

- Questions? Comments?
- A copy of this slide presentation may be found at:
<http://people.lis.illinois.edu/~weech/MBMS-IFLA14.pdf>
- Thank you for your attention:
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- weech@illinois.edu
- GSLIS – University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.