# Latin Palaeography

## Prof. Simona Gavinelli

## *Module 1 (Semester 1):*

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to outline the crucial steps of Latin writing in the main types of books and documents. Therefore, it aims to provide students with good technical and critical skills allowing them to assess and describe the ancient, medieval, and modern graphic functions, placing them in the right historical context and identifying the different types and contents, considering them as forms of communication (books, documents, epigraphs) more or less aware and controlled. In addition to the presentation of a wide variety of images aimed to develop the iconographic knowledge of the class with an educational purpose, the course will encourage the interactive participation of students for a progressive assessment of their learning, in order to develop their independent judgment skills, the ability to combine historical phenomena (related to the different graphic representations) with a clear exposition, both oral (as a form of preparation for the final exam) and written (thanks to an individual assignment to be defined in collaboration with the lecturer).

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course will include the diachronic development of a wide range of graphical systems, starting from prehistoric scripts and pictographs with magic-sacral meaning to the scripts of the Mediterranean basin, including the configuration of the Latin alphabet. At the same time, it examines the development of writing media and tools in order to reconstruct the history of documents, of ancient and medieval books, of book and document stores, up to the advent of printing using mobile characters.

***READING LIST***

Some Module 1 materials (general reading list, specification, additional readings for the written exercise, lecturer’s notes and palaeographic glossary, graphic facsimiles) will be provided to students over the course of lectures, possibly during individual meetings with the lecturer, and also made available on the BlackBoard platform.

General textbook for documents

A. Pratesi, *Genesi e forme del documento medioevale,* Jouvence, Rome 1987, 2nd ed.

Textbooks of reference for the manuscript:

G. Battelli, *Lezioni di paleografia,* Pontificia Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia e Diplomatica, Vatican City 1949, and following editions.

B. Bischoff, *Paleografia latina: antichità e medioevo,* Italian ed. by G. Mantovani and S. Zamponi, Antenore, Padua 1992, p. 7-67, 255-340.

G. Cencetti, *Paleografia latina,* Jouvence, Rome 1978.

A. Petrucci, *Breve storia della scrittura latina,* New ed. revised and updated, Bagatto Libri, Rome 1992.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures, classroom exercises, possible supplementary teaching visits to archives, libraries or museums; preparation of a written exercise, with guided assistance. on thematic orientations and bibliographic citations (via the University's BlackBoard platform using Microsoft Teams), so as to ensure the full achievement of the educational objectives set out in the study plans.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The examination shall be preceded by a short written exercise to check the student's summarising skills and their familiarity with quotes from the relevant texts. The oral examination, conducted in the manner allowed, will serve to assess students’ grasp of the material and their ability present the main subjects of the course. Students will be assessed on the relevance of their answers, their use of specific terminology and their ability to make links between phenomena.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

As this is an introductory course, it has no prerequisites in terms of contents. The topic of the written exercise will be agreed individually with the lecturer. The exercise must be completed before students can take the oral test.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on “the Faculty notice board”.

## *Module 2 (Semester 2):*

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to examine the diachronic and the synchronic evolution of Latin writing. In terms of disciplinary knowledge, at the end of the course, students will be able to recognise the function of the different forms of written evidence and the graphic systems of reference, and therefore date and localise them, describing the material aspects and the contents, placing each document (manuscripts, archival documents, forms of epigraphs) in its right dimension of cultural vehicle for the transmission of memory. In addition, the students’ learning path will be supported by guided visits to some conservation libraries, archives, or museums.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course covers the centuries-old history of Latin writing on a European scale from Antiquity to the Renaissance through its key players: copyists, notaries, authors, patrons, readers and bibliophiles, bringing together a wide range of professions, skills and graphical outcomes. The gradual exploration will take place through the reading, analysis and transcription of original documents (also on scheduled visits to libraries, archives or museums) or photographic facsimiles, some of which will be available online.

***READING LIST***

Some of the teaching material concerning module 2 (the general and the specific reading list, the additional readings for the written assignment, the coursepack and the palaeographic glossary written by the lecturer, and a selection of descriptive models) will be made available for students during classes and online in the Teaching material (Materiali) section of the Blackboard platform.

Textbooks of reference for the history of writing:

G. Battelli, *Lezioni di paleografia,* Pontificia Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia e Diplomatica, Vatican City 1949, and following editions.

B. Bischoff, *Paleografia latina: antichità e medioevo,* Italian ed. by G. Mantovani and S. Zamponi, Antenore, Padua 1992, p. 71-253.

G. Cencetti, *Paleografia latina,* Jouvence, Rome 1978.

P. Cherubini-A. Pratesi, *Paleografia latina. L’avventura grafica del mondo occidentale*, Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia, Diplomatica e Archivistica, Vatican City 2010 (Littera antiqua, 16).

A. Petrucci, *Breve storia della scrittura latina,* New ed. revised and updated, Bagatto Libri, Rome 1992.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures, practical activities in class, individual in-depth analyses taking place during office hours, either face to face or from home using Blackboard and Microsoft Teams; preparation of a written assignment, for which students will be assigned to a library or an archive that will help them find and analyse the material.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The exam is preceded by the writing of an assignment focused on the description and the contextualisation of a palaeographic document, aimed to assess the students’ technical skills and their ability to find relevant arguments and carry out a bibliographic research. In addition, the oral exam will allow the lecturer to assess the students’ ability to find their way among the most important topics of the course and make a clear exposition. Therefore, the assessment criteria will include relevance of answers, appropriate use of terminology, and ability to put in relation different phenomena.

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***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Module 2 requires general knowledge of the material aspects of palaeographic documents as outlined in Module 1, as well as basic knowledge of the Latin language. The topic of the written exercise will be agreed individually with the lecturer. The exercise must be completed before students take the oral test.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.