Textual Criticism and Codicology

Description:
This series of eight seminars introduces students to the unique difficulties of finding, editing, and interpreting literary texts from a pre-print culture, and offers first-hand instruction in the skills editors and literary critics of medieval texts require to overcome these difficulties. Three or four seminars will focus on problems relating to textual editing, with another three to four on problems relating to palaeographical (handwriting) and codicological (book as artefact) issues. The remaining seminar will offer the opportunity for first-hand examination of medieval manuscripts under the guidance of the convenor.

Learning Outcomes will include:
- Enhanced appreciation of the difficulties of establishing the authorial text of medieval literary works and basic skills for preparing editions of such works;
- Ability to read a medieval literary text in its original context, the handwritten book;
- Confidence in handling and examining medieval manuscripts;
- Knowledge of the vocabulary of manuscript description and ability to apply information acquired from first-hand examination of manuscript context to the interpretation of texts.

Teaching Programme:
Eight two-hour seminars covering these topics among others:
- The text in pre-print culture: differences among editions
- Editing Middle English texts: some practical problems
- Authorial and authoritative text: The Canterbury Tales; how to examine manuscripts
- First-hand examination of manuscript books (York Minster Archives)
- Structures of medieval manuscripts: Quires, booklets, composite manuscripts, antiquarian compilations (Mooney & Vorholt)
- Materials of medieval manuscripts: Paper, Parchment, (Mooney & Fiddyment)
- Language/Spellings and provenance
- Artistic content of medieval manuscripts (Mooney & Nuechterlein)

Preliminary Reading:
York Libraries: KM LF 5.6 DEH JBM LF 5.6 DEH
Minster Library, Hailstone Wing 091 DEH
Doyle, A. I. and Parkes, M. B. ‘The Production of Copies of the Canterbury Tales

York Libraries: JBM 090.4 MED  KM ground 090.4 MED (2 copies)