MINUTES, MRSC Board, 03-08-18

The Board of the Medieval and Renaissance Studies Center (MRSC) met at 3:30 pm on Thursday, March 8, at Barnes & Noble Café in the University Center. Present were Jacob Baum, Angelamariani Smith, and Abigail Swingen. John Howe was present as convener.

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPDATES:

Dean & Budget: Howe met with Dean Brent Lindquist on December 7 (Pearl Harbor Day). The MRSC Budget was renewed for another year. The dean expressed his belief that the Board should be able to nominate a director or directors in a timely fashion; he agreed that, given the MRSC structure, not all co-directors would need to come from A&S. (In Board discussion on this item, it was observed that if the MRSC could miraculously acquire an endowment of ca. $50,000, or could become a line item in A&S and VPA budgets, it would not need to beg for its bread each year.)

The exhibit on "Pre-Modern Bibles: From the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Complutensian Polyglot Bible" will be held at the Museum of TTU from August 18, 2018, through March 4, 2019. MRSC affiliated faculty members should calendar the formal opening ceremony, to be held on Thursday, September 6 at 4:30 pm. For more details, see Attachment A.

"Texas Medieval Association (TEMA) Annual Meeting will be held at TTU on October 25-27, 2018. For more details, see Item III below.

MRSC 5301, the methods class for the medieval and renaissance studies certificate, which has been scheduled to be offered each spring, had disappointing enrollments in 2018, barely managing to log the minimum five students. Certificate production last year dropped to one, far from the original goal of six per year. Board members expressed hopes that a momentum change might result from high publicity events in fall 2018 and were encouraged by early expressions of interest from several students seeking the class in spring 2019.

Conference Subsidies: MRSC has $200 subsidies available for graduate students who want to attend interdisciplinary medieval and/or renaissance conferences. Students interested in attending the upcoming International Congress on Medieval Studies at Kalamazoo MI on May 10-13 or the Symposium on Medieval and Renaissance Studies at St. Louis MO on June 18-20, should contact John.Howe@ttu.edu. Howe has information on Kalamazoo flights and transportation links.

II. SELECTION OF NEW MRSC DIRECTOR OR CO-DIRECTORS:

The Board has not yet produced a leader or leaders to replace John Howe and Connie Scarborough, who chose not to seek new terms when their previous three-year terms expired in May 2017. Last year the Board authorized Howe to serve as Interim Director, but a more permanent solution has been requested by the dean of A&S (the college where the MRSC resides administratively). A new director or co-directors needs to be nominated by the Board and then approved by the dean. A previous call for volunteers produced several possibilities, but no consensus solution, thanks in part to problems with conflicting administrative commitments, awkward tenure status, etc.

The Board instructed Howe to again ask the affiliated faculty members to consider volunteering for the directorship(s) or for work as a MRST graduate advisor. Note that the director (or directors) are required to be members of the MRSC affiliated faculty but do not need to be part of the presently elected MRSC Board (the director or co-directors would automatically
have ex officio seats on the Board). If you are interested in serving, as a director or as a graduate advisor, please contact Howe or any Board member.

III. TEMA 2018:

TEMA will meet on campus October 25-27, 2018. Actually these dates will feature multiple events. October 25 will be the conference prequel, featuring free public events including a late afternoon symposium at the Museum on the "Pre-Modern Bible" exhibit with Frans and Kate Van Liere (Kalamazoo College); including in the evening a free concert of medieval and renaissance music by the Collegium Musicum. The actual TEMA Conference will unfold on Friday and Saturday, with Friday's events in the Museum quadrant (followed by Movies @The Museum); Saturday's in the central campus. Featured speakers will include Tim Graham (director of the Medieval Institute at the University of New Mexico), a much decorated teacher and paleographical scholar, and George Greenia (emeritus of the College of William and Mary), a Spanish literature expert and a frequent Santiago pilgrim.

The general conference outline and tentative budget—to be financed in part by Humanities Texas and Civic Lubbock—have been approved by the offices of the A&S dean and of the TTU provost. Finances will be handled by the MRSC, working with the new conference payment office located in e-learning. The Staybridge Suites Hotel will be the conference hotel. The formal call for papers should go out within a month.

The Board encourages all affiliated faculty members to consider how they and their students might participate. Some Texans are difficult to lure very far west of I-35. The Board would greatly welcome ideas to help this conference succeed. If you have friends and research colleagues who you have wanted to squire around Texas Tech, this would be a great opportunity to organize conference sessions with them and bring them out here to enjoy our (usually pleasant) High Plains October.

The meeting concluded at 4:30 pm

--John Howe, acting scribe