

John Howe & Connie Scarborough,  
Co-Directors, CMRS  
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Dear CMRS Affiliated Faculty Members,

We write to update you on the progress of the certificate program in medieval and renaissance studies, and also to solicit some ideas and help.

Progress Report:

*Deo volente*, the worst part of the approval process for the proposed graduate certificate in medieval and renaissance studies is now behind us. ASCAP, A & S, and the Graduate School have approved the certificate program and the two proposed courses. The next step is the Academic Council, which examined the proposals on July 19 and approved everything except the proposed research course (now a 7000 number) which has now been amended and will come back before the Academic Council again on August 16. If the Provost approves the July minutes (which will be announced August 16), then the certificate and the required course will be approved on the university level. Next this goes to the Coordinating Board (for programs 18 hours and under, which this is, the Coordinating Board must receive a report but does not need to issue a formal approval) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (there is a SACSCOC substantive change report to file). Associate Vice Provost Gary Elbow says that we should hear back from SACSCOC “sometime during fall semester.” At that point we could consider ourselves “approved,” have our celebratory party, try to get some publicity in university publications, and roll out brochures and a Website.

If you have students who would be interested in a certificate, you could probably call the program to their attention, cautioning about the “in-progress” nature of the final approval steps. In theory a student could begin working on this program in 2011-2012. A room request has been made for the 5301 course (Methods in Medieval and Renaissance Studies) for spring 2012 (Howe would teach it), but this is contingent on getting the approvals noted above and on the university approving the offering of the course under its new number. The rules for the proposed certificate are attached. You could refer potentially interested students to one of the advisors: Howe ([John.Howe@ttu.edu](mailto:John.Howe@ttu.edu)) and Scarborough ([connie.scarborough@ttu.edu](mailto:connie.scarborough@ttu.edu)).

Comments Requested:

Feedback from the affiliated faculty members would be appreciated concerning several items of business that the co-directors are wrestling with:

1) The Center Name. We have been operating as the TTU Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies (CMERS). However, the senior vice provost objected to using those initials for course identification on the grounds that if any “center” could list courses beginning with a “C” then the university would wind up with a multitude of unidentifiable course prefixes. The co-directors were not convinced that the proposed alternatives were an improvement but we lost that argument and it was mandated that our courses go forward as MRST 5301 and MRST 7000 (we will try not to accidentally enroll BA students looking for Management Relations Studies). Given this fait accompli, the co-directors are toying with renaming the center the Medieval and Renaissance Studies Center (MRSC). This is even less euphonious but it would help link the Center and its course offerings by restoring a recognizable parallel in the initials. Comments?

2) Support for Student Travel to Interdisciplinary Medieval and Renaissance Conferences. As you will recall, last year the Center provided a subsidy of \$200 each for students to attend the International Congress of Medieval Studies at Kalamazoo. Four students collected this bounty, had a great time, and learned a lot about the broader world of medieval and renaissance studies. They still had to pay for most of the trip to Kalamazoo out of pocket, but even the modest help was greatly appreciated and encouraged student participation. When that initiative was approved, Howe requested input about other interdisciplinary conferences (including Renaissance ones) that might be similarly funded. Since this type of subsidy works best if it is known and approved far in advance, the co-directors and Board would like to formulate a working policy for 2011-2012 as soon as possible. Comments?

3) Support for Medieval and Renaissance Scholars Visiting Texas Tech. The Center included in its mission the support of visiting scholars, an expenditure item listed in its initial budget proposal. Presumably this could mean modest help for you all who are working to bring professional colleagues out to campus; it might also mean sponsoring one or more “grand events.” Since funds are limited, we will need to come up with some sort of fair and reasonable policy. Comments?

4) Center Affiliations. The Center has become a member of CARA, the Medieval Academy of America’s association of regional centers. What other affiliations do we need for professional visibility?

#### Help Wanted:

There are certain tasks associated with the roll-out of the certificate program where individual members of the affiliated faculty may have special expertise: 1) setting up a Web site; and 2) composing and formatting a hand-out pamphlet suitable for

introducing the certificate program to potentially interested students. If you would like to volunteer to help out on a particular project, or perhaps on a committee to oversee such projects, please notify the co-directors. Suggestions on best ways to proceed are also welcome.

If the 5301 course is approved for spring 2012, Howe will be contacting those of you who volunteered to give presentations in such a class to try to make them happen.

When the Web site is up and running, it would be great if it could provide a way to disseminate knowledge of on-campus and regional events related to medieval and renaissance studies. Getting such information is not easy. What the co-directors propose is to send each of you an email query on the first day of each month of the academic year asking you if you are aware of medieval and renaissance events that the Center community should know about. While you all do not need more clutter in your email boxes, if everyone would send back a quick off-the cuff sentence or two each month describing relevant stuff, we could keep current a pretty good events calendar.

With thanks for all your help and patience,

John Howe  
Connie Scarborough