

# Latin Paleography

## A Course on Reading 16<sup>th</sup> Century Manuscript Documents in Latin

June 4 through June 15, 2012



This course, hosted by the H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies in Grand Rapids, Michigan and co-sponsored by the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, is intended for upper-level undergraduate and graduate students and scholars interested in reading manuscript sources in Latin, whether those documents are held in archives, or in the Meeter Center's own collection. The Meeter Center is home to a substantial collection of original 16<sup>th</sup> century Latin manuscripts and texts focused on the Reformation. Beginning paleographers will develop a basic tool set to help them read, interpret, and present the texts that they encounter in their research. The core of the course will focus on the mechanics of reading manuscripts: approaching a text, resolving abbreviations, selecting dictionaries to use, identifying persons and places, understanding the process by which the document was created, etc. It will also cover the basic editorial rules of editing governing the publication of 16<sup>th</sup> century Latin texts. Finally, the course will also briefly examine the utility and pitfalls offered by each type of source with particular emphasis on its application to religious and social history.

The course will draw on a variety of documents, including correspondence, minutes, commentaries, official documents, etc.. Students will have the opportunity to read as broad a range of documents as possible within the time allowed. Class will be held every morning, Monday through Friday, for three hours, much of which will be devoted to group reading of the texts the student has prepared the previous day. Students will be expected to devote several hours each afternoon to preparing for the next day's class, deciphering texts and consulting the Meeter Center's reference collection. The instructor will also be available to assist individuals who wish to pursue projects using the Meeter Center's considerable holdings of manuscript documents on microfilm. Ideal candidates will have achieved proficiency in reading and translating Latin (equivalent to a minimum of four semesters of college-level Latin) and will have current or future plans for archival work and use of manuscript Latin texts in their research.

The first eight students accepted into the course will receive a \$500 stipend to help defray travel costs, accommodations, etc. Accommodations can be arranged in Calvin College apartments for students who are not from the local area. The deadline for applications is **March 16, 2012**. Candidates will be notified about the status of their applications by the end of March 2012.

About the instructor: Todd Rester is completing his PhD at Calvin Theological Seminary under the direction of Dr. Richard Muller. His thesis focuses on the teaching of theology at Leiden University in the seventeenth century, and he has worked extensively with Latin manuscript sources. He has worked as a translator and co-editor for various early modern Latin works including selections from Theodore Beza's corpus, Petrus van Mastricht's *Theoretico-Practica Theologia* and William Ames's *Sciagraphia Catecheseos Christianae*. He has taught Latin both in high-schools and at seminary.

For further information please contact:

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