

Department	International College of Liberal Arts		
Semester	Fall 2026	Year Offered (Odd/Even/Every Year)	Every Year
Course Number	LANG/SOCI221		
Course Title	Archeolinguistics		
Prerequisites	None		
Course Instructor	ASHMORE Darren, RAFIEYAN Vahid	Year Available (Grade Level)	2
Subject Area	Interdisciplinary Arts: Language Arts	Number of Credits	3
Class Style	Lecture	Language of instruction	English

(NOTE 1) Depending on the class size and the capacity of the facility, we may not be able to accommodate all students who wish to register for the course

Course Description	<p>This course explores the origins of language and the development of writing systems, with a special focus on European medieval scripts and their cultural contexts. Students will engage with both theoretical and practical aspects of medieval textual culture: learning to read, write, and illuminate scripts such as Uncial, Carolingian, and Formal hands; understanding linguistic change; and applying digital paleographic tools. By the end, students will produce historically informed manuscript work and a critical commentary.</p> <p>Learning Outcomes By the end of this course, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrate mastery of major medieval scripts (Uncial, High Church and Carolingian Formal (AKA Carolingian Insular)). - Explain cultural and historical contexts of linguistic and script evolution. - Apply practical skills in manuscript production (calligraphy, illumination, page design). - Analyze scribal practices and language change through hands-on study. - Employ basic digital tools for manuscript transcription and encoding. - Collaborate on historically informed manuscript reproduction. <p>Active Learning Components</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weekly practical workshops (calligraphy, layout, illumination) - Group simulation of a monastic scriptorium - Digital paleography exercise (TEI/XML encoding of a short text) - Final exhibition of student work (folios + commentary)
Class plan based on course evaluation from previous academic year	Based on student feedback this course has been re-established as a three credit lecture course.
Course related to the instructor's practical experience (Summary of experience)	N/A
Learning Goals	<p>Learning Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the course of the program, student will: • To develop and express ideas effectively. • To become more reflective, curious, and open-minded. • Apply learned technical skills in a collaborative environment. • Possess Critical, Creative, Independent and technical skills.

iCLA Diploma Policy	DP1/DP2/DP3
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iCLA Diploma Policy

(DP1) To Value Knowledge – Having high oral and written communication skills to be able to both comprehend and transfer knowledge

(DP2) To Be Able to Adapt to a Changing World – Having critical, creative, problem-solving, intercultural skills, global and independent mindset to adopt to a changing world

(DP3) To Believe in Collaboration – Having a disposition to work effectively and inclusively in teams

(DP4) To Act from a Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility – Having good ethical and moral values to make positive impacts in the world

Active Learning Methods	Flipped Classroom/Group Work/Presentation/Workshop, Fieldwork				
More details/supplemental information on Active Learning Methods	(DP1) To Value Knowledge – Having high oral and written communication skills to be able to both comprehend and transfer knowledge (DP2) To Be Able to Adapt to a Changing World – Having critical, creative, problem-solving, intercultural skills, global and independent mindset to adopt to a changing world (DP3) To Believe in Collaboration – Having a disposition to work effectively and inclusively in teams				
Use of ICT	As a lecture class based on archeological media, the whole must be considered interactive.				
Contents of class preparation and review	Specifically, each week, students are expected to brief themselves on the types of plate letters being examined in upcoming classes and practice them, in the follow-up time. Moreover, the appropriate documents associate with each style should be studied for the class in question and then reflected in, in light of students own work. Finally, time must be found to practice the 'Gaudete' as a priority.	Hours expected to be spent preparing for class (hours per week)	2 hours	Hours expected to be spent on class review (hours per week)	3 hours
Feedback Methods	As this is a Seminar project course, feedback will be made available during and after each session. As the assessment for the course is ongoing, regular feedback is essential. Moreover, at any time a student may consult on the course during office hours, or by appointment. Seeking feedback is an expected part of the course progress. I will not enforce it, but I urge you not to waste an opportunity for guidance.				

Grading Criteria		
Grading Methods	Grading Weights	Grading Content
Block Test One (by Prof. Rafieyan)	15%	Linguistics
Prep tests (Five tests @5%)	25%	Materials and practical skills
Final Project	40%	Craft Project
Studentship	20%	Participation and activity.

Required Textbook(s)	To be Provided to the class
Other Reading Materials/URL	Further readings will be provided as required at the due time via the learning management system.

<p>Plagiarism Policy</p>	<p>iCLA ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICY Acts of Academic Dishonesty: In accord with University policies and good practices in higher education, acts of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism, cheating, forgery (on a paper, examination, test, or other assignment) will result in the failure of the course at a minimum. An act of academic dishonesty during the final examination or assignment in lieu of the final examination will result in failure of all courses registered in the relevant academic term. Cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs for relevant action. See also the attached class AI use policies.</p>
<p>Other Additional Notes (Outline crucial policies and info not mentioned above)</p>	<p>Class Policies in Addition to iCLA Policies 1. Group Workload: Any student unfairly burdening their fellows will be actioned appropriately. 2. Use of devices in class: Phones are banned. Laptops, tablets and other devices may only be used during class tests, or assigned tasks. 3. Test Proctoring: If proctors detect any suspect activity during tests, the student will be withdrawn from the test and actioned by Admin. 4: Attendance is a given, naturally, as a consequence absences will be considered demerits. Each missed class will dock you 2% from your top grade, therefore if you accrue 5 you will lose an entire letter grade from your final score at the end of the semester; 10 absences will cost you two letter grades. *However, please note that 11 or more and you fail automatically in line with iCLA attendance policy.* 5: Being more than 10 minutes late to class will be considered absent. Exceptions to participation rule are documented evidence of illness from a clinic or hospital; these must be presented within one week of the missed class. Documented official family emergencies, requiring leaving campus; notify before or just after missed class session.</p>

(NOTE 2) Class schedule is subject to change

Class Schedule	
Class Number	Content
<p>Class 1</p>	<p>Week One - The Origin of Language -- This session explores various ideas about the origins of language, including the divine source, the natural sound source, the musical source, the social interaction source, the physical adaptation source, the tool-making source, and the genetic source. By Professor Rafieyan</p>
<p>Class 2</p>	<p>Week One - The Origin of Language -- This session explores various ideas about the origins of language, including the divine source, the natural sound source, the musical source, the social interaction source, the physical adaptation source, the tool-making source, and the genetic source. By Professor Rafieyan</p>
<p>Class 3</p>	<p>Week Two - The History of Writing -- This session explores the root of writing and various forms of writing, including pictograms and ideograms, cuneiform writing, the rebus principle, and also the development from hieroglyphics to the alphabet. By Professor Rafieyan</p>
<p>Class 4</p>	<p>Week Two - The History of Writing -- This session explores the root of writing and various forms of writing, including pictograms and ideograms, cuneiform writing, the rebus principle, and also the development from hieroglyphics to the alphabet. By Professor Rafieyan</p>
<p>Class 5</p>	<p>Week 3: Introduction to Monastic Calligraphy. Core lens: The scriptorium as linguistic engine. Additions: Daily rhythm of a medieval scribe; copying as devotion, discipline, and silent prayer. Brief look at Rule of Saint Benedict and its emphasis on order and silence. Case studies: Lindisfarne Gospels for Insular complexity; Abbey of Saint Gall for ideal scriptorium layout. Practical enhancement: Students sit in silence for ten minutes while copying basic strokes. Key takeaway: Script form emerges from discipline, not individuality.</p>
<p>Class 6</p>	<p>Week 3: Introduction to Monastic Calligraphy. Core lens: The scriptorium as linguistic engine. Additions: Daily rhythm of a medieval scribe; copying as devotion, discipline, and silent prayer. Brief look at Rule of Saint Benedict and its emphasis on order and silence. Case studies: Lindisfarne Gospels for Insular complexity; Abbey of Saint Gall for ideal scriptorium layout. Practical enhancement: Students sit in silence for ten minutes while copying basic strokes. Key takeaway: Script form emerges from discipline, not individuality.</p>

Class 7	Week 4: Tools & Techniques. Core lens: Embodied knowledge. Additions: Why quill angle determines letterform; ink failure as historical evidence (fading, corrosion); parchment flaws leading to textual lacunae. Micro-task: Students deliberately cut one poor nib and diagnose the results. Reflection prompt: How much meaning is lost when we read only transcriptions?
Class 8	Week 4: Tools & Techniques. Core lens: Embodied knowledge. Additions: Why quill angle determines letterform; ink failure as historical evidence (fading, corrosion); parchment flaws leading to textual lacunae. Micro-task: Students deliberately cut one poor nib and diagnose the results. Reflection prompt: How much meaning is lost when we read only transcriptions?
Class 9	Weeks 5-6: Uncial Script. Core lens: Sacred readability. Additions: Why Uncial works for liturgical reading; Roman legacy and Christian adoption; compatibility with oral reading. Case study: Book of Kells, focusing on letterforms rather than decoration. Mini-task: Copy the same line in Uncial and a modern serif to compare cognitive load. Key takeaway: Uncial prioritizes clarity over speed, appropriate for scripture.
Class 10	Weeks 5-6: Uncial Script. Core lens: Sacred readability. Additions: Why Uncial works for liturgical reading; Roman legacy and Christian adoption; compatibility with oral reading. Case study: Book of Kells, focusing on letterforms rather than decoration. Mini-task: Copy the same line in Uncial and a modern serif to compare cognitive load. Key takeaway: Uncial prioritizes clarity over speed, appropriate for scripture.
Class 11	Weeks 5-6: Uncial Script. Core lens: Sacred readability. Additions: Why Uncial works for liturgical reading; Roman legacy and Christian adoption; compatibility with oral reading. Case study: Book of Kells, focusing on letterforms rather than decoration. Mini-task: Copy the same line in Uncial and a modern serif to compare cognitive load. Key takeaway: Uncial prioritizes clarity over speed, appropriate for scripture.
Class 12	Weeks 5-6: Uncial Script. Core lens: Sacred readability. Additions: Why Uncial works for liturgical reading; Roman legacy and Christian adoption; compatibility with oral reading. Case study: Book of Kells, focusing on letterforms rather than decoration. Mini-task: Copy the same line in Uncial and a modern serif to compare cognitive load. Key takeaway: Uncial prioritizes clarity over speed, appropriate for scripture.
Class 13	Weeks 7-8: Carolingian Minuscule. Core lens: Power standardizes language. Additions: Literacy reform under Alcuin of York; script as administrative technology; separation of words as a linguistic revolution. Comparative exercise: Same text in Uncial and Carolingian, comparing speed, legibility, and error rate. Discussion prompt: Is Carolingian Minuscule a linguistic technology or a political one?
Class 14	Weeks 7-8: Carolingian Minuscule. Core lens: Power standardizes language. Additions: Literacy reform under Alcuin of York; script as administrative technology; separation of words as a linguistic revolution. Comparative exercise: Same text in Uncial and Carolingian, comparing speed, legibility, and error rate. Discussion prompt: Is Carolingian Minuscule a linguistic technology or a political one?
Class 15	Weeks 7-8: Carolingian Minuscule. Core lens: Power standardizes language. Additions: Literacy reform under Alcuin of York; script as administrative technology; separation of words as a linguistic revolution. Comparative exercise: Same text in Uncial and Carolingian, comparing speed, legibility, and error rate. Discussion prompt: Is Carolingian Minuscule a linguistic technology or a political one?
Class 16	Weeks 7-8: Carolingian Minuscule. Core lens: Power standardizes language. Additions: Literacy reform under Alcuin of York; script as administrative technology; separation of words as a linguistic revolution. Comparative exercise: Same text in Uncial and Carolingian, comparing speed, legibility, and error rate. Discussion prompt: Is Carolingian Minuscule a linguistic technology or a political one?

Class 17	Week 9: Formal Majuscule & Minuscule. Core lens: Hierarchy on the page. Additions: Majuscule as sacred emphasis; decorative initials as navigational tools; Insular versus Continental aesthetics. Practical: Design a single initial that communicates importance without text. Key takeaway: Ornament is information, not decoration.
Class 18	Week 9: Formal Majuscule & Minuscule. Core lens: Hierarchy on the page. Additions: Majuscule as sacred emphasis; decorative initials as navigational tools; Insular versus Continental aesthetics. Practical: Design a single initial that communicates importance without text. Key takeaway: Ornament is information, not decoration.
Class 19	Week 10: Comparative Script Workshop. Core lens: Scripts as arguments. Additions: Students argue which script best suits law, gospel, and chronicle. Introduce script choice as an editorial decision. Assignment: Reflection framed as, "If I were a medieval scribe, when would I change scripts—and why?"
Class 20	Week 10: Comparative Script Workshop. Core lens: Scripts as arguments. Additions: Students argue which script best suits law, gospel, and chronicle. Introduce script choice as an editorial decision. Assignment: Reflection framed as, "If I were a medieval scribe, when would I change scripts—and why?"
Class 21	Week 11: Decorative Elements & Illumination. Core lens: Visual theology. Additions: Pigments as trade evidence (lapis lazuli); gold leaf as symbolic light; the risk of illumination overpowering text. Practical: One illuminated initial using geometric rather than figurative imagery.
Class 22	Week 11: Decorative Elements & Illumination. Core lens: Visual theology. Additions: Pigments as trade evidence (lapis lazuli); gold leaf as symbolic light; the risk of illumination overpowering text. Practical: One illuminated initial using geometric rather than figurative imagery.
Class 23	Week 12: Manuscript Design & Layout. Core lens: The page as system. Additions: Ruling methods (drypoint versus lead); margins as gloss space; codex superiority over scroll for reference. Practical: Students plan a page anticipating later glosses.
Class 24	Week 12: Manuscript Design & Layout. Core lens: The page as system. Additions: Ruling methods (drypoint versus lead); margins as gloss space; codex superiority over scroll for reference. Practical: Students plan a page anticipating later glosses.
Class 25	Week 13: Historical Linguistics & Transmission. Core lens: Mistakes are data. Additions: Common scribal errors such as dittography, haplography, and eye-skip; marginalia as dialogue across centuries. Facsimile task: Identify whether an apparent error reflects linguistic drift or mechanical failure. Key takeaway: Transmission reveals language change more honestly than polished editions.
Class 26	Week 13: Historical Linguistics & Transmission. Core lens: Mistakes are data. Additions: Common scribal errors such as dittography, haplography, and eye-skip; marginalia as dialogue across centuries. Facsimile task: Identify whether an apparent error reflects linguistic drift or mechanical failure. Key takeaway: Transmission reveals language change more honestly than polished editions.

Class 27	Week 14: Paleography and Decoding. Core lens: From parchment to meaning. Additions: What is lost in transcription; why encoding choices matter; brief introduction to Text Encoding Initiative. Activity: Encode uncertainty, abbreviations, and damage, not just text.
Class 28	Week 14: Paleography and Decoding. Core lens: From parchment to meaning. Additions: What is lost in transcription; why encoding choices matter; brief introduction to Text Encoding Initiative. Activity: Encode uncertainty, abbreviations, and damage, not just text.
Class 29	Week 15: Capstone & Exhibition. Core lens: Scholarship as reconstruction. Additions: Group Scriptorium Folio reflecting medieval collaboration; oral defense explaining script, layout, and decoration choices. Optional public element: Invite students from another department to read the folios and report on legibility. Final takeaway: To read medieval text well, one must understand the hand, the tool, and the belief behind it.
Class 30	Week 15: Capstone & Exhibition. Core lens: Scholarship as reconstruction. Additions: Group Scriptorium Folio reflecting medieval collaboration; oral defense explaining script, layout, and decoration choices. Optional public element: Invite students from another department to read the folios and report on legibility. Final takeaway: To read medieval text well, one must understand the hand, the tool, and the belief behind it.