Annual Report *(combined for 2008-2009 and 2009-2010)*

Medieval Studies Program

I. Executive Summary

The Medieval Studies Program performs two primary functions at Loyola University New Orleans: (1) it supports an interdisciplinary academic minor and contract major in Medieval Studies for interested students from all of the undergraduate colleges and (2) fosters general interest in the Middle Ages on campus and within the larger community through its programming.

The Medieval Studies Program was founded in 2001 as an interdisciplinary minor in the former College of Arts and Sciences (now the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences) by the late Julian Wasserman, a holder of a Provost Distinguished Professorship and a teacher of medieval literature in the Department of English at Loyola. From the beginning, however, medieval studies at Loyola have always been as much of a presence outside undergraduate classrooms as within their walls. Professor Wasserman sought to bring the Middle Ages to life for willing students in a variety of settings, including the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts, Lusher Elementary School, and a Summer Teachers Institute sponsored by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.

The subsequent arrival of medievalists in a number of departments across the University introduced a new phase in the development of the Program, with the creation of new courses, the implementation of a revised curriculum, the institution of the Venerable Bede Award to recognize the outstanding achievements of Medieval Studies students, and the inauguration of two new extracurricular activities: Pizza and Movie Nights and the Greater New Orleans Medieval Scholars (GNOMeS) book discussion group. The Program has also hosted a number of lectures by scholars of national and international distinction as well as the 2008 meeting of the Louisiana Consortium of Medieval and Renaissance Scholars. At any given time during the last five years, we have at least eight and as many as 21 minors and a total of four contract majors.

Graduates of the program are currently pursuing advanced degrees in medieval studies at, among others, the University of Cambridge, the University of Exeter, Western Michigan University, and Louisiana State University.

The program continues to do much with little. Our operating budget of $1,500.00 in 2008-2009 was reduced by 10% to $1,350.00 in 2009-2010. During these years we sought support for events (including lectures, performances, and a conference) from the Biever Lecture Fund, the Office of Grants and Leaves, the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences, the College of Music and Fine Arts, the Institute for the Study of Catholic Culture and Tradition, the Catholic Studies Program, the Office of Mission and Ministry, and various departments. Our programming is well-attended, but support for it is currently insufficient. We receive the same amount of funding through our operating budget as other interdisciplinary programs that do considerably less, but we have benefitted from the generosity of numerous units on campus.
2. Unit Identification/Profile Summary

2.1. Name and Mission

Medieval Studies (Interdisciplinary Minor)

The Medieval Studies minor seeks to foster an understanding of the cultural monuments of the European Middle Ages both as accomplishments worthy of study in their own right and as the source of countless institutions of, and questions about, modernity in the West. In keeping with the mission of the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences, the faculty pursue a multidisciplinary approach to teaching and research that emphasizes the interrelatedness the many fields of human knowledge.

2.2. General Statement and Descriptive Information

The Medieval Studies Steering Committee includes representatives from the three core areas (History, Literature [English], and Thought [Philosophy/Religious Studies]) and faculty from other related departments as approved by the Steering Committee. Representatives serve two-year terms which are renewable by a majority vote of the Steering Committee. A Chair is elected from among the members of the Steering Committee to serve a renewable two-year term. The Steering Committee maintains the academic curriculum and arranges for extra- and co-curricular programming. The minor consists of 18 hours of coursework. HIST A306, “Middle Ages,” and ENGL A316 “Medieval Literature,” are required and both are offered on a biennial basis. Students must also take one Thought course from a list of approved offerings in Philosophy and Religious Studies. The remaining six hours are satisfied by electives drawn from the regular offerings of participating departments. All coursework must be approved by the Medieval Studies Chair, who functions as the adviser to all minors, and must be distributed across at least three different departments. Extra- and co-curricular programming includes our regular film series (an average of two film screenings per semester with pizza and a faculty expert to introduce the film), our discussion group for area medievalists, and at least one major lecturer per year. A chartered student organization, Gamma Delta Rho, is available for interested students and in recent years has co-sponsored a living chess game with the University Honors Program during the spring semester.

2.2.1. Headcounts of staff: n/a

2.2.2. Headcounts of faculty: n/a

2.2.3. Headcounts of undergraduate students: headcounts for interdisciplinary minor programs were not kept during the years covered by this report

2.2.4. Headcounts of graduate students: n/a

2.2.5. Retention rates: n/a

2.2.6. Graduation rates: n/a
3. Assessment

3.1. General Statement on Assessment

N.b.: This report was written retrospectively in 2011 to cover the years 2008-2009 and 2009-2010, during which period reporting structures with respect to interdisciplinary programs were unclear, as administrative responsibility for these programs transferred from individual colleges to the Office of the Provost. Indeed, no reports were solicited from the programs during these years, and so none were written.

During the period 2004-2008, we examined one area of our program each year to determine what changes needed to be made to meet our learning objectives. We made determinations and changes on the basis of: the consensus of the faculty committee as demonstrated through minutes and votes; peer course observations and evaluations; discussions with students and suggestions submitted from students in writing; evaluations of student portfolios; developments in the discipline as appropriate for our department and institution. This method of program assessment proved to be only moderately successful, in large part because of the limited faculty buy-in. There is no incentive for faculty outside of the Steering Committee to participate in curricular assessment, and consequently our efforts to date have been partial at best. While the members of the Steering Committee have more than demonstrated their commitment to the program, all have obligations to their home colleges, departments, and other interdisciplinary programs that limit their availability for participation in fuller assessment. Historically there has been little or no institutional support for assessment activities within interdisciplinary programs, all of which results in much of the responsibility for assessment resting on the shoulders of the program’s Chair. The Chair receives no stipendiary support or course release time and has no budget for assessment, nor does the current Chair possess any particular expertise or training in assessment. The result is that assessment within the program has been haphazard at best, despite recognition on the part of the faculty involved in the program of the value of assessment generally.

3.2. Program Goals for 2008-2009 and 2009-2010

The Medieval Studies program neither has now nor has had in recent years, if ever, a strategic plan. The program identified the development of a full strategic plan as a goal in 2007-2008 but failed subsequently to achieve that goal largely because the Chair was also serving as the Deputy Director of the University Honors Program during that same period. While a comprehensive strategic plan remains a desideratum of the Steering Committee, the simple fact of the matter remains that developing such a plan requires resources of time that the already overburdened members of the Steering Committee do not possess. The four regular members of the Steering Committee are among the most active faculty on campus in terms of service, scholarship, and off-campus professional activities. The program therefore had no specific goals tied to any strategic plan during the years covered by this report.

3.3. Student Learning Outcomes

a. Students should be familiar with the basic framework of western European history in the Middle Ages and the methods for creating that framework.
b. Students should be familiar with major works of medieval literature written in English and translated from other languages and methods for interpreting those works.

c. Students should be familiar with major works of philosophy or theology in the Latin Middle Ages and methods for interpreting those works.

d. Students should be familiar with products of medieval culture outside of literature (music, visual arts, etc.) and methods for interpreting those works.

e. Students should be able to communicate ideas in oral and written form.

3.4. Assessment of Internal and External Factors Affecting the Unit

Having completed a long-term program assessment in Spring 2008, the program pursued no specific assessment during the years covered by this report.

3.5. Assessment of Community-Related Activities

While program faculty have engaged in community-related activities, we have not formally assessed those.

3.6. Assessment Results

The program did not formally assess our student learning outcomes in these years. These outcomes were, however, the subject of our assessment activities during the period 2004-2008.
4. Summary of Achievements

4.1. Unit as a Whole

The years covered witnessed the zenith of Medieval Studies at Loyola University. At our height, the program had upwards of two dozen students participating in the minor, including three contract majors. We were able to draw on the resources of contributing departments to offer 16 courses during 2008-2009 and 15 for 2009-2010, including courses offered for the University Honors and First-Year Seminar programs. Our core faculty continue to be incredibly productive contributors to the University as well as to their professional fields.

Medieval Studies continued to host a “Medieval Film Festival” consisting of two screenings per semester and including films such as *Beowulf and Grendel*, *Dante’s Inferno*, and *El Cid*. As always, each film was introduced by a faculty expert who also facilitated a discussion of the film afterwards. Film screenings drew audiences of between 10 and 30 people per event. We also continued to host meetings of the Greater New Orleans Medieval Scholars (GNOMeS) book discussion group, an event that brings medievalist faculty from colleges and universities in the greater New Orleans area together on Loyola’s campus.

During these years, we also hosted and/or co-sponsored a number of successful lectures and other events, including:

- a lecture by Dr. Jace Stuckey on “Imagined Crusades: Memory, Propaganda, and the Legend of Charlemagne in the Ear of the Crusades” in October of 2008;
- a performance by the internationally-known Baba Brinkman, the so-called “Chaucer Rapper,” in November of 2008;
- a lecture by Dr. Krista Kesselring on “Faith, Politics, and Protest in Elizabethan England,” in February of 2010;
- performances by a group of seven Loyola students of a medieval play under the direction of Prof. Artemis Preeshl (Theatre Arts) in collaboration with Dr. John Sebastian (English) at the University of Toronto as part of “Chester 2010: Peril and Danger to Her Majesty,” an international medieval dramatic festival in May of 2010 (the students also performed the play twice on campus).

In 2010 we also began a new tradition: an end-of-the-year barbecue as a means of celebrating our achievements and sending off our graduating students. We also began in 2010 to support the annual “Salon de Jeanne,” sponsored by the Krewe de Jeanne d’Arc, a community organization committed to celebrating New Orleans’s ties to Joan of Arc.

4.2. Faculty Achievements/Service: n/a

4.3. Staff Achievements/Service: n/a

4.4. Student Achievements

a. In October of 2008, four students (G. Nicholas Courtney, Michelle Garcia, Jason Straight, and Nathanael Thacker) presented conference papers at the annual meeting of the Louisiana Consortium of Medieval and Renaissance Scholars at the University of Louisiana, Lafayette.

b. In March of 2009, Jason Straight presented a second paper, “From ‘Old Custom’ toward a New Social Order: The Evolution of Peasant Rebellion in
Late Medieval Germany” at the statewide conference of Phi Alpha Theta, the National History Honors Society. His presentation won the award for best paper delivered by an undergraduate.

c. Mary Kate Delaney also presented at the Phi Alpha Theta conference, delivering a paper entitled “A Pope of Great Words: Innocent III and His Writings.”

d. G. Nicholas Courtney delivered a paper at the 18th Annual Undergraduate Conference on English Language and Literature at the University of St. Francis in April of 2009.

e. Charles O’Boyle received the Venerable Bede Award for Outstanding Graduate in Medieval Studies at the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences Honors Convocation in May of 2009.

f. G. Nicholas Courtney was selected to participate in the prestigious Erasmus Institute at the University of Notre Dame during the summer of 2009.

g. In 2009-2010, no fewer than five students completed honors theses on medieval topics: Mary Kate Delaney (History), Jason Straight (History), Lauren Cherneski (Ancient and Medieval Studies), G. Nicholas Courtney (Medieval Studies), and Mia Farmer (Medieval Studies).

h. G. Nicholas Courtney and Jason Straight shared the Venerable Bede Award for Outstanding Graduate in Medieval Studies at the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences Honors Convocation in May of 2010.

i. G. Nicholas Courtney was the recipient of the Davies-Jackson Scholarship in 2010. The award, granted to only two students nationally each year, covers the cost for two years of study for the equivalent of a master’s degree in philosophy at St. John’s College, University of Cambridge (UK).

j. G. Nicholas Courtney was honored with the Ignatian Award, the highest honor granted by the university to an undergraduate student, during Commencement 2010.

k. In 2010, seven Loyola students traveled to Toronto to perform a medieval play as part of a three-day dramatic festival and symposium entitled “Chester 2010: Peril and Danger to Her Majesty.”

4.5. Community Engagement Achievements

In 2010 Medieval Studies began to forge a relationship with the Krewe de Jeanne d’Arc to support community interest in New Orleans’s “medieval” history.
5. Budget

5.1. 2008-2009 Operating Budget: $1,500.00; 2009-2010 Operating Budget: $1,350.00

5.1.1. Budget discussion

The program continues to do much with little. Our operating budget is insufficient for supporting our extensive programming, and we have routinely sought support, especially for lectures but also for other activities, from the Biever Lecture Fund, the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences, the College of Music and Fine Arts, the Institute for the Study of Catholic Culture and Tradition, the Jesuit Social Research Institute, the Office of Mission and Ministry, the Catholic Studies Program, and various departments. Our programming is well-attended, but support for it is currently insufficient. In 2009-2010, moreover, the operating budget of the program was cut 10% in keeping with across-the-board cuts throughout the university.

5.2. 2010-2011 Operating Budget: $1,350.00

5.2.1. Budget discussion

Please see the discussion in the report for 2010-2011.
6. Planning and Goals for 2009-2010 and 2010-2011

6.1. Strategic Planning

Medieval Studies has not had a formal strategic plan. In 2009-2010 the Chair began to meet regularly with other program directors as part of the Interdisciplinary Studies Group convened by the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. That group has worked together on developing interdisciplinary programs in general. In the absence of a formal plan, our goals have been determined through regular meetings of the Steering Committee, including informal assessment and planning activities. The Committee consists of Drs. Sara Butler (History), Alice Clark (Music), Mark Gossiaux (Philosophy), and John Sebastian (English, Chair).

6.2. Support of the University Mission

Despite lacking a current strategic plan for the program, in its activities and aspirations Medieval Studies is clearly in line with the University’s mission and strategic goals. By means of its interdisciplinarity the program reflects St. Ignatius of Loyola’s emphasis on “finding God in all things” and “is grounded in the liberal arts and sciences” (University Mission Statement). Our participating faculty strive “to educate the whole student” through their “teaching, research, creative activities, and service,” as reflected in the quality and variety of our courses, our efforts in mentoring students both through active advising and through direction of undergraduate research (our faculty routinely direct undergraduate theses), our outstanding scholarly output, our participation in and leadership of some of the most significant programs and committees at the University, and our support of extracurricular activities intended to stimulate interest in the Middle Ages (University Mission Statement). Our participating faculty seek “to benefit the larger community” through their participation in a variety of local organizations, volunteer services (e.g., in the STAIR tutoring program), and community talks on aspects of our work (University Mission Statement). One of the three principal goals of the University’s Strategic Plan is the enhancement of the University’s reputation and stature, which includes an action plan for bolstering academic programs. The Strategic Plan outlines an initiative to

Enhance existing distinctive programs and those which demonstrate unique market advantages; develop new programs and strengthen existing programs that are distinctive in subject matter and that are cross-disciplinary, interdepartmental, and inter-college programs based on subject matter upon which no other University competes; and house interdisciplinary studies and other cross-college programs in a centralized location. (Loyola 2012) Given its interdisciplinary nature and its emphasis on the Catholic intellectual tradition, Medieval Studies should be part of this ongoing initiative to shore up existing interdisciplinary programs that are both distinctive (if not entirely unique) and competitive.

6.3. Program Goals

The Program did not articulate specific goals during these years but sought generally to continue delivering a rigorous minor and high-quality co-curricular programming.

6.4. Student Learning Outcomes

a. Students should be familiar with the basic framework of western European history in the Middle Ages and the methods for creating that framework.
b. Students should be familiar with major works of medieval literature written in English and translated from other languages and methods for interpreting those works.

c. Students should be familiar with major works of philosophy or theology in the Latin Middle Ages and methods for interpreting those works.

d. Students should be familiar with products of medieval culture outside of literature (music, visual arts, etc.) and methods for interpreting those works.

e. Students should be able to communicate ideas in oral and written form.

We did not assess our student learning outcomes in these years, having completed a four-year assessment of these outcomes in 2008.

6.5. Community Engagement

The Chair of the program is currently working with Amy Kirk Duvoisin, Director of the New Orleans-based Joan of Arc Project, to develop a partnership between Loyola Medieval Studies and the Joan of Arc Project in advance of the sexcentennial anniversary of Joan’s birth in 2012.

6.6. Resources

Medieval Studies will presumably continue to be supported by an operating budget provided by the Office of the Provost, although funding for interdisciplinary programs has historically been unstable. The program also has a very small gift account sustained exclusively by faculty payroll deductions. We will continue to seek additional support internally and externally, but the necessity of doing so is exhausting, especially given that other programs, which do very little by comparison, are funded at comparable levels. For the program to continue to operate at its current levels and for it to experience the same level of success, additional resources are necessary. The University continues to proliferate these programs (we have gone from eight minors to 13 minors and two majors in a few years) without providing adequate funding to support them. Currently, interdisciplinary programs are not part of any University fundraising efforts, a situation that should be addressed.

The program also continues to be overly dependent on courses provided by extraordinary faculty, a less than ideal situation. This dependence on adjunct faculty means that we have very inconsistent course offerings from semester to semester, making it difficult for the program to advise students as effectively as it would like. Ideally, interdisciplinary program directors would be engaged in college-level discussion of faculty hiring plans to ensure that we have the faculty to support existing programs.

6.7. Assessment Plan

Medieval Studies did not develop a new assessment plan during these years.
7. Appendices

7.1. Student Data Collection Tools

The program has developed several student data collection tools over the last several years, although the current Chair has admittedly been lax in employing them, including a student-learning outcomes matrix; senior interview questionnaire; student portfolio cover sheet; and student semester goals questionnaire that we have used on and off over the last several years. These documents are attached below.

7.2. Other Data Collection Tools: n/a

7.3. Assessment Reports

n/a

7.4. Additional Supporting Documentation

n/a
7.1 Assessment Matrix
Medieval Studies minor

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<th>Literature</th>
<th>Culture</th>
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<td></td>
<td>HIST-A306 (required);</td>
<td>ENGL-A316 (required);</td>
<td>electives (12 hours, distributed in at least three departments, chosen in consultation with advisor)</td>
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<td>electives</td>
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**A. Students should be familiar with the basic framework of western European history in the middle ages and the methods for creating that framework.**

1. discuss the basic chronology of medieval history both in its broad outline and detailing the most significant events
   - in-class discussion, exams
   - in-class discussion, exams
   - in-class discussion, exams

2. discuss the military, political, social, economic and/or intellectual context of significant events, individuals, institutions or periods
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers

3. discuss the interrelationships between sacred and secular authority in medieval Europe
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers

4. discuss and analyze primary sources and the ways in which they are used to create modern interpretations of significant events, individuals, institutions or periods
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers

**B. Students should be familiar with major works of medieval literature written in English and translated from other languages and methods for interpreting those works.**

1. discuss the conventions, history and special techniques of that genre
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers

2. analyze the significant stylistic features of the passage
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers

3. discuss the place of the passage in the career of its author and in the history of the genre
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
<table>
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<th>4. discuss the place of the genre in its literary and cultural context</th>
<th>in-class discussion, exams, papers</th>
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<td><strong>C. Students should be familiar with products of medieval culture outside of literature (music, visual arts, etc.) and methods for interpreting those works.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. discuss the basic stylistic features of one non-literary artistic genre (music, manuscript illumination, architecture, sculpture, etc.)</td>
<td>in-class discussion, exams, papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. discuss how a work of medieval culture was affected by its historical, intellectual, and/or spiritual context</td>
<td>in-class discussion, exams, papers</td>
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<td><strong>D. Students should be able to communicate ideas in oral and written form.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. write essays and papers on medieval subjects</td>
<td>exams, papers exams, papers exams, papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. make in-class oral presentations</td>
<td>in-class discussion, presentations in-class discussion, presentations in-class discussion, presentations</td>
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Medieval Studies Exit Interview
2006

Name: _________________________________

Major: ________________________________

What do you see as the strengths of the Medieval Studies program here at Loyola?

What do you see as the weaknesses of the Medieval Studies program here at Loyola?

Do you feel there was adequate coverage of the Middle Ages (both chronologically and geographically) in the selection of courses offered by Loyola?

Was there enough variety in the medieval courses offered?

Do any of the following events sound at all interesting to you?
Would any of the following potential courses sound appealing to you?

- Medieval Medicine and Medical Practices
- Late Medieval Drama (this course would include putting together an actual production of a medieval play)
- Medieval Women’s Literature

Do you feel you received adequate advising with your Medieval Studies Minor?

On behalf of the Medieval Studies Minor Committee,
thank you for participating in this survey!

Sara Butler
Chair, Medieval Studies
## Medieval Studies Minor Portfolio
### Cover Sheet

Name___________________   Year admitted______________________
E-mail__________________   Year minor declared_________________<br>
Major?__________________   Year declared______________________
Other major/minor?________   Year declared______________________
Advisor__________________
Permanent Address____________________________________________________

## Medieval Studies Coursework

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<tr>
<td>HIST-A306</td>
<td>“The Middle Ages”</td>
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<td>ENGL-A316</td>
<td>“Medieval Survey”</td>
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Personal Goal Statements (beginning and end of each semester)

Fall   ______   ______   ______   ______
Spring   ______   ______   ______   ______   Exit Review______
Medieval Studies Minor Portfolio
Cover Sheet
(for students who registered prior to program changes)

Name___________________   Year admitted_____________________
E-mail__________________   Year minor declared__________________
Major?__________________   Year declared______________________
Other major/minor?_______   Year declared______________________
Advisor__________________
 Permanent Address____________________________________________________

Medieval Studies Coursework

*Courses must span three different departments

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Personal Goal Statements (beginning and end of each semester)

Fall ________   ________   ________   ________   ________
Spring ________   ________   ________   ________   ________   Exit Review______
Beginning of the Semester Goals for ________________________(semester/year)

Name_____________________________________________

Please think about your academic goals for the semester.

1. What skills do you want to develop this semester in medieval studies?

2. What other learning objectives will you address this semester?

3. How will your work in medieval studies this semester address your career goals?
Assessment of Learning Goals for ___________________________ (semester/year)

Please think about your academic progress this semester.

1. What skills did you develop this semester in medieval studies?

2. What other learning objectives did you address?

3. Is there anything you hoped to accomplish that you did not? Why?

4. How did your course work in medieval studies this semester address your career goals?