Early Modern Literature & Culture
Department of English
Northwestern University

Ph.D. Program Highlights

Eight tenured faculty members working in the field: Kasey Evans, Jeffrey Masten, Susan Phillips, Regina Schwartz, Laurie Shannon, Wendy Wall, William N. West, and Kelly Wisecup.

Extraordinary field coverage in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature and culture; particular strengths in drama, poetry, the comparative and classical Renaissance, animal studies, digital humanities, gender and sexuality, history of the book, religion, Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton, and writing by early modern women. Strong links to medieval and eighteenth-century faculty.

Interdisciplinary study with Northwestern Renaissance specialists in Art History (Jesús Escobar, Claudia Swan, Rebecca Zorach), French & Italian (Cynthia Nazarian), History (Lydia Barnett, Edward Muir, Scott Sowerby), Music (Linda Austern), and Religious Studies (Sylvester Johnson, J. Michelle Molina), as well as faculty in fields such as Classics, Gender & Sexuality Studies, Performance Studies, Theatre & Drama.

Local access to the consortium seminars and rare book and manuscript archives of Chicago’s Newberry Library. Our students have also secured internal and external funding for research travel to archives including the Folger, Huntington, Bodleian, British, and Vatican Libraries, and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Current and recent students have received grants from the Mellon Vernacular Paleography Institutes, and the AAUW, ACLS/Mellon, Fulbright, & Woodrow Wilson fellowships, with multiple early modernist recipients of Northwestern’s highest graduate honor, the Presidential Society of Fellows. Our students have also garnered recognition for their pedagogical skills both inside and outside the classroom; winning teaching awards, and delivering pre-performance lectures at the acclaimed Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

Home of the semi-annual journal Renaissance Drama.

Colloquia and speaker series, including the Northwestern Early Modern Colloquium, and the Newberry Library’s History of the Book and Milton seminars.

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With eight faculty specialists in the Renaissance, Northwestern’s English department offers superb graduate training in the full range of genres, topics, methods, and approaches in early modern literature and culture. In addition to a highly visible and productive faculty, the program features a wide range of interdisciplinary opportunities in a variety of related departments and programs at Northwestern, a strong record of job placement, the nearby resources of Chicago’s Newberry Library, and more.
In the past 10 years, our graduates specializing in early modern literature have secured tenure track positions at Cornell University, Illinois Wesleyan University, Santa Clara University, SUNY-Brockport, University of Tennessee-Knoxville, USC, the University of Washington in Seattle, and others. They have been awarded post-doctoral positions with Emory University, the Michigan Society of Fellows, and the Public Theater in New York. Two have won the Leeds Barroll Prize for Best Dissertation from the Shakespeare Association of America. One produces the podcast “Rude Tudors”. Other graduates of our program have accepted tenure track positions at universities and colleges including Boston University, Temple University, UNC Chapel Hill, University of Pittsburgh, Washington University in St Louis, Wheaton College in Massachusetts, and Yale University. While in our program, recent and current students have placed articles in major scholarly journals, including *Book History, Criticism*, *ELR, PMLA, Shakespeare Quarterly, Shakespeare Studies, Sidney Journal*, and *JEL*.