



Winterthur Program Core Courses

The course of study begins with an introduction to American decorative arts and material culture, a five week summer institute that makes extensive use of Winterthur's museum and library collections. This course provides a firm foundation for the formal curriculum, highlights of which appear below.



Connoisseurship I

One of the key elements of the core curriculum is a sequence of courses taught by Winterthur's renowned curators on the major categories of objects in the Museum's collections. In the fall semester of the first year, fellows study American furniture, concentrating on the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

The second major bloc deals with American silver production. As in their study of furniture, fellows have the opportunity to work directly with museum objects and to explore the extensive library holdings on early American silver.





Connoisseurship II

The second of the three connoisseurship courses takes place in the spring of the first year. The course is comprised of three five week blocs on ceramics, base metals and textiles. Curators bring objects from the collections into the classroom. There are also intensive sessions in the Museum's study collections. Since fellows are trained as guides and have handling privileges they spend considerable out- of -class time in the collections.



Connoisseurship III

The final semester of connoisseurship is devoted to study of American prints and portraits, concentrating on Winterthur's holdings. Glass objects occupy a separate bloc as do books from the Library's impressive array of original imprints. Winterthur also has an outstanding slide library and the Decorative Arts photographic collection is an invaluable aid to fellows throughout their connoisseurship training.



Additional Courses at Winterthur

Winterthur's office of advanced studies offers three courses that build upon the methodology of the connoisseurship offerings. Fellows take a required seminar on American Material Life. In this course they work with both collections objects and primary documents in the Museum's research library. An elective course on American Craftsmanship includes wide-ranging readings as well as a behind the scene field study at Colonial Williamsburg. Fellows may also elect a seminar that concentrates on topics such as Religion in Material Life, and American Arts and Crafts.

Graduate Seminars at the University of Delaware

Since its inception in 1952, the Winterthur Program has taken a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of material culture. The University's distinguished departments of Art History, English and History provide graduate seminars that introduce fellows to the latest disciplinary scholarship that bears on the study of material culture. Fellows take one graduate seminar in each of these three departments.



The Art History department offers courses on Vernacular Architecture, American Painting, Neo-Classicism in America and Folk and Outsider Art. In the English department, fellows may choose from a variety of graduate seminars, including Colonial American Literature, The Victorian Novel and Literary Theory. The History department's offerings encompass a wide range of topics including American Social and Cultural History, Revolutionary America and Images of Race and Ethnicity in American Life.

Interdisciplinary Courses



The Winterthur Program's national prestige is also the result of innovative, interdisciplinary courses that explore the latest scholarship on American decorative arts and material culture. Leading the way are two core courses: Issues in American Material Culture and Theoretical Perspectives on American Material Culture. Fellows must take one of these courses and some elect to take both. Courses on Historic Preservation, Historical Archaeology and Women's Studies also employ interdisciplinary approaches.

Master's Thesis

In the summer between their first and second year in the program, fellows do the primary research for their Master's Thesis. Time periods range widely, from the 17th through the early 20th century. Master Theses are based on objects and primary materials in Winterthur's collections and in the holdings of other major museums and historical societies.



The Museum Studies Program



Many Winterthur fellows elect to pursue the Certificate offered by the Museum Studies Program at the University of Delaware. This curriculum offers courses in Leadership and Management, Historic Properties, Museum Education and practical experience as a Museum intern. Most of these internships for fellows take place at Winterthur in the curatorial division, the education division, the publications division or in the development office.