

Descriptive Bibliography 101

A Course on Describing Books in the Hand Press Era

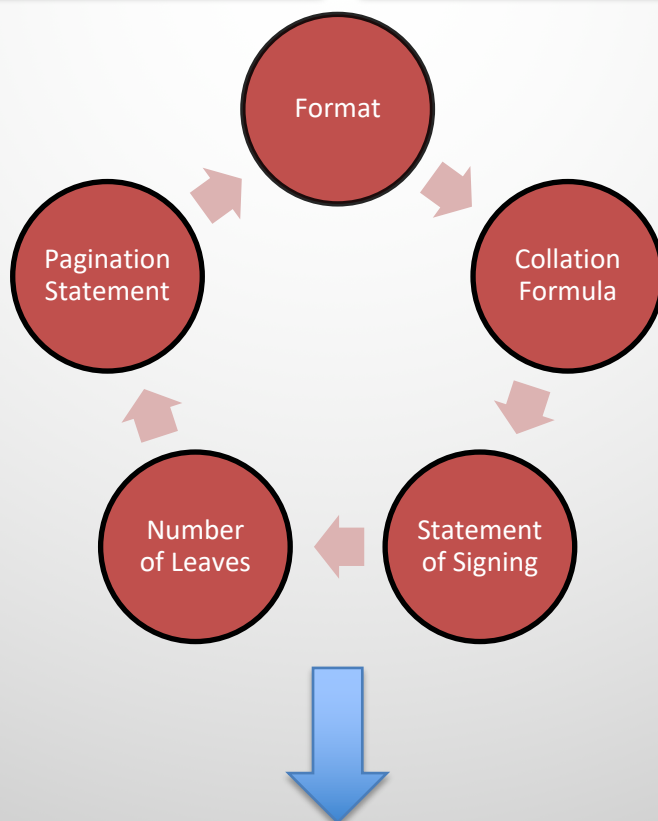


Purpose:

To many, descriptive bibliography is a dying skill and not needed in today's technological world. In fact the exact opposite is true. The field of bibliographic description is vital to the field of rare books and special collections. Descriptive bibliography is what catalogers, antiquarian book dealers, auction houses, and many other fields; use to describe copies of rare books. It is more important today than ever to preserve, describe, and maintain the importance of our rare books and special collections.

Course Format:

The course is a graduate level, ten week, hands-on class focused on all aspects of bibliographic description. There are weekly readings, lectures, and skills lab. This course will focus on the five main components of bibliographic description; format, collation formula, statement of signing, number of leaves, and pagination statement. We will also touch on bindings, handling, preservation, the history of printing presses and production circa 1500-1800, and the potential future of descriptive bibliography.



An Example of a Descriptive Bibliography Formula

The Faerie Queene by Edmund Spenser-1609

2°: A-Y⁶ 2A-2H⁶ 2I³ [\$4 (-A1, -2I3-4) signed]; 183 leaves, pp. [2] 1-363 [1] [misnumbering 8 as 10, 311 as 3]