University Administrative Fellow, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Firestone Library

Reporting To: Eric White, Curator of Rare Books
Position Start Date: on or after September 9, 2019
Position End Date: End of December, 2019

The Department of Rare Books and Special Collections (RBSC) seeks applications for the University Administrative Fellows (UAF) program to assist with a bibliographical survey and description of an under-catalogued collection of Victorian literature within the Rare Books division of the RBSC Firestone Library. Applicants should submit a cover letter and one copy of her/his/their résumé via email by September 6, 2019 to Eric White (ericwhite@princeton.edu).

About the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections:

The Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, housed within the Firestone Library, is one of the premier repositories of its kind. Its holdings span five millennia and five continents, and include around 300,000 rare or significant printed works; 30,000 linear feet of textual materials, ranging from cuneiform tablets to contemporary manuscripts; a wealth of prints, drawings, photographs, maps, coins, and other visual materials; the Cotsen Children's Library; and the recently-gifted Scheide Library.

Consultation

Some 5,000 patrons from Princeton and around the world seek assistance on a wide variety of research projects related to holdings with the department. Staff direct students, faculty, independent scholars, and others to resources within its collections and refer them when appropriate to other libraries for further information. Guidance is often provided through the creation of print and online research guides and collection overviews.

Education

Approximately 200 Princeton Undergraduate and Graduate class sessions are held in the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections throughout the academic year. Class sessions often involve in-depth course assignments that explore and interpret the department’s collections and unique holdings.

Outreach

Through a variety of online guides, websites, and other media, the department publicizes its collections, suggests potential research topics for students.
Learning Objectives:

Through the creation of an in-depth, topic-specific collection research guide, the UAF selected for assignment to RBSC will learn technical aspects of research, education, and outreach in the field of special collections. Thus, the fellowship has the potential to broaden employment opportunities in both academic and non-academic settings. The fellow will be exposed to many different facets of the field of Special Collections Librarianship and explore associated career paths in both academic and nonacademic settings.

Administrative Objectives:

The fellow will be expected to learn basic skills required for providing collection outreach and managing Voyager catalog records. His/her responsibilities will involve working with both department supervisors and student and faculty researchers to enhance the visibility and teaching potential of RBSC holdings.

Outreach Objectives:

The fellow will gain basic competence in searching and updating the Voyager cataloging system, thereby improving the online presence of the Morris L. Parrish Collection of Victorian Novelists, which constitutes a significant division of the PUL's nineteenth-century holdings that has remained largely hidden from researchers. The project goal is to achieve full consistency between the print bibliography of the Parrish collection and its digital representation through the library catalog.

Additionally, the fellow will provide logistic and organizational support for the Rare Book Working Group towards the goal of establishing a sustainable outreach program. This will involve arranging speaker visits and interactive learning sessions on a variety of collection- and field-specific topics for an interdisciplinary audience of graduate students and faculty, as well as creating an online platform documenting the progress of the group. The fellow will assist with developing and recording pedagogical approaches to PUL’s rare books and special collections under the guidance of supervisors collaborating on teaching initiatives with other campus entities.

Prerequisites:

Applicants for the UAF position in RBSC will be expected to have:

- basic familiarity with research processes in the humanities as demonstrated by graduate course work or special projects/previous employment
- familiarity with, or interest in, special collections librarianship
- experience with archival materials and/or the use of historical primary sources