



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF BOOKBINDING

An International School

Founded 1993

Student Diploma Program Guidelines for Conservation

Updated January 2010

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF BOOKBINDING

A Program of Excellence

Founded in 1993, the American Academy of Bookbinding offers a program that gives serious bookbinding and book conservation students an opportunity to initiate and improve their skills in a fertile and supportive setting. The Academy holds intensive courses in the fine art of leather binding, conservation and related subjects. The goal of the Academy is to graduate professional level binders and book conservators who have the knowledge and skills to produce the highest quality work and the ability to pass on these skills to the next generation. The Academy is unique in the United States in its ability to offer a comprehensive diploma granting program in the study of bookbinding and book conservation, taught by some of the most experienced and highly regarded book artists and conservators in the world. Students have the opportunity to study at either of two locations: Telluride, Colorado, or Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Founders of the Academy are Tini Miura, Einen Miura and Daniel Tucker. The Program Director is Monique Lallier. Current and past faculty members include Monique Lallier, Don Etherington, Tini Miura, Einen Miura, Louise Genest, John Franklin Mowery, Eleanore Edwards Ramsey, Hans-Peter Frölich, Hélène Jolis, Don Glaister and Renate Mesmer.

AAB DIPLOMA OPPORTUNITIES

The American Academy of Bookbinding has designed diploma programs in both Fine Binding and Conservation. This document will outline the requirements for a **Diploma in Conservation**.

A student seeking a diploma in conservation is required to complete a number of bindings through a combination of practical *Course Work* at the Academy, *Elective Course Work* and *Independent Study*.

The student will then choose and complete a *Diploma Project*, consisting of: a treated textblock with boards attached; a full-leather binding with raised bands and gold or blind tooling; a clamshell box with titling; two repair and restoration example projects with treatment reports and before photos; sample repair sheets; and a research paper. Experts in the field will then jury the Diploma Project and successful candidates will graduate with an official diploma from the Academy.

Course Work

Students will learn the basic techniques in the repair and restoration of bindings in different materials while attending five (or six) core Conservation Program classes. These classes are required for the Conservation Diploma. They include:

- Introduction to Binding Structures **This class will be added in 2009 and will be required of all students who enter the diploma program in 2009 and afterward. This will be a two-week class. Fundamentals of Bookbinding, the entry level class for Fine Binding, may be substituted.*
- Treatment of Textblocks and Sewing (two weeks) This class is also in two one-week sections titled "Paper Conservation" and "Sewing Structures." They are the same classes just with different titles.
- Forwarding and Covering (two weeks)
- Finishing (two weeks)

- Fine Box Making (one week)
- Restoration of Cloth and Leather Binding (one week)

Note that students may enter the program at different levels, and that curriculum requirements may differ based on personal skills and previous experience.

Through instruction in the above courses, each student will be introduced to the following techniques:

Text block techniques:

- dry cleaning
- washing
- aqueous de-acidification and sizing
- non-aqueous method of de-acidification
- mending techniques using Japanese paper and wheat starch paste
- the use of heat-set tissue on more modern paper
- sewing techniques: sewing on tapes, single or double cords or thongs

Construction of Books:

- simple case binding in cloth
- half-leather bindings
- full-leather covers including goat, calf and alum tawed leather
- sewing of end bands and board shaping
- board attachment
- shaping of spine prior to covering
- end paper techniques and styles appropriate to various book constructions
- box making in various styles
- finishing in blind and gold tooling

To assist a student in understanding his or her skills, a review is held at the end of each course taken. During this 'review,' the student will receive a numerical grade from 1-5, with 5 being excellent. The instructor bases a student's grade on:

- understanding of techniques
- quality of work
- rate of performance
- skill development

During this review process, a student's weakness in a particular area or areas is explained. This becomes a focal point of the 'homework'. (For example, if the instructor feels the student needs practice in sewing raised cords, the student's homework might be "One book sewn on double raised cords.")

These assignments will be detailed in the *Certificate of Course Completion*. This is a document that verifies the student's participation in an AAB course and lists the student's grade, as well as any other instructor comments. It is sent to the student after the completion of a course. It also serves as the yearly diploma guide for both the student and the administration of the Academy. Copies of all certificates are kept on file at the Academy for later review during the diploma evaluation period.

Independent Study/Homework Books

Students need to complete a number of different structures independently each year. A minimum of one independent binding a year is expected and will be noted in the student's file. These bindings are part of the 'homework' assignments. During the last year of study, the instructor will determine if the student has successfully completed enough independent bindings. If not, the student will need to complete more independent bindings. The instructor must be satisfied with the student's ability to restore and repair bindings independently for the student to proceed with the diploma program.

Students will complete their homework assignments before the next class they attend. Work completed at home should be sent to the instructor for review following each class – one book should be sent within 6 months and any others within 12 months. Homework is critical to the development of each student and is taken seriously by Academy instructors. Documentation of homework

assignments is the responsibility of the student. Please contact the Academy to make sure your homework assignments are being properly recorded.

Additional Courses

The Academy offers a variety of courses that students are encouraged to take, though they are not required for the diploma. The additional courses are meant to enhance training, giving the student a stronger and broader background in conservation and bookbinding. For example, courses may be offered in German Style Leather Binding, Alternative Designs for Leather, Decorated Paper, Vellum Binding, Millimeter Binding, and other relevant classes. These “extracurricular” courses are taught by permanent faculty and visiting experts.

Code of Ethics

Students in the Academy will follow the code of ethics established by the AIC. Please refer to the attached AIC document. It is strongly recommended that applicants be members of AIC and GBW.

The Student as a Candidate for Diploma

After required course work is completed, the instructor and student will meet to discuss the student’s readiness to be a Candidate for Diploma. They will review the student’s file, including prior grades and ‘homework’. At that time the instructor determines if the student is satisfactorily producing independent bindings, or if more work is required. If it is determined that the student is ready to begin work on the *Diploma Project*, possible topics for the Research Paper will be discussed, and a date for the jury process will be proposed. This will enable the student as well as the Director and staff of the Academy to prepare for this process. Note: a final meeting of similar nature must occur *a year in advance* of expected graduation, confirming the jurying date.

GRADUATION PROCESS FOR A DIPLOMA IN CONSERVATION

The Diploma Requirements for Conservation are accomplished through *Course Work, Independent Study*, and by study in non-required elective courses offered by the Academy. Upon satisfactory completion of this work, the instructor elects the student as a Candidate for Diploma. The student then has one year to produce the *Diploma Project*, which is outlined below. A jury of experts will evaluate the Project. There is an additional filing fee of \$150 required for the jurying process.

DIPLOMA PROJECT GUIDELINES

Three Bindings

The Diploma Project should reflect the knowledge and skills that the student acquired from the Academy's instruction and independent study.

For the Diploma Project, the student must present two new conservation bindings entirely realized independently by the student. The first binding will be chosen by the student and will be from the 19th century. This first binding will not need to be completed; it will be a treated textblock with boards attached, not covered, so the jurors can view the sewing, endbands and board shaping. The second book will be provided to the student by the AAB for a small fee and will be from a set, so that all prospective diploma students will conserve and bind nearly identical books. The second book will be a full-leather binding with raised bands and blind or gold tooling. The second book should have a clamshell box with titling.

A third binding that will need to be presented with the rest of your Diploma Project will be a fully restored leather binding using the original cover. This can be one of your homework books.

Repair and Restoration Projects

The student must demonstrate proficiency in repair and restoration, by provided examples of the following:

- Cloth Case Restoration, accompanied by a condition and treatment report and before photos
- Leather Hinge Repair, accompanied by a treatment report and before photos

The student will also need to present some sample sheets repaired with Japanese paper and sheets repaired with heat-set tissue (*these sheets will be provided by the Academy.*) These restoration projects are part of the Diploma Project and will be presented to the jury for review and critique.

Research Paper

The Candidate for Diploma must also write a *Research Paper* on a topic approved by the instructor. The research paper should reflect the Candidate's knowledge of Conservation. Examples of potential subjects are as follows:

- History of binding structures or styles
- History of adhesives used in conservation
- History of endbands and the many different varieties
- Limp vellum binding and its evolution
- Sewing structures and their uses

Academy instructors will be available to discuss and offer suggestions for the topic of the Research Paper. The paper should demonstrate the student's ability to do independent study and write effectively on the subject of bookbinding and conservation. It must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the subject matter. The paper should be a minimum of ten pages in length, double-spaced.

Portfolio

Each applicant will submit a comprehensive "Portfolio," which should show a varied selection of different kinds of restoration/conservation projects. The portfolio should include before and after photos, and condition and treatment reports. The portfolio may include both in-class and homework assignments, and this should be noted with each project. Care should be taken in how the portfolio is displayed.

Jurying Process

Academy Director Monique Lallier and founder Daniel Tucker will select a jury of three or four professional conservators. The jury convenes each year in the autumn, during the annual Guild of Book Workers 'Standards of Excellence' Conference. The Director will not be a member of the Jury but will be on hand to answer the jury members' questions.

The student is required to send his/her Diploma Project and Research Paper to the Director for review. At least eight weeks prior to the jurying, after approval, Project books and samples will be returned to the student. Copies of the research paper will be forwarded to all jurors. After graduation, a copy of the paper will be kept in the AAB library in Telluride for reference by other students.

The student is responsible for bringing his or her final projects to the jurying. The jurying will take one or two days, with the jurors meeting both privately and with the student in attendance. For the Conservation Diploma, the jurors will be looking for the student's proficiency in the following areas :

- High quality paper mending
- Tight and consistent sewing
- Endband construction with even stitching
- Good book shape with solid board attachment
- Superb paring of leather covers
- Fine finish of covered bindings
- Blind and gold titling
- Clamshell boxes

(Please see the Conservation Evaluation Sheet, attached, for a more specific list of areas of concern to the Jury.)

After reviewing and discussing the diploma student's bindings, research paper, and restoration and repair projects, the panel will arrive at a decision to either grant the student a diploma, or it will provide specific guidelines for further work necessary to meet the required standards.

Receipt of Diploma

The signed Diploma in Conservation will be sent to the student within three months of the jurying process.

American Academy of Bookbinding
Diploma Requirements Checklist for Conservation

_____ Completion of at least eight weeks of conservation classes over a four-year period. Required classes include:

- Introduction to Binding Structures **This class will be added in 2009 and will be required of all students who enter the diploma program in 2009 and afterward. This will be a two-week class. Fundamentals of Bookbinding, the entry level class for Fine Binding, may be substituted.*
- Treatment of Textblocks and Sewing (two weeks) This class is also in two one-week sections titled "Paper Conservation" and "Sewing Structures."
- Forwarding and Covering (two weeks)
- Finishing (two weeks)
- Fine Box Making (one week)
- Restoration of Cloth and Leather Binding (one week)

_____ Portfolio of Candidate's work: varied restoration projects

_____ Completion of a few bindings produced independently at home.

_____ Completion of a written research paper completed during the last year of study (subject is determined jointly by the student and faculty of the Academy).

_____ Critique of the following projects by a panel of jurors with a minimum grade of 3.5:

- Treated textblock, with boards attached (not covered) so the jurors can view sewing, endbands, board shaping, etc.
- Full-leather binding with raised bands and blind or gold tooling
- Clamshell box with titling (the above book should fit in this)
- Fully restored leather binding using the original cover
- Sample sheets repaired with Japanese paper and sheets repaired with heat-set tissue
- Cloth Case Restoration, accompanied by a condition and treatment report and before photos
- Leather Hinge Repair, accompanied by a treatment report and before photos

CONSERVATION BINDINGS EVALUATION SHEET

Student: _____

Title of Book: _____

Today's Date: _____

BINDING EVALUATION (scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest)

Treatment of textblock	1	2	3	4	5
Mending	1	2	3	4	5
Guarding	1	2	3	4	5
Endpapers	1	2	3	4	5
Sewing	1	2	3	4	5
Rounding & Backing	1	2	3	4	5
Endbands	1	2	3	4	5
Board attachment	1	2	3	4	5
Paring	1	2	3	4	5
Covering	1	2	3	4	5
Endpapers	1	2	3	4	5
Titling	1	2	3	4	5
Fine Box Making	1	2	3	4	5
Overall	1	2	3	4	5

Comments: