

**Application to Host the 19th Annual Vagantes Conference in 2020**

**Name of University:** University of Connecticut

**Name of Departments to be involved**: English, History, Literatures Cultures and Languages, Judaic Studies

**Name of Programs to be involved:** Medieval Studies

**Statement of Interest:** The University of Connecticut would be a great place to host Vagantes because there is a tradition of involvement among the graduate students and faculty with a strong presence of medievalists. One of the greatest advantages to the community at the University of Connecticut is the network of students and faculty alike that supports the same goals as the Vagantes Conference. Upon approaching departments and faculty, the response and excitement for hosting has been overwhelmingly positive. The University of Connecticut is particularly interested in exploring diversity in the Middle Ages and eagerly welcomes the chance to host this and related conversations that take place at Vagantes.

In addition, the presence of a Medieval Studies Program, which also houses the Charles A. Owen, Jr. Medieval Studies Library, outside of any single department, indicates just how important interdisciplinary study is to the University of Connecticut. The Medieval Studies Program regularly has guest speakers and invites professors to teach a graduate seminar as the Carles A. Owen, Jr. Visiting Professor. The Medieval Studies Program also hosts the Annual Medieval Studies Secondary Schools Outreach Seminar, in late March or early April, that is designed to connect with local schoolteachers and others with an interest in Medieval Studies. The Program also hosts a Yale-UConn Working Group that focuses on the development of medievalists and their work, further indicating UConn’s devotion to engagement with a broader community of scholars, especially graduate students.

The University of Connecticut is prepared to host a conference of the size of Vagantes. Storrs, Connecticut is a good venue for an international conference because it is situated within the beautiful rural landscapes of the Northeast and UConn has a hotel available on campus (the Nathan Hale) that would be very convenient for commute. There are many options for dining available within walking distance of the campus and the graduate students are devoted to creating a welcoming environment for any visitors. Many have already agreed to help visitors arriving at the airport in Hartford (Bradley International Airport) to reach Storrs and feel comfortable within the town.

**Funding**: After discussing the conference with various departments, there have been verbal promises to help fund the conference from the Departments of English, History, Literatures Cultures and Languages, Judaic Studies, and the Medieval Studies Program. We should be able to secure further funding from organizations such as the Medieval Academy of America, the Society for Medievalist Feminist Scholarship, and other departments and organizations to meet the financial obligations in 2020.

**Student Representatives:**

Catherine Albers, Department of English, University of Connecticut ([cmalbers08@gmail.com](mailto:cmalbers08@gmail.com))

William Biel, Medieval Studies Program, University of Connecticut

Laura Godfrey, Medieval Studies Program, University of Connecticut

Micah Goodrich, Medieval Studies Program, University of Connecticut

Jake Couturiaux, Medieval Studies Program, University of Connecticut

**Faculty Advisor:** Fiona Somerset, University of Connecticut

We agree to the following conditions:

1. The conference will be free and registration will be open to the general public.
2. The conference will run from a Thursday-Saturday in or around March.
3. The conference will include a keynote by a faculty member from our school on the opening day and a final keynote by a faculty member from the future host school.
4. The conference will conclude with a final banquet.
5. Our school will send a faculty member to serve as a keynote at the current host school. We will provide the current host school organizers with the speaker’s name and contact information no later than August 15.
6. Three graduate students from our school must agree to serve as abstract submission readers in November in the year the conference is hosted and in the following year. The abstract submission review committee is comprised of members from the past host institution, current host, and future host institution.
7. The host institution representative from our school must agree to serve a three-year term on the Vagantes Board of Directors.
   1. *Year 1*: the position of Future Host Institution Representative on the Vagantes Board of Directors begins as soon as the new host institution is named (c. June). Conference preparations begin.
   2. *Year 2*: the position becomes Current Host Institution Representative in May and continues for one year. Conference preparations continue; hosting the event occurs in or around March.
   3. *Year 3*: in May the Current Host Institution Representative becomes the new Chair of the Vagantes Board of Directors and serves in that capacity until the following May. The Chair is primarily an advisory role. The Chair ensures a smooth transition to the new host institution and supervises the operations of the Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies and its governing body.
8. The host school will feature the Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies seal logo on the conference program and other print and electronic marketing materials.