



The Renaissance Studies Program presents the third lecture in its  
“Forms of Knowledge and the Renaissance Uses of the Liberal Arts” series:

# Ann Blair

Henry Charles Lea Professor of History, Harvard University

## “Transferable Skills” in Renaissance Pedagogy

5:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 18, 2015  
Oak Room, Indiana Memorial Union

“Transferable skills” has become a mantra today in encouraging undergraduates to concentrate in the humanities. A humanist education became fashionable in the Renaissance for a variety of reasons, among them some equivalents to our “transferable skills” argument. In particular humanist pedagogues praised note-taking as an essential skill which was developed in their teaching both in the classroom and in private instruction. This talk will offer a survey of the principal forms of student note-taking in the late Renaissance, using evidence from note-taking manuals and from surviving notes in the margins of printed texts and in free-standing manuscripts, ranging from France 1550-1650 to colonial Harvard.

Ann Blair is a leading intellectual historian who has pioneered the sub-discipline of the organization and structure of knowledge in the early modern period. A recipient of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the MacArthur Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, and the Guggenheim Foundation, she is the author of *The Theater of Nature: Jean Bodin and Renaissance Science* (Princeton UP, 1997), and *Too Much To Know: Managing Scholarly Information Before the Modern Age* (Yale UP, 2010). She has co-edited, with Jennifer Milligan, *Toward a Cultural History of Archives*, a special issue of *Archival Science* (2007) and, with Richard Yeo, *Note-Taking in Early Modern Europe*, a special issue of *Intellectual History Review* (2010).

This lecture is made possible through the support of the College Arts and Humanities Institute, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Mary-Margaret Barr Koon Fund of the Department of French and Italian, the Department of History, and the Department of History and Philosophy of Science. The lecture will be followed by a reception.