Ivory, gold, bronze, glass, gems, wood, stone, silk, vellum, lead, fur, alabaster: the materials of medieval art are the subjects of this seminar. How did matter matter in medieval artworks and objects? How were materials acquired, worked, transformed, circulated, and valued? What new questions and insights emerge when we begin with the material specificity of medieval objects, rather than with artist, patron, or iconography? In this seminar, we will consider the physical, economic, technical, tactile, symbolic, aesthetic, and political histories of materials. Readings will include medieval texts on artistic practice and aesthetic response, as well as current art historical and philosophical scholarship on issues of materiality, agency, ontology, network, identity, and ethics.

Course requirements include attendance at all sessions; weekly readings and preparation of discussion topics; a regularly updated research blog; annotated bibliography; two presentations; a 20-page research paper; and peer reading and writing workshops.

The course will focus on Western Europe, c. 500-1400; prerequisite of FAH 1, one previous course in medieval art, or permission of instructor.
Course Calendar/Topics (see Trunk for reading lists and assignments)

02 September: Materials Matter
09 September: Making Stuff
19 September: Materials presentations
30 September: Materials presentations
07 October: Circulation
14 October: Material Responses
21 October: Symbolism and Allegory

preliminary project proposal due – meetings this week

28 October: Assemblage and Agency
04 November: drafts and presentations
11 November: no meeting: Veteran’s Day
18 November: drafts and presentations
25 November: no class meeting; online workshop assignment TBA
02 December: dinner, discussion, and papers due
Course Requirements
- Attendance at all seminar meetings
- Preparation of readings, participation in discussion, workshops, feedback
- Presentation of discussion topic/readings and/or questions
- Research project
  - Research blog
  - project proposal
  - annotated bibliography (20 sources)
  - 12-15 page draft and presentation
  - revised research paper
  - 2 conferences (1 post-draft)
  - weekly research updates/discussions, including online discussions

Deadlines, and Policies regarding assignments
- All work is due as noted on the course calendar and/or Trunk.
- No late work will be accepted for this course without prior written permission of the instructor. (Emailing me the night before an assignment is due does not constitute permission.)
- Arrangements for extensions are at the instructor’s discretion, and may include a grade reduction.
- Most assignments may be turned in as PDFs or other electronic documents. Computer and/or printer failure will not be considered a valid excuse for late or missing assignments.
- Keep a copy of all assignments until you receive your final grade for the course.
- Unless specifically requested, do not submit assignments as email attachments.
- If you are absent from class be prepared for the next meeting by following the syllabus.
- Attendance at all class meetings is expected. More than two unexcused absences will result in a lower grade, as will excessive lateness. Do not enroll in this class if you have foreseeable scheduling conflicts. Excused absences must be documented as emergencies by your academic Dean or advisor. If you have six total absences, you will fail the course.

Especially in the work of the course that is collaborative, be respectful of the members of your team in organizing and planning your work.

Policy on Plagiarism
Plagiarism is intellectual theft, using someone else’s words and/or ideas as if they were your own; plagiarism is dishonorable, and a violation of Tufts’ policies on academic ethics and integrity. You are responsible for educating yourself about what constitutes plagiarism; please read the policies on Academic Integrity, and speak with me if you have any questions. Tufts’ Academic Integrity policy is available online:
http://uss.tufts.edu/studentaffairs/publicationsandwebsites/Academicintegrity.pdf

Special Needs
Students with special needs must inform instructor within the first two weeks of the semester, so that appropriate accommodations can be made in consultation with the office of Academic Services.