

Detailed Course Evaluation

- 1) *How useful were the pre-course readings? Did you do any additional preparations in advance of the course?*
 1. Very useful, and not in excess.
 2. Very useful.
 3. Helpful—I wish I had read more of the instructor’s publications, though.
 4. Pre-course readings overlapped in background with some course lectures, but they made it possible to move much more quickly through that material in class, and were very helpful for introducing an outsider to the subject.
 5. I did the readings very quickly, as our academic quarter ended just a day before my arrival here. They were useful. I have also taken a few paleography courses that were very helpful as well, and we used more or less excerpts from these suggested texts.
 6. They were useful; in preparation, I also took a few classes at the college and looked over the plates in the Clemens book.
 7. Very good introductions, and good supplements to the coursework I had done in this area. I agree with the recommendations.
 8. Useful, yes, but not very exciting. How about Glissen or Vezin?
 9. The readings gave a good overview. I didn’t do anything in particular, otherwise.
 10. The pre-course readings were helpful in giving me a basic introduction to the kinds of information we received in class. To encounter the information *twice* instead of once will help with retention (I hope), and helped me come into class oriented in the field.

- 2) *Were the course workbook and other materials distributed in class appropriate and useful (or will they be so in the future, after you return home)?*
 1. The course workbook is very useful. Perhaps in future editions, the hand-drawn renderings and captions could be improved in clarity, quality, and size. It would be particularly helpful if the illustrations of initials could be produced in color.
 2. I shall treasure mine. (Would it be possible to make it available electronically?)
 3. Yes.
 4. Extremely so: this workbook contains many bibliographies, charts, examples, and discussions I expect to refer to as I use these skills.
 5. The workshop is an excellent desk-copy guide to codicology. I plan to use some of the very helpful tables and illustrations in undergrad teaching. The bibliography is amazing, and I wish I had had it earlier.
 6. The workbook was extremely helpful! I wish that the books we had pulled from the shelves in reference were bolded in the book to help find the title/author for future reference. It should be helpful in future endeavors, and I plan to use it for other classes.
 7. Appropriate for the course. The bibliography is thorough, and would point the way forward for further specific questions.

8. Yes. I throw most papers away. Not this.
9. The book covers various aspects of codicology, and is thus really useful to have.
10. I found the workbook very useful as a guide to the kinds of things that we learned and as a place to keep notes.

3) *Have you taken one or more RBS courses before? If so, how did this course compare with your previous coursework?*

1. No.
2. Yes. The two courses were very different in time, but quite complementary.
3. No.
4. No.
5. No.
6. No.
7. No.
8. No.
9. This was my first one.
10. This was my first RBS course.

4) *What aspects of the course content were of the greatest interest or relevance for your purposes?*

1. Of first interest to me was the detailed discussion of methods and materials for book making. Secondly, I was very appreciative of the introduction to the procedures and systems of codicology, and especially to types of scripts. The brief periods devoted to paleography (the part of the course for which I was least well prepared) were great. It was wonderful to have the guidance of AD's expertise and patience in my first attempts to transcribe scripts.
2. The study of quire composition; the more general introduction to scribal habits.
3. Learning how to read the material, the book as an actual object, and how it was assembled. Very important to know. Will definitely give me more guidance when I visit archives in the future.
4. The connections drawn between complex processes of book creation, and the sometimes minute evidence for them to be found in the text, within the contexts of the book's creation and use, were invaluable to my interests and research. In one week, I was made to feel that I could very rapidly get to grips with books as material records and understand a lot about their histories.
5. For me, pagination and mise en page. I am very interested in how poetry was laid out on the manuscript page and how scribes made use of space.
6. The greatest interest and relevance would be the script and the decoration portions, as that is what I would like to study in grad school.
7. Having a systematic way to approach a manuscript in the preparation of a codicological description.
8. Hard to isolate one thing. It was all useful as a practicum, as a thoughtful approach to materials I have long worked with, but which I have still failed to make very fundamental steps toward understanding.
9. I have a hard time picking out anything in particular; it was all interesting/relevant.

10. The information about quire structures, bibliographical format, and additions to a manuscript will be most useful to my research, though I do feel that having some awareness of illustration, layout, and script will help me in the future.

5) *Did the instructor successfully help you to acquire the information, knowledge, and skills that the course was intended to convey? Was the intellectual level of the course appropriate?*

1. Excellently.
2. Truly excellent. Unparalleled.
3. Yes. AD challenges us every moment, but has endless reserves of energy, patience, and good humor (and good stories).
4. The intellectual level of the course and the analytical expectations were both high. Both general and specific knowledge and skills were conveyed effectively. By the week's end, we were well prepared to examine manuscripts.
5. This was an excellent introductory course. I would not wish the level of detail to be higher, since I am a literature person (that is, in the long run, I will be primarily interested in content rather than structure). I feel very well informed to do research in more depth on the topics of codicology in the future because of this course.
6. Yes! The intellectual level of the course was appropriate. I feel that as an undergraduate, it was quite challenging, but it was beyond worth the effort.
7. He provided a good mixture of foundational material and more advanced aspects of codicology.
8. Yes, to both.
9. Yes, to both.
10. Yes. Yes.

6) *What did you like best about the course?*

1. Repeated and guided practice with book examples.
2. AD's shockingly, horrifyingly deep knowledge of manuscripts.
3. AD (incredible to work with him!), and especially time spent handling manuscripts, practicing what we were learning.
4. AD's encyclopedic knowledge, enthusiasm, and generosity: together, these meant that at every stage we felt empowered to learn on our own, but also that what remained to learn might be within our grasp. I also appreciated how, early and frequently, we encountered and handled actual manuscripts, to apply what we were learning in the classroom.
5. Many hands-on exercises and opportunities for working with my colleagues.
6. I loved the trip to LC, though I wish that we had gotten to spend more time there. I also enjoyed the trips to SC to do hands-on work with the manuscripts.
7. The professor's experience and ability to share that with the class. A close second would be the various kinds of expertise the students bring to the discussions.
8. Hard to say. I would have liked to spend more of the last day looking very closely at the Hildegard or *Liber Floridus* manuscripts, and trying to understand the issues they raise.

9. The great balance of theory and practice—getting to see various aspects of manuscripts we'd already read about/been introduced to. AD is an excellent and patient teacher.
10. The time with the manuscripts—after morning lectures in a particular feature—helped put theory into practice and exposed the complexities involved in identification and interpretation, which can seem straightforward when someone knowledgeable is explaining them. I also loved the book of hours exercise at LC. It was hugely instructive to look at lots of works of the same genre.

7) *How could the course have been improved?*

1. Restructure the timing of the LC trip.
2. The trip to DC needs to be reorganized. It was fun, but fighting traffic both ways was unfortunate. Why not leave at the middle of one day and return at the middle of the next? I would be happy to spend one night in DC to avoid the traffic and to have more time with the collections there.
3. Wish manuscripts had been made available in some vernacular options alongside Latin—transcribing these in addition to (or in place of) Medieval Latin would have been more relevant to scholars of vernacular literature, and we'd have appreciated the opportunity to do so with AD's expert help. The LC field trip was a traffic disaster, where we spent more time on the van than at the library—our driver got lost going in both directions and it took us 7.5–8 hours of driving for about six hours in the library; an overnight stay would have solved this.
4. As a non-medievalist, I would have appreciated some more historical explanation of the books encountered: their uses and functions. But I understand that this would detract from the time which was well spent on other discussions.
5. I cannot think of anything.
6. The course couldn't be improved by RBS; the only problem we hit was DC traffic and confusion on the part of the GPS on the bus.
7. Perhaps a bit more by way of summary... putting the various elements together in a big picture.
8. The repeated manuscript descriptions were tedious (twenty-five in one day!), but very useful. The same exercise turns out to help descriptive matters sink in. I'd have liked perhaps if we had spent more time with a single interesting manuscript and perhaps presented our observations. Could be a paired project.
9. {No response—RBS staff}
10. I think some more forecasting of the kinds of activities we would be doing/how we would (or could someday) use the skills/resources we talked about in the morning would have made me feel more grounded in the content and its *application* in arguments I might make about manuscripts in the future.

8) *Did you learn what the course description/advertisement indicated you would learn?*

1. Yes.
2. Yes.
3. Yes. The course description could do more to emphasize that this course takes into account primarily Latin texts. In my field, we've moved away from Latin in the past few decades and more toward various vernaculars.
4. Yes. It is hard to express how much I learned from this course: a singular

experience!

5. Yes. I also felt like there's plenty AD taught us via personal anecdote that was not in the course description. He is great.
6. Yes.
7. Yes.
8. Yes.
9. Yes.
10. Yes.

9) *How do you intend to use or apply the knowledge or skills learned in this course?*

1. In preparation for an upcoming exhibition and catalog on later medieval and Renaissance manuscripts.
2. I will use these skills in both my teaching and research.
3. Visiting archives!
4. This course will inform my research on book history and, in particular, the ancient manuscript book. It will also allow me to use manuscripts in my teaching.
5. I am not sure yet. Perhaps research for my prospectus or perhaps for use in an internship at the Getty Museum in Los Angeles.
6. I plan to use it in my thesis, which will hopefully be on early Insular manuscripts; this course will allow me to look at features of the manuscripts besides the script and will also help me to place time period and origin.
7. It will be useful in my doctoral work, which will require codicological description of two manuscripts.
8. It will make me more conscientious and meticulous, to be sure, when I approach manuscripts.
9. I'll be taking them with me in working on my Ph.D. project.
10. I will use the knowledge to visit libraries and look at sources for my dissertation and future academic projects.

10) *If your course left its classroom, was the time devoted to this purpose well spent?*

1. See above regarding trip to DC.
2. The traffic! We spent more time in the van than in DC itself.
3. See above. The transportation situation is really regrettable.
4. The trip to LC was a great experience. The travel time was long: in part, unavoidably, because of traffic, but in some cases avoidably, as Capitol Police restrictions kept us in the car for at least an extra half hour as we tried to reach LC (the driver should be warned about this in the future).
5. I loved being at LC. However, spending seven-plus hours in a bus was terrible. We spent less time at LC. I suggest we stay overnight in DC to ensure a restful visit. Or take a train? It was a lot of wasted time! We also missed Booksellers' Night because we returned so late.
6. Yes, because there was so much more variety at LC. The only problem was traffic...but that was fine!
7. I'm not sure the driving time back and forth to Washington was worth the day. However, there were many more manuscripts available for study there than there were at UVA, and it was nice to see LC.

8. Perhaps do not schedule a long bus trip on Booksellers' Night, which we missed entirely, and regrettably.
 9. Yes.
 10. The field trip was worth the time.
- 11) *If you attended the evening events (e.g., RBS Lecture, Video Night, RBS Forum, Booksellers' Night), were they worth attending?*
1. Both speakers from LC were excellent.
 2. Well chosen. interesting.
 3. N/A. I attended none.
 4. All were excellent. I appreciated the wide accessibility of the lectures and the generosity of the teachers at Ornament Night.
 5. No, I wanted to explore Charlottesville. I suggest lunchtime lectures (with brown-bag options maybe) with evening trips in Charlottesville; this is a lovely city.
 6. Yes! They were wonderful. The lectures were interesting and engaging. My class was unable to attend any of the Thursday events, due to the trip, though I would have loved to have attended them.
 7. Opportunity to learn about new subjects from true experts. The receptions afterward likewise provided opportunities to visit with students from other courses.
 8. Wednesday's lecture was interesting.
 9. Yes.
 10. Yes.
- 12) *We are always concerned about the physical well-being both of the RBS teaching collections and of materials owned by UVA's Special Collections. If relevant, what suggestions do you have for the improved classroom handling of such materials used in your course this week?*
1. I am assuming that because this is a teaching collection there is an expectation that these books will be more invasively handled than is permitted in some museum or library rare books collections. I think that, overall, students were guided to be careful and respectful when handling books. It may be helpful to remind students that they may not encounter such an open attitude in other research collections, and to be prepared for restriction.
 2. {No response—RBS staff}
 3. {No response—RBS staff}
 4. {No response—RBS staff}
 5. No comment.
 6. I think that the materials were handled well. My only concern is that some of the materials (e.g., the cardboard) would flake slightly, though it is unclear what the cause was in that case.
 7. {No response—RBS staff}
 8. {No response—RBS staff}
 9. {No response—RBS staff}
 10. {No response—RBS staff}

13) *Did you (or your institution) get your money's worth? Would you recommend this course to others?*

1. Yes. I learned a great deal of new information that I feel I will use in my work.
2. Yes.
3. Yes, with the caveat that its Latinity makes it less relevant and more dated for those of us in English departments.
4. Yes. I would be sure only to note to others that the course is very focused on the technical study of book objects: it is magnificently illuminating in that regard, but some historical advance reading on the uses of the books in question might be helpful (or, someone interested in history might prefer a different course). But for me, it was excellent.
5. Yes. I plan to recommend this to many graduate students in my field.
6. Yes. This course is well worth the effort and concentration that it requires. However, it is quite the amount of work in class, so it is not for the faint of heart.
7. Yes. Highly recommended!
8. Yes, of course. The instructor, of course, made it worth it.
9. Yes, certainly.
10. Yes. Yes.

14) *Any final or summary thoughts, or advice for other persons considering taking this course in a future year?*

1. {No response—RBS staff}
2. {No response—RBS staff}
3. Overall, a very rewarding week that has given me some skills I really need to continue to my work. Thank you, RBS staff and faculty!
4. {No response—RBS staff}
5. Budget for rest. Out of necessity, I had to bring grading since our courses just ended, but rest is good in order to “stay present” during class—every minute is valuable and worthwhile.
6. {No response—RBS staff}
7. The combination of a great course with the opportunity to interact with a variety of interesting instructors and students made this an exceptional week. Thank you!
8. {No response—RBS staff}
9. Thanks for a great week!
10. {No response—RBS staff}

Aggregate Statistics

Number of respondents: 10

Leave

Professional leave time: 3 (30%)

I took vacation time or unpaid leave: 1 (10%)

N/A: student, retired, or had summers off: 6 (60%)

Tuition

Institution paid tuition: 3 (30%)

Student paid tuition: 1 (10%)

Scholarship from RBS: 3 (30%)

Fellowship from RBS: 2 (20%)

Multiple sources: 1 (10%)

Housing

Institution paid housing: 2 (20%)

Student paid housing: 3 (30%)

Fellowship from RBS: 1 (10%)

Multiple sources: 1 (10%)

N/A: stayed with friends or lived at home: 3 (30%)

Travel

Institution paid travel: 2 (20%)

I paid my own travel: 4 (40%)

Fellowship from RBS: 2 (20%)

Multiple sources: 1 (10%)

N/A: I had only local travel expenses: 1 (10%)

Which one category most closely defines what you do for a living, or why you are at RBS?

B.A student: 1 (10%)

Ph.D. student (humanities): 5 (50%)

University assistant professor: 1 (10%)

Art conservator: 1 (10%)

Postdoctoral scholar: 2 (20%)