

Jackie Dooley & Bill Landis
L-60: Introduction to Archives for Special Collections Librarians
28 July–1 August 2014

Detailed Course Evaluation

- 1) *How useful were the pre-course readings? Did you do any additional preparations in advance of the course?*
 1. Quite useful, although it would have been even more useful to be able to discuss questions that I had related directly to the articles we read.
 2. No additional prep. I had read pre-course readings prior to preparation for this RBS course. The readings would have been more crucial had I not the work experience I have now. Theory is not as interesting as practical method.
 3. Great to have required and recommended readings in advance to become better acquainted with relevant topics and names of importance in the field.
 4. Useful enough, but not vital. I had read several of the articles previously.
 5. I read some of them, found them useful. Unfortunately, I did not have time to read all, but plan to go back.
 6. Very good.
 7. The pre-course reading, particularly the optional ones, were very useful for an overview of the archival field.
 8. Not entirely necessary, but helpful to get an overview. Don't study them!
 9. Not particularly useful—we were emailed shortly before class began to say the readings were intended to be skimmed over, which made them seem not important.
 10. Great.
 11. Useful—raised some basic questions and gave context.
 12. Very useful—good foundation.
 13. No.

- 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. Yes.
 2. The materials distributed will be extremely valuable resources in my immediate future.
 3. Useful in class and useful for future.
 4. The slides, resources, and digital files were very useful and will be when I return home.
 5. Yes, I will look them over.
 6. Yes.
 7. Very useful; when I return home, I plan to print and folder for easier reference and sharing with colleagues.
 8. The Dropbox feature was very good.
 9. Yes, and I appreciated the fact that they were made available via Dropbox.
 10. The digital workbook is great, and will be a source I will return to once I return home.
 11. Excellent—lots of supplementary materials in electronic format for future use.

12. All appropriate and useful—I will reference them often.
13. OK.

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

1. No.
2. No.
3. No.
4. Yes, although the lectures were not as interesting, and there was no time allotted for in-class discussions.
5. It was more interactive, many more group activities, but I liked it.
6. Average.
7. I've taken several other classes, and this one was excellent and very informative.
8. I have taken one in my field of study. This was outside my field, but I found it fascinating.
9. No.
10. Yes, it compared well.
11. No.
12. Took one course last summer. This course was equally vigorous and informative and thought provoking.
13. Yes. Better than my first one.

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

1. The hands-on exercises, especially processing, were very helpful. I also liked the exercise where we discussed real-world archival issues in the news, as it brought up many topics/facets of archival work for discussion.
2. Born-digital considerations; management of accessions and processing of backlog.
3. Basic info about scope and work of archivists and archives was what I had hoped to gain.
4. The practice processing in groups of the (Woodruff) collection. The material about DACS, EAD, and naming files.
5. Assessment, processing, acquisitions, instructor techniques, news article summaries, the exercise where we told each other about the archives.
6. Teaching with archives; case studies of major archival issues; processing strategies.
7. All of the information was relevant, but the processing exercises from Monday through Wednesday were probably the most useful!
8. Born-digital presentation by Gabby was wonderful!
9. I enjoyed the hands-on processing work and the guest speakers. The units on arrangement and description were especially useful, as were class exercises.
10. I especially enjoyed the session where we looked at archival records—instruction and outreach. I will also make good use of BL's handouts in the workbook.
11. Digital archives are a daunting and new area. The survey gave some good starting points.
12. All of it, but perhaps especially the born-digital sections. Tours were helpful—to see “other shops.”

13. The field trips and hands-on experiences, by far—when we took advantage of the Yale University environment.

5) *Did the instructors 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. Yes, I did acquire most of the info I expected. BL was particularly strong in his pedagogical approaches and techniques.
2. My instructors were fantastic in providing overviews of the work ahead as well as practical suggestions to carry them out.
3. Instructors did successfully help me acquire new knowledge and skills. I felt the instructors did a good job of maintaining an appropriate intellectual level.
4. Yes. Yes.
5. Yes, yes.
6. Yes.
7. Yes.
8. Yes, it was an intro class.
9. Yes.
10. Yes.
11. Perfect intellectual level, engaging discussions, and good survey of the field.
12. Yes, felt like a sponge and enjoyed it immensely.

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

1. The topics and structure, from theory to practical. I also liked the variety of attendees (their background) as they provided a knowledge base in some areas outside the instructors' experience.
2. Hearing suggestions that I will immediately be able to apply to my current position addressing institutional goals.
3. The hands-on activities with actual archive material were very engaging and interesting to me.
4. I liked the group work, research of articles, hands-on processing, and all hands-on exercises. The chance to interact with others in this profession was invaluable.
5. I appreciated the document we can download, the hands-on processing time, and the opportunity to ask questions of the practitioners.
6. Hands-on exercises. There could be more of these.
7. The processing exercise, and hearing from professionals in specific areas of archival work such as preservation and digitization.
8. BL.
9. See answer to Q4, above.
10. I really enjoyed time with my RBS colleagues. The other students are such an intelligent and experienced lot! You do a great job in bringing people to RBS to share their experience.
11. BL! Such a warm and engaged instructor and a wealth of information.
12. The opportunity to hear from experts (instructors and guest speakers) is always invigorating. Networking with peer-professionals valuable, too.

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

1. More processing. For technical topics (EAD/XML), a brief intro to the background/theory/concept would have helped in my understanding and being able to follow the presentation. I learn from doing, not so much from hearing, so some more exercises in each topic area would be helpful.
2. Both instructors offered tremendous information.... {Private comment—RBS staff}
3. Start at 8:00 a.m. instead of 8:30, and use the time gained for passage time if breaks continue to be offered out of the building. Those who rely on elevators and ramps take longer to move from one site to another, especially with the elevator situation at Beineke.
4. I felt that there was too much time devoted to seeing other people's workspaces; it was interesting, but took a lot of class time. I wish we could have had instructor-lead discussions, but not instructor-dominated discussions. {Private comment—RBS staff}
5. I would have preferred doing the news article exercise on my own rather than with a partner.
6. I personally found some of the discussions of technical processes and cataloging standards to be overwhelming and/or hard to follow. I would pare them down to the essentials.
7. I can't think of any ways for improvement.
8. Things didn't come together for me until Thursday/Friday. Maybe during the first day there can be more of an outing or assuaging of fears that it takes time. Almost like osmosis.
9. I would have liked more practical or hands-on work with digital archives—and exercises digitally encoding part of an archival collection would have been useful to me.
10. {Private comment—RBS staff}
11. Not much required to improve. Perhaps more coverage of reference and outreach, and using Web 2.0 strategies in archives.
12. {Private comment—RBS staff}

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

1. Yes.
2. Yes.
3. Yes.
4. Yes.
5. Yes.
6. Yes.
7. Yes.
8. Yes.
9. Yes.
10. Yes.
11. Yes.
12. Yes.

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

1. I can now talk much more knowledgeably with my special collections curator, and with archivists in the Records Management and Archives Department in the other sector of the university.
2. I have learned a number of things that I can immediately apply to managing accessions, and making initial steps to handle born-digital holdings.
3. Knowledge gained in this class will be applied in volunteering in archives.
4. In my work organizing the archive.
5. I feel I have a more thorough background in archival theory and practice, which I will be able to use in many ways as a public services person. I also have a better understanding of processing and finding aids, which will help me to train other staff and researchers.
6. General knowledge and future reference.
7. I foresee using all the knowledge learned in this class once I return to my institution except for the digitization. We are not yet to that level, but may be so in the next few years.
8. I have a structure that I can apply to my everyday work environment.
9. I hope to use the skills acquired in this class to help get a professional archivist job.
10. I have already identified collections that will lend themselves to the type of outreach with archival materials BL suggested.
11. The digital archives component has provided some practical ideas to start digital archiving.
12. With the focus on new areas (mass digitization of archival slides, for instance, or born-digital records), I will look to a lot of this course material for guidance.

10) *If your course made any trips outside the classroom, was the time devoted to this purpose well spent?*

1. Yes.
2. The trips outside of class were spectacular. More time doing that would be great in future. Seeing people efficiently working out problems that I wrestle with stimulated lots of questions.
3. All the field trips taken in class were valuable.
4. Not always. It was a lot of walking for not so much information.
5. Yes, I enjoyed all the field trips.
6. I did not find the tour of the digitization labs to be very useful, though it might be to people new to the professions.
7. Yes, all the field trips were interesting, but it would have been nice hearing more about the patron photography requests. This field trip component felt very rushed.
8. Absolutely! Can't stress enough how each trip added to my understanding.
9. Yes.
10. Yes.
11. Yes—seeing the “behind the scenes” of archival work was useful.
12. Yes—see answer to Q6, above.

- 11) *If you attended the optional events (e.g., RBS Lecture, Bibliographical Press tour, Beinecke Library tour, or receptions), were they worth attending? Please specify.*
1. The lecture was quite dull and did not really speak to the reality of my situation. I would have liked to have heard from a more dynamic speaker on a more contemporary issue like born-digital archives.
 2. Yes, and no. The lecture by Tanselle was not; Reese was great.
 3. Yes.
 4. No. The Tanselle lecture was awful. The Beinecke Library collection tour was great—very informative.
 5. Yes. I only attended Monday’s lecture, but I enjoyed it.
 6. Yes.
 7. Yes.
 8. RBS Lecture, receptions—yes.... {Private comment—RBS staff} Receptions were great.
 9. Yes.
 10. Yes.
 11. Yes. I would have appreciated a full tour of Beinecke, even though I took the archives course.
 12. Yes. All interesting, except the unnecessarily boring presentation by Tanselle on Monday evening.
- 12) *We are always concerned about the physical well being of the collections used during RBS courses. If relevant, what suggestions do you have for the improved classroom handling of such materials used in your course this week?*
1. None.
 2. I didn’t see problems with the way materials were handled.
 3. Hold the class in a room with a sink for hand washing.
 4. None. It was done very carefully.
 5. N/A. The collection we processed was a good example, very interesting.
 6. {No response—RBS staff}
 7. {No response—RBS staff}
 8. {No response—RBS staff}
 9. {No response—RBS staff}
 10. {No response—RBS staff}
 11. N/A.
 12. No issues.
- 13) *Did you (or your institution) get your money’s worth? Would you recommend this course to others?*
1. Yes!
 2. My institution scored on this investment! I would definitely recommend to others.
 3. I sincerely feel my money was well spent on this course, and I will recommend it if the opportunity presents itself.
 4. Yes, very much so. Yes.
 5. Yes, in fact I plan to recommend this course to my staff.
 6. Ninety percent worth it. Yes, I’d recommend it to others.

7. Absolutely. Because this class was a hands-on class intermixed with lecture and provided general information to the field, this is a perfect class for new archivists, interested people, or archivists who have been away from the field for several years.
8. Yes, and yes.
9. Yes.
10. Yes.
11. Yes, and I would highly recommend the course. Tuition is very reasonable.
12. Yes! And yes!

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

1. This is a great overview/survey course with broad topical coverage applicable to those in many institutional settings.
2. {No response—RBS staff}
3. Bring comfortable shoes! Yale and New Haven are great areas for walking.
4. RBS does not really consider the physical limitations of its students. There is a lot of walking—while I am not disabled, just injured, it was very difficult for me. The breaks were often too far for me to attend—I really needed working elevators.
5. Thank you again for a wonderful and useful class!!! BL and JD did a great job!!!
6. {No response—RBS staff}
7. Reading the pre-course readings will introduce one to the terms used throughout the week. Not knowing key terms and concepts in advance will limit how much a participant will actually get out of the class.
8. BL and JD are a good, balanced team.
9. I really appreciated the amount of time given for receptions and for students to interact with each other—it helped form what I hope are lasting professional relationships.
10. {No response—RBS staff}
11. An excellent opportunity to network, gauge the state of the field and acquire new knowledge and skills.
12. Being at Yale (lots of fun) was different than being at Charlottesville, of course.... At times, our class wasn't sure about where to go, and there was a miscommunication regarding a noon event's day, so we missed it. We weren't as well "handled" as in Virginia.

Aggregate Statistics

Number of respondents: 13

Leave

Institution gave me leave: 9 (69.23%)

I took vacation time or unpaid leave: 2 (15.38%)

N/A: self-employed, retired, or had summers off: 2 (15.38%)

Tuition

Institution paid tuition: 7 (53.85%)

Student paid tuition: 5 (38.46%)

Other: 1 (7.69%)

Housing

Institution paid housing: 5 (38.46%)

I paid for my own housing: 5 (38.46%)

N/A: stayed with friends or lived at home: 3 (23.08%)

Travel

Institution paid travel: 7 (53.85%)

I paid my own travel: 5 (38.46%)

N/A: I had only local travel expenses: 1 (7.69%)

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

Archivist: 2 (15.38%)

Full-time student: M.L.I.S.: 1 (7.69%)

Librarian/archivist of digital materials: 1 (7.69%)

Library/University Administrator: 3 (23.08%)

Rare book librarian: 4 (30.77%)

Retired: 1 (7.69%)

Other: Corporate records center: 1 (7.69%)