

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 just the right amount to fit in a busy schedule.
 2. I had read most of them previously, and was able to get along without rereading them.
 3. Very useful. No time to do more prep.
 4. Very useful.
 5. Course readings provided useful background for the course. They likely weren't all necessary, but they were certainly helpful in equipping me for the material taught.
 6. Very useful, felt prepared for the terminology and for the deluge of information.
 7. The pre-course readings were very thorough, if not perhaps a bit redundant.
 8. I found the readings useful in introducing vocabulary and concepts that were activated in the class.
 9. Readings were very useful, and will serve superbly for future reference.
 10. Extremely useful and necessary. A specified order in which to read may have been helpful, as some better inform others.
 11. Some of the reading was redundant, but I also read beyond the required chapters. The Bringhurst *Elements of Style* was fantastic, and I found the Updike *History* much more informative than the Chapell.
 12. Bringhurst was excellent: comprehensive discussion of very fundamental concepts. Of the history books, Blumenthal was best.

- 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. Very much so. I plan on using them when I get back home.
 2. Yes, and yes.
 3. Absolutely.
 4. Yes.
 5. The course workbook contained some quite useful information: particularly the examples of old fonts and monotype revivals, the diagrams on the anatomy of letterforms, and the ways to describe and identify type. Even more tips or guides on how to describe and identify type would be helpful. Information on how to identify which printing techniques were used for a given book would also be useful. Though advertised as a topic of the course, and dealt with in lectures, our course materials didn't contain much information on what to look for in a printed text for clues as to how it was printed.
 6. Yes. Would like inclusion of examples of poor register, press mistakes in the workbook—to show what variations/errors in presswork look like.
 7. Very useful! Even more typeface specimens would be appreciated.
 8. I think that the reference materials in the course workbook were very well chosen, and will be useful references for me in future projects.

9. Workbook was very useful, and will be saved.
10. Unquestionably. Workbook is filled with helpful materials—I will be bookmarking many pages.
11. Yes, the workbook has a lot of great resources I will definitely be using in the near future; however, I wish there were more (maybe just more streamlined) guides to recognizing type faces.
12. Typesetting and typography materials were excellent. Cobden-Sanderson was weaker—usefulness not entirely clear.

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

1. Yes. It was one of the best courses I have ever taken at RBS.
2. Yes. Maybe a bit more demanding, and at least as interesting.
3. No.
4. Yes. It was just as good if not better.
5. No.
6. Yes. I have taken “Introduction to the Principles of Descriptive Bibliography.” Feel this course was equally intensive, although not as time-consuming—less homework.
7. No.
8. N/A.
9. First course.
10. This was my first class.
11. N/A.
12. No.

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

1. Learning about methods to identify a typeface and about the history of printing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
2. The history lectures (in part because the more practical things covered were already familiar).
3. Characteristics of different type. Aspects of composition.
4. All aspects; and especially the materials related to the twentieth century.
5. Information on the history of typography and the development and shifts in typographic styles across history were quite useful. Information on shifts in printing technology was also helpful. The hands-on workshop on identifying type and the type quiz gave us the opportunity to try to put our newly gained knowledge on type identification and description into use. The research time gave us a chance to utilize the RBS collection and to draw on our instructors’ expertise to conduct research specifically related to our interests.
6. Lectures on printing technologies, type comparison, analysis, and identification.
7. Identifying type and describing type effectively.
8. I was most glad to learn (and receive a hands-on “feel” for) the physical processes of type design, casting, and printing.

9. Historical development and context of typography. Pleasant surprise to have a discussion of the subject prior to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to set background.
 10. Typography-identification training.
 11. The history of printing and the mechanics and practice of printing—working in the lab was incomparably helpful—were all relevant to my research, and the trips to SC, particularly for the twentieth century, were incredibly interesting.
 12. Work in the print shop was essential and provided a direct knowledge that only comes with hands-on experience. Visits to SC also provided direct knowledge of print history.
- 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. Absolutely.
 2. Yes, and yes.
 3. Yes.
 4. The instructors were great, and made for a terrific combination—I could not imagine the course being taught by just one of them.
 5. A number of the course sessions helped us acquire the information, knowledge, and skills that the course was intended to convey. While the instructors successfully taught us about the evolution of typographic style and the history of printing techniques, less time was spent on the cultural context that informed these shifts, a stated aim of the course. The instructors spent a great deal of time on fine and private presses in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, particularly in Boston, a particular interest of one of the instructors. As letterpress practitioners, the instructors also spent a great deal of time commenting on the relative aesthetic value of different typefaces and their suitability for fine press work. While interesting, this sort of judgment was less useful than more time learning and practicing our description and identification skills, or lectures that focused more on cultural context and less on specific great men and dates would have been. The course could have been a bit more intellectual.
 6. Yes, to both questions.
 7. A bit more focus would be put on identifying type in a serious way—perhaps instead of lots of time to independent research.
 8. Both JK and KR were excellent lecturers and were thorough in reviewing the basics of the material and in answering questions. I did feel that the course could have been more academically rigorous, but I'm not sure how the instructors would introduce more historical and aesthetic detail without sacrificing the vital hands-on component.
 9. Absolutely, for all three aspects. Intellectual level was appropriate for me.
 10. Indeed. Intellectual level was rigorous, but appropriate. Could have perhaps used more typography identification exercises.
 11. Yes, and yes (although it took me a while to catch up to the typography terms).
 12. Yes. Was sometimes too basic, but the students had a wide range of prior knowledge. Instructors were generous and helpful!

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

1. The two instructors make a wonderful team. I like the pace of the course, switching from seminar-type session to hands-on printing. This made for a very lively experience.
2. Lectures.
3. Hands-on aspects were a larger portion of the course than I expected. The layers of involvement in composing and creating the broadsheet really tied things together in a relatable manner.
4. Both the hands-on practice and the trip to the UVA printing office.
5. Time for research and putting the skills we were taught into practice. Compositing type and printing on the Vandercook press in the printing office. Lectures on historical shifts in printing technology and typography.
6. Printing on the Vandercook.
7. I loved the two-dimensional approach as a result of having both KR and JK teach.
8. I enjoyed compositing and the type quiz—both helped me activate the information reviewed in lectures.
9. Enjoyed seeing and discussing the items from SC. These were iconic books I never thought I'd see. The instructors knew so much about them.
10. Will anyone in this class say anything *but* the lab exercises? Such a rare opportunity, and critical to a developed understanding of the practice and form, not to mention great bonding experience for classmates and instructors.
11. The printing and the chance to handle RBS collection books, undoubtedly.
12. Hands-on work in print shop.

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

1. I was first concerned that we were not given more directions to choose a typeface to work on, but it turned out not to be a problem at all.
2. {No response—RBS staff}
3. No suggestions. Fantastic.
4. Given my own interests, the course could perhaps have benefitted from a little less focus on Boston, and a little more focus on, e.g., twentieth-century European developments. On the other hand, the current curriculum allows students to benefit from the instructors' specific expertise, so perhaps, *etaoin shrldu*, all is well. If there had been more time, I would have enjoyed further discussion on the implications for culture more broadly of changes in printing and typography....
5. {Private comment—RBS staff} Incorporation of information on the social context/social implications of changes in printing technology and typography might help course attendees better understand the significance of the shifts discussed on a largely technical and aesthetic level.
6. Would like inclusion of trade books and type/print features of books that are not elegant examples of book art. Need comparison. Also an evening with access to the course books would be welcome.
7. {No response—RBS staff}
8. I would have been interested in learning about popular print media (newspapers, ephemera, popular books, &c.) in greater detail than fine press book printing.
9. Fine, as is.

10. Would have liked more time with, and analysis of, non-fine-press printing and display typefaces.
11. I would have liked to put into practice some of Bringhurst's elements of style—as well as our study of the arrangement of book openings—by having more participation in the layout design of our class broadside.
12. Some content was repetitive. The readings introduced all the background, but these basic concepts were sometimes covered two to three more times in class.

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. Perhaps description could better convey the course's emphasis on letterpress printing.
11. Yes.
12. Yes.

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

1. I will apply this knowledge in my day-to-day job and in my personal research.
2. Some items for further study, contacts made.
3. This course has given me depth of knowledge that I will bring directly to my job in publications and communications.
4. For the further development of my dissertation, for the enhancement of my teaching, and for my own delight.
5. The knowledge gained in this course will help me analyze material texts associated with my scholarly research. This analysis will produce evidence key to my project. The class also made me aware of gaps in the scholarship I might be able to fill in the future when undertaking new projects, particularly if I continue with my education in bibliographic methods. Finally, the introduction to letterpress printing rekindled my interest in bookmaking, which I hope to have the opportunity to pursue further in the future.
6. Use it in dissertation research—to describe and communicate the print quality and technological sophistication of the materials I work with.
7. Cataloging an upcoming exhibition.
8. I hope to leave this course with the skills to study the physical characteristics of nineteenth- and twentieth-century books and ephemera in order to use these items as sources for my historical research.
9. I'll be more comfortable in my functions as a volunteer/employee at my institution.

10. I cannot wait to return and review my institution's holdings and to feature materials on our blog, as we are trying to better showcase our special collections. Will definitely be practicing my deduction skills.
11. This will be an unbelievably helpful foundation to begin research related to my honors thesis.
12. Scholarly research into book history.

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

1. It was a very illuminating trip, well worth the time.
2. I know other class members loved the field trip, but I didn't see how visiting a current print shop helped us learn history.
3. Great to see the presses in action.
4. Yes—both the SC visits and the printing press visit were invaluable.
5. We made one trip, which was useful, as the chance to see an offset press in action complemented our in-class experience with the Vandercook and video recordings of linotype and monotype machines to contribute to our understanding of printing techniques.
6. Yes. UVA printing office was fascinating.
7. Yes! The printing office was an exceptional trip.
8. Our field trip to the UVA print/copy center was a great component of the course in that it gave me a much better understanding of lithographic printing.
9. Print shop visit was a refreshing change.
10. Indeed.
11. Yes, to UVA's printing plant. The trip could have been a little shorter, as it was fairly unrelated to the press work we studied, but it was still a great insight into how printing has evolved and remains a largely commercial enterprise. (I would love to see something like Firefly!)
12. Yes, trip to UVA printing plant was highly informative.

11) *If you attended the evening events (e.g., RBS Lecture, Video Night, RBS Forum, Booksellers' Night), were they worth attending?*

1. The two lectures were excellent: informative, but not heavy on the scholarship (a good point after a day of study).
2. Lectures were very interesting, and Ornament Night was fun.
3. Wish I had the time to do more.
4. Yes.
5. Ornament Night was lots of fun! The lectures were interesting, though not particularly relevant to my work; the associated receptions provided a nice opportunity for socializing.
6. Yes.
7. Yes. The lectures were exceptional. The movies were okay, but not very engaging.
8. Yes. A full RBS course on tactile reading systems would be fascinating!
9. Yes.
10. Yes. I thought Booksellers' Night would have been more of an event with all the RBS-ers together. Video Night was a bit of a bust (should be in a different space), but it may have been overshadowed by Ornament Night.
11. I wish there were more events throughout the year! (Maybe there are.)

12. N/A.

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. {No response—RBS staff}
2. {No response—RBS staff}
3. {No response—RBS staff}
4. {No response—RBS staff}
5. None—this seemed to really well thought through.
6. None.
7. {No response—RBS staff}
8. {No response—RBS staff}
9. {No response—RBS staff}
10. No concerns.
11. None at all. I thought they were well respected.
12. None.

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

1. Yes.
2. Yes.
3. Yes.
4. Yes. Absolutely.
5. Yes. I would recommend RBS to anyone interested in bibliography, typography, and printing history.
6. Yes. Yes, absolutely. Have already, and will continue to recommend RBS to others.
7. Yes, and yes!
8. Yes. All in all, I learned what I wanted to learn and had a good time. So yes!
9. Yes and yes. I enjoyed and respected the instructors. They are enthusiastic, helpful, knowledgeable, open-spirited, accomplished, and fun.
10. Yes. This kind of intensity and combination of hands-on lab work and thoughtful scholarship and analysis seems to be the best way to achieve nuanced understandings of the field. Plus the instructors are a divine, dynamic duo.
11. Yes, yes!
12. Yes, yes. Instructional expertise and lab equipment are great value!

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

1. Congratulations!
2. {No response—RBS staff}
3. Both faculty members were fantastic, and complemented each other well.
4. {No response—RBS staff}
5. RBS is a unique and thoroughly useful environment for learning about books, their making, and their history. Anyone interested in gaining competency in

- bibliographic methods or book history should attend. Those interested in learning about typography and printing technologies—with access to a fantastic collection of books and other artifacts, and complemented with an introduction to letterpress printing—should make plans to attend.
6. {No response—RBS staff}
 7. The week is very carefully planned for optimal engagement with not just the coursework, but also with the diverse students and staff involved!
 8. {No response—RBS staff}
 9. {No response—RBS staff}
 10. Do preliminary reading and come committed. I was not expecting the necessity to review materials in downtime. If RBS starts this early in the a.m., they should really have nap breaks! A little more break time outside of the gathering room would be good, and more allocated time to see exhibits at SC.
 11. Thank you!!
 12. {No response—RBS staff}

Aggregate Statistics

Number of respondents: 12

Leave

Professional leave time: 3 (25%)
 Took vacation time/unpaid leave: 2 (16.67%)
 N/A: student, retired, or had summers free: 7 (58.33%)

Tuition

Institution paid tuition: 3 (25%)
 Institution and student shared cost: 1 (8.33%)
 Student paid tuition: 2 (16.67%)
 Scholarship from RBS: 1 (8.33%)
 Fellowship from RBS: 4 (33.33%)
 Other: 1 (8.33%)

Housing

Institution paid housing: 1 (8.33%)
 Student paid housing: 5 (41.67%)
 Fellowship from RBS: 2 (16.67%)
 N/A: stayed with friends or lived at home: 4 (33.33%)

Travel

Institution paid travel: 2 (16.67%)
 Student paid travel: 5 (41.67%)
 Fellowship from RBS: 2 (16.67%)
 N/A: I had only local travel expenses: 3 (25%)

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

Cataloguer: (for book dealer) 1 (8.33%)

B.A. student: 1 (8.33%)

M.A. student: 1 (8.33%)

Ph.D. student (humanities): 4 (33.33%)

Librarian with some rare book duties: 1 (8.33%)

Rare book librarian: 1 (8.33%)

Retired: 2 (16.67%)

Other: Creative director at education-affiliated foundation: 1 (8.33%)