

Detailed Course Evaluation

- 1) *How useful were the pre-course readings? Did you do any additional preparations in advance of the course?*
 1. Really useful. I had bought some of these before enrolling the class. They are books I will definitely keep and reread in future.
 2. I had read most of the readings before, but it was fantastic to revisit them; they provided a strong background for the work that we did in the course.
 3. Very useful. We didn't necessarily refer to them directly in class, but it was good to have done them. I especially appreciated the Blayney book, as it employed a wide array of analytic techniques, and was very affordable.
 4. Useful.
 5. The pre-course readings were helpful, but I found that I relied more on the practical experience I gained from Desbib (taken previously).
 6. Enormously, particularly the very accessible Blayney. Perhaps list a preferred order for the readings? The suggestion to bring Gaskell to class was very appreciated (and useful).
 7. Very good, especially Gaskell—most essential to read that carefully. Blayney really gave me a sense of what you could do with bibliography.
 8. I found the pre-course readings very helpful. It would have been convenient if they had been available in a digital form (i.e., Dropbox or similar).
 9. Very useful, some as refresher and some entirely new. All interesting and quite relevant to the course.
 10. Useful, though not discussed explicitly enough.
 11. Very helpful.
 12. I was admitted to the course at the last minute and therefore was unable to do the pre-reading.

- 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. Overall, yes. I like the workbooks. In future, it would be great if they (and maybe the PowerPoint slides?) were also in a Dropbox file, on a class website, or maybe on RBSCConnect.
 2. Absolutely. They'll certainly have a home in my permanent archive. Will be useful to consult in future when I have re-familiarized myself with various techniques/methods.
 3. Yes.
 4. The additional reading will be. Most of the examples will likely be thrown away.
 5. The course workbook and other materials will probably be useful (if I can decipher my notes!). I wish that I had brought graph paper with me to class to help keep my diagrams neat.
 6. They were very useful for classwork, although their post-class relevance will be limited, only because they were very exercise-based.

7. Yes. I'm looking forward to using the printing-demo material in my own teaching. Workbook very useful in class, too.
 8. Yes, the materials were exceptionally well chosen, organized, and thoughtfully prepared.
 9. Slightly complex, but very useful.
 10. Excellent.
 11. Yes.
 12. Yes, they were useful; although the unbound format means they will be harder to store/keep intact. I would also be able to return to them more effectively if they had a table of contents (e.g., "Day 2—paper").
- 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 positive. All my classes have been so different that it would difficult to compare. I think they all did what they needed to do. This one required more working with reproduction than I like, but I don't think there was any way around that given the material.
 2. No, this is my first course.
 3. Yes. It was an excellent course, on par with others I've taken.
 4. Yes. A little more scattered in the approach, but very helpful and rewarding.
 5. Yes. I think this course had the greatest number of academics in it of all the courses I have taken, which made it feel a bit like an advanced graduate seminar.
 6. No.
 7. First course.
 8. N/A.
 9. Yes—this was excellently prepared and executed; ST has the plan down extremely well.
 10. "Desbib." Slight overlap, same high quality, less work.
 11. Yes.
 12. No.
- 4) *What aspects of the course content were of the greatest interest or relevance for your purposes?*
1. Press figures; desperately trying to distinguish between issue, state, &c.; being able to try to track production order.
 2. I was interested to discuss the use of type reoccurrence and running headlines with someone who has a lot of experience dealing with them.
 3. Digging in to the close examination of the books—even in facsimile. That's what I really was looking for in the class, and it certainly delivered.
 4. Evidence contained in single copies of a book. Teaching the eye what to look for will be very helpful.
 5. I most enjoyed the exercises that combined analysis of facsimile images with an introduction to the reference materials available. It would have been great to have had more of the articles and books referred to by the instructor on hand for browsing in the classroom.
 6. Introduction to and practice with a wide range of tools for analysis. I especially enjoyed the experience with a hand press and the printing process.

7. 1) Discussions of how ESTC determines editions; 2) the day in the print shop; 3) methods for distinguishing state, edition, issue.
 8. The practical exercises in type identification, paper analysis, and running title analysis were extremely illuminating. I would even suggest a yet greater proportion of class-time be dedicated to these and similar exercises.
 9. Getting into the nitty-gritty of the technicalities was absolutely fantastic. A bit mind numbing, but fantastic.
 10. Watermarks, printing, proofreading.
 11. As a non-professional, I wanted an understanding of what to look for in identifying elements of production and what I needed to be wary of when purchasing books.
 12. The *hands-on* encounters with the methods, concepts, and theories in the bibliographical texts I've read—McKerrow, Gaskell, Bowers. Many lights went off in my head as we sat before the exercises and suddenly understood entire chapters in the scholarship that had mystified me.
- 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. Yes. Yes.
 2. ST was fantastic—a very humble man who is willing to share his years of knowledge.
 3. Yes.
 4. Yes.
 5. Yes, the instructor had clearly spent a lot of time developing the exercises used during class, and the intellectual level of the course was appropriate.
 6. The exercises were well paced and appropriately placed within the week, and effectively introduced/demonstrated their objectives.
 7. Yes! Loved how interactive and exercise-based the course was. Though sometimes felt I was just skating the surface of understanding and there wasn't always time to stop and really figure things out. But some of that is probably inevitable.
 8. Yes. It was helpfully challenging, but also provided the necessary detail and background information to elucidate so complex a subject.
 9. Definitely. I think given the range of experiences it was handled expertly.
 10. Excellent, hands-on learning—extremely well designed. Excellent discussion, sometimes slightly unfocused.
 11. Yes. The intellectual level of my classmates was outstanding—as usual.
 12. Yes; although sometimes ST switched or used terms interchangeably (r/v; a/b) in ways I found confusing.
- 6) *What did you like best about the course?*
1. The exercises with *Triumph of Peace*, collators, and the woodcuts—also a really wonderful group. Good conversations in and out of class.
 2. I already had a background in analytical techniques when I came to the course, so for me it was especially rewarding to have an opportunity to discuss their strengths and limitations.

3. The discussion of what we were seeing in the texts. It was very helpful to have everyone thinking out loud together, as it allowed us not only to learn the “right” answers, but to get insight into the ways other people were seeing and processing the evidence.
4. Working with digital surrogates.
5. Unlike “Desbib,” in which the lab exercises each have excruciatingly detailed answer sheets that seem to provide a definitive answer, many of our exercises in this class did not come with a key. This seems to be in keeping with the instructor’s belief that the reality of the print shop was often much more messy than we can easily imagine (even after our typesetting exercise!). The lack of closure, though slightly frustrating, is a good reminder that the practice of bibliography on “live books” in the wild is an ongoing process.
6. The camaraderie and mutual self-education of the exercises. Hands-on work is clearly the best introduction to, and training for, the subject.
7. Interactive—we were learning by doing.
8. Identifying and tracking recurring type. Getting to work from primary materials (as in the repeating-ornament exercise) was very interesting.
9. See response to Q4, above—getting into the real technical processes and seeing all the examples was great. The typesetting/correcting exercise was vital and very useful.
10. Printing, group discussion.
11. The wolf!—inside joke. The training of my eye to spot critical elements, and the typesetting/printing exercises gave an understanding of the issues faced in the print shop.
12. The choice of topics covered and the order in which they were presented, e.g., Day 1: the Press; Day 2: The Paper...Day 5: An exercise that integrated all the knowledge and skills we had acquired.

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

1. See note about Dropbox or the like.
2. If enrollment could support it, I think it would be useful for there to be both intro and advanced versions of this course. Would have really liked to spend more time on the grittier stuff we finally got to on Thursday and Friday.
3. Hm. Well, you could make it a week longer, I suppose.
4. Hard to answer as it is difficult to tailor the material to suit the extremely diverse backgrounds and knowledge bases of the students in the class.
5. I think the lecture component of the common press demo at the beginning of the course could have been a bit briefer. Or it would have been helpful to have discussed or demoed a few more advanced issues while in that setting, such as the use of friskets when printing red. For some of the more complicated tables, it might have been helpful to have had blank versions of the tables that we could fill in available as loose sheets in our packets, rather than having to construct the tables too from scratch. A pencil sharpener and some graph paper in the classroom might also have been helpful.
6. While surrogates are a key part of bibliographical work, sometimes they were so bad as to obscure the point of study. Occasionally there was some disorganization within section work, although the course as a whole was well organized.
7. Instructions at beginning of exercises could have been clearer.

8. I would have benefitted from a more leisurely view of ST's process in examining a book with which he is unfamiliar. With entirely new materials in hand, what are the essential steps to take in identifying the most pressing bibliographic problems of a given text?
9. Perhaps just a bit more streamlining of the Monday exercise would be helpful, but generally all went very well.
10. Reduce time on running-titles; deal more with the applicability of these techniques.
11. {No response—RBS staff}
12. Perhaps a more thoughtful introduction and conclusion to each day's (as well as each section's) work. I sometimes found myself wondering if we could step back from the trees to observe the forest.

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. And more.
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'm looking at various copies of a core set of works for two of my research projects right now. This will be applicable.
2. A bibliographical project I have will immediately benefit.
3. In an upcoming bibliographical project, and also in my teaching.
4. Assisting other researchers and evaluating new acquisitions.
5. I intend to go back to the books that I study and see if I can identify any evidence of printing practices using the methods we were taught (recurring types, &c.)
6. Better informed of researcher practices, which will make me a more effective librarian.
7. Analysis of {private comment} in eighteenth-century Britain.
8. I do fairly detailed textual criticism in my research, much of which can be profitably revised with reference to analytical bibliographical conclusions drawn from the same materials.
9. I'm probably going to start seeing little clues all over the place in books I look at!
10. Textual editing.
11. Yes.
12. In my scholarly work and in my shift toward a career in curation.

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

1. N/A (unless you count collators in SC or murals in the Environmental Sciences building).
2. N/A.
3. Yes. The time in the print shop was helpful, in that it gave us a practical sense of how type might behave in the forme, &c.
4. The trip to see collational machines was interesting, but not essential.
5. N/A.
6. Absolutely! Loved all three trips.
7. Yes—both the printing exercise and the trip to SC to see collators. Both good.
8. N/A.
9. Typesetting/proofing demo extremely useful and interesting.
10. Collating in SC, of limited use.
11. Using the Hinman at SC was great, but I preferred the Lindstrand.
12. {No response—RBS staff}

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

1. Yes! I wish the films were on iTunes or something similar.
2. Enjoyed the lectures greatly.
3. Yes. The lectures were interesting individually, but also fit together nicely, as it happened. Video Night was sparsely attended, but nice.
4. Easily the best lectures I have been to at RBS.
5. I enjoyed both lectures very much—in particular the Tuesday Forum!
6. Yes. Lectures were both excellent, although it was disappointing that the question-and-answers were so brief.
7. Yes. Skipped Video Night and Booksellers' Night. Talks were great.
8. Yes. I only attended the Monday and Tuesday night lectures. They were excellent.
9. Yes. Both lectures were excellent this week.
10. Yes. Great lectures.
11. Yes. Tuesday's lecture was great!
12. 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. N/A.
2. N/A.
3. When we were working with rare materials, everything seemed to me to be handled carefully and appropriately.
4. {No response—RBS staff}
5. N/A.
6. See my earlier comment about cradles on seminar tables (precarious!). Some book snakes would have been nice, too.
7. {No response—RBS staff}

8. None.
9. All went well.
10. The instructor limited “live book” use. This was fine.
11. {No response—RBS staff}
12. {No response—RBS staff}

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

1. I will and have recommended this course to others. In future, I won’t have institutional funds, but I’m going to try to find a way to take more courses.
2. Yes. Yes.
3. Yes, on both counts. Emphatically, on the latter point.
4. Yes. I would recommend it to some with specific research interests.
5. Yes.
6. Absolutely. An exceptional amount was covered.
7. Yes!
8. Definitely.
9. Absolutely.
10. Yes.
11. Yes.
12. {No response—RBS staff}

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

1. If you simply want to know notation, this isn’t the class. If you want practical experience analyzing (hence the “analytical” not “descriptive”), take this class. It did make me want to take “Desbib.”
2. {No response—RBS staff}
3. This is a good complement to the “Desbib” courses. Those are more focused on producing collational formulae, while this one really pushes on the techniques that enable one to understand what one is seeing.
4. {No response—RBS staff}
5. {No response—RBS staff}
6. Although I was one of the few non-scholars (in the course), I felt included and respected, and had a wonderful time throughout.
7. Intense, and awesome!
8. N/A.
9. {No response—RBS staff}
10. {No response—RBS staff}
11. {No response—RBS staff}
12. {No response—RBS staff}

Aggregate Statistics

Number of respondents: 12

Leave

Institution gave me leave: 2 (16.67%)
I took vacation time or unpaid leave: 1 (8.33%)
N/A: student, retired, or had summers off: 8 (66.67%)
Other: Staff: 1 (8.33%)

Tuition

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

Housing

Institution paid housing: 1 (8.33%)
Student paid housing: 3 (25%)
Institution and student shared cost: 2 (16.67%)
Fellowship from RBS (Mellon): 4 (33.33%)
N/A: stayed with friends or lived at home: 2 (16.67%)

Travel

Institution paid travel: 1 (8.33%)
Student paid travel: 4 (33.33%)
Institution and student shared cost: 1 (8.33%)
Fellowship from RBS (RBS-Mellon): 4 (33.33%)
N/A: I had only local travel expenses: 2 (16.67%)

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

Book collector: 1 (8.33%)
Ph.D. student (humanities): 2 (16.67%)
Librarian with some rare book duties: 1 (8.33%)
Rare book librarian: 1 (8.33%)
Full or associate professor (college): 1 (8.33%)
Assistant professor (university): 1 (8.33%)
Full or associate professor (university): 1 (8.33%)
RBS staff: 2 (16.67%)
Other: Independent scholar, editor; independent scholar, PhD, former asst. prof.: 2 (16.67%)