

Information Guide | Washington, DC

Welcome to Rare Book School!

FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS, the bibliographical community has been supported and nourished by the work of Rare Book School (RBS). From its tentative beginnings at Columbia University, the School has educated two generations of librarians, collectors, academics, conservators, and booksellers, producing a network of loyal alumni, talented faculty, and dedicated friends around the globe. In the process, it has also earned a reputation as the world’s premier institution for the study of bibliography and book history. We are delighted that you will soon be a part of that distinguished tradition, and of our School’s promising future. We look forward to welcoming you to Washington for your Rare Book School course.

This *Information Guide* should answer most of your questions about transportation, housing, and other practical matters. Upon arrival, you’ll also receive a copy of the *Student’s Vade Mecum* with additional information to ensure that your stay is as productive and enjoyable as possible. (N.B. Please bring the present guide with you when you take your RBS course; it contains valuable information not repeated in the *Vade Mecum*.) In the meantime, we eagerly await your arrival, and look forward to another wonderful session!

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RBS in Washington, DC



HOME TO SOME OF THE NATION’S most distinguished historical and cultural institutions—not to mention the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government—Washington is one of America’s great urban centers.

Founded and designed by Enlightenment thinkers, the nation’s capital boasts a proud and storied bibliographical tradition: Within a mile’s walk of the world’s largest library (the Library of Congress) book enthusiasts can tour the Folger Shakespeare Library, visit the National Archives, or examine the Asian and Middle Eastern collections housed at the Smithsonian’s Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery.

This year, the Library of Congress hosts two Rare Book School courses, both taught by members of the Library of Congress staff: L-105: *Preservation Imaging: Science, Scholarship, and the Artifact*, taught by Fenella France, Chief of the Preservation Research and Testing Division; and H-110: *The Art & Science of Cartography, 200–1550*, taught by John Hessler, Curator of the Jay I. Kislak Collection of the Archeology of the Early Americas. The Folger Shakespeare Library will host L-35: *Advanced Rare Book Cataloging Workshop* taught by Deborah J. Leslie, Senior Cataloger at the Folger.

We’re excited that you’ve decided to join us in Washington this fall, and we want to do all we can to deliver an exceptional educational experience. If you have any questions about the courses, or about RBS generally, please email us at rbsprograms@virginia.edu.

The RBS Week

All RBS students are expected to be in attendance and on time for all regularly scheduled classes, labs, and field trips. This is to ensure the quality and community of RBS as a school, and we insist that participants attend all sessions of their courses, unless presented with the most extraordinary of circumstances. Practically speaking, this involves a full-time commitment generally of 5–6:45 PM Sunday, 8:45 AM–5 PM Monday through Thursday, and 8:45 AM–4 PM Friday. Please make your travel plans accordingly.

N.B.—These times will vary somewhat for students taking class at the Folger, as business hours differ from those of the Library of Congress.

SUNDAY, 5–7 pm **Opening Reception**

RBS students will convene for registration and a meal at a nearby restaurant, location TBD.

Once there, all students will receive a copy of the *Student's Vade Mecum* and a name badge.

N.B.—If you plan to attend this event, RSVP by email (rbsprograms@virginia.edu) no later than 30 September. If you have any dietary restrictions, please include them in your RSVP.

Late arrival: We strongly suggest attending the Sunday night registration, but if you are unable to make it, please email us (rbsprograms@virginia.edu) and let us know. If you do not attend, you will need to register at your course location at 8:45 AM sharp on Monday morning.

MONDAY through THURSDAY

8:45 am* **Arrival at Libraries**

To ensure that everyone has sufficient time to make it through security and find his or her classroom, students should plan to arrive at the security desks of their respective Library buildings no later than 8:45 AM each morning.

N.B.—Students who did not attend the Sunday Night Opening Reception *must* register before classes start at 9 AM.

8:45 am* **Final Registration (Monday Only)**

Registration for those not in attendance Sunday evening.

9–10:30 am* **First Period**

10:30–11 am **Morning Break**

11 am–12:30 pm* **Second Period**

12:30–1:30 pm **Lunch**

1:30–3 pm* **Third Period**

3–3:30 pm **Afternoon Break**

3:30–5 pm* **Fourth Period**

FRIDAY

8:45 am* **Arrival at Libraries**

9–10:30 am* **First Period**

10:30–11 am **Morning Break**

11–12:30 pm* **Second Period**

12:30–1:30 pm* **Lunch**

1:30–3:30 pm* **Third Period**

3:30–4 pm* **Course Evaluations**

Students receive course completion certificates and fill out RBS course evaluations.

4–6 pm **Farewell Reception**

Evening Lecture Monday or Tuesday TBA

Look out for more details about your course via email in mid-September!

*Required activities are noted by asterisk

Before you arrive

Reading Lists

All RBS courses have advance reading lists or assignments that RBS instructors expect their students to complete before they arrive. These are outlined at www.rarebookschool.org/reading.

Students should come to class prepared. Those who have trouble locating required readings might try obtaining them through interlibrary loan (ILL), from used or antiquarian booksellers through the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America (ABAA), or online via sites such as www.bookfinder.com or www.vialibri.net.

Arrival & Departure Logistics

When thinking about your transportation arrangements, please remember that staying over Friday night after the last day of class is an excellent idea, if you can swing it. Early-evening ground and air travel is seldom much fun anywhere, but it can be especially difficult in a major city like Washington. Arriving a day early may also be a good idea, as it can provide an opportunity to settle in, overcome jet lag, &c. RBS first-timers are often surprised by the intensity of the experience, so be sure to get some sleep before classes start!

Problems

Please let us know if you encounter problems on any front. If such problems occur before you arrive, email (rbsprograms@virginia.edu) or telephone us (434-924-8851, 8:30 AM–5 PM; voicemail after hours). If you encounter issues with tuition payments, contact RBS Accounting Specialist Michael Taylor at 434-243-2920, or by email (michael.taylor@virginia.edu).

Should any difficulties arise during the course, please bring your concerns to a faculty member or course follower, or contact us at Rare Book School.

Accommodations

Of the several hotels located within walking distance of the National Mall and Capitol Hill, Hotel Harrington (436 11th Street NW; 202-628-8140; www.hotel-harrington.com;) offers some of the lowest rates; that said, the accommodations are very basic, and students should read reviews carefully before making a reservation.

A very reliable, nearby choice is the Capitol Hill Hotel (200 C Street SE; 202-543-6000; capitolhillhotel-dc.com), where RBS has set aside a discounted block of rooms. To utilize the discounted rate, please call the Capitol Hill Hotel (202-448-2081) and request the rate for Rare Book School. You can also use this link: www.rarebookschool.org/capitolhillhotel2016.

Security

The Library of Congress requires all patrons and guests to move through airport-style security before entering any of their buildings, and to submit to package, purse, and backpack searches before leaving. Dangerous items (e.g., firearms, knives, box-cutters, razors) are not permitted. Please plan accordingly, and arrive early enough to make it through in time for all course events.

N.B. You should plan to carry some form of photo ID on your person at all times while visiting the Library and the Folger.

Transportation

Air Travel

Three major airports serve the greater Washington area: Washington Dulles International (IAD; www.flydulles.com), located about thirty miles west of the city; Ronald Reagan National (DCA; www.flyreagan.com), just across the Potomac River in Virginia; and Baltimore Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI; www.bwiairport.com), in Maryland, about thirty miles to the northeast.

While DCA is conveniently located for RBS students, it offers fewer flight options compared to the other two airports; on the other hand, getting to the city from IAD or BWI takes extra time, planning, and expense. Please take these details into consideration when arranging your flights!

Taking the Train

If you are arriving from a nearby state, Amtrak (www.amtrak.com; 1-800-872-7245) may offer the most convenient and affordable means of getting to the capital: the centrally located Union Station (50 Massachusetts Avenue NE) is only about a fifteen-minute walk from the Library of Congress and the Folger.

Driving to Washington, DC

The main north-south route into the city is Interstate 95, one of the nation's busiest, and potentially most frustrating, highways. Getting to Washington from points west will usually involve a combination of either I-70/I-270 (from the northwest) or I-81/I-66 (from the southwest). No matter what route you take, know that rush-hour traffic can be intense, and parking spaces on Capitol Hill hard to find.

Advance Advices

What to Bring

At RBS, dress is business casual for all events. October in Washington generally has moderate temperatures, with highs around 68 degrees and lows around 50 degrees; that said, October in the mid-Atlantic has been known to drastically swing away from these moderate temps in either direction. The rooms we use at the Library of Congress and the Folger tend to maintain a cool temperature regardless of weather so it's a good idea to pack for both extremes and to bring a sweater, especially if you chill easily under air-conditioning. In general, a light rain jacket or umbrella is also a good idea.

RBS participants are expected to come to class prepared, and are required to be on time. Bring a watch. If you wish to take notes, plan accordingly. Pencils, paper, and other supplies are available at nearby convenience stores. Before leaving home, check the course description and the reading list on the RBS website for specific instructions on what to bring. (It is not, for instance, always necessary to bring copies of your advance reading.) This year, laptops are required in L-35 and suggested in H-115 and L-105. Other inside tips on what to bring can be found in the previous year's course evaluations, also available on the course webpage.

Pharmacies & Medical Facilities

The nearest pharmacy will probably be Grubb's Pharmacy (326 East Capitol Street NE; 202-543-4400), a Capitol Hill institution that dates back to the Johnson administration (Andrew, not Lyndon). The store is open Mon-Fri, 8:30 AM-6 PM; Sat, 9 AM-3 PM.

If you need something on Sunday, your best bet will be the CVS at 661 Pennsylvania Avenue SE (202-543-3305). Their pharmacy hours are daily, 7 AM-10 PM.

The most convenient emergency room is at the George Washington University Hospital (900 23rd Street NW), about three miles northwest of the Library of Congress. The hospital's emergency department can be reached at 202-715-4911. As always, if you need immediate help, dial 911.