

Detailed Course Evaluation

- 1) *How useful were the pre-course readings? Did you do any additional preparations in advance of the course?*
 1. They were all very useful, well chosen, and worth reading. I'm also thankful to now have them on my bookshelf at work, where I'm certain I'll refer to them again.
 2. Readings were useful, though some were more dense than others. Eisenstein informed so much of the class, and while I don't think it should be dropped, it's not the easiest of reading.
 3. The pre-course readings were very useful during my preparations for the course. Eisenstein was particularly useful because it provided a historical framework that I could consult to place technological developments in a broader historical context. Twyman and Hamel (series) were nice, short introductions to the technical aspects of medieval manuscripts and later print processes. No additional preparations.
 4. Very useful, all of which I plan to read again.
 5. The readings were largely covered in class, so while they were helpful, they seemed more supplemental than required.
 6. They were pretty useful, and mostly helped with vocabulary. I only read the pre-course reading to prepare.
 7. Helpful. I plan on going back and re-engaging with the texts.
 8. The required reading was perfectly adapted to the course presentations and demonstrations.
 9. Eisenstein and *History of the Bible* left a big impression on me. The others much less so. It was all I could do to finish them in time.
 10. I was not able to obtain copies of some of the pre-course readings at my local library.
 11. Very useful. I read all the "required" ones. There was so much new information presented that it would have been even more difficult to keep up without having done the reading.
 12. Pre-course readings were interesting, and they gave an important background to the course. Valuable.

- 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. What a bonus! The material and selections from other reference sources were very helpful in class, and it'll be going on my bookshelf right beside the pre-course readings.
 2. Quite useful, though not extensively referred to in class—I'm assuming they will be very useful when I return home.
 3. The course workbook was not particularly useful during the course. However, I believe that it will be a helpful resource in the future.
 4. I will keep my workbook on my shelf with my other bibliographical texts.

5. Yes. I full intend to continue to use this in my work.
6. They were both appropriate and useful, and I will be taking them home so I can read further into the subject.
7. Useful, will continue to be a good reference, especially the bibliography. List of books presented in classroom would've been helpful.
8. They were useful.
9. Good, but wish we had a list of *all* the resources shown to us.
10. The workbook was useful, and I will reference it in the future.
11. Both useful during class and in the future. It was great to have a list of the materials shown in the SC presentation.
12. Useful now, and good to refer to in the future. We saw so many materials that it would have been difficult to remember without this guide.

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

1. No, this is my first course.
2. No, this is my first course.
3. No.
4. No.
5. No—my first.
6. No.
7. N/A.
8. No previous course taken.
9. N/A.
10. N/A.
11. N/A.
12. I've taken one other course, also outstanding.

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

1. I don't think there's anything I learned that I won't put to use at some point in my work; everything seemed relevant.
2. Both instructors made it a point to relate what we were learning to how we might use our new knowledge, regardless of our employment.
3. All of it was of interest to me. The broad survey of books from the beginning of writing to the present day has given me a new perspective about the history of communication and materials in my collection.
4. The hands-on examples of early manuscripts were of most value to me.
5. I loved the explanations of illustrations and the progression of technique. Practically, being able to look at a book and begin to "read" its construction is immensely useful.
6. Learning about ancient cultures has always interested me. All the information had the same amount of relevance to what I do.
7. How books were born. Ability to differentiate quality of books and rarity.
8. It's hard to say. The evolution in techniques of book production and illustration was fascinating, and very relevant for my work.
9. No soft spots in the course. It *dazzled* me with the incredible array of famous

works and supporting commentary.

10. I was looking for a comprehensive, chronological overview, so I would say it was all interesting.
11. The illuminated manuscripts, the advent and development of printing and its impact on the literate world. The private press movement and fine printing in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.
12. Seeing books from every century and learning how they fit into the social, cultural, and economic history of their times.

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, what a pair. They managed to guide us through two thousand years of book history in a highly entertaining and informative manner.
2. Yes, they did—such a broad survey course moves quickly, lightly, and superficially by nature, but they were able to make it relevant and thoughtful nonetheless.
3. Yes! I have taken many courses, seminars, and workshops at various institutions, and I can easily say that the instructors made this one of the best learning experiences in my career. Every minute of the course provided a new piece of information or insight. At no time was I overwhelmed by the volume or nature of the content, and time seemed to fly by during every class session.
4. YES! A million times so!
5. Absolutely. MD and JB are erudite, exceptional scholars in the field, and their knowledge and passion are easily discerned.
6. Yes, the instructors were very informative. The intellectual level of the course was appropriate.
7. Yes. Yes.
8. They did an excellent job in this regard. I got exactly what I had hoped for, or more.
9. As an introductory survey course, it's broad rather than very deep. But for my first RBS course, the "deep" was plenty deep enough.
10. Yes, the content presented and the discussions that ensued went above and beyond my expectations, and got me thinking about topics beyond book history.
11. Yes, in response to both questions. The teachers' use of the whiteboard, review of new terms, and the quiz at the end were very effective.
12. Everything about this course was wonderful and appropriate. The instructors are excellent teachers with many ways to give us the knowledge and help us absorb it.

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

1. The trip to LC!
2. The instructors, of course! And the materials—the dozens and dozens of beautiful examples we were able to see and, in some cases, handle. I wish we were able to be more hands-on with the materials from SC, but I understand perhaps why we could not. The materials from the teaching collection helped—especially being able to see and handle things like type, wood blocks, burin, &c.
3. The trip to LC was a once-in-a-lifetime experience that I won't forget.
4. These two instructors work so well together.

5. The mezzotint plate was eerily beautiful, but obviously the trip to LC.
6. The teachers were interesting and charming, but also very knowledgeable on the subject.
7. Interaction with instructors, classmates, but more importantly seeing all of the interesting and unique items presented to us in Charlottesville and D.C.
8. I liked most the fact that we got to see and touch books and other artifacts representing the range of processes and techniques we were studying.
9. 1) MD/JB. 2) Selection of works reviewed. Just dazzling. 3) Proximity to teachers and students.
10. The stories and anecdotes that MD and JB provided brought the objects to life and made the whole experience memorable.
11. The enthusiasm of the teachers and the students was a great synergy. The teachers' knowledge was so encyclopedic, it was awesome. Their reverence for the materials was inspiring. Their desire to share their knowledge was fantastic. And, of course, the exposure to the materials—at RBS, UVA, and LC—was life changing!
12. The teachers' interactions, the seamless way they shared the teaching. It was wonderful in every way.

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

1. I have no suggestions.
2. Can't think of any, off hand.
3. This is the most finely tuned course I have ever taken. I'm not sure there is much that can be done to improve it.
4. I have no idea—I place my faith in the MD-and-JB show improving by their own imagination and substantial knowledge.
5. More early modern, less *dull* twentieth century!
6. I would have enjoyed a little more focus on Asian countries, but I'm not sure if we would've had enough time.
7. Give more detailed outline of the five days at the *beginning*, with option for students to give suggestions. Provide list of items presented (or planned to be presented).
8. Hard to say. I wonder if there could be an exercise in which students take one book and do some sort of analysis, drawing on what has been studied.
9. Tell us to dress warmly for the visit to LC.
10. Revive the scriptorium game.
11. It was fabulous. If the teachers said that the SC books were listed in the notebook, I missed it for a couple of days. If they didn't, it would be a good thing to point out early on.
12. I can't imagine, except having more days!

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

1. Above and beyond, yes!
2. Met my expectations.
3. Yes.
4. Yes.
5. Yes. Very thorough and well organized.
6. Yes.

7. Yes—expected a little more commentary on the state of the book in the twenty-first century.
8. Yes.
9. Yes.
10. Yes. See response to Q5, above.
11. Yes.
12. Yes, and more. We learned especially how to really look at books and what they can tell us about when, how, why, and for whom they were produced.

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

1. I'm so excited to get back to my home institution and look at our collections with new eyes. I'm particularly excited to incorporate what I learned into my own library instruction sessions. If I can share even a tiny fraction of what I learned this week with the students I work with, I'll be very happy.
2. I plan on using what I've learned to interact more capably with our special collections at my library—particularly in a pedagogical role, in creating meaningful interactions between students and materials, and knowing how to handle and interpret our collections.
3. I hope that the course will make me a better steward for rare books in my collections. Also, the knowledge I gained here will greatly improve how I use these books in course instruction.
4. I will be able to handle rare and unique items better, along with identifying clearly what is most important within a collection.
5. In my own scholarship, which deals with the production of books and material objects.
6. I intend to use it to help me with any future classes I might take.
7. Use this knowledge personally and professionally. As a subject librarian, I understand items in my library's collection better, and have increased confidence and skill in acquiring new and rare(r) books.
8. The knowledge I got will help me in my instruction sessions, as I help students start to get familiar with book history. It will also be useful for curating exhibits.
9. 1) Support my scholarly research with broad context. 2) Inform (expand) my collecting.
10. This course provided me with a greater understanding of, and appreciation for, book history, and I intend to use this knowledge to help support and advocate for the preservation of cultural heritage.
11. In my reading and collecting. There was a lot of directly pertinent information.
12. What I learned here will inform my own collecting, as well as what I see in libraries and exhibits.

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

1. Yes! Our trip to LC was the highlight of a week full of wonderful things.
2. YES! Day trip to LC was exhausting and the single best part of the class. Having JB and MD share items from his collection felt like once-in-a-lifetime good.
3. Yes.
4. Yes.
5. YES. That trip is the highlight of my intellectual life.

6. It was very well spent and very enjoyable.
7. Extremely.
8. Unbelievably well spent.
9. Six hours on a bus in one day is a long time. Why not hire a bus that has TV monitors and show "Jane Eyre" or other material relevant to the course.
10. Yes, the SC visits, print demonstration, and LC field trip were all enriching.
11. Absolutely!! The LC field trip was fabulous.
12. Our trip to LC was extraordinary. The treasures we saw will be impressed on my mind. It was an experience to be treasured.

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

1. All three of the speakers I got to hear were very interesting, and RBS is a great chance since there are plenty of other people to talk about the lectures with afterwards, including the speakers themselves!
2. Tuesday's lecture was fantastic. Booksellers' Night was fun, but I'm not a collector, so it was just a nice reason to wander downtown.
3. Yes. Lecture about Galileo frauds.
4. Yes.
5. Yes.
6. Yes.
7. N/A.
8. Yes.
9. Yes. Galileo lecture—wow!
10. Yes.
11. Yes. Tuesday's lecture on Galileo was especially timely as we saw the book at LC the next day.
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. MD and JB were, not surprisingly, very attentive, and guided us appropriately in the use of all material.
2. We had a fair amount of time to handle materials, particularly from the teaching collection. That said, I wish there'd been more opportunity.
3. No suggestions.
4. Maybe small pamphlets explaining how to do it, what handling does to manuscripts/codices, and why care is needed.
5. N/A.
6. No suggestions come to mind.
7. {No response—RBS staff}
8. {No response—RBS staff}
9. None.
10. The process relief box #12 was incomplete, and there was no key, which made it difficult to understand what we were looking at.

11. No suggestions. It was fine.
12. {No response—RBS staff}

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

1. Yes, and yes!
2. Yes, for both.
3. Yes. Yes.
4. Yes—I would tell others that this course is necessary to an understanding of any book profession or hobby.
5. Yes. I would absolutely recommend this course—and will!
6. Yes, and yes.
7. YES, YES.
8. I would wholeheartedly recommend “The History of the Book” to others.
9. Yes.
10. Absolutely, I have already recommended it to several people.
11. Absolutely. Yes.
12. Absolutely. It was a privilege to be taught by two outstanding and knowledgeable teachers.

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

1. This is just such a wonderful program. I was very impressed at the attention to detail at every level, from coffee breaks to the course content!
2. {No response—RBS staff}
3. Take this course if you have the opportunity. Also, come to the course with one book in mind that you have always wanted to handle. You may get the opportunity to see your volume at UVA or at LC.
4. This was an excellent course—I am convinced I need to come back and take more courses.
5. FORGET WHAT YOU THINK YOU KNOW—This course makes you see what we take for granted—the book—as a historical innovation that has shaped the direction and impact of human culture. Featuring the musical stylings of Johnny B and the Salsa Plant, get ready to couch like you've never couched before! (For real—did like!)
6. This was a very informative and enjoyable experience that I would recommend to anyone interested in books.
7. All librarians should know what's taught in this course. “History of the Book” at RBS allowed me to acquire this knowledge in a way that cannot be replicated online or through self-study.
8. I advise future students to do as much of the required and recommended reading as possible. The class reinforces and completes the readings.
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: 6 (50%)

I took vacation time or unpaid leave: 1 (8.33%)

N/A: student, retired, or had summers off: 5 (41.67%)

Tuition

Institution paid tuition: 7 (58.33%)

Student paid tuition: 4 (33.33%)

Scholarship from RBS: 1 (8.33%)

Housing

Institution paid housing: 2 (16.67%)

Student paid housing: 4 (33.33%)

Institution and student shared cost: 1 (8.33%)

N/A: stayed with friends or lived at home: 5 (41.67%)

Travel

Institution paid travel: 3 (25%)

Student paid travel: 4 (33.33%)

Institution and student shared cost: 1 (8.33%)

N/A: I had only local travel expenses: 4 (33.33%)

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

Archivist: 1 (8.33%)

Book collector: 1 (8.33%)

M.L.I.S. student: 1 (8.33%)

Ph.D. student (humanities): 1 (8.33%)

High school student: 1 (8.33%)

Librarian with some rare book duties: 3 (25%)

Rare book librarian: 1 (8.33%)

Retired: 1 (8.33%)

Teacher or professor: University: full or associate professor: 1 (8.33%)

Work in a museum or cultural institution: 1 (8.33%)