

Todd Pattison
B-75: American Publishers' Bookbindings, 1800–1900
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. Gave a satisfactory and adequate introduction to the subject. No additional preps.
 2. Extremely useful, and balanced nicely with the in-class material in that it was not redundant, but helped in understanding the material presented in class.
 3. Very useful, I thought. I made cloth-binding flashcards from high-quality scans on the PBO, printed them in color, and had them laminated. They were very helpful, I feel.
 4. Some of the readings were somewhat difficult to locate. I will probably revisit the pre-course readings after having taken the course for better comprehension.
 5. The pre-course readings were extremely helpful. Perhaps it would have been helpful to also add a book that addresses basic bookbinding techniques, or to review this in the beginning. A handout or a page in the workbook with a labeled illustration of the “parts of a book” would be helpful for those who do not have any or limited knowledge of bookbinding.
 6. Very useful. Some were a repeat from other course readings, but in general a very good overview in preparation for the course.
 7. Extremely useful. The readings all made sense with the materials covered in the course, and augmented what TP showed in class.
 8. The pre-readings were useful.
 9. These are always very important and useful.
 10. Very useful.
 11. I didn't complete all of the pre-course readings, but found the ones I read to be very interesting. I will return to the readings to learn more post-class.
 12. I found the pre-course readings helpful in either giving me a general understanding and/or supplementing what we covered in class.

- 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, the workbook will provide a useful refresher, and the comprehensive bibliography will be useful for locating additional reference sources.
 2. The workbook also adds to the material covered in class, and will clearly provide assistance for future research on the subject.
 3. YES.
 4. The workbook was not used much during the week, but I do believe that I will refer to it in the future. One suggestion for future courses would be to add a section on basic bookbinding vocabulary or a list of terms for beginners.
 5. Basic bookbinding glossary. An illustrated-label handout on the parts of the book. Help everyone have use of the same vocabulary.
 6. Yes, very helpful. Will retain all for future reference.

7. Very useful. The workbook is *awesome*, and will be a great resource for myself and my colleagues. The bibliography alone is worth taking the course.
8. This I found to be better and more useful to me than the pre-readings.
9. Yes, I always use these resources long after leaving RBS.
10. Yes (yes).
11. Yes—especially the extensive bibliography—complete with online resources.
12. I feel the workbook and materials will be useful. They're easy to use, with great information. The bibliography will be an excellent resource.

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

1. Compared favorably.
2. This course was very well organized and presented, and stayed even more faithful to the topic than some others
3. I took the “Born Digital” course last year. I enjoyed it a lot, and it was useful, but I’ll take the books if that’s all right with you.
4. This was my third course, and I learned a lot. However, some of the concepts of bookbinding structure were gone over quickly, and I think this course would have been even more difficult for students who haven’t taken at least “Desbib.”
5. Less intensive than “Desbib.”
6. Yes—very good. This course measured up very well with others I have taken, despite this being the first time it has been given. TP is very knowledgeable and passionate, and I’m sure the course will even improve over time.
7. Yes. This course was very thoughtfully planned out and delivered. TP’s experience and knowledge is impressive, and his flow was right on. I thought this was the best of the courses I have taken at RBS.
8. Different, but every bit as good to me.
9. Yes, seven courses. Equally as good as every other course.
10. Yes. As interesting and valuable.
11. Yes (three previous courses). This class is *top notch* and compares as one of the strongest of the four total.
12. I found the coursework in this course to be much more applicable for the material in our particular institution.

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

1. Mainly book structure and manufacturing techniques.
2. The fact that the class presented a truly balanced perspective meant that I think it probably had a little something for everyone. The technical details and the production methods, motivations, and developments were most relevant for me.
3. I wish I had a better response than “all of it,” but “all of it.” Especially the “all” part, although the “it” is also relevant.
4. Shifts in binding structures and their relation to popular culture and the book trade.
5. The identification of binding types and techniques. Also the bookbinders and book designers behind the beautiful work we had been shown in the class. All this information is helpful in creating a detailed library catalog entry.

6. Binding structures; dating books by style and manufacture technique; also all the cautionary examples of books out of the ordinary expected time periods.
 7. Pre-1880 cloth case bindings, especially the section on Benjamin Bradley: Invaluable information that will directly contribute to my work back home.
 8. The binding construction section and the review of binding design sections. I enjoyed the break-out sessions in McGregor.
 9. All aspects of the course are useful for me.
 10. Cover design.
 11. Learning the trade/business of bookbinding and being now able to identify books by era far more reliably.
 12. The days spent on designs in the later part of the century were of great interest due to our institution receiving many items from that time period.
- 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. The instructor presented all information clearly and in easy-to-understand ways. I think the class was intellectually appropriate and also fun.
 3. TP really did an amazing job with this. We covered a large amount of material in a coherent and comprehensible manner.
 4. The wealth of examples—both physical copies for inspection and the very informative visual slides—really made this course spectacular.
 5. Yes. There was no hesitation on the instructor's part in reviewing information or providing extra time to explaining bookbinding techniques.
 6. Yes—perfect.
 7. Yes, and yes.
 8. Absolutely, and TP was very good in explaining concepts in simple terms. He was very well prepared.
 9. Yes; yes.
 10. Yes. Yes.
 11. *Absolutely*, and the intellectual level of the course was great.
 12. Yes, he did.
- 6) *What did you like best about the course?*
1. The trip to SC to see selections from the recently acquired DJ collection.
 2. The instructor is clearly passionately interested in the subject—that excitement, and his depth of understanding, make the class a wonderful experience.
 3. The physicality of the course subject, combined with the historical context provided by TP and the course readings.
 4. The examples, the instructor's depth of knowledge on this particular aspect of book history, and TP's wonderful personality and passion for bindings.
 5. The opportunity to handle and view closely the bindings of books from the nineteenth to the early twentieth century. It is always easier to remember information when it is possible to handle the material and view it up close, rather than just as an image out of a publication on bookbindings.

6. Collegial atmosphere, questions, contributions, and group discussion. Also the visit to McGregor Room to browse RBS collections.
7. TP did a great job of balancing contextual information, and of demonstrating the significance of the changes from one time period to another.
8. Hard to say, since I very much enjoyed all aspects of the course.
9. The opportunity to see and to handle the materials.
10. SC/McGregor Room.
11. The instructor's teaching style and his deep knowledge of the subject. TP is a fantastic instructor!
12. I liked the many examples that were used. TP not only gave us the information, but also backed it up with plenty of examples. Spending time in the McGregor Room and selecting our own books to discuss was of great help because we were able to learn from each other and apply the content of the course to the items.

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

1. {Private comment—RBS staff}
2. I wouldn't change anything!
3. No.
4. A clearer explanation on Day 1 of the basic terms and things to look for that would have gone into a bibliographic description of bookbindings.
5. To refer to the workbook when discussing the topics covered in the course. Briefly review what we'll cover at the start of the course.... We really did not know what to expect at first.
6. Please put dates prominently on all slides—we often had to ask for a date again, even if it had been already stated—dates on slides (of bindings) would be easier.
7. The time in the McGregor Room was fantastic. It would have been fun to start with an exercise like that one at the beginning to see how our eye changed throughout the course.
8. Hard to say, as I am leaving with so much info; not sure how it could be better. To stay a few more days would be nice.
9. Keep teaching the course and the fine tuning will occur naturally.
10. {No response—RBS staff}
11. No improvement needed.
12. {No response—RBS staff}

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

1. Yes.
2. Absolutely.
3. Yes. It was quite accurate, I felt.
4. Yes, and I was especially pleased with the focus on the first few days on the first half of the nineteenth-century U.S.
5. Yes, I did, and more topics were covered than expected.
6. Yes.
7. Yes. Take this course.
8. Yes.
9. Yes.
10. Yes.

11. Yes. I also learned more than was described, and I have a real appreciation for the physical tasks of binding.
12. Yes.

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

1. In my daily work with nineteenth-century material.
2. I will continue to study certain aspects of the course material, and will also be able to share a lot of my better understanding of this topic with my students.
3. Immediately. I will write a paper either on Colton & Jenkins, or on the influence of mon {?—RBS staff} on Sarah Wyman Whitman's designs.
4. Relating binding styles to print culture and literary history.
5. Cataloging the nineteenth-century materials found at our special collections with a fresh look, because I am sure some details have been overlooked—not by neglect, but by not being aware of the importance.
6. In my work—it will help me to better understand the books I work with, better appreciate the materials and structures, and respect them accordingly. In my collecting—I will be paying more attention to a broader range of styles.
7. This knowledge will absolutely apply to my future work, as I can now recognize characteristics of different bindings within the hundred-year span.
8. Absolutely.
9. I will use it directly in my appraisal practice.
10. In my business as bookseller/buyer/appraiser.
11. I plan to find examples of specific binders, designers, and artists in my library's collection. I also have a better sense of what components of the book are useful to show and describe for digitization.
12. Absolutely. I feel this information will help me be a better cataloger.

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

1. Yes, see earlier comment. Trips to the McGregor Room quite useful and informative.
2. Yes, the trips to pick out materials ourselves were very interesting ways to learn more from each other.
3. Yes.
4. The visits to the McGregor collection of bindings was great because it allowed each student time to choose bindings for individual inspection. We also visited SC on Day 5 and saw some new acquisitions. These field trips were very good for collaboration between students and the instructor. I recommend making this a permanent part of the course.
5. YES. What a treat to be able to view some materials from the recently acquired collection of dust jackets. It really was an added treat. Thank you!
6. Yes. The McGregor Room visits were a highlight, and I could have spent even more time browsing and exploring.
7. Absolutely. It was wonderful to see the dust-jacket collection at UVA, as well as see what the class chose to look at from the McGregor Room.
8. In some respects these trips may have been the best parts.
9. N/A.
10. Yes.

11. Yes. We were able to investigate the bindings in the McGregor Room and went to SC to see slipcovers.
 12. Yes. Seeing items in SC helped to illustrate the topic at hand. But the time in the McGregor Room really helped to cement the topics we learned in my memory.
- 11) *If you attended the evening events (e.g., RBS Lecture, Video Night, RBS Forum, Booksellers' night), were they worth attending?*
1. Yes, enjoyed all I attended.
 2. I really appreciate these activities and would do more if I had the energy!
 3. Yes. I specially liked the paper and the printing museums in 421. They were amazing, actually. It's too bad the other weeks didn't get a chance to experience them.
 4. {No response—RBS staff}
 5. Yes. Appreciate the organization of the lectures. It may not be a topic known but always interesting.
 6. Yes—definitely! Wonderful!
 7. Yes.
 8. Yes. I do not know where you get these videos, but they are great.
 9. Yes—RBS Lecture, RBS Forum, Booksellers' Night.
 10. Yes.
 11. N/A.
 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. Dust jackets are very fragile....
 2. I love the ability to carefully handle materials from the teaching collection.
 3. I have no suggestions, sorry.
 4. {No response—RBS staff}
 5. It seems that the right amount of assistance was given by RBS staff and necessary props.
 6. {No response—RBS staff}
 7. Everything seemed okay to me.
 8. None.
 9. Methods continue to prove effective.
 10. {No response—RBS staff}
 11. None.
 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, without reservation.
 2. I will recommend it!
 3. Yes.

4. Yes. I highly recommend this course for those interested in nineteenth-century book history.
5. Yes.
6. Yes. Yes. I will be back again in future!
7. Yes, and YES.
8. Several times over!
9. Yes; yes.
10. Yes. Yes.
11. Yes, I did and I would *highly* recommend this course to colleagues.
12. Yes, I did. I have already recommended this class to my colleague.

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

1. Twenty down; looking forward to the next twenty!
2. {No response—RBS staff}
3. Rare Book School is better than Space Camp.
4. I think with some time this course will be truly spectacular. Highly recommended for fans of cloth bindings.
5. Everyone should attend RBS at least once in their life. It does not matter if you are in academia or a library. There is something here for everyone.
6. {No response—RBS staff}
7. I love Rare Book School!
8. Any thoughts of adding a few classes on (specifically) English bookbinders and publishers?
9. Take the course by all means; TP is doing a great job!
10. {No response—RBS staff}
11. This class was wonderful. Interesting lectures; great class exercises; extensive book examples; and a really wonderful selection of students in the class too. Bravo!
12. This was an excellent course. Not only was the instructor knowledgeable, but he presented this knowledge in an easy-to-follow way. He was more than willing to answer questions and, I felt, honestly wanted us to learn this information, which I feel is valuable to whatever your interest in books may be.

Aggregate Statistics

Number of respondents: 12

Leave

Institution gave me leave: 3 (25%)

I took vacation time or unpaid leave: 4 (33.33%)

N/A: self-employed, retired, or had summers off: 5 (41.67%)

Tuition

Institution paid tuition: 4 (33.33%)

Student paid tuition: 7 (58.33%)

Fellowship from RBS (Mellon): 1 (8.33%)

Housing

Institution paid housing: 2 (16.67%)

I paid for my own housing: 8 (66.67%)

Fellowship from RBS (Mellon): 1 (8.33%)

N/A: stayed with friends or lived at home: 1 (8.33%)

Travel

Institution paid travel: 2 (16.67%)

I paid my own travel: 9 (75%)

Fellowship from RBS (Mellon): 1 (8.33%)

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

Antiquarian bookseller: 2 (16.67%)

Cataloguer: 1 (8.33%)

Cataloguer (Rare books): 2 (16.67%)

Conservator/binder/preservation librarian: 1 (8.33%)

Librarian/archivist of digital materials: 1 (8.33%)

Teacher or professor: Other: 1 (8.33%)

Other: Postdoctoral Fellow: 1 (8.33%)

Other: Systems Librarian: 1 (8.33%)

Other: Hotel G.M.: 1 (8.33%)

Other: Practicing book appraiser, ISA: 1 (8.33%)