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L-30: Rare Book Cataloging  
4–9 June, Charlottesville, Virginia

## **Narrative Course Evaluations**

1) *Were the pre-course reading assignments useful? Are there any readings that you would like to see added or removed in future years?*

1. Yes, the reading assignments were fine.
2. Pre-course reading was extremely useful.
3. Yes.
4. They were very useful and the videos we watched were super helpful.
5. Very useful.
6. Our pre-course assignments were relevant and accessible. They were broken up into small chunks that were easily digestible during the busy run-up to arrival in Charlottesville.
7. The pre-course readings were very useful.
8. Yes, they were very helpful. I had no idea about hand-press books and the readings really helped explain what hand-press printing was like.
9. They were very useful, however, I think if the class does not necessarily utilize the readings, they shouldn't be marked as required/required to bring to class (i.e. Gaskell).
10. The pre-course reading assignments were mostly useful, particularly the ones regarding determining book format and creating signature statements. The pre-course assignments also included watching a number of videos, but the most important one was the Terry Belanger video, plus the video that shows how paper with chain lines and watermarks are created. The other videos regarding different printing processes, how printing presses work, how to create various types of illustrations, &c. were less important and not discussed too much during actual class time.
11. These were very helpful, especially the practical exercises.
12. The pre-course reading assignments were very useful, and in fact I would recommend this list to anyone interested in learning more about rare book cataloging, whether or not they were coming to this class.

2) *What are your thoughts on the course workbook and/or other teaching materials distributed during class? Was the content appropriate and useful? Will it continue to be useful for you after the course?*

1. Highly useful; I'm going to keep the binder on my shelf at work with other reference materials.

2. I will refer to the workbook for this course constantly when returning home.
3. I guarantee I will use the toolkit provided for cataloging on a daily basis for the foreseeable future. It is extremely helpful at outlining "best practices" that simply aren't written down in one place to reference.
4. Yes, it was extremely helpful and wonderfully arranged. I will definitely keep it at my desk at work as a reference source.
5. Excellent. I plan on keeping the binder at my professional workspace going into the future.
6. Course materials were unique and useful. I will likely use my workbook as the basis for a self-assembled reference source that I expect to use heavily.
7. The content will continue to be useful for me after the course.
8. Incredibly helpful. Plenty of good examples and full of references. I will be bringing the workbook to my job.
9. 10/10 would recommend. Yes, this information/handouts will be invaluable for the rest of my career.
10. The course workbook is extremely helpful and I will definitely be referring to it in the future.
11. Yes, it's great to be going home with a toolkit of resources in addition to the slides and my own notes. Having lots of examples of records and the pictures of the title pages of the books is also great. I appreciate that we'll still have access to what's in the Google Drive folders as well.
12. The materials distributed during class were very helpful for learning purposes during the week, and I fully intend to keep the binder on my desk for reference for the foreseeable future.

3) *Which aspects of the course were most intriguing and relevant for you as an individual? Did you walk away with any new insights, ideas, or project plans?*

1. I enjoyed the transcription exercises, and learned that I need more practice.
2. The books I worked on are directly relevant to my home cataloging—I will be able to apply nuances to my work immediately.
3. I loved learning and seeing different books and variations of books. The variation was extremely important and extremely valuable.
4. Definitely learned a new skill and gained a lot of insight into why you make certain decisions and what is important to think about.
5. I knew little about signatures and the like before coming here.
6. {no response}
7. Both lectures and hands-on activities were very relevant. The visit to SC was very relevant too; I enjoyed it very much and it was a great opportunity to reinforce concepts we had learned in class.
8. Honestly, all of them. I had no rare book cataloging experience before this. I am

interested in writing some policy or procedures for rare books when I get back to my institution.

9. Pretty much every aspect. I loved the deep dive into DCRM(B) because it really shows just how much thought has been put into the discipline. I'll definitely take this knowledge to my institution and fix our crappy records.
10. The parts of the course that were most intriguing and relevant for me were the discussions about physical description, creating signature statements, subject and genre/form terms, and particular details about deciphering title/other title information for title fields.
11. All of the detailed practical cataloging training is just what I needed to be able to start on rare books cataloging for the first time.
12. One of the most valuable things from this course was the connections I made with the rare book cataloging community outside just my institution. It was great to meet and work with other like-minded professionals, and I look forward to having them as colleagues going forward.

4) *Did the instructors help you to acquire all the skills and information promised in the course description? Did you learn what you had hoped to learn?*

1. Yes, particularly collation.
2. Yes!
3. Yes.
4. Yes, they were awesome and very thorough and helpful. They made sure to address any questions and gave helpful feedback.
5. I did, with the acknowledgment that rules only go so far, and that is where informed decisions (and a cataloging community) come into play.
6. Our instructors were so very knowledgeable and enjoyable. The lectures and days were broken up into segments that were meaningful and content-rich, yet not overwhelming. I am very satisfied with my experience here.
7. The instructor and her assistant taught me what I had hoped to learn. The lectures were engaging and relevant and I had the opportunity to practice what I learned during these lectures.
8. Yes, I learned all I expected and more. The course really packs a lot into a week.
9. Yes, and yes.
10. Yes, I was able to learn what I hoped to learn in this course.
11. Yes, the lectures and practicum work was complete and thorough without being repetitive. I do feel I learned what I'd hoped to learn, although of course cataloging takes a lot of practice to solidify. I loved how hands-on the class was.
12. Yes! I came to familiarize myself with DCRM(B) rules and practice, and that is what I got. DJL and BB are both so knowledgeable, experienced, and helpful, and I'm grateful to have taken this course with them.

5) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*

1. This almost certainly will be relevant at work, as I work with special collections materials.
2. See above.
3. Professionally.
4. I will be using it directly to catalog several items at my library when I return.
5. I hope to use these skills to more fairly describe the rare materials under my purview at my institution. While the bulk of the skills learned apply to materials dating from somewhat earlier than my institution carries, the overall concepts are applicable universally.
6. I plan to use the skills and knowledge I acquired at Rare Book School to catalog and provide access to a special collection that has long been awaiting metadata.
7. I will apply what I have learned to my work as a cataloger.
8. I will continue to be a cataloger of our rare materials so will be using the skills and knowledge to provide better cataloging for our materials (mostly books) and will be looking at the catalog records for previously cataloged rare books.
9. I plan on sitting with my coworker/pseudo-supervisor to figure out policy and best practices for my institution going forward. We are the only two cataloging librarians (and now the only two rare materials cataloging librarians) so we will use this knowledge to figure out the best way forward.
10. I will definitely try to apply what I have learned in this course to my future cataloging work to the best of my ability.
11. I hope to be able to start cataloging with DCRM(B) at my institution.
12. To refine my practice in my own job at my home institution.

6) *Who might benefit the most from taking this RBS course?*

1. Metadata librarians and book collectors.
2. Catalogers working with rare materials; and catalogers with at least some experience creating original records.
3. Anyone who catalogs rare books with DCRM(B) needs to take this course. Even if you use it frequently, this deep dive will uncover blind spots and unknown, persnickety details that are incredibly important to the work.
4. Special collections catalogers for sure and any catalogers who are interested in working with rare materials.
5. Formal rare books catalogers, but I consider myself lucky to have been given this opportunity as a lowly music cataloger.
6. {no response}
7. Rare material catalogers.

8. A cataloger who's interested in special collections or rare books or someone who's already cataloging rare materials.
9. Any and all catalogers interested in learning a new skill with cataloging special/rare materials. Especially young catalogers who don't want to be pigeon-holed into a career path—explore the different aspects of librarianship!!!!
10. Those who are starting out cataloging rare book materials, or those who might need a refresher about DCRM(B) standards and rules.
11. Working catalogers who want to begin cataloging in DCRM(B).
12. People who are already familiar with library cataloging but new to rare books cataloging, as it assumes some baseline knowledge of cataloging, but introduces all the fundamentals of working with rare books.

7) *If applicable, what were the most powerful, or otherwise noteworthy educational moments in the course? Were there any "aha!" moments you'd like to share?*

1. {no response}
2. {no response}
3. {no response}
4. I thought all of it was very interesting and gave me a lot to think about, so no one thing stands out. I think the overall experience was excellent and noteworthy!
5. {no response}
6. {no response}
7. Every moment of the course was relevant.
8. Signatures. I had seen signatures in a book I had previously copy cataloged and didn't know exactly what they were. I managed to catalog it, but having knowledge of signatures will make future cataloging easier (plus everything else I learned).
9. {no response}
10. {no response}
11. {no response}
12. I finally understand the differences between editions, issue, impression, and state! They have been explained to me several times, but this week it finally clicked.

8) *Are there any other ways in which the course could have been improved?*

1. {no response}
2. Connecting the DCRM(B) rules directly to the exercises to reinforce connections between them.
3. {no response}
4. A bit more time to work on our practicum books.
5. {no response}
6. {no response}

7. {no response}
8. More illustration and binding knowledge/experience.
9. Less breaks, but that's for RBS as a whole, not just this course. The 30 minute breaks, twice a day, were killing me.
10. More time to work with peers. More time to finish exercises/practicum records during class so students don't have to spend a lot of time outside of class doing homework.
11. More outside of class time to work on the practicum.
12. {no response}

9) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? How likely are you to recommend this course to others? **On a 1–10 scale**, 1 would indicate that you disagree that you got your money's worth, 5 would indicate a neutral response, and 10 would indicate that you agree that you got your money's worth.*

1. 10
2. 10
3. 10
4. 10
5. 10
6. 10
7. 10
8. 10
9. 10
10. 9
11. 10
12. 8

10) *If your course made any (virtual) field trips outside of the classroom or had guest speakers, do you feel that they enhance the course experience?*

1. Yes
2. Yes! The trip to SC was great. I thought the Pope exercises were especially relevant for format, and directly connected to what we were learning.
3. Yes. It offered a fun hands-on, real life cataloging challenge, but only portions of the field trip seemed applicable to the hands-on work of learning the DCRM(B).
4. Our visit to SC was very useful to see examples of concepts we went over in class. The hands-on exercise was also fun and useful. The speaker was great!
5. Yes. We visited UVA SC and examined publications of Henry James, Alexander Pope, and Sinclair Lewis. While I'm not someone with a rich English literature background, I do acknowledge that many of the issues that arose are equally applicable in my own music sphere.

6. We had a field trip that was interesting and engaging. It was highly relevant to the course content.
7. The field trip was very relevant and enhanced my course experience.
8. Yes, very much. It helped show me how editions and issues work and why they need to be cataloged individually.
9. Oh most definitely. David Vander Meulen was very knowledgeable on format, impression, states, edition, etc. and helped augment what we were learning.
10. Our class visit to SC was excellent.
11. The field trip was interesting to illustrate some things we talked about in class, but maybe it didn't need to take the amount of time devoted to it.
12. Yes! It was great to see bibliography in use and talk about how it applies to library cataloging.

11) *Do you have any additional thoughts or advice for anyone considering taking this course in a future year?*

1. {no response}
2. {no response}
3. If you think you're going to do stuff after class, you're not. It's homework time.
4. {no response}
5. {no response}
6. {no response}
7. {no response}
8. Be prepared to do homework and work long into the evening after class. It's so worth it though.
9. Read and watch everything!!! Even if it's optional.
10. {no response}
11. Definitely do the advanced reading and exercises. They are very helpful.
12. The things you learn in this course are absolutely essential to anyone who works or wants to work as a cataloger of rare materials.

12) *If you had to sum up your RBS experience with a single sentence, phrase, or a haiku, what would you say?*

1. Extremely informative and useful, a lot to unpack.
2. I enjoyed this experience immensely.
3. Stop waiting, just go. Thanks.
4. {no response}
5. {no response}
6. Superb.
7. {no response}

8. An incredible experience that was extremely helpful.
9. You know that episode of Always Sunny in Philadelphia where Charlie is working in the mailroom and going crazy trying to figure out who Carol is? And Pepe Silva? You remember his red lined chart reminiscent of a detective solving a murder case? That was me this week . . . connecting every dot.
10. It's an intensive experience, but I'm glad I was able to learn a lot that I will be able to apply to my everyday work.
11. I learned so much, and while it was a lot to take in, the course made me even more enthusiastic to catalog rare books!
12. Rare book nerd summer camp was everything I hoped it would be.