

Narrative Course Evaluations

1) *Were the pre-course reading assignments useful? Did you do any additional preparation for your course? Are there any books or articles that you would like to see included in future years? Any that you might suggest removing?*

1. I thought that the books were great, especially JR's book.
2. Reading assignments were helpful. They helped me to familiarize myself with the vocabulary and concepts that were used in the course.
3. The pre-course reading assignments were very useful and helped prepare me to begin to identify various photographic prints.
4. Yes, the two main pre-course readings were helpful exposure to vocabulary for the course, technical context—I look forward to going back to them now that I have a much better grasp of the physical materials.
5. Yes. I wish the pre-course reading had included a recommendation to explore the Graphics Atlas instead of covering that in class as much as we did.
6. Pre-course reading was definitely useful for general familiarity with the material. However, it included many details which could only be retained through reinforcement in the course and hands-on evaluation. Perhaps recommend a more recent book on the history of photography such as Marien or Batchen, in addition to early histories like Gernsheim and Newhall.
7. Pre-course reading was useful. The *Colour Photography* book was tedious but still worthwhile. JR's book is essential.
8. Yes, all good.
9. Pre-course readings provided a good basis for class work. JR's book was especially useful, and will continue to serve as a good reference for working with photos.
10. Yes, they were very helpful and I will continue to use them as reference into the future.
11. JR's book is essential reading to start creating a framework that can be built upon in class. Coe, while interesting, wasn't as useful.
12. The pre-course reading was excellent and helped me prepare for the class.
13. They were useful, however I think a couple of the books were redundant.
14. JR's book was very useful. Should make the Graphics Atlas website required to look at and play around on before class.
15. Yes. No. No. No.

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. I thought that the content was wonderful—no complaints. And I will certainly refer to the binder for help later.
2. It was very useful to have copies of the slides for note taking and for future reference. For some of them it would have been nice if they were printed larger,

- for it will be more difficult to read some of them. It also would have served us better if the page numbers/sections could be better organized so that there weren't just repeating numbers in each section. Perhaps section numbers with page numbers like this: 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, &c..
3. The course workbook was well organized and provided good information aligning with the lecture/presentation. The instructors offered print materials, hands-on visual material, and websites and other electronic resources to help in the learning process.
 4. Course binder/slide notes and identification keys are super—look forward to using the set as a resource moving forward.
 5. The notebook with slides with space for note taking was useful, and I will use it at work. I wish it contained more charts, tables, and summaries to help with identification methodology.
 6. Workbook is very helpful, but some images would be much more helpful in color. It will definitely continue to be useful.
 7. The course workbook made taking notes a lot easier. {private response}
 8. Superb.
 9. The binder was useful and allowed me to easily take notes while following the lecture. Another good reference source I will be using in the future.
 10. Yes, very useful and well put together. Graphics Atlas is also great, but it might be nice to have handouts of photos/prints under magnification as reference.
 11. Very much so. The binder was useful. The only thing I would suggest is making color slides available afterwards. The black-and-white reproductions are too small to be effectively used later.
 12. The notes folder was especially useful. This allowed me to make notes alongside each presentation slide. Other materials used in class were also useful.
 13. Workbook was nice. Would prefer the slides to be sent to us as an option. Very useful content, and will be extremely useful in the future.
 14. Workbook was great. Will be useful in my cataloging.
 15. Excellent workbook. When dealing with color processes, color printing would be very helpful as would separation tab and navigation.

3) *If you've taken previous RBS courses, how did this one compare?*

1. {no response}
2. {no response}
3. The prior two courses I have taken were excellent, and this is just another to add to that category. The instructors are experts in their field and teach in a way that the novice can understand. They were open to answer questions I had.
4. N/A
5. I felt like I got less info that was completely new to me, and there was less raw info being thrown at me.
6. {no response}
7. This was in the top 3 (of 12-15) courses I've taken.
8. N/A
9. N/A
10. N/A
11. Excellent.
12. {no response}

13. N/A
 14. This was similar to my previous course, L-40: "Visual Materials Cataloging."
Hands-on learning is the best way to learn.
 15. Different in genre, but all of them were excellent.
- 4) *Which aspects of the course were most interesting and relevant for you as an individual? Did you walk away with any new insights, ideas, or project plans?*
1. The best aspect of the course was the time we spent engaging directly with the materials, when the professor brought out examples for us to look at and challenged us to identify the process.
 2. The nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century black-and-white photo identification was the most helpful and applicable for my current everyday work. Though it was more difficult, the study of color photography, especially digital prints, will help provide a foundation for collecting these formats in the near future.
 3. Having the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained through lecture and presentations by hands-on identification of processes in photographs was invaluable. You cannot learn this skill just by reading a book.
 4. It was incredibly helpful to do all of the hands-on identification work. Also loved the printing/darkroom demos—definitely makes me excited to work with more photographic material.
 5. Being able to better distinguish between photo and photomechanical processes will be very useful in my work.
 6. Explanation of the technical history of photography and physical comparisons and analysis of prints are essential components for anyone studying or working with photographs. It combines and supplements what one would want to learn in a studio class and a lecture class on the history of photography.
 7. Since my interests lie mainly in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries, I found the first half of the course most relevant, but I learned a huge amount in the second half and enjoyed it far more than I expected.
 8. As a bookseller, I needed to be able to more specifically identify twentieth-century prints. I got what I came for, and a lot more.
 9. The entire course was useful. Hands-on identification work was especially helpful.
 10. Identification is very useful to me as a conservator. I feel much more confident about my identifications, and I hope to practice on our collection in the future.
 11. I came away with a solid framework for early processes, and a strong starting point for later processes I can build on.
 12. Handling actual examples of the various photographic processes and examining is the only way to learn about them. I also found it useful to hear and see how each process was made, including its structure.
 13. Describing photographic processes orally (new and old), seeing a wide range of prints. Yes, I plan to tinker around with piezography and finally create my own darkroom.
 14. I enjoyed learning the nineteenth-century processes and the photomechanical processes. These are the most relevant for my job.
 15. Definitely a better understanding of what photography is about on a technical level. The importance and variety of its supports in particular.

- 5) *Did the instructors help you to acquire all the skills and information promised in the course description? Was anything left out or undeveloped? Did you learn what you had hoped to learn?*
1. I learned exactly what I came here to learn. The professors are so knowledgeable and are an indispensable resource.
 2. Yes, much of what I learned was right on target and just what I had hoped to get. I did not expect to go into digital prints so much, but RB's experience and knowledge was a pleasant surprise, and one that will come in handy in building my own knowledge of digital prints in the future.
 3. The teaching was excellent and I am much better prepared to apply what I learned on identifying print processes to my work. I learned more than I expected.
 4. Yes! Learned so much more than I knew to anticipate. JR and RB answered any and all questions with great detail and I know could've kept going...they're so knowledgeable and approachable!
 5. I don't feel like I got enough hands-on time practicing with examples and learning about ID methodology approaches to really get good at this, especially the digital processes stuff. I didn't learn quite as much as I'd hoped in terms of getting practice.
 6. Yes. Only more practice could increase the skills learned in the class. I would like to learn more about the photographer's perspective (across different historical periods) in conceiving and making photographs and negatives in addition to how to make the prints.
 7. Yes on all counts. I would have been happy with a bit more time on the nineteenth century and less on the twenty-first century, but that's me.
 8. Superb from beginning to end. JR and RB work beautifully together, and their joint expertise is staggering.
 9. Absolutely. We learned a great deal in a few days. I learned all I hoped to and more.
 10. Yes, definitely. I maybe could have used a little more time looking at digital prints under the microscope, but there's always Graphics Atlas!
 11. Yes, I learned what I hoped to learn, and with much satisfaction.
 12. The instructors were exceptional. Their expertise and real-world experience are extensive and their teaching style and good humor make the classes a pleasure to attend. Their enthusiasm and love of their subject shines through.
 13. Yes. Sometimes I felt we rushed the new processes/technologies, but I think that's because these processes build on each other. Therefore, the old processes are fundamental to understanding new ones.
 14. Yes.
 15. Yes, they did. Time looking and asking questions is key. Some parts of the workbook were left out—lack of time. Better timing? Graphics Atlas session too long.
- 6) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*
1. The skills that I learned in this course will be directly applied to my graduate research, as I begin to go through objects/conduct primary research.
 2. I plan to go back to my archives and just start identifying everything. I learned that this knowledge has to be put into regular practice to be reinforced and

- expanded upon. This knowledge will help me every day.
3. I will be able to use what I learned cataloging photographs in my work.
 4. Looking forward to implementing new skills to do a bit of cataloging and hopefully for some future projects.
 5. At work for surveying collections and identifying photo/print materials for rehousing projects.
 6. Understanding the material and making a process of photography will provide essential and foundational knowledge in my studies of photography and its relationship to other artistic media and types of prints.
 7. At home—completing my database of my photo collection by adding in photographic processes. At work, being able to identify photos in the collection more readily and better preserve them.
 8. Identification and cataloging of photographs I will be selling.
 9. I will be identifying photographs in work collections and adding descriptive information to finding aids.
 10. For identifying prints in the collection where I work and making recommendations for storage, &c.
 11. To better catalog, date, and describe objects in my business.
 12. {no response}
 13. I plan to use these skills in my own artistic endeavors and hopefully later on when I oversee an academic preservation department.
 14. I will be using my new skills to better catalog my institution's photo collections.
 15. Identifying and dating photographic prints, building on the basic knowledge acquired through the course by looking at more photographic prints.
- 7) *Please briefly describe the intellectual level of the course. What sort of person might benefit the most from taking it?*
1. I thought that the course was of a high intellectual level but also very accessible and would be most useful for someone deeply engaged with materials whether an art historian, archivist, librarian, or curator.
 2. It was a more scientific content (chemistry and physics mostly) than I expected, but JR and RB are great at teaching you these concepts whether you like science or not. An archivist will learn much of importance to understanding photography from these two instructors.
 3. Anyone interested in photographs and identifying them would benefit from this course.
 4. I think that anyone who would like to know more about how photographs are made—technically, historically—could benefit from this course.
 5. It felt introductory and general to me for nineteenth-century processes but with the ability to go deep if you had a question about something specific. I think catalogers and dealers will benefit most.
 6. High learning standard and excellent discussion as well as relatable approach from instructors and freedom to ask questions.
 7. This course is aimed at those with some knowledge of the history of photography and minimal to modest ability to identify photographic processes.
 8. A basic knowledge of photo identification is useful, and an understanding of archival paper handling is very useful.
 9. The course can serve students and professionals of all levels. Those with less

knowledge in the beginning will come away with a strong foundation, and more advanced learners will refine their skills.

10. Anyone who is looking at a detailed overview of print processes, with very good depth and breadth overall, without getting lost in the details.
11. Anyone who is genuinely interested in the subject.
12. The course is useful to anyone with an interest in learning about the history of photographic processes.
13. Intellectual level necessitates knowledge in basic chemistry, basic color, and basic photography.
14. Anyone who has to work with photographs from any period. People interested in what their own collection is comprised of.
15. Some discussions are quite technical especially with regards to color theory. Instructors help make it understandable but basic education in chemistry is helpful.

8) *If applicable, what were the most original, powerful, or otherwise noteworthy educational moments in the course? Were there any “aha!” moments you’d like to share?*

1. The most powerful moment for me was when the instructors challenged us to identify materials, and I was able to do it correctly! It was such a satisfying feeling!
2. The historical survey of photography on the first day was excellent and really laid the foundation for me.
3. Each day was an “aha” moment for me. But it was great when I recognized the “matte collodion” print process.
4. Hearing about some contemporary printing techniques (and about some of what RB and Caroline do in their studio) really had me geeking out. Seeing so many details under the microscope.
5. Grasping the difference between POP and DOP papers and how to identify them was really useful.
6. The hands-on analysis of physical prints and the repetition, especially comparison.
7. It was really great to see how much better I did on the final test than the first one. I really learned a lot!
8. Too many to count.
9. I can’t select a single moment. The entire week was filled with such experiences.
10. The final test was a good measure. I did not realize how much I had absorbed until then, and I felt fairly confident on most items.
11. Handling of lots of examples. It makes all the difference.
12. {no response}
13. Seeing and speaking about the prints. Interacting with instructors and prints. No “aha” moment—more of a gradual understanding.
14. All of the tidbits and identifying characteristics for photos was noteworthy.
15. Understanding the fundamental differences between photographic/photomechanical prints and current issues with conservation of inkjet prints.

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

1. No comments!

2. I'm not sure; it was wonderful.
3. This course is already excellent, but presenting any new printing processes as they come up would be helpful.
4. More time (ha ha).
5. More examples passed around for students (one for each student) to look at and compare when discussing a process. The talks moved fast enough that passing unlabeled material around meant that by the time it got to me I didn't remember what it was. Also, a second microscope at least. Three would be great!
6. {no response}
7. Even more hands-on (with guidance) would be good. Because the class was larger than usual, it was sometimes hard to see what the instructors were describing and seating was cramped.
8. I honestly can't imagine how it could have been better.
9. I have no suggestions.
10. In a perfect world, more microscopes or a microscope with a screen so we could all look at things under magnification together.
11. 1. By contrast to I-20, there were times when many different samples were being passed around and yet teaching continued. This caused me to lose track. While I caught up with most, it would be far more effective if each student had a sample while the relevant teaching occurred. 2. Build and sell sample packs as part of the course so we have "certified" examples for later. Same with magnifiers, &c.
12. Bigger classroom—more space.
13. N/A
14. I think this course could be split into two courses—one on traditional processes and one on digital processes.
15. Definitely some timing issues. Some presentations could be shortened so that students have more time identifying works throughout the class themselves rather than listening to instructors doing the work.

10) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? Would you recommend the course to others?*

1. 100%. I can't wait to go back to my university and tell everyone to attend!
2. Yes, most definitely.
3. I definitely received my money's worth for the course and I would recommend it to others.
4. Yes, and yes!
5. I would recommend to others. For me personally I feel wanting more.
6. Yes, and yes.
7. Yes, and yes.
8. Yes. Yes.
9. Yes. I would highly recommend the course.
10. N/A. Yes, I would definitely recommend it to others enthusiastically!
11. Yes, definitely.
12. Yes. Yes.
13. Yes, and yes.
14. Yes, definitely. There was a wealth of information that I didn't know. I would recommend this course to others.
15. Definitely—both.

- 11) *If your course made any trips outside of the classroom, do you feel that they were time well spent?*
1. Yes.
 2. Yes, going to the photo lab was very helpful in getting to the essence of printing processes in photography.
 3. {no response}
 4. Yes—trip to the darkroom was great. Helpful to see a couple of photographic processes in action.
 5. We visited the arts center to make prints using printing-out and developing out papers. I had a lot of darkroom experience so it wasn't new to me but anyone without darkroom experience would really benefit from seeing the demo.
 6. Absolutely—very important for this course to have time in a lab/darkroom.
 7. N/A
 8. Yes.
 9. Yes. The photo developing exercise was educational for those of us without photo processing backgrounds, and it was fun.
 10. Yes, the hands-on parts were great. It was fun to make a gelatin POP and to spend time in the darkroom.
 11. Yes, the darkroom exercises were instructive.
 12. {no response}
 13. N/A
 14. Yes. Being able to see print-out and develop-out processes was very useful to understand what goes into making a photographic print.
 15. Darkroom trip very valuable and fun.
- 12) *If you attended any of our optional evening events, do you feel that they were a good use of your time? Were there any that were particularly important to your RBS experience? Any that you could have done without?*
1. I thought that the special events were great, especially as I learned a great deal about research and how collections work just from socializing with librarians!
 2. They were nice, of interest, but not essential to my good experience. Icing on the cake perhaps.
 3. The lecture on Monday evening was excellent.
 4. N/A
 5. The Tuesday evening curator talk was fun. The Monday lecture didn't feel like the presenter really had anything to say for a lecture.
 6. {no response}
 7. Molly Schwartzburg's tour of the Shakespeare exhibition was superb.
 8. All great.
 9. N/A
 10. They were great but not critical. Sometimes after a long day of class, you really don't want to go to another event, but it is nice that they are offered.
 11. {no response}
 12. I enjoyed the lecture even though it was on a subject that I have no personal interest in.
 13. N/A

14. I attended Booksellers' Night. While it was nice to see downtown, I don't feel like this was a worthwhile event.
15. Booksellers' Night was great fun.

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

1. {no response}
2. It's a great course!
3. RBS will transform the way you think about books and photographs. It makes one understand the significance of them in history and interpreting it.
4. Such wonderful, encouraging, and incredibly knowledgeable instructors!
5. If you have photos to practice IDing before the class, do it!
6. Could not have asked for a better or more informative instructor.
7. Do it! But do the reading both before and after.
8. I would say that the Reilly book should be required reading.
9. The instructors were interesting, approachable, and full of knowledge they clearly enjoyed sharing. I highly recommend the course if you work with photos.
10. Definitely do the readings! They give a solid framework.
11. Read Reilly before the class.
12. If you want to learn about historical photographic processes from people who know and care about them, come here and learn from the best!
13. If you don't have any experience with the subject, be sure to do pre-course readings or some investigation on your own. The week is intense and goes by fast!
14. Take it! JR and RB are extremely knowledgeable about every aspect of photography and are willing to share their knowledge.
15. {no response}

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

1. Perfect! Everything I could want it to be and more!
2. It was a ground-breaking, enlightening experience.
3. RBS is one of the best weeks of your life!
4. Wonderful instructors, so much information, so many details, really great material (and classmates!).
5. Photos are hard. Let's go collating.
6. Practically perfect in every way.
7. The instructors are incredibly knowledgeable and thoroughly charming—first rate all around!
8. Superior.
9. {no response}
10. Toned with gold and platinum!
11. Do it. Do it now. Find a way.
12. {no response}
13. I can't wait to come back! (Also, JR and RB are great instructors with complementary strengths. JR, you are hilarious!)
14. I hope I get to come back soon!
15. Differential gloss!

Student Data

Number of respondents: 15 (of 15)

How did you arrange for time off to attend this course?

My institution/employer gave me professional leave time: 9 (60%)

I am self employed, and can arrange my own schedule: 2 (13.33%)

I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible summer schedule: 3 (20%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (6.67%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

I paid 100% myself: 3 (20%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 5 (33.33%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 5 (33.33%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive part; I paid the rest: 1 (6.67%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (6.67%)

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 5 (33.33%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 4 (26.67%)

My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (6.67%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 3 (20%)

I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 2 (13.33%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 5 (33.33%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 4 (26.67%)

My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (6.67%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 2 (13.33%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (6.67%)

I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 2 (13.33%)

*Which of the following **best** describes your current occupation?*

Library disciplines:

Archivist: 2 (13.33%)

Cataloger/metadata librarian: 2 (13.33%)

Conservator/binder/preservation librarian: 2 (13.33%)

Special collections librarian: 1 (6.67%)

Other: 1 (6.67%)

Student working toward a/n:

M.A./M.S.: 1 (6.67%)

Ph.D./D.Phil: 2 (13.33%)

Professional educator:

Lecturer/adjunct: 1 (6.67%)

Book trades:

Antiquarian bookseller: 2 (13.33%)

Other occupations/vocations:

Other: 1 (6.67%)