

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. Yes, they were helpful.
 2. They were very useful. I did a review of my Latin grammar and vocabulary.
 3. The pre-course reading was very helpful.
 4. Yes. I will hang on to them for future use.
 5. Yes. The book written by the curator at Beinecke. Yes.
 6. Readings were good preparation. I also did some transcription practice before the course.
 7. I did find the pre-course readings very useful, although there were some places where the readings overlapped/disagreed with each other.
 8. {private response}
 9. {no response}
 10. I did all the suggested pre-course assignments and was glad I did. I was practically the only person in the course who was not a medievalist or classicist, so I needed to shift gears to be ready. I wish I'd taken the suggestion to acquire the Cappelli. My university does not subscribe to OCLC, and I do prefer a hard copy.
 11. I found the required reading helpful. I would recommend browsing through Cappelli before the start of the course, as abbreviations are fundamental.
 12. I appreciated the Derolez more than the Powell. I thought Powell's chapter was rushed and dry—perhaps too many details crammed in too short a space. I did like the bibliographic material. Perhaps all or a portion of Ray Clemens' *Introduction to Manuscript Studies* could be used?
- 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. Content was great.
 2. Very thoroughly designed. Absolutely appropriate for the course. They should be kept.
 3. The workbook was very helpful and a great tool in our course. I will be keeping it due to its continued usefulness.
 4. Lovely workbook, great image reproduction.
 5. Yes. Yes.
 6. Yes, and yes. Also appreciate the scanned images the instructor shared.
 7. I'll definitely keep the binder for reference! (Other than that, there weren't many materials distributed.)
 8. I thought the workbook and materials were very useful and appropriate. Some portions of it will continue to be useful to me after class—especially the

- transcriptions!
9. The examples of different scripts in the workbook were very helpful; better than using a textbook, because seeing actual manuscripts taught us how scripts can vary.
 10. I liked the workbook and I'm sure it will help me with my upcoming research.
 11. Yes, and yes.
 12. The binder of materials was great! I wish some of the images were higher resolution, but we have the manuscript number. {private response}

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

1. N/A
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A
5. N/A
6. All were good. I especially like RBS's paleography courses.
7. N/A
8. N/A
9. None.
10. The last one was sixteen years ago—Introduction to Descriptive Bibliography—and we worked long into the evening. I was much less tired this time around. The group was smaller, too, so I got to know more people.
11. N/A
12. N/A

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. Translating/transcribing the texts aloud in class.
2. The analysis and transcription of legal manuscripts because of my {illegible}.
3. {no response}
4. So many. CD is so willing to tailor the class to suit our needs. I'm looking forward to returning home with more skills.
5. I knew nothing when the course started. I am now a beginner and have enough foundation to access and work on these texts myself.
6. Most interesting and relevant was practicing reading aloud and learning features identifying places and time periods.
7. I really enjoyed getting to see and work with actual physical manuscripts from RBS's and UVA's collections—was great to be able to apply what we had learned (and just to see the manuscripts!).
8. I was most interested in how to discuss and describe different letterforms. I have gained the insight that the divisions between different scripts are more fluid than rigid.
9. I had no experience with paleography, but I can now distinguish between Caroline miniscule, humanist, and various types of cursive and Gothic. I found this interesting.
10. The most interesting were the cursive hands. I was happy to discuss audiences and situations as parts of interpretation.

11. I found it useful as a formal introduction to paleography, which is what I had hoped to acquire. It is not designed as, nor should one expect to receive, a comprehensive introduction to a specific period/script.
 12. This course was perfect! I feel confident that I can work on a greater variety of scripts which will be helpful for me as a student and professional. I liked that I was exposed to scripts with which I would not have bothered to work. I'm excited to return to my institution and further work to catalog the materials.
- 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. Yes, she did.
 2. I think that the instructor surpassed my expectations of what I thought that I could learn in this class.
 3. Yes! This course was very useful and packed with information. I never felt that my time was wasted.
 4. Yes! Learned what I wanted to know and more.
 5. Yes. No. Yes.
 6. Yes, I learned what I hoped to learn.
 7. Yes! I feel really confident with my ability to read/identify scripts, which is exactly what I'd hoped for!
 8. Yes, the course covered what was promised. I would have liked to look at more documentary scripts in addition (although I know this is not a main focus of this class).
 9. Yes! CD was great at pointing out the idiosyncrasies of each script...and she's very funny!
 10. Yes—I did learn what I needed to know.
 11. CD was extremely amicable and personable. Her passion “illuminated,” so to speak, her teaching. That said, I thought we focused perhaps a bit too much on religious manuscripts. Personally, I would have enjoyed more classical texts, but that's just me.
 12. CD fulfilled the promise of this course and then some. I can think of no lacunae.
- 6) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*
1. I will study Byzantine Greek manuscripts.
 2. Working on legal manuscripts in Latin, mainly in the field of canon law and Roman law.
 3. {no response}
 4. In archives and special collections on my own projects, to read and more accurately date texts.
 5. Please see Q4 above.
 6. Identify and read scripts in researching and cataloging manuscripts.
 7. This was my first foray into manuscript studies and from here I want to see what more I can learn—maybe even take another RBS course.
 8. I plan to use them to read Medieval documents. In reality it is unlikely I will need to identify or date/locate a text, although that is a skill we learned.
 9. I would like to go on to learn to read early modern secretary hand—this class was a

wonderful foundation!

10. I'll be on a research trip next spring and I'll need to read a sixteenth-century French scholar's handwriting. With the foundation I've gotten here, I'll be able to supplement with some online work to be ready to read it. So I'm happy.
 11. I can now approach manuscripts with more confidence both paleographically and codicologically. I am mainly interested in being able to read these manuscripts, so the course will certainly prove helpful in this respect.
 12. Cataloging material at my home institution; transcribing/reading for my dissertation project; ameliorating my understanding of my own collection/better understanding what's on the market and why it might be important.
- 7) *Please briefly describe the intellectual level of the course. What sort of person might benefit the most from taking it?*
1. A graduate student.
 2. {no response}
 3. This is a highly intellectual course, but CD made it so easily accessible. Medievalists would benefit the most.
 4. Latin is a must, but it can be a little rusty—if Gothic or script or other hands freak you out, this can also suggest methodological tools for approaching a different script.
 5. This would also be of benefit to anyone studying post-antique Latin.
 6. Most beneficial to those who can read Latin, have done some previous work with manuscripts, and are familiar with manuscripts and book history in general.
 7. Everyone was very smart but not too intimidating—all friendly and supportive. It definitely helps to know some Latin, but mostly to be able to recognize words. We didn't do any translation. Some vague and general knowledge of book/medieval studies is also useful.
 8. I believe the person who would benefit most from this class is someone who wants to become a special collections librarian working with Medieval and Renaissance documents.
 9. Someone with a very solid knowledge of Latin grammar, but not necessarily any preexisting knowledge of paleography.
 10. We were undergraduate to full professor. I think we all benefitted.
 11. The intellectual level was very high. It was stimulating but equally enjoyable. A prior knowledge of Latin is a sine qua non. I even learned some new Latin usages which I had not necessarily expected from this course.
 12. This course is good for students who have a little paleography or are good at one hand and need to read other hands, or for those who are interested in a comprehensive refresher. Challenging, but welcoming.
- 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 focus on interpreting abbreviations.
 2. The last PowerPoint presentations.
 3. {no response}
 4. When we started to be able to date and locate a script based on paleographical

signifiers learned in class!

5. No “aha” moments, but a gradual lifting of a heavy fog!
6. Looking at example manuscripts and identifying features learned in class.
7. Hard to choose one.
8. No.
9. I enjoyed learning the abbreviations in scripts, or learning to predict the abbreviated word based on grammar/context.
10. The group experience mattered a lot; so much better than online!
11. There were many “aha” moments, which is the thrill of paleography: suddenly recognizing letterforms that were initially unintelligible.
12. I now stand a chance at reading cursive script (or as I misheard CD say once “curse’d script”). I had always passed it over when I encountered it before, but now cursive/Anglicana seem approachable.

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

1. The course is excellent the way it is.
2. {no response}
3. N/A
4. N/A
5. I don’t know how or where I could have possibly learned to read these difficult scripts in a more efficient and enjoyable way.
6. If possible, some coverage of how Medieval and Renaissance hands evolved into early modern hands.
7. I really don’t know...I wish we’d spent more time on vocabulary maybe, but I totally understand why time constraints prevented that.
8. I would say we should spend less time in SC and more time practicing reading a greater number of (and more types of) scripts.
9. I would have liked to cover the distinctions between different types of cursive at greater length.
10. I can’t think of anything.
11. More hands-on time with manuscripts. {private response}
12. CD is the best. I wish we could’ve have more hands-on time with the manuscripts. {private response}

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

1. Yes, yes!
2. Absolutely, yes to both questions.
3. Yes!
4. Yes. Yes!
5. Yes. Yes.
6. {no response}
7. Yes, and yes!
8. I would recommend the course to someone looking for a good introduction to book manuscript scripts and I think it is a good deal for the price for the right person.
9. Absolutely!

10. Yes, and yes.
 11. Yes, and yes.
 12. Without a doubt.
- 11) *If your course made any trips outside of the classroom, do you feel that they were time well spent?*
1. {no response}
 2. {no response}
 3. Yes, the trips to view the manuscripts in SC were instrumental to our learning.
 4. {no response}
 5. Yes.
 6. Yes, I enjoyed visits to UVA SC to see a wider variety of example manuscripts.
 7. N/A
 8. No. I thought the trips to SC were too long and that we did not do enough learning at these sessions—only looking at manuscripts. Of course it is lovely to see manuscripts, but this went on for too long.
 9. The trips to SC were a great way to interact with the texts.
 10. N/A
 11. N/A
 12. I enjoyed our time in the rare book library.
- 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. {no response}
 2. {no response}
 3. I didn't attend any.
 4. I especially enjoyed the Shakespeare exhibit. The curator we met was so engaging and brilliant!
 5. Yes.
 6. I attended the Monday night lecture and appreciated the opportunity to hear a talk outside of my course content.
 7. The lecture was cool, but not an area I really know anything about. The Booksellers' Night was excellent.
 8. {private response}
 9. N/A
 10. Booksellers' Night was wonderful. The lecture on Mughal art was very interesting. The movies were OK (I'd seen one).
 11. Yes. Didn't get to make the lecture, but enjoyed the guided tour of the Shakespeare exhibit.
 12. Movie Night is a good idea, but I heard a few of my colleagues say they'd already seen the films. Maybe there are some less known films?
- 13) *Do you have any additional thoughts or advice for anyone considering taking this course in a future year?*
1. Do it.

2. {no response}
3. {no response}
4. {no response}
5. {no response}
6. Very good introductory course.
7. You should do it! It's really fun and the professor is absolutely wonderful—smart, funny, supportive, nurturing...basically everything you could want in an instructor.
8. If you don't think you will need to be able to date and locate manuscripts, then this is probably not the right way for you to learn paleography (although if that is your interest then it is an excellent way).
9. Make sure you have a strong Latin foundation. And think outside the box—there are no absolute rules in paleography.
10. Be ready to work hard and meet interesting people, and pack an extra sweater.
11. {no response}
12. Bring a sweater. The classrooms are chilly.

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

1. Thorough training.
2. Insightful, illuminating, demanding, but totally worthy.
3. {no response}
4. Bring your brain and maybe a blanket (COLD CLASSROOMS) and always, always WASH YOUR HANDS!
5. {no response}
6. Thank you!
7. Brilliant people who are deeply passionate about what they study and having way too much fun doing it.
8. Minims.
9. A great exercise in critical thinking!
10. We work better in good company.
11. EVOU AE
12. Dutschke is really swell.
Even if her name is hard
To spell. She is great.

Student Data

Number of respondents: 12 (of 12)

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

My institution/employer gave me professional leave time: 1 (8.33%)

I am self employed, and can arrange my own schedule: 1 (8.33%)

I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible summer schedule: 9 (75%)

No Response: 1 (8.33%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

I paid 100% myself: 6 (50%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 4 (33.33%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 1 (8.33%)
No response: 1 (8.33%)

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 6 (50%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 3 (25%)
I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 2 (16.67%)
No response: 1 (8.33%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 6 (50%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 3 (25%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 1 (8.33%)
I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 1 (8.33%)
No response: 1 (8.33%)

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

Library disciplines:

Archivist: 1 (8.33%)

Student working toward a/n:

B.A./B.S.: 1 (8.33%)
Ph.D./D.Phil: 6 (50%)
Other: 1 (8.33%)

Professional educator:

K-12 teacher: 1 (8.33%)
Full professor: 1 (8.33%)

Other occupations/vocations:

Other: 1 (8.33%)