

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. Pre-course readings were very helpful.
 2. So useful! I may need to re-read them again, now that I have a better idea about how the book in China was made to be used.
 3. Pre-reading was extremely useful; no additional prep was needed. No changes recommended. Dropbox readings are dynamic and relevant, so no one is left out.
 4. Yes, they were very useful for getting background information without which the course would have been harder to follow, although still possible.
 5. The pre-course reading was essential to understanding the content of the course. For students unfamiliar with Chinese history (like me), I would recommend reading a basic history of China book, or listening to a history podcast about China.
 6. The reading suggestions were very helpful. As in past years, I will spend the next several months re-reading all suggested books, articles, &c..
 7. The pre-course assignments were very helpful. Spending several weeks on the readings was a wonderful way to prepare for RBS. I also brushed up on Chinese history, and researched the Chinese language and calligraphy.
 8. Many of the pre-course readings—all of which were relevant and engaging—were generously provided in PDF format before the beginning of class. I was grateful for the opportunity for advance preparation; the readings helped me get my bearings before wading into a topic that is beyond my areas of specialization.
 9. All the material I read was very useful. *From Oracle Bones to E-Publications* was hard to find, and I didn't get it in time. Perhaps a video or two on processes could be included.
 10. Useful—yes, glad I read that info ahead of time. Additional prep—looked at some Asian books in my institution's collection. Books and articles in future—SE gave us even more sources to read/reference later. I couldn't have devoted more time to advanced reading than I did for the current list. Removing—McDermott book, I found it difficult.
 11. The pre-course readings were varied and covered all of the course topics. SE provided additional readings through the week via Dropbox, and the course manual also provided useful supplemental readings.
 12. Great readings, pitched to an appropriate level. Some were a bit challenging to get (had to go through ILL). A class member is a whiz at scanning interesting supplemental readings for PDFs, so that was also super helpful.

- 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. Very helpful! I will keep it in the studio and reference as needed.
2. Yes! I will be sure to look back at it if I encounter an East Asian book in a collection. I wish that there was a pronunciation guide in it, but that is because I am not familiar with the Chinese language.
3. Stellar materials, jaw dropping specimens distributed during class. A privilege to examine these.
4. I will continue to use. The bibliography is helpful. Overall I found it useful during class.
5. The workbook was extremely useful and I took many notes about the content within it and marked readings to examine after the class. I expect it to be a continued resource.
6. The workbook was an excellent complement to the exhibits and to SE's comments.
7. Very happy to have the materials! Especially appreciated being able to use the time examining the objects rather than writing down the titles, authors, dates, &c.. Yes, I plan to keep my workbook and notes for future reference. The bibliography is a very valuable asset.
8. The workbook was very well considered—extremely detailed, thorough, and well organized. I plan to refer to it as I review my notes and photographs from our class meetings.
9. Workbook will be invaluable in the future. Besides the bibliography, which will give direction to further study, the terms/glossary is going to save me a ton of time and struggle.
10. Workbook is great, and will be a hugely valuable reference in the future.
11. The course workbook served as an invaluable guide to SE's lectures, slides, and realia. It will serve as an important sourcebook for me after I return home and continue my study of this topic.
12. Very good reference; especially liked the terminology section. I read Chinese, so I could find things OK as SE was speaking, but I think changing the formatting of realia entries so that the Romanization is bold and comes first in the entry would make the item easier to find. This is an issue when the instructor is showing things in an alternate sequence from the way they appear in the list.

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

1. N/A
2. Just as wonderful as the others.
3. This is so tough to say, because all have been fabulous, but I must say this opened a new world to me so it is the best right now.
4. I would say they were on par.
5. N/A
6. I always say that the last course, that is, the current one, is the best! I have not had a "bad" course at RBS.
7. I liked this one better.
8. N/A
9. It was just as excellent.
10. N/A
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. Yes, I have a better understanding of the binding techniques and materials used in Chinese bindings.
 2. The books of Latin in the East were most useful as a Latinist, but the illustrations were just as interesting to me. I hope I can study both further.
 3. Illustration, book history, too many new insights, ideas, and projects to mention, but completely inspired and supported.
 4. The realia was the most interesting. I have done lots of reading on the topic, but hands-on experience with a knowledgeable teacher was invaluable.
 5. I had no previous knowledge of Chinese printing history, and this course changed my whole opinion on printing history in general. It's given me a good basis as I enter the profession of archives and rare books. It's led me to include a section on Chinese romance novels in my Masters capstone project.
 6. Since printing, illustration, and publishing in Asia is a new area for me, this course was a superb introduction with in depth insights. I will continue learning in order to attempt appraisals of materials in this area.
 7. I loved learning more about the technologies, tools, and techniques of Chinese hand printing and bookbinding.
 8. It would be difficult to describe the full breadth of my experience this week, but by my count, I have about 20–25 “threads” for follow up via research and praxis. We saw and handled so many materials, learned about so many bindings, processes, techniques, customs, and raw materials that I am thoroughly inspired!
 9. Exposure to material from SE's library was a unique experience and helped me understand the books in context with each other. My desire to learn Chinese is much stronger now, and the Chinese book generally feels much less daunting now that I understand that some of the difficulty I've had is reasonable.
 10. All the information about materials and techniques, how they changed, how they stayed the same—very important to my profession. I'm leaving this course with so much more understanding of Asian/Chinese books, as well as Asian/Chinese history and culture. I feel enlightened!
 11. The slides and realia, which were circulated to the class, accompanied by SE's narration regarding each one's distinctiveness, were deeply engaging. His frequent questions to us were useful. I leave the course with a richer understanding of my research project.
 12. Hands-on contact with great examples! Really makes a verbal description of a technique or material make sense, helps you feel like you have a more intuitive grasp of the historical development of forms and styles.
- 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, I learned what I'd hoped to and much more.
 2. I learned all I had hoped to and more.
 3. Yes. No. Yes.
 4. The instructor was most helpful and the course fulfilled its promise.

5. All my expectations were met.
6. All of the course expectations were met and exceeded with a most interesting presentation.
7. I learned far more than I could have imagined.
8. SE's knowledge of his subject matter is stunningly encyclopedic. I found him very direct, generous, and inquisitive, and I am so grateful that he is willing to stay in touch with us after the class ends. It is no exaggeration to say that we got to witness a virtuoso academic collector and storyteller in his element this week!
9. I only wish that there could have been more time to really delve into how to identify processes and date materials ourselves. It will still be hard to know when to be wary of reprints or piracies, &c.
10. Yes. No. Yes.
11. I gained a deep insight into the history of Chinese books, providing a rich context to a more nuanced understanding of the evolution of Tibetan printed books, which was my goal.
12. I think the course was true to its description. I'd like to see an expanded section on typography and script styles and maybe exercises that test our ability to differentiate block-printed from typeset books.

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

1. Influence future binding work.
2. I plan to apply what I learned in any collections I encounter in the future in libraries.
3. Personal work with books, professional work with special collections, collection development, travel (!), conferences, writings, presentations.
4. The enjoyment of life and books.
5. I plan to continue learning about Chinese printing, and plan to research Chinese popular fiction printing because of what I learned in this course.
6. I will attempt to appraise materials in this area after additional study.
7. This course will definitely inform my teaching of classes on the history of printing and the book, and I can't wait to try some of the bookbinding techniques.
8. One major avenue of application will be in my own practice as a poet and book artist. I plan to replicate many of the materials, processes, and aesthetics we encountered during the course. Pedagogically, the book forms and histories we encountered will be introduced to students in my poetry workshop.
9. Mainly for my book business, and to understand this side of the trade generally.
10. To be better at evaluating the Asian books in my institution's collection, to be better at determining appropriate treatments/repairs/preservation measures. Also possibly to move general collection materials into the rare collection.
11. {private response}
12. I feel like I'll be able to go back and evaluate the older items in our collection with greater confidence (and hopefully accuracy). I also feel like we've laid the groundwork for developing knowledge further, to the point where I could make intelligent choices about dealer offerings.

7) *Please briefly describe the intellectual level of the course. What sort of person might benefit the most from taking it?*

1. It was an academically rigorous course. A successful student is one who enjoys intellectual pursuit, whose work relates to Chinese (book) history, and is detail-oriented.
 2. Those who have an interest in the books of East Asia would benefit most, but everyone could benefit.
 3. High. I really think we had a perfect mix of a group. Strangely complementary so the selection process worked, I think.
 4. Someone with curiosity and willing to venture into a “foreign” topic and willing to do at least some background reading.
 5. People interested in printing history, East Asia, or East Asian book collecting.
 6. SE presented on a multi-level, speaking to all of us.
 7. Perfect for an introduction, but also helpful to the advanced student of bibliography.
 8. The intellectual level of the class was of the highest order, but everyone was welcoming and I would recommend the class to anyone.
 9. People should have a decent understanding of the general principles of printing, but other than that you don’t need much. Knowing Chinese/Chinese history is a huge benefit, because we look at a lot of text that may mean little otherwise. There were people with experiences in China and Chinese art that still benefitted.
 10. Quite intellectual, but not intimidating. I think one would need some relevant background—some knowledge of Asian history or the history of books and printing in the West.
 11. This course should appeal to anyone with a strong interest in China and/or East Asia who is curious and willing to share ideas.
 12. This is a good, generalist course. Even though I have some background, I found the interchange of questions, observation, and ideas from all my classmates really stimulating.
- 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. {no response}
 2. {no response}
 3. Too many to share. A lot to think about. Collegial group, and we hope to keep in touch on these topics.
 4. There were, but now I’m so overwhelmed by all the new ideas that I can’t pull out just one or two.
 5. Every day had multiple “aha” moments for me. My class was a good mix of people who added to the discussion.
 6. The fact that SE used most of his own materials was generous and exceptional.
 7. Seeing the beautiful miniature multicolor woodcuts on the letter paper.
 8. It might sound silly, but I feel I must now learn classical Chinese. There’s nothing else for it. I have to be able to read the poems in the books I’ve seen this week.
 9. Understanding that an edition could last hundreds of years explained a lot about the bibliographical challenges with these books.
 10. China—printing “on demand” for hundreds and hundreds of years. The nature of Chinese characters means that woodblock printed books make more technological sense than moveable type—very interesting.

11. I gained invaluable insight into how the transmission of ideas and printing technologies were more similar regarding Tibetan than I initially thought, and that differences in cultural values explained why they diverged.
12. I think the best day was the most seductive. Ming color printing! More, more, more of this!

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

1. {no response}
2. The pronunciation guide to terms in the workbook would have been nice, but aren't necessary.
3. Go to China together.
4. Keyboards for answering these surveys. Otherwise, the only thing I can imagine would be to expand the course. Maybe courses on individual dynasties or connoisseurship/identification or making our own books as part of the class.
5. We tended to stray from the lesson plan, but it wasn't a bad thing.
6. No improvement.
7. It would be nice to have access to reference books (non-rare) during breaks and put a label on the realia tray with the item number.
8. N/A
9. Make it last five months. It's important that RBS improve its own holdings in Chinese materials so it does not rely so heavily on SE to provide that material.
{private response}
10. It would be helpful if SE could label the images in his PowerPoint slides with basic info—name of book, date, &c..
11. SE commented that he intended to provide descriptive annotations to the slides, and I agree that this would be helpful.
12. Sometimes SE wasn't completely linear in his presentation (totally fine), so I think it would be tremendously helpful if he could get those PowerPoint slides captioned.

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

1. Would certainly recommend the course and RBS in general.
2. Yes, and yes.
3. Yes. Yes.
4. Yes. Yes.
5. Yes, and yes.
6. Yes, and I certainly would recommend to all.
7. Yes, definitely!
8. Yes, absolutely, on both counts. My institution's money was very well spent.
9. Absolutely.
10. Yes! (Even if my institution hadn't paid.)
11. Absolutely yes to both questions.
12. Hell yes! Hell yes!

11) *If your course made any trips outside of the classroom, do you feel that they were time well spent?*

1. N/A
2. N/A
3. N/A. Perfect use of time in class.
4. We didn't but they would have been with SE as a guide.
5. N/A
6. {no response}
7. N/A
8. N/A
9. N/A
10. N/A
11. N/A
12. Sadly, we didn't—but we didn't have time anyway!

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 did not attend. After all day at RBS, I wanted evenings to explore other things in the city.
2. Yes; the lectures and Ornament Night were equally important.
3. Yes. Loved Ornament Night, Booksellers' Night, Movie Night, and lectures.
4. Yes. It was nice to feel part of the community.
5. I liked all the evening events and found them a nice change of pace.
6. The two lectures were interesting.
7. Love the lectures.
8. N/A
9. They are an enjoyable break. I went to all of them.
10. Sure. My experience would have been fine without, but it was nice especially the lectures.
11. I thought they were all interesting and varied.
12. Really enjoyed the first lecture. Serious academic study that didn't come across as stuffy; funny and engaging.

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

1. {no response}
2. Take it if you have even the slightest interest in Asian books. SE is wonderful!
3. Do all of the reading to break your world open a bit.
4. Only that they should take it.
5. Not at this time.
6. Read as much of the recommendations as possible.
7. Take it!
8. Please do take the course!
9. Copley housing is more far away than you think. Make sure you talk to as many people as can. There are many opportunities for professional connections.
10. {no response}
11. I feel very fortunate to have participated in this experience. SE is a master and a

- humble (but knowledgeable) one at that.
12. Get lots of sleep! We sat on our butts all day, but our brains were working overtime!

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

1. Brain is saturated.
2. Fantastic!
3. Reviving, enlightening, life changing, transformative....
4. It was time very well spent.
5. "Be excellent to each other."—from the great piece of American cinema, *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*.
6. The very best!
7. The time spent with SE was a gift.
8. Below heavenly
Head, & above earthly foot
I have left my heart.
9. The week takes all your energy and replaces it with knowledge.
10. A wonderful week learning even more about what I love (books and printing and paper)!
11. A peak experience with kindred spirits is rare indeed!
12. When's the field trip to Beijing?

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: 5 (41.67%)

My institution/employer did not give me professional leave; I used paid or vacation days: 1 (8.33%)

I am self employed, and can arrange my own schedule: 3 (25%)

I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible summer schedule: 3 (25%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

I paid 100% myself: 4 (33.33%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 5 (41.67%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 1 (8.33%)

I exchanged goods or services in lieu of tuition: 2 (16.67%)

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

- I paid 100% myself: 4 (33.33%)
- My institution/employer paid 100%: 4 (33.33%)
- I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (8.33%)
- I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 3 (25%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

- I paid 100% myself: 5 (41.67%)
- My institution/employer paid 100%: 3 (25%)
- My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (8.33%)
- I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (8.33%)
- I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 2 (16.67%)

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

Library disciplines:

- Conservator/binder/preservation librarian: 1 (8.33%)
- Library administrator: 1 (8.33%)
- Subject specialist/bibliographer: 2 (16.67%)

Student working toward a/n:

- M.L.I.S./M.L.S.: 2 (16.67%)

Professional educator:

- Assistant professor: 1 (8.33%)

Book trades:

- Antiquarian bookseller: 1 (8.33%)
- Appraiser: 1 (8.33%)
- Book artist, artisan or printer: 1 (8.33%)

Other occupations/vocations:

- Independent scholar: 1 (8.33%)
- Other: 1 (8.33%)