

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 useful. The Bringhurst in particular was an excellent introduction to the aesthetics of type.
 2. Somewhat useful. Some of the readings were really outdated with respect to attitudes towards women. I don't think the readings have to be withdrawn for that reason, but it surprised me until I realized I was reading material from 70+ years ago.
 3. Yes. No. No. No.
 4. Pre-readings were very useful. In addition to the assigned readings, I did look at some online resources concerning typography, before arriving and during the week.
 5. Useful. Repetitive at times, but served to reinforce. No matter what one's interests are, it seems as though one could find something to serve for future research as well.
 6. Reading choice well suited for this course. Established an excellent ground upon which to launch the broad and dense material covered each day. There are always other books. These were great—not too much—but well spread across the material to be covered.
 7. The pre-course assignment readings were very useful, and the list was quite lengthy. Please don't add more! Bringhurst was an excellent introduction!
 8. All of the readings were useful and informative. I especially enjoyed Bringhurst and Updike. Perhaps include more specimen books/examples.
 9. It was just the right amount of reading and of the right type. I might have liked a reference regarding the identification of type.
 10. Readings were appropriate—not too much, not too little, well-balanced.
 11. I read all the required and recommended reading, and found it very stressful at the time, as there were at least ten titles. It helped me get in the academic mindset before my course, but wasn't entirely necessary since we began with the basics in class.
 12. The pre-course reading assignments were beyond necessary. Even though the material felt brand new, I enjoyed how each reading connected and overlapped with one another. If you don't feel like you totally grasped one book, read another, and it will most likely fill in the gaps from another perspective or time period. I would appreciate knowing the best order to read the books and maybe a description of what to focus on or expect in each book. I think *Tally of Types* should be added to the required reading, as we spoke about it and referenced it a lot in 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. The workbook is great, and I expect to consult it for years to come.
2. Definitely appropriate and useful. The diagrams and specimen sheets for different typefaces were especially good. The homework reading on type/printing processes was less useful. Reading about how to hold a composing stick is beside the point when you have an instructor on hand to show you how.
3. Yes. I am very happy to have the course materials and I am looking forward to making extensive use of them as I move along in my dissertation.
4. The workbook and handouts were very useful and related well to the lectures.
5. Very helpful. Some repetition with advance readings, but they served to reinforce material in a timely manner.
6. Most additional material was good. Hopefully I will be able to use these documents and add them to further my understanding of type. I do now have a good awareness of what other materials I need for my research and where/how to obtain.
7. Teaching materials were especially useful after clarification, and will continue to be used as reference.
8. The course workbook provided us with a great amount of reference sources and a very extensive bibliography for future reading! I will most certainly continue to use these materials in the future.
9. More identification of type. Maybe RBS students could even begin to compile as part of the coursework.
10. Very useful—could include more typeface samples, but no complaints.
11. Very useful during class and I will keep it at my desk at work to refer to often!
12. The course workbook was helpful. I didn't realize we would have reading as homework each night. It was always informative and useful—it just would have been nice to know coming into the week. Also, questions to consider with the homework would be helpful while reading and then in the first period we could specifically discuss the workbook readings.

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

1. All RBS courses have been wonderful.
2. Consistent with RBS's legendarily high standards of quality. More hands-on fun and learning than the classroom-based course I took last year.
3. N/A
4. Equally pleasant and intellectually challenging.
5. N/A
6. N/A
7. N/A
8. This course was much more organized and orchestrated. Every single detail was well thought through and flowed seamlessly.
9. Fantastic—good hands-on, independent research, and excellent examples.
10. All have been excellent and this was no exception.
11. N/A
12. This was my first course, but it certainly makes me want to take another next year!

- 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 most useful session for me was when we sat down and went through several of the most prominent type families. I would have loved even more time to do this systematically.
 2. Hands-on experience with printing processes was the best! Learning something of typographic design history was also good. Understanding how designers reacted to each other and aesthetic movements was valuable.
 3. I have acquired skills that are necessary for my current project and these skills will elevate it to a higher level.
 4. This course helped me gain a clear idea of typography, its historical development and cultural significance. I will be able to use this perspective in my archives/book teaching immediately.
 5. The historical and cultural context of type. Yes—I have a better sense of context for research and a better awareness of resources.
 6. Seeing and touching the real things. Much is available today on the internet but the true subtle knowledge is only available through interacting with the real! This course was excellent. So much to see. Need a month!
 7. Hands-on and questions. KR and JK are experienced and knowledgeable and that—along with practice composition and operating the press—were the highlights.
 8. The physical experience of printing on the Vandercook press and learning how to set type was invaluable. I also (surprisingly!) enjoyed the quiz on Friday morning!
 9. Actually printing from setting type to printing to putting the type away. It has me rethinking the default types in common computer use.
 10. Setting type and printing. Definitely understand the culture of printing and print design much better.
 11. All the Merrymount Press-related information and the typesetting and printing itself. I needed to understand the physical process and now, as a beginner, I do!
 12. I felt like the history and background of typography was finally accessible to me, and even if I don't retain every detail (how could you?), I now have such a base of knowledge and a growing intrigue. The instruction and structure of RBS was invaluable when mixed with the readings. I am not in a position to get a Masters in graphic design, and you can't just learn this topic in a book or on a blog. It really was a remarkable experience to learn from JK and KR—such a privilege!
- 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 had hoped to learn more about the industrial print processes in the period c. 1800–1880 before Linotype. I would have also benefitted from more instruction regarding the common typefaces used for 19th-century mass reproduction. Our focus in this class tended towards the long 20th-century.
 2. I am satisfied with the material covered by the course.
 3. While I had no exact ideas as to what I was expecting to learn, I did learn a great deal. {private response}

4. KR and JK are gracious, skilled teachers and supported my learning well, throughout the week.
5. Yes. The course was full of information and was well organized. Instructors are an impressive wealth of knowledge.
6. I gained the competency I needed through this course. Excellent, usable material.
7. Yes. If anything, I have been left with a much better understanding of the history of the book.
8. Both JK and KR do an amazing job of team teaching and each have such unique skills/experience to offer their students. I wish we had more time for type identification, but it's understandable in the short time span!
9. I wish I could have left with some more cheat sheets and type identification.
10. Yes, yes, yes.
11. Absolutely. KR and JK are an amazing team, and I learned much more than I even knew I could learn this week.
12. Yes, they certainly did. I would have liked a more in-depth discussion of how typefaces exist digitally today with licensing and websites where you can buy digital fonts. I definitely learned more than I thought I could.

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

1. I plan to use my new vocabulary and identification skills to analyze historical typefaces in my research.
2. I will have a better understanding of 19th-century typographic styles and the printing process in general—good background for understanding “books as objects” in my work.
3. They will be put to use immediately for the writing of my current dissertation chapter.
4. I plan to incorporate typographical presentations and assignments into the labs we teach in SC. This content can be used in many ways.
5. I plan to incorporate what I learned into dissertation research.
6. Definitely this will become a chapter in my dissertation.
7. For my research/archival visits. I plan to build a “library” of facsimile samples to compare typefaces and house styles to supplement my study of multiple editions and anthologies.
8. For various chapters in my dissertation.
9. Better understanding of impact of layout/type on a page. Better understanding of effect rebinding has on original layout. Better sense of some areas of collecting strength/weaknesses in typography in our own collections.
10. Primarily to teach undergraduates.
11. With the project I'll be working on for at least a couple of years at work, arranging and describing the Merrymount Press job ticket collection.
12. I plan to apply it as a practicing artist and designer.

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

1. This course is perfect for those with some basic knowledge about books and printing, but who are new to typography. Great for academics, librarians, and anyone with an interest in the topic.

2. I definitely benefitted from coming in with some knowledge of bibliography, printing processes, and type styles. The course moves quickly so having some prior knowledge in this area helps you absorb the course content.
3. {no response}
4. Someone such as myself, before this course: no formal training in typographical design or history, but whose work would be greatly enhanced by knowledge in these areas.
5. Anyone interested in personal or professional research would seem to benefit most.
6. One must have a love affair with type in some way before they start. This course {illegible}.
7. Someone previously familiar with the history of the book or literary canon. Also required is the ability and interest to conduct a mini-research project.
8. I think the course is well suited to a range of backgrounds. For instance, I know a great deal about the production process, but not as much about typeface characteristics, and got a lot out of the course.
9. This class was one of the best for wrapping in the interests/needs of the participants—from the Ph.D. student to the book arts practitioner to the teacher to the collector. I think all would leave with insight into their areas of interest. The independent projects let you delve into areas of personal interest.
10. Excellent balance of co-instructors, with an intellectual level that is challenging, but not daunting. This course can benefit people from a wide variety of backgrounds.
11. Anyone interested in the history of type design, not only 19th- and 20th-centuries.
12. Anyone interested in a deeper history of typography and how that relates to our daily interaction with type today.

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. I enjoyed the time set apart to do a little research on our own for the type presentations. A great opportunity to apply the knowledge we learned.
2. Not a single moment, but I have a much better historical framework for looking at type styles now.
3. {no response}
4. I enjoyed seeing the solid connections between modern typefaces and the manuscript tradition. Also, understanding about the technological aspects is great.
5. Both instructors gave opportunities for individualized research, and both offered individualized and helpful advice on that research. Much appreciated!
6. Nothing major I can think of today. My brain is full. The ahas will come later.
7. Gasps = Kelmscott press books and touching fine press books. Reading further about typefaces. Practicing recognizing typefaces.
8. Learning how to read and set type in the composing stick (i.e., all the hands-on work) was the most powerful moment in helping us truly understand how difficult this process is!
9. Actually setting the type—helpful to understand the effort and the impact of technology.
10. Seeing typefaces and book designs “in the flesh” was very helpful, and clarified

much of what we heard in lectures.

11. Using the Vandercook! Very satisfying. Setting the type even more so.
12. Learning about Linotype and Monotype was fascinating. Even through the readings, I didn't grasp how amazing it was that they revitalized centuries old typefaces through these companies and introduced them to a modern audience. The instructors did a great job of communicating how living and connected the history is.

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

1. I would love to have a longer, more systematic introduction to the main type families. Two sessions on this would be great. I would happily sacrifice a little bit of the time spent on fine press printing to learn more about industrial print processes and popular typography.
2. JK needs to end his lectures/sections promptly on time.
3. At points I was a bit frustrated that we did not probe a bit further and deeper with the context of types. A more cultural history approach might benefit the course at times. A second week and perhaps more academic moments.
4. Mid-week, we zoomed through a large number of typefaces, and I was having difficulty writing good notes in addition to actually looking at the samples. Maybe provide basic notes beforehand so we have more time to look/listen?
5. A word about the intent to ask students to identify typefaces in the course description.
6. Not sure.
7. Could you switch or alternate when Roman or Italic groups got to do printing activities? Three periods sitting/studying was quite long on two consecutive days.
8. Perhaps including more geographic developments—i.e., different typographic developments in other parts of the world.
9. Good balance between time to work independently with assistance and lecture. I think Tuesday could have been structured better. We ended period one early and period four ended thirty minutes late.
10. Some of the lecture sessions ran overtime, so some judicious editing would help.
11. Two weeks instead of one!
12. Sometimes the lecture topic was so fascinating that we all wanted to stay an extra 30 minutes to discuss, but the breaks were necessary for stamina. In particular, the lecture period where we go over many typefaces individually could span two periods instead of one. The only thing I would recommend is that if instructors know that a certain lecture could produce a lot of questions from students, perhaps build in time into the next period to continue the conversation.

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

1. Yes, and I will recommend to others.
2. Yes, and yes.
3. I am not sure I would have been happy if I had paid with my own money, since there was repetition with preliminary reading and lectures and I was at times hoping for more conceptual rigor, and perhaps moving away from the more traditionalist narrative.

4. Yes, definitely.
5. Yes.
6. 110%. Yes, yes, yes.
7. Yes! If not more so. Excellent support, learning opportunities, and take-home bling!
8. Absolutely! This course has been extremely detailed and one of the best I have taken at RBS thus far.
9. Yes to both.
10. Absolutely.
11. Absolutely on both counts.
12. My institution paid for my tuition, but I would definitely say it was worth taking the time to study before the class and taking a week of my accrued leave to attend. I definitely would recommend.

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

1. Yes.
2. Yes!
3. Yes!
4. We went to the UVA print shop, and that was very complementary to our class discussions.
5. Absolutely. The trip to the printing factory was an incredible educational experience and I'm interested in taking other classes that include field trips!
6. Yes.
7. Yes. It was great that we got to see a working press.
8. Our field trip to UVA Printing and Copying Services was very helpful for getting a better sense of how modern technologies work.
9. Yes—trip to UVA Printing and Copying Services was useful for comparison.
10. Very much so.
11. Yes, to SC and to the printing services, and very much yes, I'd have spent more time in both places.
12. Yes.

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 enjoyed the evening lectures and the opportunities for collegiality with the larger summer session cohort that they facilitated.
2. N/A—did not attend, sorry!
3. I shopped Booksellers' Night. Monday lecture was lively, but not all that conceptually {illegible}.
4. I attended the Wednesday evening lecture and found it disappointing. The topic sounded interesting but the speaker was not skilled at presentation.
5. The lecture on Samson Occom was directly related to my research interests. Booksellers' Night was a nice connection to the community.
6. Both speakers were new info paths for me. Always good.
7. Monday lecture and book hunting night = good. Ornament Night was fantastic.

8. I loved Ornament Night!!! It was such a great opportunity and so fun! I also really enjoyed Bill Reese's lecture.
9. Ornament Night! My first time...it was great!
10. I usually find it difficult to fit in more than one evening event, with outside obligations to tend to.
11. Neither talk really benefitted me and I found both disappointing. Ornament Night was great, especially for students not in our class.
12. I am really glad I watched the Linotype movie, but I was surprised not many stayed for it. I wish there was a panel discussion afterwards. Perhaps if it was held earlier in the evening in the Harrison Institute or another venue that offered a larger screen? Also, I didn't know anything about the two lectures I attended and am so glad I simply went to see—worth learning something completely outside my wheelhouse!

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

1. {no response}
2. JK and KR make a great teaching pair.
3. JK and KR work extremely well together and are very charming. Having two teachers was definitely an asset to the course.
4. No.
5. There is more walking than one might expect—bring sensible shoes. Also, I found it occasionally useful but not necessary to bring the advance readings.
6. No.
7. Arrive well rested. Don't forget a pencil.
8. Make sure to complete as much of the readings as possible!
9. Don't worry—there is enough time for all the wonderful projects, regardless of your speed.
10. Take it!
11. {no response}
12. Take notes while you read the required and suggested reading. Try to enjoy preparing, and look forward to having the dots connected in class.

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

1. Yes.
2. I learned a lot about typography and printing in an amazingly short time.
3. I'll be back!
4. I'll be back!
5. RBS is a thoughtful and like-minded community that conducts and preserves important work in the book arts.
6. {no response}
7. It was interesting, well organized, and great fun.
8. Mess is lore.
9. Reinvigorating.
10. {no response}
11. Enlightening and invigorating.

12. Nothing beats learning in a small group from those who have devoted their life to such a craft as this.

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 a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible summer schedule: 6 (50%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

My institution/employer paid 100%: 6 (50%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 5 (41.67%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive part; I paid the rest: 1 (8.33%)

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 3 (25%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 3 (25%)

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

I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 4 (33.33%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (8.33%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 3 (25%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 3 (25%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (8.33%)

I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 4 (33.33%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (8.33%)

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

Library disciplines:

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

Library administrator: 1 (8.33%)

Special collections librarian: 1 (8.33%)

Other: 2 (16.67%)

Student working toward a/n:

M.A./M.S.: 1 (8.33%)

Ph.D./D.Phil: 5 (41.67%)