

M. Michèle Mulchahey
M-20: Seminar in Western Codicology
31 July–31 August 2016

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. Fantastic! I found Clemens/Graham more thorough than Shailor but appreciated both.
2. Quite useful. Exceptionally so. Not too long, but good grounding in topic.
3. Yes. Manageable and useful.
4. The readings were useful, and will continue to be helpful reference tools, but I would have appreciated some discussion in the class of these texts.
5. The assigned materials were relevant and helpful, but the instructor might have made more direct references to them during the course.
6. Readings were useful to give background information.
7. I was first introduced to Ray Clemens's book as an undergrad, and have returned to it as a touchstone for my manuscripts studies questions since. I was glad to revisit it.
8. Yes, both books recommended were very useful.
9. Pre-course readings were very useful and of an appropriate length. I might recommend emphasizing the introductions to paleography in the readings as passages especially worthy of careful review.
10. Yes, the pre-course reading assignments were helpful to prepare for the class, as a refresher or an introduction. More history of the scroll and codex could be read before class so that more time could be spent with more hands-on learning.
11. The pre-reading was useful, in that it was relevant, but most of it was also repeated during the course. Possibly a more helpful reading list would be longer and encourage students to read those texts which they know to be outside their knowledge/awareness.
12. The Shailor book is interesting and well done, but not very useful for course preparation. A book giving more of a historical overview of popular texts we discussed (e.g., bibles, books of hours, breviaries) would have been good.

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. It was awesome. Bibliography so much appreciated. Very useful, will continue to use.
2. Very good.
3. Yes, it was very useful. Yes, I will consult it often.
4. The workbook has a wealth of useful reference material that will certainly be helpful. The extensive bibliography and glossary will stay on my reference shelf.
5. The content was helpful, and I will certainly retain and use it.

6. Workbook has a great bibliography! It will definitely be a valuable resource in the future for me.
7. The workbook is indispensable! I'm looking forward to reviewing it with more time. I can tell it will be very helpful for my upcoming dissertation and library projects in the future.
8. The workbook was great, but all the images presented during class were not available to us and the instructor said she is not sure if she will make her PowerPoint available. There were also terms and info not in the workbook and there wasn't enough time during lectures to write them all down while trying to listen at the same time.
9. The workbook was very helpful and I will definitely consult it in my future research. RBS's collection of teaching materials was also very instructive. {private response}
10. It was somewhat useful. Page numbers would have helped.
11. It will continue to be useful. It was not especially useful during the course itself as we never really did any in-class exercises.
12. Workbook material was certainly helpful. However, I would have liked more illustrations of concepts for ready reference (e.g., exemplars of historiated initials, cartouches, and shelf marks).

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

1. N/A
2. Comparable to "M-10: Introduction to Paleography, 800-1500," which I also loved (course and instructor).
3. Both were excellent.
4. N/A
5. I had a similarly positive experience.
6. The two courses have been similar. They paired nicely with each other.
7. "M-10: Introduction to Paleography, 800-1500" complements this course very well. I would advise other students to try to take them within the same summer.
8. I've taken "M-10: Introduction to Paleography, 800-1500" here at RBS and the images shown during class were also distributed electronically so we were able to review them after class. I wish we had electronic copies of PowerPoint slides used in class.
9. N/A
10. N/A
11. I have not.
12. This was a good class, but I think discussion suffered a little from lack of diversity among students. Previous classes have had a mixture of librarians, academics, and collectors. People with diverse backgrounds provide different insights.

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. Everything! I'm now into a new project, and will use everything MM taught us. So useful. My only regret is not doing this sooner!
2. So many particular new ideas about the Middle Ages, and I've devoted more than half of my life to the Middle Ages.

3. The discussion of terminology was particularly helpful. Yes, I was taking notes about new ideas all day.
 4. I am starting a project that will require me to examine physical manuscripts, which is why I wanted to take this course. It gave me a basic vocabulary and hands-on experience with manuscripts, and also helped me identify areas where I need to develop more expertise.
 5. The instructor extensively surveyed the skills and terminology necessary for codicological analysis, all of which strikes me as highly relevant. It certainly inspired the desire for further study.
 6. The manuscript I presented on still has me searching for a coat of arms (maybe a topic for a future paper). I have several project plans that I hope to begin.
 7. I now have the vocabulary and reference resources to describe manuscripts (hopefully) at the appropriate level for a doctoral student who wants to do this professionally.
 8. The class was great. The instructor has a wealth of knowledge, and she made the class fun and enjoyable. The fellow classmates also brought a wealth of knowledge to share in class.
 9. The best part of the course for me was our discussions about a consistent methodology for the examination of medieval manuscripts. It will help me do work in the archives more efficiently and far more thoroughly.
 10. The hands-on aspect of getting to touch and see the manuscripts was the most rewarding and helpful for understanding the manuscripts and the codex.
 11. The lectures given by the professor produced over twenty-three pages of notes, single spaced, much of which was new information and much of which was intensely practical, aimed at teaching us techniques and tips for identifying manuscripts.
 12. Discussion of materials with samples in classroom (e.g., wax tablets, parchments, and bindings) was really interesting.
- 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, absolutely. Above and beyond. Could not have asked for more.
 2. Yes.
 3. Yes.
 4. Yes. MM was engaging and encouraging, and I learned what I hoped to learn in this course.
 5. Yes. I think we learned as much as is humanly possible in five days.
 6. MM was an engaging and helpful instructor. She provided a good overview of material.
 7. I believe so. MM gave us impressive breadth with simultaneous thoroughness that I feel was impressively managed for a five-day course.
 8. Yes, but one week isn't enough to digest all the information. That is the reason why having an electronic copy of the lecture slides would be helpful in reviewing the work and assignments if those can be made available.
 9. MM is a very engaging lecturer, and her knowledge and experience are immediately evident. She also fostered a comfortable environment for discussion.
 10. The instructor was helpful in acquiring the skills. More hands-on time with

- fragments or manuscripts would enhance the experience even more.
11. The course didn't extend as far chronologically as I would have liked, but there are other RBS courses that do.
 12. Yes. I would have liked to have spent more time on how to do collation rather than just an overview of the terms.
- 6) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*
1. Writing my post-tenure book! (Eventually!)
 2. Hone my research skills. Pass on my new knowledge to my students as appropriate.
 3. In both teaching and research.
 4. I plan to apply my knowledge in a project on reading practices.
 5. I plan to continue developing competency in working with medieval manuscripts.
 6. To reexamine and better organize how I approach manuscripts when first starting research.
 7. I'll be able to incorporate "pure" codicological descriptions in my dissertation so that I can be more marketable to libraries. I am also going to renew my effort to catalog and describe material at my home institution that has not had this treatment yet.
 8. I will use it in my job describing all the rare materials at my institution's special collections.
 9. To continue my scholarly research in greater detail.
 10. I would like to use the skills and knowledge in future research towards a masters degree in medieval history.
 11. Practically, by studying more manuscripts. Also by building off certain elements of it for a future class syllabus.
 12. Not sure.
- 7) *Please briefly describe the intellectual level of the course. What sort of person might benefit the most from taking it?*
1. High. I have a Ph.D., am an assistant professor teaching my own grad students, and learned a ton. I can't imagine anyone not benefitting from it.
 2. Bright undergrads through tenured professors. High level, but accessible for anyone with interest.
 3. Elevated. Perfect for graduate students and professors.
 4. Advanced grad student or beyond. This course does assume a basic familiarity with medieval book culture.
 5. The course was dense and engaging. It presupposes familiarity with the Latin language, with paleography, and with the broad outlines of medieval history.
 6. Course is good for grad students and above. Helpful to have some familiarity with paleography.
 7. A good introduction, but MM is willing to go into depth on any given point. Good for anyone interested in working on manuscripts.
 8. As a novice medievalist, I thought the level was just right where I know what areas to concentrate in the future, but I wasn't lost in class at any point.
 9. The course was challenging but not inaccessible, especially with the required reading. I think academics with an interest in medieval literature/history and

- special collections librarians would benefit most.
10. People who are interested in working with medieval history at a higher level would benefit the most.
 11. Someone who is already advanced in their field as a textual scholar, as this course seemed designed to make us think about the physical aspects of the book which otherwise get ignored.
 12. The course seemed very geared toward academics, but that might have just been because they were the majority of students.
- 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. Loved the structure and progression through material plus time with the manuscripts themselves.
 2. The early medieval scriptorium was more of an idea than a place.
 3. Honestly, realizing that there were different types of glosses. Why hadn’t I realized that before?
 4. Hands-on access to manuscripts—having physical examples of manuscript features—was the most useful aspect.
 5. I appreciated how the course built towards a practicum in SC. We had to absorb an array of information within the first three days, but it all came together when we sat down with our manuscripts.
 6. Being able to catch erasure and addition of two saints.
 7. Every day was a new insight and a new “why haven’t I been looking for that all along?”
 8. Can’t think of any right now.
 9. Learning where the practice of “endorsing” a check comes from.
 10. Working with a loose gathering that was tacketed and dirty, and pastedowns that were older manuscripts, was surprisingly informative. It was like seeing the inner workings of the codex.
 11. No moments as such, but the repeated focus on the book and its instruments, related practices, and development as technology was a relatively new concept, and left a profound impression.
 12. Discussion of the pesical system was interesting and something I know almost nothing about.
- 9) *How could the course have been improved?*
1. N/A. Seriously, it was amazing. If there were like thirty hours in the day, I would’ve liked more time with manuscripts in rare books, but understand it’s not possible in a week!
 2. More focused in-class hands-on materials. Everyone (or pairs of students) get an object all at once, then rotate rather than trying to pass objects around.
 3. I thought we would have spent more time examining the ecology of fish, especially cod.
 4. {no response}
 5. Perhaps a little more interaction in the first two days.
 6. {no response}

7. Maybe a Part I and Part II set up. I think we covered a lot of material that I would have liked to spend more time on, to really get the fine details.
8. Please make the lecture slides available.
9. {private response}
10. More time with the chosen manuscript for the analysis would improve the experience. At least one more class period would have improved the experience.
11. Maybe with more attention to the manuscripts of "Middle English Literature" which all class members would be more likely to know.
12. Please provide page numbers and a numbered table of contents in workbook. I would have liked a few mini exercises before spending an afternoon studying manuscript codices for classroom presentation.

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

1. Yes, absolutely, x 2.
2. Oh yes.
3. {no response}
4. Yes to both.
5. Yes!
6. Would definitely recommend.
7. Yes.
8. Yes!
9. Yes, and yes.
10. Yes, I would recommend the class to others.
11. Yes.
12. I enjoyed it and learned a lot. Unfortunately, I would not recommend it to my colleagues, because I'm afraid they would be offended by the tone of students. I am a librarian and non-librarian students and teachers made several comments about librarians not providing access to materials as if it were a mean-spirited personal decision on the part of the librarian.

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

1. Yes, definitely. So useful. I would've liked more time with manuscripts and more hands-off librarians (not MM but RBS's in SC were kind of overly hovering).
2. Trips to SC were essential and excellent.
3. Yes. The SC trip was great.
4. N/A
5. Absolutely. Our two afternoon visits to SC were essential. Another period there earlier in the week would have been helpful.
6. SC was a valuable trip to enhance what we were learning in class.
7. I loved our three-hour "describe-athon" in SC.
8. The trip to SC to examine the manuscripts was great. I just wish we had more time, but I know this is only a one-week class.
9. Yes, our time in SC was well spent. I wish the course had gone on longer so we could've spent more time there.
10. Yes. The SC visit was time well spent.

11. Yes. Visits to SC are a thrilling part of the library, and the practical exercise employed there was the perfect capstone to the week.

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. Yes, they were great. I am a medievalist so I skipped Movie Night and Booksellers' Night, but can see appeal to others! Lectures were fantastic.

2. Attended two wonderful lectures.

3. Yes. I enjoyed the lectures.

4. I enjoyed both lectures although neither was in my field.

5. N/A

6. Both lectures were interesting.

7. {no response}

8. I enjoyed the lectures very much (as always)!

9. N/A

10. I enjoyed the evening guest lectures.

11. I enjoyed the ones I attended, especially the McLeod lecture.

12. I enjoyed the two lectures. Movie Night seems like it is not needed, but I didn't actually go, so I could be wrong.

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

1. MM was amazing. This was seriously one of the most useful professional things I've ever done. Wish I'd done this years ago.

2. Take it!

3. Do it.

4. {no response}

5. It is absolutely worth it for those with some knowledge of medieval Latin and who want to engage with manuscripts.

6. {no response}

7. I only wish I'd been RBS-ing earlier in my career.

8. Don't complain about A/C! Layer yourself!

9. {no response}

10. {no response}

11. Research as much as you can before going, and practice your Latin and paleography skills.

12. Study paleography before taking. Also be familiar with format and contents of Christian texts like calendars, breviaries, books of hours, &c..

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

1. #notalion

sayeth: taketh this course or ye shall haveth much regret.

2. Si quaeris locum amoenum studiosumque, circumspice.

3. Red is to Rubric as Blue is to Bluebric.
4. {no response}
5. Veni, Vidi, Didici (“I came, I saw, I learned”)
6. Medieval manuscript bootcamp.
7. Can’t wait for next time.
8. Fabulous!
9. Summer camp for book nerds.
10. The time you have with the manuscripts is over all too quickly. Enjoy it to the fullest.
11. A good beginning.
12. Much like high school, I learned a lot, but I’m not sure I could say I enjoyed it.

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: 2 (16.67%)

My institution/employer did not give me professional leave; I used paid or vacation days: 2 (16.67%)

I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible summer schedule: 7 (58.33%)

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

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

I paid 100% myself: 5 (41.67%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 2 (16.67%)

My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 2 (16.67%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 2 (16.67%)

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

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 8 (66.67%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 1 (8.33%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 2 (16.67%)

I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 1 (8.33%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 8 (66.67%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 1 (8.33%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 2 (16.67%)
I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 1 (8.33%)

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

Library disciplines:

Cataloger/metadata librarian: 2 (16.67%)

Student working toward a/n:

M.A./M.S.: 2 (16.67%)

Ph.D./D.Phil: 2 (16.67%)

Professional educator:

Assistant professor: 5 (41.67%)

Associate professor: 1 (8.33%)