

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. The pre-course reading assignments list was short—a good thing. {private response}
 2. Yes, readings were useful. No additional preparation. Maybe make people aware of online publishers' bindings references and *Suave Mechanicals? Books for the Millions* is long, but no removal suggestions.
 3. Yes! I immediately checked my library's collections for the texts on the course website, delighted to find that we did have some.
 4. The pre-course assignments were both useful and reasonable.
 5. It was good to have only two short-ish readings on the recommended readings, but a good number on the suggested list, so we could have a lot if we wanted/could spend a lot of time in advance.
 6. Yes! The pre-reading completely changed my thinking about the course. Given the visual nature of the class, links to digital sources would be helpful, especially links pointing to specific time periods or styles.
 7. {private response}
 8. They were useful. I appreciated that not too much was assigned. It was do-able, and they weren't overwhelming content-wise either.
 9. I enjoyed the readings. I did all the required ones, and almost all of the suggested readings. It's a lot, so it would be a good idea to start early. For me, being prepared helps me get the most out of the class.
 10. Yes, extremely.
 11. They were useful but sometimes difficult to obtain. What would be useful would be PDF links, or a list of students so that we could "hive" our collected articles, or scans.
 12. Yes, maybe better links to e-articles if available.
 13. A general intro to bookbinding with names of the structure. Conservation issues for this time period as well.

- 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. Yes. Yes.
 2. I love workbooks! A nice reference resource.
 3. The workbook was very useful, the samples included were a great touch. We didn't refer to all the sections of the workbook in class, but I'm sure to treasure it and read through it in years to come.
 4. The workbook, though not often referred to in class, seems like it will be a great

- resource to get back to. I do wish there were some spare pages in the back so all of my notes could reside with the workbook for easy reference.
5. We didn't refer too much to the workbook during class, but the cloth samples alone were worth it. Really great! Looking forward to using the bibliography in the future.
 6. The workbook wasn't used much in class, but is full of useful information, especially the extensive bibliography. Cloth samples in the book were a welcome surprise. The exercise sheets in the workbook were fantastic for applying what we learned.
 7. The course workbook will be a valuable addition to my office reference collection.
 8. Useful, yes. I wish the workbook would follow the slides a bit just for note-taking, and long-term reference purposes. But everything was very useful. It will be consulted repeatedly in the future.
 9. Yes. I will keep the workbook for reference, and to supplement my extensive notes.
 10. We were lucky in that our instructor taught off his extraordinary knowledge base, a natural and orderly process—however (the lucky part), we still get to explore the workbook. Joy!
 11. The workbook was both useful in class, and as a reference guide in the future.
 12. I always save my workbooks.
 13. Same as above. Workbook was great.
- 3) *If you've taken previous RBS courses, how did this one compare?*
1. More organized, and objectives met within time allotted.
 2. Love, love, love! THIS COURSE WAS AMAZING AND SO INFORMATIVE AND FUN AND WONDERFUL, caps intended. There is no comparison. This course had a fantastic facilitator, whereas my previous course was poorly run. If all courses would only be this excellent.
 3. N/A
 4. N/A
 5. It was well organized, interesting, with a great deal of hands-on, demos, and visits to the McGregor Room and SC. I would put it at the top.
 6. N/A
 7. All courses have been excellent.
 8. Every one has been excellent, in terms of instructors, content, and organization.
 9. It was just as awesome as all the others. RBS faculty is amazing!
 10. The. Best. Ever. Very seriously, the most well thought out, in depth and yet accessible course.
 11. I really liked this one—maybe the best overall.
 12. Lots of hands on examples.
 13. 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. The early years 1830s to 1850s. Yes. TP's insights into styles of the period and emphasis on marketing were helpful to my own research.
 2. Most interesting and relevant: early period of bindings, artists. New insights and ideas: Find Whitman in the stacks and get things into boxes!

3. As someone who has never taken an RBS class, and with minimal experience, I learned so much in a very short period of time, but at no point did I feel rushed or too overwhelmed. Questions were welcomed. I felt very comfortable.
 4. I particularly enjoyed the first quarter of the century when the enormous pressure to keep up with demand by hand was really evident in the finished bindings.
 5. So many ideas! My determination of a good class is how it inspires, and this did in spades. I especially liked the visits to the McGregor Room. Talking about the books revealed so many things that I missed in class.
 6. I've completely changed how I think about publishers' bindings. My previously narrow view was demolished on day one, and rebuilt with a sense of scope that is much more inclusive and nuanced. The entire course will be useful professionally, especially the binding information, and class discussions have helped fill in details and areas out of my experience.
 7. Discussions with classmates—both in and outside of class—is one of the most valuable aspects of Rare Book School. I also appreciate opportunities to work with RBS and UVA collections.
 8. All! I'm desperate to go back to my institution and take every nineteenth-century book off the shelf in order to see which publishers' bindings, which designers' bindings, and anything else interesting or surprising, that we have.
 9. In addition to learning about the {illegible} (and learning a lot), I gained understanding on how the subject area connects to other disciplines, and can be used in instruction.
 10. Every new insight imaginable—and very happy to be able to immediately apply new knowledge and scope to work, even retroactively. This isn't theoretical, it is materially relevant now and ever.
 11. I overlooked publishers' bindings in the past and feel I have gained tremendous insight and respect for them.
 12. A new appreciation for a class of books I scarcely knew existed.
 13. This was perfect for me as a cataloger. I came away with ideas on how to improve my records which is just crucial to our collection.
- 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 to all.
 2. {no response}
 3. Yes! I wish we could spend more time on conservation, but I completely understand the timing issues of doing so. I learned everything I hoped to learn and more! Really amazing volume of information we absorbed!
 4. Yes. No. Yes.
 5. Definitely! I was afraid I would want more designer bindings, but I was wrong. There was the right amount of topics, time periods, and a logical flow.
 6. Yes!! I learned so much more in class than I expected. Rather than diving into a few designers, the course created a foundation and structure to build on. I feel much more equipped to evaluate form and design than before I arrived.
 7. Yes, and I'm leaving class with an extensive bibliography for further study.
 8. Yes. As usual at RBS, I learned more than I imagined I could in a week. Nothing was left out as far as I know, though more time for conservation would be really

- helpful.
9. I learned so much more than I could have hoped for! I am truly grateful for the experience.
 10. All was developed, and far more than I anticipated.
 11. Yes, no, and yes.
 12. Yes, and more.
 13. Yes!
- 6) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*
1. {private response}
 2. Creating guides for books in my collections.
 3. I plan to take my skills back to my current library and beyond! I am pursuing an interest in conservation, so I hope my knowledge will be well utilized there.
 4. For research on early Charleston, South Carolina bindings and binders.
 5. Projects to improve access to binding information in the catalog, help users understand and find bindings, and improve my own research into the time period.
 6. In class sessions with undergrads, improved cataloging, on Instagram for #librariesofinstagram and #publishersbindingsthursdays.
 7. I plan to put the new knowledge to use designing exhibits, describing collections, and making conservation decisions.
 8. Daily! In identifying and providing descriptive info to cataloging, to improve my teaching and reference work, to incorporate into history of the book and book-making classes I work with, to improve my collection development decisions, and potentially for exhibit purposes.
 9. Survey of nineteenth-century stacks books to identify publishers' bindings. Make preservation decisions, and enhance catalog records to increase access. Incorporate new knowledge into instruction, and potential exhibits.
 10. Immediately applicable to purchasing choices, catalog work, the discernment and historical context needed to truly and properly work.
 11. I want to put out a catalogue of bindings in our holdings.
 12. In evaluating book purchases.
 13. Absolutely. I have a plan for our uncataloged materials, but plan on doing a retrospective survey of what's been cataloged before. Revise and improve.
- 7) *Please briefly describe the intellectual level of the course. What sort of person might benefit the most from taking it?*
1. It would be helpful if class participants knew something of the mechanics of bookbinding.
 2. This course is accessible to anyone who has ever seen a publishers' binding.
 3. Someone like me actually! I am just starting out, but have enough background to keep up. I will say I benefited from the varying levels of knowledge my fellow students have!
 4. I thought it was appropriate given the variety of professionals. Everyone should take this course.
 5. TP did a good job of including all skill levels, though a little knowledge of bookbinding history helped deepen my experience.
 6. Intense. Tons of information and examples flying around. Anyone interested in

- book history, conservation, or bookselling/collecting should take this course. It was extremely accessible, especially the hands-on demonstrations.
7. Anyone with an interest in the subject—good for beginners or those with some subject knowledge.
 8. Anyone with real interest in the topic. No specific education or prior experience really needed.
 9. Librarians, archivists, book dealers, and preservationists.
 10. Cataloger or bookseller with some experience with era and materials, though artists with less book-specific knowledge would still be enriched.
 11. This was a very diverse class with a high intellectual capacity, so this is difficult to say.
 12. Not for big {illegible}. Professionals, to expand their knowledge.
 13. Everyone. Seriously.
- 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 instructor’s use of daguerreotypes and contemporary photographs of subjects holding books of the period—very inventive teaching moment!
 2. {no response}
 3. The second time we visited the McGregor Room I felt so much more confident and excited about my choices! It felt great, and evidence of my advancement.
 4. Learning about adhered-boards bindings was a game changer.
 5. Really understanding sewing structure in publishers’ bindings—and how to tell when things aren’t case bound.
 6. Defining American Publishers’ Bookbindings, or trying to. We found so many exceptions that we never fully agreed.
 7. Browsing collections in the McGregor Room was a highlight of the course.
 8. Recognizing designer bindings, better understanding book structure and materials, being able to identify things I couldn’t a day before. A lot!
 9. It was the overall experience that was powerful, and one week was not enough.
 10. There were many aha moments. My favorite: a better understanding of sewing techniques, while not primarily a book construction course, this facet is my primary understanding for dating and assessing.
 11. So many, but I really learned what to look for, and where to find it.
 12. The sheer beauty of some of the bindings. All I had seen before were very unattractive.
 13. TP’s comments about what he wants in cataloging records as a researcher were very eye-opening and motivational.
- 9) *How could the course have been improved?*
1. Add another week, i.e., Part One & Part Two.
 2. No suggestions.
 3. I felt the section on the 1860s–1880s did a great job of making distinct the styles, and the earlier years would benefit from the same treatment.
 4. TP is a treasure; no one compares. This class I would take anywhere. One does not simply improve this class.

5. I've got nothing.
6. I hate to say this, but maybe less examples on the slide show. It was a bit overwhelming.
7. {no response}
8. More on conservation and pairing workbook with slides. Or putting slides into workbook? Though that would be too many pages....
9. N/A
10. Not possible, though perhaps less time on accounting records.
11. If it went on for two weeks?
12. N/A
13. The dust jacket show-and-tell should be moved towards the beginning of the week—too distracting on Fridays.

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

1. Enthusiastic yes to both!
2. YES and ABSOLUTELY!
3. Absolutely! I would 100% recommend this course to others, and I have the feeling it will be all I'm talking about for weeks to come!
4. Hell yesssssss.
5. Yes, most certainly.
6. Absolutely.
7. Yes, and yes.
8. YES.
9. Yes, and absolutely.
10. Yes, yes, yes! I have new eyes and understanding.
11. Yes, and yes.
12. Yes, as always.
13. Absolutely. TP was worth every penny.

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

1. {private response}
2. We went to SC and McGregor Room (2x); much time well spent.
3. Yes! Visiting the McGregor Room and SC were great changes of pace and allowed even more interaction and different learning experiences.
4. Absolutely.
5. As stated above (Q4), McGregor Room visits were amazing. SC for dust jackets also good and well-timed.
6. Yes, browsing the stacks in the McGregor Room was amazing.
7. Yes.
8. Yes. McGregor Room was a great experience, and I would've been happy spending every afternoon there getting to really look at books.
9. N/A
10. Yes, real access and interaction brought knowledge home and allowed us to blossom while insights are fresh.
11. Yes.

12. Yes.

13. The McGregor Room exercises were great. The SC show-and-tell = meh.

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 was unable to attend any evening events owing to my obligations at home.
2. I went to everything and it was all useful.
3. I attended all of the optional events! I wanted to get the full experience! I learned more from the video series, and the talk by Szilvia was a great presentation on a project by a fellow student.
4. Oh yeah.
5. {no response}
6. The topics for this years' lectures were interesting, but could've been better served by stricter moderation.
7. Booksellers' Night is great!
8. N/A
9. I always attend at least two out of the three extras, and they are very worthwhile.
10. The Monday lecture, while a scholarly and honorable endeavor, seems to often be less engaging that it could be.
11. They were interesting.
12. Lecture was good. I had seen the movie before.
13. Lecture and Booksellers' Night were awesome. Other two were boring.

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

1. Prepare by reviewing some of the language of printing and binding in a contemporary encyclopedia or mechanics dictionary—all available on HathiTrust or The Library Archives website.
2. {no response}
3. Do it! You will never regret it!
4. {no response}
5. No matter your background, you will get a lot from this class. Todd is really a great and responsive teacher.
6. {no response}
7. {no response}
8. Do it!
9. {no response}
10. {no response}
11. Do it!
12. Try to become familiar with “Better, {illegible}, Special” bindings before class.
13. {no response}

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

1. Book opens, mind expands...

2. {no response}
3. I am so thankful and awed that I got to be a part of this amazing class, and I can't wait to come back!
4. Sad, sad bookbinders
Rich ass publishers, demand:
Publishers' binding
5. {no response}
6. Take this course title, literally.
7. {no response}
8. Amazingly informative, immersive experience with just enough hands-on....
9. The RBS week is my favorite week of the year!
10. Amor nos libros unit.
11. See you next year.
12. Smile, smile, smile.
13. Thank you, Taco Todd!

Student Data

Number of respondents: 13 (of 13)

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

My institution/employer gave me professional leave time: 8 (61.54%)

My institution/employer did not give me professional leave; I used paid or vacation days: 3 (23.08%)

I am self employed, and can arrange my own schedule: 2 (15.38%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

I paid 100% myself: 2 (15.38%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 7 (53.85%)

My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (7.69%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive part; I paid the rest: 2 (15.38%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (7.69%)

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 4 (30.77%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 5 (38.46%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (7.69%)

I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 3 (23.08%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 6 (46.15%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 5 (38.46%)
I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 2 (15.38%)

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

Library disciplines:

Archivist: 1 (7.69%)
Cataloger/metadata librarian: 2 (15.38%)
Conservator/binder/preservation librarian: 1 (7.69%)
Public services librarian: 3 (23.08%)
Special collections librarian: 2 (15.38%)

Book trades:

Antiquarian bookseller: 3 (23.08%)

Other occupations/vocations:

Other: 1 (7.69%)