

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. I thought the readings mostly provided helpful background.
 2. Yes. I especially appreciated how the instructors stressed before we came that we should know our strengths and weaknesses and read accordingly.
 3. All useful.
 4. Extremely useful. More digital surrogates and tutorials for prep for specific tasks may have helped.
 5. The assignments were useful, but not always relevant. I suggest assigning at least a basic programming tutorial.
 6. I did not prepare for course in any way, but came in with a fresh mind.
 7. Yes, the reading was useful as background preparation.
 8. They were more of a springboard than directly relevant to what we covered in the class, but I found them useful and interesting to get me in the right frame of mind. Perhaps add readings on coding?
 9. Pre-course lists were good and necessarily needed to cover a range of topics. The tools list will be especially useful for continued learning.
 10. Advance reading was helpful for context. The advance installations made installapalooza go more smoothly. Maybe a post of follow up reading list with Jockers and other references from class.
 11. The pre-course readings were wonderful. Too bad there was no time to discuss them. They were not closely linked in terms of preparation, but related to my projects and interest.
 12. The list of databases/online archives was particularly useful. It seemed that it would be advantageous to do a bit more reading on/practice in coding in advance to better understand the ways we were using the programs. CS and BP, though, were always patient, and ready to explain the concepts 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. Though we didn't use the course booklet very often during class, I have already found the material included is quite useful as I revisit some of the course topics on my own.
 2. It is not only useful, but will continue to be useful for years to come.
 3. The workbook was minimal, unless one counts—as one should—the files and files of code &c. that the instructors prepared, and the software downloaded to laptops in the course of instruction.
 4. Incredibly useful. Rich material I will return to.

5. Workload was fine; it was enough to keep me very engaged, but not so much to be overwhelmed.
6. In the future, I think this particular class should make a blog or website to use before, during, and after class, with reference materials and other information.
7. I thought the course material was really useful. It might be useful to have lists of the key commands we're using in each lesson printed so that you could quickly reference to that if you get behind following the lesson and need to catch up.
8. It looks useful. I'm planning on working through more carefully after the class.
9. The content is necessarily technical, with detailed instructions on how to use several tools. I look forward to using these instructions as a resource manual when I can get back into the tools.
10. Yes, very useful, especially to have something written to take back (besides files).
11. We had a handout but I never really used it. I think it repeated what was being shown (typed) on the screen.
12. The course workbook was a useful reference for our work, especially the coding section, and I anticipate keeping it handy as I continue working with programs. It would have been even better to have studied it before class.

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

1. The nature of this course is so unique relative to other RBS courses I sort of feel it is impossible to compare.
2. One of the best.
3. Very much up to RBS standards.
4. An equivalent experience of introduction to major issues/skills that allows for further learning.
5. N/A
6. N/A
7. This was a fantastic course covering an astonishing range of digital approaches nicely tied into questions rooted in material bibliographic practice.
8. Very different given the nature of the course, but it was really engaging and interactive. I learned a lot, as is usual at RBS.
9. This was the first time I have taken a digital-oriented course. There was a lot of hands-on this week, which does compare well with other courses.
10. This has been my favorite RBS class to date! Really appreciate having two professors with the interplay between them, and the ability to help us individually.
11. I was miles away from this subject material. Basically, I needed to listen to what were possibilities, not actually perform the task.
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. I found the segment on visualization particularly relevant.
2. Yes. Not only do I have a new project plan to earn credit for my MLIS program, but I can see myself taking these ideas further.
3. I certainly walked away with new insights, and respect for the work of the instructors and my fellow students.
4. My project happens to be TEI-rich, so late discussion of data visualization was

- most immediately useful.
5. I could mention many things, but in a world of growing digital tools it is helpful to be introduced to specific tools that I will use as I leave.
 6. I liked to see specific project highlights of libraries using digital humanities and technology.
 7. I have many, many plans for exciting things I can start doing with the copious amount of knowledge and skills the course has given me.
 8. We covered so many different concepts that I will be digesting them for a while, but there are general programs that I'd like to adapt for my collections.
 9. The instructors did a great job of structuring the course; each day built upon the day before. What most interested me prior to taking the course was the visual work we did on Friday. But we needed to build to that aspect/approach.
 10. Text mining, data visualizations, and less fear of command line!
 11. Procuring and reading metadata (importing records); image recognition.
 12. Data visualization, common open source platforms, and OCR.
- 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. The instructors fulfilled the promise of the course by allowing us to dip into the various subjects and digital tools covered in the description. Anything like comprehensive skill development would be impossible considering the complexity of the course material, but I certainly feel like I learned a great deal and left with a sense of the possibilities and challenges which digital bibliography presents.
 2. Yes! Considering the vast amount of material to cover, they did an amazing job teaching us these skills. I will return to my program with a new skill set.
 3. This was for me an exposure course. I am fairly adept at old school "WWBD" bibliography and textual editing. My purpose was to get some sense of further possible facilitation and extension of that work, which I will probably do only to a minimal extent myself, but which I must be aware of as an RBS instructor. The course did give me that to a considerable degree. The taxonomies and ontologies of twentieth-century Anglo-American bibliography, analytical and descriptive, are respected in this course, the consciously addressed question being the points of contact of that with the t's and o's of bibliography performed using digital methods which also go well beyond into the territory of critical approaches to textuality newly enabled.
 4. I trust in BP and CS as continuing resources for my learning—the collaborative nature and ever-changing technology made the ethos/principles modeled most important.
 5. I think that course content well matched the course description.
 6. I did not have any preconceived ideas about what I would learn, but I am satisfied with my experience and the knowledge I now have.
 7. Yes. I thought both instructors did a fantastic job of walking us through some complex activities. It was especially helpful that we got to do all the steps, from setting up the development environment on, so that we could learn all the steps involved.
 8. It was very fast-paced, so we had to move through things quickly, but I'm hoping that the materials and my notes will help me bridge any gaps when I try to

- implement some of these methods myself. The instructors did a great job of covering an extensive range of content in a short period of time.
9. Yes, all was delivered and more!
 10. Nothing underdeveloped, just more awareness of how much room there is to learn with each tool or method.
 11. I learned about the subject; did not master the subject. Even that was a miracle on the part of the instructors.
 12. Yes, the course provided a good foundation for further experimentation. I would love to see this develop into a multi-tier class offered over different summer sessions. It would also be helpful to have “homework” to continue practicing the skills learned in class.
- 6) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*
1. I hope to utilize them for both research and instruction.
 2. I am going to do a project for credit in my MLIS program.
 3. See answer to Q5.
 4. To design the initial phase of a digital project with the uses of the tools modeled/discussed in mind; teaching to students.
 5. I’m attempting to be more involved in some digital humanities projects at my institution. This course has given me the vocabulary and basic skills to enter those projects.
 6. To improve my awareness and ability to communicate digital initiatives in the future.
 7. In ways too numerous to count. I am looking forward to using CS’s image recognition software to experiment on images in the project I direct, to get started doing some OCR and NLP work, and much more!
 8. {no response}
 9. I would like to use some of the OCR tools, and hopefully get to a skill level to use the text analysis tools/concepts we learned.
 10. First, just to bring awareness of these tools and methods to my institution. Specifically, I want to use text mining on some transcriptions to see what is revealed, more as proof-of-concept than full project. The Gephi tool could also be very useful for charting metrics.
 11. Hire someone competent to do it. But, I am in a position to recognize competence.
 12. I intend to use the data visualization training in thinking about how to display relationships between authors.
- 7) *Please briefly describe the intellectual level of the course. What sort of person might benefit the most from taking it?*
1. The course is challenging in both its pace and the demands it places on one’s facility with digital technology. That said, I believe anyone with a genuine interest in the emerging digital tools and methods now available to bibliographers, book historians, and humanists would find the course quite beneficial.
 2. High. I recommend applicants be honest with themselves about their tech skills. That being said, I am a beginner, and I had an amazing experience.
 3. Often cruising happily in the stratosphere. Those who would benefit from its current pedagogical methods are students with some bibliographical background

- (e.g., DesBib knowledge) along with some existing facility tools of “digital humanities.”
4. Those who want an intensive intro and are willing to confront difficult/complex new ways of thinking. Some code experience helps, though it isn’t required.
 5. This course is best for those with at least some programming knowledge. Although the instructors were very helpful, you should know your way around a computer.
 6. Someone with existing knowledge of computers would likely have fared better.
 7. I think what was great about this course was that it brought together a group of people with varying degrees of coding and traditional bibliographic skills and that everyone would learn something useful.
 8. Some coding experience (regardless of the specific language) will be helpful. It would benefit academics and librarians with some control over potential/current digital projects.
 9. This course would benefit anyone planning to work with students and faculty engaged in textual studies, as well as researchers engaged in this work themselves.
 10. We had a wide range of knowledge and experience which I think was interesting and helpful. Anyone interested in discovering (some of) what digital humanities is all about.
 11. Tech savvy! Half my age, with a desire to work in the twenty-first century.
 12. Someone with a bit of knowledge coding or eager to learn.
- 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. At least once a period! The best exercise was the ontology exercise with RBS materials.
 3. {no response}
 4. {no response}
 5. {no response}
 6. {no response}
 7. So many “aha” moments. The course brought me much closer to being able to actually do some exciting digital work myself as well as to understand what experts do well.
 8. The font training and image recognition portions were my favorite parts.
 9. Really, just the realization on Thursday that all we had done earlier in the week led to text analysis tools.
 10. NLP steps were very helpful to see all laid out. Difference in how OCR works vs. image analysis.
 11. Aha—if I hire the right person my projects will make a difference to scholarship.
 12. Once the coding languages came more naturally, seeing the power of image recognition programs.
- 9) *How could the course have been improved?*
1. I think it would be useful to teach the course in a classroom with better digital facilities, easily accessible WiFi, and supplied computers with all the necessary software already loaded.

2. There should be a way of ensuring that applicants are tech-savvy enough for this class.
3. Much time was spent simply getting code to work equally well on all of the student's laptops. Cross-platform problems, as well as others I am not competent to describe, indicated how hard this work can be—a good thing to know—but did eat up the better part of some hours. Students should (unlike myself) be fairly adept players of their instrument—the laptop, knowing how to tune it, and read off its notation with some speed, to avoid distraction from the substance of the course.
4. The course deserves to be split into an intro and advanced/targeted version—it's currently one of the highest-numbered “L” courses (and suitably intensive), but the name seems at odds.
5. The content of this course was so rich it should really be split in two. Maybe one section on text, and another on image.
6. Balance course content between super-techy vs. surveys/highlights of digital projects.
7. We all agreed that the thing we wanted most was more of this course. A two-part version would be great.
8. It would help contextualize things if, at the introduction of a new tool/program, we briefly discussed its overall purpose and potential applications to bibliography (rather than at the end or over the course of the session).
9. {private response}
10. No complaints, but the digital classes at RBS could more logically build on each other. For instance, I took the XML/TEI class in 2009, but think I would be more ready for it now, after this course (same for “Born Digital Materials: Theory & Practice”).
11. Had I known more about computers, programming, life....
12. N/A—it was challenging, but a great course!

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

1. I feel the course was definitely worth the investment of time and money, and would heartily recommend it to others.
2. YES!! One of the best classes I've ever taken.
3. Yes. Yes.
4. Yes—in tool/tutorials/resources.
5. Highly recommended.
6. I would recommend the course to someone with a better technological background.
7. Yes.
8. Yes, and yes.
9. Yes, and definitely.
10. Yes, and yes.
11. Yes, to people much younger than I interested in the digital humanities.
12. Yes!

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

1. {no response}
2. Yes.
3. Very useful trip to SC to collate physical books via Hinman Collator and Lindstrand Comparator.
4. Yes.
5. Yes, the trip to SC was great.
6. Yes.
7. Yes.
8. Yes—I really liked using the collation machines and inspecting the physical texts we were analyzing digitally.
9. Yes, our trip to SC was useful. It was a shame that the digital lab trip could not occur.
10. {no response}
11. To SC—yes.
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 particularly enjoyed the lectures.
2. Yes.
3. Yes. All things bookish are relevant here.
4. Yes (though Movie Night was a repeat).
5. The evening events added a great deal to the week; an excellent time to interact with those outside my class.
6. N/A
7. Yes. I enjoyed all the evening events.
8. Yes.
9. I enjoyed the collaborative approach to the Wednesday presentation. The Monday lecture was interesting, and I wonder if a course on the African book might happen at some point?
10. {no response}
11. I hope so, for the lectures. I missed the popcorn; I had seen those films before.
12. Szilvia Szmuk-Tanenbaum's event was an excellent forum for generating ideas on increasing access to library resources.

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.
3. Possibly a beginner/intermediate course plus an advanced course à la DesBib.
4. Make sure your computer is up to date with great memory/storage. It's useful to know this is more of an immersion in ways of thinking and tools than a project-based course. It is useful for people considering digital approaches as well as those

- already immersed.
5. Teach yourself basic programming skills.
 6. {no response}
 7. Be prepared to do lots of coding work and have lots of fun!
 8. CS and BP were great—knowledgeable, passionate, and patient.
 9. Don't be afraid of the use of code in the course if you are not a coder.
 10. You don't have to learn command line before class, but it might be helpful, or to have some familiarity with the different computer languages.
 11. Come knowing more than I did.
 12. Engage in some project-based coding if you can.

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

1. Invigorating, collegial, and engaging.
2. {private response}
3. Thank you BP and CS, and thank you to my fellow students.
4. Digital boot camp.
5. Stimulating.
6. An enlightening experience, and great exposure to new people and their institutions.
7. Error in command line
Together we can hack that
While telling jokes
8. "Technology becomes your collaborator and provocateur."
9. Great as always!
10. {no response}
11. Self-inflicted pain at its best.
12. Collaborative classroom.

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: 9 (75%)

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: 2 (16.67%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

I paid 100% myself: 2 (16.67%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 8 (66.67%)

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

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 3 (25%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 7 (58.33%)

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

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

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 3 (25%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 7 (58.33%)

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

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

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

Library disciplines:

Archivist: 1 (8.33%)

Cataloger/metadata librarian: 1 (8.33%)

Conservator/binder/preservation librarian: 2 (16.67%)

Curator: 1 (8.33%)

Digital collections librarian: 2 (16.67%)

Library administrator: 1 (8.33%)

Special collections librarian: 1 (8.33%)

Student working toward a/n:

M.L.I.S./M.L.S.: 1 (8.33%)

Ph.D./D.Phil: 1 (8.33%)

Professional educator:

Assistant professor: 1 (8.33%)