

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 readings were very useful for both my discipline and research. They were interesting and engaging as well. I did do extra work.
2. The exercises assigned were perfect. The quantity of work before was manageable, and the level of difficulty just right.
3. Yes, very helpful.
4. Yes, readings were useful, though it seemed like we read them just to be exposed to inadequate systems. Useful and informative, but maybe Bischoff could have been excerpted.
5. It would have been good to do weekly transcriptions leading up to the course because that proved to be essential.
6. Helpful. Somewhat a lot.
7. Yes, they were well calibrated and extremely helpful. I'd recommend including Ralph Hanna on booklets from *Pursuing History* (with Pam Robinson's earlier study). I think it would help folks less knowledgeable about collation.
8. Yes, the pre-course assignments were very helpful. I also reviewed my Latin—this would be helpful for anyone who doesn't work with Latin texts very often.
9. I did preparation and found it useful given the highly intensive and demanding level of work.
10. More targeted assignments in Derolez and Bischoff. BAS's book was a very nice intro to studying manuscripts at the Beinecke.
11. The pre-course reading assignments at first glance appeared to be too much, but they were useful and I'm glad they were assigned.
12. Yes, they were very useful and topical. I did do additional preparation for the course, reviewing some old Latin paleography readings I had.

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, very useful, as always. I will use for teaching!
2. Wow. The handouts will be useful for a long time, and I really appreciate that we were provided with such useful and beautifully produced booklets.
3. Eminently useful.
4. Excellent. Booklets of condensed info will be very useful to me in the future.
5. Good.
6. Great.
7. Amazing. The booklet on binding is going to be an extremely valuable resource, and I might just take up calligraphy with the help of the calligraphy scripts

handout.

8. The course materials were superb, especially the pamphlets produced by the Yale Conservation Lab.
9. Adequate. I am sure the reference materials will be helpful, but I haven't reviewed them.
10. All excellent.
11. Content and both of the above. I'll give them to our calligraphy teachers.
12. Again, they were very useful and will continue to be. I found BAS and Alex, her graduate student, to be very well organized and proactive in sending us important documents in advance of class meetings.

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

1. Fast paced yet edifying!
2. This one was much better!
3. I haven't taken any others, but I can't imagine it being better than this!
4. It did not compare; the other course was unsurpassable, but this course was still good.
5. This was harder—in a good way.
6. The best.
7. Fantastic: equally as exciting and dynamic and deeply engaging; maybe even better. I was just enthralled.
8. N/A
9. Much more demanding and "informative"—you work, you learn!
10. N/A
11. I found both of these at about the same level. Energetic professors, challenging material. The group in this 2016 course was very cohesive.
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. More on how to read/imagine place/date of manuscripts.
2. The hands-on work, exposure to dozens (hundreds?) of manuscripts, the tutorials in pigments, bindings, and the quills exercise all gave me a cache of new knowledge. The key word is exposure (along with BAS's knowledgeable glasses as we walked by and looked at each object).
3. Helpful work in paleography; most interesting were the other participants!
4. Practice with manuscripts in all varieties was great; impossible to do at a smaller institution.
5. Reading cursive handwriting.
6. Total infusion of skills to hands-on experience.
7. I worked out my second book project this week as a direct result of doing the final project. I might also turn my presentation into an article. I found the refresher on scripts to be the most useful as my codicology trumps my paleography.
8. The whole experience was a once-in-a-lifetime, memorable one: studying 100+ manuscripts so intensively, with so knowledgeable a guide, and fellow students who were each well versed in particular sub-disciplines...I'm planning on doing further work with my project manuscript.

9. Yes, much improved level of skills.
 10. Transcription practice was very useful; the week-long project was challenging but also enjoyable. I plan to incorporate manuscript studies into my dissertation research more deeply.
 11. We looked at 130 manuscripts, some of the highest quality. I've come away with one idea for a book and lots of things to ponder.
 12. Everything. BAS is invaluable. Her experience and knowledge, her structure for the lessons—interspersing paleography practice and analysis of the regional variations in manuscript illumination and codicology with work on our own presentations and a hands-on quill writing demonstration—and her encouragement of future research and publication from Yale's manuscripts all made for an exceptional class. I came away with many new insights and ideas, but most importantly, a project plan that fits well with research I am already conducting and that would be significant to publish.
- 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. All skills learned, wonderful!
 2. I learned even more than I thought I would.
 3. Yes, learned more than I had hoped!
 4. More time spent on “ugly” manuscripts would have been nice, since those are the majority of what we'll encounter.
 5. Yes. I feel overloaded with information.
 6. Yes. More than.
 7. Absolutely. I couldn't have asked for more, truly.
 8. Yes, the course exceeded my expectations in all respects. I knew it would be an amazing learning experience...and it was doubly or triply so.
 9. Yes. Instructor so helpful and understanding of varying levels of competence.
 10. I needed a bit more guidance in the collation exercise.
 11. Yes, she was very encouraging, steady, kind to those who were beginners.
 12. Yes. No. I learned far more than I had hoped to learn.
- 6) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*
1. Teaching and research!
 2. Aside from using it in my research, I'm going to emulate BAS in my teaching!
 3. Writing articles!
 4. At my own institution's archives and in future scholarship.
 5. Two years of archival work for dissertation writing!
 6. Research and teaching.
 7. In my Pirot and record book projects and honestly for the rest of my life.
 8. I'm in a rare books/special collections library school program, hoping to work with medieval manuscripts and incunables. This course will be tremendously helpful for cataloging rare materials, as well as for my own scholarship.
 9. For my professional research activities.
 10. I will continue work in the archives this summer on a research trip to the U.K.
 11. New book or article.

12. I plan to use them in my teaching, to provide students with a more comprehensive account of the varieties of medieval manuscripts and book production. I will also use the paleography and codicology skills in my research. I intend to use Yale's archives, of which I now have a much better knowledge, for current and future research projects.

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

1. Graduate students (especially new) and anyone in their prospective field at any level.
2. I think someone with at least one manuscripts course under their belt would benefit.
3. Very high. Advanced grad student and post-docs, as well as junior faculty benefit most.
4. Very high. Someone who already has a Ph.D.
5. Advanced grad student or someone with limited collection experience but with general nomenclature.
6. Academics.
7. It's quite intellectually rigorous. I felt, having full background and training in all aspects of paleography and codicology, that I was who the course is pitched for—so, not for the faint of heart.
8. The course was conducted at a high level of intellectual attainment and scholarship. I'd say it targets Ph.D. students and post-doctoral students as well as specialists in medieval studies (university instructors).
9. Very high. A professional with an interest in paleography.
10. This course would benefit somebody with a background (i.e., at least one RBS course) in both paleography and codicology.
11. The way it was arranged, birds could sing and elephants drink.
12. Very high. It does require linguistic abilities. That said, the participants seemed to come from diverse intellectual and professional backgrounds, which I appreciated, because I learned from my fellow students as well as from BAS.

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. Seeing the major differences between manuscripts as far as region!
2. Watching BAS point out the characteristic features of manuscripts from X, Y, Z time/region.
3. Too many to count! Most helpful were insights from other students.
4. N/A
5. Writing with quills.
6. Transcription exercises, Italian illumination, and guest visits on binding and ink.
7. For me it was just the opportunity for independent work with collation and fragments. I loved the model of independent research and discussion thereafter.
8. It's intriguing to watch experts in medieval paleography and codicology struggle to date and locate manuscripts. The ongoing conundrums are an exciting challenge.
9. Individual projects and guided transcriptions.

10. {no response}
11. Learning what codicology could teach you about a manuscript.
12. Yes, several aha! moments. First, the presentation, where I learned more about documents I am working with and how the documents in Yale's collection relate to them. Second, when BAS showed us a manuscript that she believes may be fifteenth-century Spanish. Though she was interested in dating it through its materials, I was interested in the content. If the two (materiality and content) correspond to her dating, it will be a key part of my research.

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

1. More time on individual projects.
2. A session on technologies for helping to answer research questions (UV, infrared, &c.) would be useful.
3. Make into two-week seminar. The course has much content and would be helpful to spread it out.
4. More work with things that had not already been extensively catalogued.
5. More transcription before the course (weekly, with answers?). Also, our project could have been our fragment.
6. Major projects on fragments.
7. We didn't always get to present our findings after an independent exercise which was a shame.
8. {no response}
9. Excellent already.
10. {no response}
11. I would have liked to relate the content of a manuscript to the manuscript.
12. Maybe make it longer! I realize that is completely unrealistic, but I could have spent another week learning from BAS. On a more realistic note, perhaps a brief discussion about how form (e.g., the bindings, the illuminations, the scribal hands, &c.) and content (the actual words of the text) relate could add even more depth to an already first-rate course.

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

1. Yes to both!
2. I am on a fellowship, but...yes! Yes!
3. Yes, absolutely!
4. I have some regrets about using my scholarship for this.
5. Yes.
6. The best.
7. YES, OMG.
8. Definitely yes to both!
9. Yes.
10. Yes, and yes!
11. Yes. Yes.
12. Definitely.

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

1. {no response}
2. N/A
3. N/A, but perhaps a visit to art gallery and a tour of European holdings would be important for visual analysis.
4. N/A
5. N/A
6. N/A
7. N/A
8. {no response}
9. Yes. No trips except receptions.
10. {no response}
11. {no response}
12. N/A

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. Great! Edifying!
2. The evening lecture is rough because we're so tired!
3. Yes—the talk was helpful.
4. Yes. Fragments lecture was the best.
5. It was too much given the boot camp nature of our learning experience.
6. Could have done without.
7. I really enjoyed the opening night lecture—wasn't able to make it to Tuesday's reception.
8. The lecture by Ray Clemens was fascinating and germane to our subject.
9. Receptions only. Perhaps a visit to Yale Museum might have been appropriate.
10. {no response}
11. Yes.
12. Yes. The dinner was a nice way to meet people before class began, and the talk on Tuesday evening provided a further educational experience.

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

1. More time on individual projects.
2. BAS is my hero!
3. Spend a good deal of time preparing!
4. {no response}
5. Do some research on your manuscripts beforehand.
6. {no response}
7. Do all the prep reading! But take it and have all the fun!
8. If you're primarily a librarian rather than a medieval historian, literature specialist, or paleographer/codicologist, prepare yourself with some reading on medieval texts and intellectual history...I can work on a list of suggested readings

- if you'd like.
9. Same instructor, same syllabus.
 10. The project is a very important part of the course so choose your manuscript wisely! (Take advantage of the fact that the Beinecke has lots of interesting/problem manuscripts.)
 11. {no response}
 12. Apply early for a scholarship. I did not realize that the RBS scholarship deadline is so far in advance of the regular course deadline. As a consequence, I had to pay for much of the course out of pocket, which is expensive for those of us working in regional public universities.

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

1. When in doubt, just describe what you see!
2. What an intelligent, lively, and dedicated educator. What an honor to learn from her. And Alex Reider was awesome, too!
3. Sic igitur ad astra!
4. {no response}
5. illegible ink
slowly comes into focus
in only five days (!)
6. Fantastic.
7. THE. BEST.
8. The lyf so schorte, the crafte so long to lerne...Except when you receive a lifetime of medieval studies knowledge so pleasantly and fulfillingly crammed into five days! Thanks, BAS and Alex, medieval rock stars!
9. Wonderful.
10. {no response}
11. I'd love to do it once more—only RBS course {illegible} manuscript in twenty-first century.
12. From a medieval Spanish scribe: "The labor of the scribe is the refreshment of the reader: the former weakens the body, the latter profits the mind. Whoever you may be, therefore, who profit by this work, do not forget the laboring one who made it, so that God, thus invoked, will overlook your sins. Amen."

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: 4 (33.33%)

I am retired, and can arrange my own schedule: 1 (8.33%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 2 (16.67%)
No response: 1 (8.33%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

I paid 100% myself: 3 (25%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 1 (8.33%)
My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (8.33%)
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%)
No response: 1 (8.33%)

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 3 (25%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 2 (16.67%)
My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (8.33%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 3 (25%)
I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 2 (16.67%)
No response: 1 (8.33%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 3 (25%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 1 (8.33%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 4 (33.33%)
I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 3 (25%)
No response: 1 (8.33%)

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

Library disciplines:

Library administrator: 1 (8.33%)

Student working toward a/n:

M.L.I.S./M.L.S.: 1 (8.33%)
Ph.D./D.Phil: 3 (25%)

Professional educator:

Lecturer/adjunct: 2 (16.67%)
Assistant professor: 3 (25%)
College/university administrator: 1 (8.33%)

Other occupations/vocations:

Post-doctoral fellow/researcher/scholar: 1 (8.33%)