

## **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. Very useful. I think paring down the list would actually create a clearer narrative for the seminar.
2. Yes, good readings. Stimulating.
3. Reading list was very extensive, and we really only talked about two pieces in any sustained way. The act of distinguishing reading of particular importance was especially helpful in preparation for the course, especially with the professional requirements that come with the conclusion of spring term.
4. Yes. No. No. No.
5. Very useful. The pointers to focus on Gell and Carter were much appreciated, especially as I initially got a bit lost myself wading around in folders 1 and 2. {private response}
6. We didn't discuss the readings but did regularly refer to some of them. I found it useful to have done the asterisked readings and a few others of interest to me. If we think of this not as a required advance reading list but as a reference list (as I think we should), I suggest adding McKitterick, Clanchy, Ong, and maybe Baxandall.
7. The pre-course readings were too numerous, and since they didn't play much of a role in the course itself, don't seem like they need to be required. That said, the list is a great resource and compilation of readings, so please keep it as a course companion.
8. Pre-course materials were copious, but excellent. I appreciated the asterisk system to allow for judicious choice. Continue to review and use the asterisks!

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, absolutely.
2. I will continue to consult course readings and pedagogical materials.
3. We referenced the workbook only occasionally, but the labs and questions will be helpful for teaching in the future.
4. Workbook was not used much during the course, but will doubtless be invaluable after.
5. Yes, especially the materials on teaching.
6. We didn't use the workbook, but I imagine it will be useful to me as I go back to organize my thoughts and notes in the coming days/weeks.
7. Workbook seems great and teaching tips/advice seemed helpful. Much of what I learned will be useful long after this class.

8. {no response}

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

1. This was comparable to the other RBS courses I've taken, and which I benefitted from immensely.
2. This was (seemingly) much more free flowing and discussion driven, which is what this course calls for.
3. Very different, but useful and productive in a way the others couldn't be.
4. The best, the most capacious (!), the most intellectually engaging, the most provocative.
5. This one was better, for me.
6. Apples and oranges!
7. This has been one of the best RBS courses I've taken. I appreciated how discussion and student driven it was. I also really liked the presentations!
8. This was an excellent theoretical course; a different genre from the skills-based courses.

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. Most helpful was the hands-on work with the books, and the conversations that emerged from that shared, hands-on investigation.
2. I think discussing theoretical approaches to critical bibliography was most useful for me.
3. I learned quite a bit about other fields and disciplines, and I broadened my knowledge of books in general. I will in the future think about bibliography in a more capacious sense.
4. Most provocative was the combination of very close focus on special objects and very wide engagement with the claims of humanism at the largest scale.
5. Tons of new insights, ideas, and plans. Most interesting: mixture of seeing all the books we saw, and hearing the instructor's and fellow participants' insights on those and on matters more generally.
6. All the attention to pedagogy was fantastic. Discussions were great. I was skeptical about our SC presentations but ended up loving that session and learning so much from it. I have no immediate teaching plans/prospects, but so many ideas for when the opportunity comes.
7. Discussion was great and presentations were super interesting! Many of the asides/explanations of things I didn't know about were useful, but I worried they might bore someone who did know these things already.
8. The seminar discussions were extremely thought provoking, and I came away with many new ideas.

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, although I think more of a "workshop" model for talking about one another's projects might have been more useful than "presentations."

2. I think more time could be devoted to exploring a comparative approach to critical bibliography and how to achieve a critical bibliography that includes, and even welcomes, more than just English hand-press books.
3. The nature of the seminar and the course format means that a lot of things remain intriguingly inchoate. But we were always welcome to return to topics of particular interest—and we did not infrequently.
4. Yes. No. Yes—even though we rarely stuck to the syllabus for any given session.
5. Yes. I'm not sure what I hoped to learn, but I did learn a lot and I became much more confident about how to learn more too, for which I'm very grateful.
6. Exceeded my expectations all around. Great mix of discussions, labs, pedagogical tips, instruction about terminology/trade/production methods and technologies.
7. Overall, yes, although this course wasn't exactly "skills" based. I certainly have a better understanding of "critical bibliography."
8. {no response}

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

1. I plan to continue working to find graceful and illuminating ways to bring material investigation and literary culture together. This seminar has been a thought-provoking engagement with strategies for that.
2. In teaching and research. Lots of good ideas were generated on teaching through objects such as teaching a course around a group of objects.
3. Scholarship; pedagogy; career.
4. To advance my thinking, my questioning, and especially my teaching.
5. Having the courage to try to make my work more book oriented; teaching in ways that incorporates books in the room as objects; straying a bit further out of my own field.
6. See Q4.
7. Many of the conceptual/theoretical issues we discussed will inform my current and future scholarship. I also hope to incorporate teaching approaches/methods we discussed.
8. To continue scholarship and to use these approaches to inform my teaching, faculty development, and service roles.

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

1. Academics from mid-graduate school level on. I actually think a course like this could also be helpful to grad students prior to dissertation research.
2. High. Mellon fellows. Academics.
3. Very high. Very different levels of preparation and training, but the seminar's array of disciplinary knowledge and intellectual generosity was truly humbling.
4. At the highest possible level, certainly in my experience.
5. It was pitched exactly at the level of those of us taking it, I thought (mostly junior faculty and graduate students).
6. Very high. I learned so much from my colleagues in the course and feel grateful to them.
7. High. This course is obviously suited for academics perhaps without formal training in traditional bibliography.

8. This is an “upper level” course that is best taken by those who have had significant exposure to bibliography.
- 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. {private response}
  2. {no response}
  3. Many. Too many to recollect here.
  4. {no response}
  5. Seeing things in practice which corrected wrong ideas I’d picked up from just reading about them. The other fellows’ brief presentations in SC were great—almost more interesting than our more formal presentations, though the earlier presentations informed the Friday ones in an important way.
  6. Pedagogical tips; learning about technologies of print.
  7. Not so much moments but the accumulation of insights gained in discussion and in seeing colleague’s projects.
  8. {no response}
- 9) *How could the course have been improved?*
1. More structured discussion of the readings (close reading). More reading one another’s work. More time teaching one another about unfamiliar books.
  2. {no response}
  3. None. I had heard general criticisms of the course before taking it, but I thought it was thoughtfully conceived and executed.
  4. The advance reading list might have been a little more useful if a little shorter.
  5. Can’t think of much. Should we have discussed the readings more? I don’t know—I’m sure we could have if we’d wanted to.
  6. N/A
  7. Fewer readings.
  8. {no response}
- 10) *Do you feel that you got your money’s worth? Would you recommend the course to others?*
1. Definitely.
  2. Yes, and yes.
  3. N/A. Yes, will speak highly of it to next year’s RBS-Mellon cohort.
  4. Absolutely. Yes.
  5. Absolutely.
  6. N/A. Yes.
  7. Yes.
  8. Yes, and yes.
- 11) *If your course made any trips outside of the classroom, do you feel that they were time well spent?*

1. Trips to SC were excellent and galvanizing.
2. {no response}
3. The picnic on Thursday night was a highlight of the week.
4. Time in SC was exceptionally valuable.
5. Time in SC was invaluable.
6. SC—yes.
7. I really enjoyed our sessions in SC.
8. SC visits were worthwhile.

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. {private response}
2. {no response}
3. No answer.
4. {private response}
5. {no response}
6. The lecture was disappointing.
7. Booksellers' Night was fun.
8. {no response}

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

1. In preparing the readings, read for larger questions, without focusing too narrowly. The readings seem to serve more as springboards than objects of analysis.
2. {no response}
3. {no response}
4. It was a privilege {private response} to be able to spend a whole week with  
{Respondent did not finish writing their answer.—RBS staff}
5. Reading Carter's *ABC for Book Collectors* beforehand was well worth it. The other readings are only worth it for a richer experience of the week, even though we didn't discuss them much.
6. {no response}
7. {no response}
8. I believe the theoretical aims of the course can better be served if the attendees have a firm knowledge of bibliography stemming from "DesBib" or "DesBib Lite."

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

1. This was a provocative, immersive, and extended conversation about the stakes of humanistic scholarship and the role of bibliography, a conversation we all needed to freely participate in.
2. Texture on a leaf  
Eight students breathe and attend.  
Footprints and echoes.

3. Capacious.
4. Outstanding.
5. {private response}
6. Three courses is not enough!
7. Delightful.
8. RBS facilitates progress toward being learned; being learned allows one to serve our profession and our communities.

## **Student Data**

*Number of respondents:* 8 (of 8)

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

My institution/employer gave me professional leave time: 2 (25%)

My institution/employer did not give me professional leave; I used paid or vacation days: 1 (12.50%)

I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible summer schedule: 4 (50%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (12.50%)

*Who paid your RBS tuition costs?*

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 8 (100%)

*Who paid your RBS housing expenses?*

I paid 100% myself: 2 (25%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 6 (75%)

*Who paid your RBS travel expenses?*

I paid 100% myself: 1 (12.50%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 6 (75%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (12.50%)

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

**Student working toward a/n:**

Ph.D./D.Phil: 2 (25%)

**Professional educator:**

Lecturer/adjunct: 1 (12.50%)

Assistant professor: 2 (25%)

Associate professor: 1 (12.50%)

**Other occupations/vocations:**

Post-doctoral fellow/researcher/scholar: 2 (25%)