

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. Yes, they were useful. I don't think many others in our class read them, though, which caused a lot of unnecessary questions.
2. {private response}
3. Gaskell was essential pre-course reading. I would have needed a much slower teaching pace had I not read it. Carter's *ABC for Book Collectors* was helpful, but I wouldn't say essential.
4. The email sent in advance about the readings was very helpful. The workbook was also a great resource to take with and use as reference to the material discussed in the lectures.
5. The pre-course reading was good.
6. Pre-course assignments were useful.
7. I thought the pre-course readings were helpful. I only did the required reading. I will go back and look over the rest of the readings now that the class is over.
8. Yes, but students should be told to read only a bare minimum of what's necessary, not more than that!
9. I really enjoyed the book *ABC for Book Collectors*. The descriptive bibliography book was a chore.
10. Yes, they were useful. The videos were enormously helpful for me. Gaskell was so dense I ended up skipping around but *ABC for Book Collectors* was helpful getting through parts of Gaskell.
11. I found Gaskell and Carter to be extremely useful. Regretfully, some suggested readings (Pearson) proved too difficult to find.
12. Pre-course reading assignments were useful, but nothing compares to real world experience, whether through professional experience or RBS courses. The pre-course preparation on collation left me nervous about this aspect of the course, but when we reached this topic in class I realized there was nothing to fear.

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. Workbook was very thorough. It was good to have it in color on the overhead projection and physically in front of me for notes.
2. {private response}
3. The workbook and other materials will go next to my other reference (and published) works on books. {private response}
4. I will definitely use the workbook when I return to my institution. I was able to avoid taking copious notes during the class and that was very nice. Instead, I could

annotate the workbook.

5. I will retain the materials used in class and continue to use them.
6. The content was useful and will continue to be a useful reference.
7. I think the workbook is full of useful information and something I know I will refer to for many years.
8. Yes. I appreciate the color photos of leathers used for book bindings. I like that key quotations were printed in the book, but wonder if Tanselle's rejoinder to Greg's {illegible} for bibliography studies could be included next to it.
9. The materials for class will be used again for my own personal study and research. Very useful.
10. The workbook will hold a coveted position on a shelf near my desk for easy and frequent access.
11. I found DW's workbook to be a very handy complement to his lectures and am certain to refer to it (especially the suggested reading list) in the future.
12. The workbook is an expertly crafted resource that I will refer to often. It has been perfectly designed to align with class discussions and support our understanding of concepts and physical resources. Truly a gem.

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

1. I wish I had taken this one first. Lots of review, but just as thorough and patiently taught as the other.
2. {private response}
3. This was my first RBS course. I already had high expectations and they were all met.
4. N/A
5. N/A
6. N/A
7. N/A
8. N/A
9. N/A
10. N/A
11. This course was slightly less intensive than "L-30: Rare Book Cataloging" but, insofar as it was more widely varied in topical content, proved to be more intellectually challenging and engaging.
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. The step by step review of each component of a book that might be relevant or meaningful—and all with examples to see in person—was best.
2. {private response}
3. The step by step process of each stage of book production solidified in my mind the nebulous concepts I had in my head, particularly the papermaking and binding.
4. I enjoyed the sessions where we engaged with materials or actively worked through examples. I was able to find some connections with work I am doing in my institution, but now have more background knowledge and guidance about

- where to go for these projects.
5. I greatly enjoyed hearing about how the demands and circumstances of various periods directly impacted and influenced printing.
 6. {no response}
 7. I especially enjoyed the provenance portion. This is most relevant to the questions I answer at work.
 8. The typesetting experience was critical for understanding the way books are put together.
 9. While much of the information was repeated info from my job, there were more than enough topics to keep me interested, including corrections to some information I thought I knew to be correct, but wasn't.
 10. I can't pick just one or a few. Most of this class was interesting. Six hours a day for five days is a lot of time, and I think the time was used wisely. I think my new knowledge will be very helpful in my near future.
 11. For myself, I felt like the sections dealing with provenance and binding were the most relevant and fruitful, and I am certain that my cataloging will benefit. The section on collation gives me some notions towards ameliorating institutional praxis.
 12. This was a remarkable overview of book production in the hand-press period with emphasis on the necessary technicalities and applications of bibliography. I feel much more secure in my understanding of early printed books, and I feel that the doors to the world of bibliographic description have been opened.
- 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. No. Yes.
 2. {private response}
 3. I came with high expectations and they were all met.
 4. Yes, it was exactly what was promised and more. The instructor brought personal knowledge and background that added to the information in the class.
 5. I wish that more time had been spent on teaching collation. It is a complex process and deserves more attention and explanation.
 6. I received a very good introduction to the subject, and suggestions for further study.
 7. I feel like everything I expected to be covered was. While many of the topics could be covered extensively, I feel like the most important aspects were addressed to give us a solid ground to build upon.
 8. More or less.
 9. DW is great and his love of books comes through with his endless knowledge on certain topics. I actually learned more than I expected.
 10. Yes, and then some! I bet the first time DW taught this class it was good. The second time, probably great. This was his tenth time! He's got this down, and we as students get all the benefits.
 11. I was unsure of what to expect, but the survey nature of the course has given me a very useful working introduction to aspects of bibliography I was heretofore ignorant in, and points towards future areas for self-improvement. Bibliographical description is probably the most difficult part to cover in so short a time. Perhaps

add a bit more on the history of bibliomania.

12. Yes.

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

1. To work with printed materials during my dissertation research next year. I'm thinking some personal collation records will be useful to track what I've seen as I move around.
2. {private response}
3. I am interested in book history, though with a more artifactual approach, and I see this course helping in that interest.
4. I now have more confidence in my understanding of the topic and can go back to my institution to connect better with catalogers, researchers, and students using our rare book collections.
5. I intend to apply it to my cataloging work as fully as possible.
6. {no response}
7. I hope to have a better understanding of the material I work with, and to be able to answer questions from our library patrons.
8. Bibliography for further reading. Now I know where to go for further questions about physical features of book format. I understand key distinctions for catalog entries when I read and consult rare books.
9. The knowledge I acquired here will help me tremendously both in my own study of books and in my job helping researchers find answers.
10. Help to assess the collection of my institution and evaluate possible future acquisitions.
11. I am going to apply that which I have learned to my cataloging and mentoring, and take the expanded sense of what remains for me to learn to direct further intellectual growth (via reading, training, and more RBS courses).
12. Hopefully throughout a long career in scholarship and special collections librarianship.

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

1. First time RBSers or early grad students new to bibliography or book history.
2. {no response}
3. Rare book cataloger, scholar of the book, special collections librarian, book trade person.
4. I think a librarian or bibliophile would have the most application for this information, but it was presented in a very approachable way so others interested could benefit as well.
5. I would advise a well-read, historically curious, and/or generally literary person to take the class.
6. Someone looking for an introduction to the study of hand press era books would benefit from this course. This class will help someone trying to decide upon an area of concentration within the subject.
7. I think anyone who works in a special collections library would benefit.
8. Good level of clarity for all levels.
9. Anyone interested in books should take this class. While it's helpful to know some

- terms, I believe anyone of any level of intellect could take this course.
10. Anyone with a serious interest in bibliographical principles. It was a perfect first RBS class for me. There were twelve of us in class, and all were interested enough to ask questions throughout. No one sat quietly and simply observed. We were engaged.
 11. I found the intellectual level to be intensive, but manageable. I would strongly advise newer rare book world initiates to take this course.
 12. I think someone with experience with rare books, but not necessarily with a library degree in special collections, would benefit most from this course. Generally, anyone with a strong interest in book history would benefit from this course.
- 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. Collation formulas and learning how to read them.
 2. {private response}
 3. {no response}
 4. Finding that some of the examples presented in class were from books we also had in our collections (in different editions) was great, and making those connections to how I can improve my own work and descriptions of our books.
 5. When we were shown a single edition of a book apparently printed by five separate printers. The mind boggles.
 6. {no response}
 7. {no response}
 8. {no response}
 9. Too many to name...and I'm getting writer's cramp.
 10. Collation! I could not figure it out from Gaskell. It's tough to learn, and I'll need more practice to become confident, but I made great strides here.
 11. {no response}
 12. I loved setting type, operating the press, and seeing the binding/tooling demonstration. The sheer volume of examples was impressive, and DW's breadth and wealth of knowledge and experience is the greatest treasure of all. Learning the tricks printers and publishers used in their creation processes was like being let in on a secret. Generally, coming to understand what a powerful and illuminating tool bibliography can be was a gift.
- 9) *How could the course have been improved?*
1. More on what descriptive bibliography can be used for, how it has helped us understand something better? Other than that, copies are different.
 2. {private response}
 3. I personally would have loved more time at the workshops to systematically work through descriptions, but I was the only one.
 4. {no response}
 5. I wish more time had been spent on the practice of collation.
 6. {no response}
 7. I think during the collation portion it would have been helpful to go through a few examples step by step with DW versus doing some on our own then checking the

answer sheet.

8. More interactive sessions. Imposition or book sewing exercises that students could do themselves. Very difficult to follow when it's all being done for you and hard to take in anything. Found it hard to stay engaged when being talked at for longer than fifteen minutes at a time. Need to be told to do things or asked questions.
 9. One week is not enough time. Two weeks might be better.
 10. Can't think of one thing. I greatly appreciated the self-paced collation sessions—no quizzes or teacher calling on a student randomly.
 11. In my estimation, collation exercises might be more beneficial to be conducted as instructor-led group exercises.
 12. {no response}
- 10) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? Would you recommend the course to others?*
1. Yes. Yes.
 2. {private response}
 3. Yes, and yes.
 4. Yes, it was a great experience.
 5. Yes, and yes.
 6. Yes.
 7. I do and I will.
 8. Yes.
 9. Yes, and yes.
 10. Yes, and yes.
 11. Hell yes!
 12. Yes. I would recommend this course to others.
- 11) *If your course made any trips outside of the classroom, do you feel that they were time well spent?*
1. {no response}
 2. {private response}
 3. Yes. The SC visit, in fact, felt a bit rushed.
 4. N/A
 5. Yes, absolutely! The visit to SC was sensational!
 6. Yes.
 7. Our trip to SC was very worthwhile. I also enjoy seeing other special collections libraries and their materials.
 8. Yes. Loved Josef Beery's print demonstration. He's a dynamic and engaging explicator.
 9. Absolutely. It was another opportunity to see and experience another library and area of collections.
 10. Yes. Always good to head to SC!
 11. Absolutely. The materials reviewed in the SC library were most illustrative.
 12. Yes. Seeing the UVA SC holdings was extremely enjoyable and helpful.
- 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. {no response}
2. {private response}
3. Yes. The sample books of bindings were of particular help, as was the leather identification stage (though I wanted more there).
4. N/A
5. Yes, the extra collating workshop was very welcome.
6. {no response}
7. I thought the dinner outing was enjoyable, and the lecture was very interesting.
8. {no response}
9. The workshop ran a little later than I would have liked, otherwise everything was what I expected.
10. {no response}
11. I've always found the evening events engaging regardless of immediate relevance.
12. Yes, both the lecture and the collation practice were interesting and useful in their own ways.

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

1. Do the preliminary reading even if it seems unclear before the class starts.
2. {no response}
3. {no response}
4. It sounds like it could be overwhelming, but the material and information was made very approachable and it was well worth the time.
5. {no response}
6. Reading the required texts will prepare you for the broad range of topics covered in a short period of time.
7. {no response}
8. {no response}
9. {no response}
10. It's worth it.
11. {no response}
12. Don't be nervous about collation. It's really not as scary as it seems.

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

1. Great, as usual.
2. {private response}
3. Ironically, it's a rare opportunity to think so much about books while attending school.
4. Do it.
5. Consciousness-raising.
6. {no response}
7. An extremely worthwhile experience where you will learn new things and make many great connections with other people in the library world.
8. In general, a well-organized course with a patient, clear, and knowledgeable

- instructor. I appreciate all the time put into selecting sample books, putting together the PowerPoint presentation, and the instructor's dedication. I was impressed by how friendly, useful, and pleasant the staff members were.
9. I wish I could spend one more week exploring the antiquarian bookshops, however, I came on a limited budget so it's probably good I didn't get that opportunity.
 10. Thank you RBS staff, especially DW for a fantastic class. Well done!
 11. Haikus are real hard
So are RBS courses
But it is worth it
 12. {no response}

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: 10 (83.33%)
My institution/employer did not give me professional leave; I used paid or vacation days: 1 (8.33%)
I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible summer schedule: 1 (8.33%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

- I paid 100% myself: 3 (25%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 7 (58.33%)
My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (8.33%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive part; my institution/employer paid the rest: 1 (8.33%)

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

- I paid 100% myself: 6(50%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 5 (41.67%)
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: 4 (33.33%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 7 (58.33%)
My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (8.33%)

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

Library disciplines:

Cataloger/metadata librarian: 1 (8.33%)

Curator: 1 (8.33%)

Library assistant/clerk: 3 (25%)

Special collections librarian: 2 (16.67%)

Other: 1 (8.33%)

Student working toward a/n:

M.A./M.S.: 1 (8.33%)

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

Book trades:

Auction house staff: 1 (8.33%)

No response: 1 (8.33%)