

Michael F. Suarez, S.J.
G-70 (I): Advanced Seminar in Critical Bibliography
4–9 June 2017

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. Advance reading was immensely helpful, in that I need to process the questions brought up in them way before I sit and discuss in the RBS course.
2. The readings were helpful, but too abundant. I would have preferred fewer readings so that I could digest them slowly. The PDFs would have been more helpful had they been listed on Dropbox in CHRONOLOGICAL order by topic. It's hard to read something published in 2011 before something published in 1987.
3. While I didn't get a chance to finish all the readings, those I did were quite interesting, and the list is extremely helpful as a basic bibliography of the discipline.
4. Yes.
5. The pre-course readings assigned were fabulous. It was—very happily—virtually my sole reading material outside of work for two or more months before the course, and beautifully geared to the subject matter of the course.

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. Most of them look wonderful, which I keep to reflect on my own pedagogy.
2. The course materials were great and I 100% plan to use them in my teaching.
3. Yes, as someone who is planning to add bibliographical material to existing courses, and to design a new course on the history of the book, I found the pedagogical sections very helpful.
4. Yes, content was useful.
5. The thematic exhibitions organized and presented by Barbara Heritage were thoughtful and extremely enriching of the themes of the course.

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

1. It was one of the tops. I am completely satisfied with what I have experienced in this class.
2. Apples and oranges. Others were about skill acquisition. This was about theories and ideas.
3. This one had the best combination of theoretical discussion and practical instruction.
4. About the same—very good.
5. Both courses—"DesBib" and this one—were fabulous.

- 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. Different labs for this course led me to think a lot about how I could teach book history and bibliography in my own institution. Also, the reflections on the advance reading redirected my new research agenda.
 2. I found our long discussions about bibliographical theory, anchored in books, to be the most useful.
 3. As a manuscript scholar, I learned a great deal of useful information on the history of the book; I also picked up a great deal of helpful information for comparative studies.
 4. This course helped me to think about my pedagogy.
 5. Integrating material culture, archaeology, art history, and especially archival issues with bibliographical issues was, of course, the point of the course.
- 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. I think I learned a lot. It could have been even better, however, if there were more non-western materials to compare and discuss.
 2. Yes. No. Yes.
 3. Yes, the course delivered!
 4. {no response}
 5. If not all the skills, many of them. The only thing we didn't do that we could have was to go back to the question asked in the application—what intervention were we trying to make? But there was much food for thought for us to work on this ourselves later.
- 6) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*
1. Mostly in developing my research agendas.
 2. The ideas we discussed will help me refine my research questions and will improve my teaching.
 3. I plan to develop some of the pedagogical materials in my own classes, and pursue some of the comparative leads.
 4. To become a better teacher.
 5. To continue thinking through these issues on my long-term project.
- 7) *Please briefly describe the intellectual level of the course. What sort of person might benefit the most from taking it?*
1. I think this course is best suited for academics, considering the sophistication of issues discussed.
 2. I think someone with 1–2 years of experience would benefit. Definitely for grad students.
 3. Faculty.
 4. {no response}
 5. Very, very high! Clearly, teachers of book history—which I am not—would benefit

the most.

- 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. I learned a lot from other participants’ presentations on their own research.
 2. They were mostly scattered. The “aha!” moments came from other students’ comments a lot of the time.
 3. I really enjoyed the labs in which we looked at Diderot’s marginalia, and discussed the Pope editions and Tristram Shandy.
 4. Thinking about the communal effort of producing the written word.
 5. Many “aha” moments—still digesting it all!
- 9) *How could the course have been improved?*
1. Again, it is so Euro-American centric. Inclusion of more non-western contexts would be wonderful.
 2. I wish we’d had fewer readings and spent more time debating them together.
 3. More digital humanities!
 4. {no response}
 5. See Q4. Should be a way to make time available to review a few specific materials.
- 10) *Do you feel that you got your money’s worth? Would you recommend the course to others?*
1. By all means.
 2. N/A
 3. Definitely.
 4. {no response}
 5. Yes, and yes.
- 11) *If your course made any trips outside of the classroom, do you feel that they were time well spent?*
1. Yes, the visits to SC were great.
 2. The SC visits were great.
 3. Yes, the time in SC was great.
 4. {no response}
 5. Yes—many trips to SC were fabulous.
- 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 really enjoyed the lecture on Monday. It was another source of intellectual inspiration.
 2. {no response}
 3. The lecture was interesting.

4. Yes, the lecture was good.
5. Deborah McGrady's talk was great.

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

1. Try to complete the advance reading and spend some time to reflect on them.
2. This course would be AMAZING for Ph.D. students in pre-dissertation phase.
3. Try to read as much as possible.
4. {no response}
5. Because the bulk of attendees are Mellon Fellows, be prepared (if you are not one) for perhaps more discussion of how to use materials, discussion points, insights, approaches to teaching (i.e., pedagogy) than may be of interest to you.

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

1. Beyond expression.
2. Exhilarating collegiality.
3. Great books (and manuscripts)!
4. Ad majorem libri gloriam.
5. Extremely intense, (good) headache inducing. It's a very great privilege to have MFS as instructor, no doubt about it.

Student Data

Number of respondents: 5 (of 5)

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

I am self-employed, and can arrange my own schedule: 1 (20%)

I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible summer schedule: 4 (80%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

I paid 100% myself: 1 (20%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 4 (80%)

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 1 (20%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 4 (80%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 1 (20%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 4 (80%)

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

Professional educator:

Assistant professor: 4 (80%)

Other occupations/vocations:

Book collector: 1 (80%)