

Information Guide | Amherst

Welcome to Rare Book School!

FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS, the bibliographical community has been supported and nourished by the work of Rare Book School (RBS). From its tentative beginnings at Columbia University, the School has educated two generations of librarians, collectors, academics, conservators, and booksellers, producing a network of loyal alumni, talented faculty, and dedicated friends around the globe. In the process, it has also earned a reputation as the world's premier institution for the study of bibliography and book history. We are delighted that you will soon be a part of that distinguished tradition, and of our School's promising future. We look forward to welcoming you to Amherst for your Rare Book School course.

This information guide should answer most of your questions about transportation, housing, and other practical matters. Upon arrival, you'll also receive a copy of the *Student's Vade Mecum* with additional information to ensure that your stay is as productive and enjoyable as possible. (N.B. Please bring the present guide with you when you come to RBS; it contains valuable information not repeated in the *Vade Mecum*.) In the meantime, we eagerly await your arrival, and look forward to another wonderful year!

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RARE BOOK SCHOOL

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About Amherst



AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS, is a town of just under 40,000 people, located eighty-seven miles from Boston, and 157 miles from New York City in the Connecticut River Valley. It is home to three of the colleges in the Five Colleges

Consortium: Amherst College, Hampshire College, and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. While the town's roots are historically agricultural, now there is a distinct focus on academia and political activism, with much of the workforce employed by the three colleges and the businesses that support them.

Other areas of interest to the RBS constituency may include: the Emily Dickinson Museum (280 Main Street), the W. E. B. Du Bois Library of the University of Massachusetts Amherst (154 Hicks Way), the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art (125 West Bay Road), the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College (41 Quadrangle Drive), and the Yiddish Book Center (1021 West Street).

This year, Amherst College's Robert Frost Library (61 Quadrangle Drive; 413-542-2373) hosts "A History of Native American Books & Indigenous Sovereignty," taught by Michael Kelly, Head of Archives & Special Collections at Amherst College, and Kiara M. Vigil, Assistant Professor of American Studies at Amherst College.

We're excited that you've decided to join us in Amherst this summer, and we want to do all we can to deliver an exceptional educational experience. If you have any questions about the courses, or about RBS generally, please email us at rbsprograms@virginia.edu.

The RBS Week

All RBS students are expected to be in attendance and on time for all regularly scheduled classes, labs, and field trips. This is to ensure the quality and community of RBS as a school, and we insist that participants attend all sessions of their courses, unless presented with the most extraordinary of circumstances. Practically speaking, this involves a full-time commitment of 4:30–6:45 PM Sunday, 8:30 AM–4:45 PM Monday through Thursday, and 8:30 AM–4 PM Friday. Please make your travel plans accordingly!

SUNDAY, 4:30 pm **Registration**

RBS students will convene (location TBD) to receive a copy of the *Student's Vade Mecum* and a name badge. Then, students are welcome to head to the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art (125 West Bay Road) for a Pioneer Valley Book Fest roundtable event at 5 PM.

N.B. If you plan to attend this event, RSVP by email (rbsprograms@virginia.edu) no later than 31 May.

Late arrival: We strongly suggest attending the Sunday night registration, but if you are unable to make it, please email us (rbsprograms@virginia.edu) and let us know. If you do not attend, you will need to register in the library's lobby at 8:30 AM sharp on Monday morning.

MONDAY through THURSDAY

8:30 am* **Final Registration (Monday only)**
Registration for those not in attendance Sunday evening.

8:30–10 am* **First Period**

10–10:30 am **Morning Break**

10:30 am–12 pm* **Second Period**

12–1:30 pm **Lunch**

Class breaks for lunch. There are several restaurants in the neighborhood surrounding the college as well as the college's dining hall.

1:30–3 pm* **Third Period**

3–3:30 pm **Afternoon Break**

3:30–4:45 pm* **Fourth Period**

** Required activities are noted by asterisk*

FRIDAY

8:30–10 am* **First Period**

10–10:30 am **Morning Break**

10:30 am–12 pm* **Second Period**

12–2 pm **Lunch**

Classes break for a long lunch. By tradition, though not compulsion, students take their instructor to a group lunch on Friday. Advance reservations are strongly recommended.

2:30–3:30 pm* **Third Period**

3:30 pm* **Course Evaluations**

Students receive course completion certificates and fill out RBS course evaluations.

4 pm **Farewell Reception**

Celebrate the week with drinks and light snacks. Location TBA.

TUESDAY, 5:30 pm **Evening Lecture**

Join your classmates for a lecture with a reception to follow. More details to be announced via email in May.

Look out for more details about your course via email in early May!

Before You Arrive

Reading Lists

Most RBS courses have advance reading lists or assignments that RBS instructors expect their students to complete before they arrive. These are outlined at www.rarebookschool.org/reading.

Students should come to class prepared. Those who have trouble locating required readings might try obtaining them through interlibrary loan (ILL), from used or antiquarian booksellers through the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America (ABAA), or online via sites such as www.bookfinder.com or www.vialibri.net.

Arrival & Departure Logistics

When thinking about your transportation arrangements, please remember that staying over Friday night after the last day of class can be an excellent idea, if you can swing it. Early-evening ground and air travel is seldom much fun anywhere, but it can be especially difficult to get to Boston from Amherst. Arriving a day early may also be a good idea, as it can provide an opportunity to settle in, overcome jet lag, &c. RBS first-timers are often surprised by the intensity of the experience, so be sure to get some sleep before classes start!

Problems

Please let us know if you encounter any problems on any front. If such problems occur before you arrive, email (rbsprograms@virginia.edu) or telephone us (434-924-8851, 8:30 AM–5 PM; voicemail after hours). If you encounter issues with tuition payments, contact RBS Accounting Specialist Michael Taylor at 434-243-2920, or by email: michael.taylor@virginia.edu.

Should any difficulties arise during the course, please bring your concerns to a faculty member or a course follower or contact us at Rare Book School.

Accommodations

RBS has reserved space with Amherst College Conferences and Special Events. Dormitory reservations for the Amherst session will be made through RBS and our participants will have sole use of Charles Drew Residence Hall. The dorm rooms are all singles unless you request to room with a friend; the cost is \$42 per person per night. Each reservation comes with a pillow and a summer blanket. A linen packet containing bed sheets, pillow cases, and towels is available to rent for \$15 per person. There is no elevator in Charles Drew Hall but there are rooms on the first floor and a shower chair can be requested. There are coin operated laundry machines in the Hall. Please note that this residence hall is not air conditioned, but the windows do open. For more information, or to receive the registration form and payment information, please contact RBS Program Manager Laura Perrings at laura.perrings@virginia.edu.

RBS students will also have access to the Amherst College Valentine Dining Hall (59 College Street). The dining hall is cash only, pay upon entry style. Breakfast is \$9, lunch is \$12, and dinner is \$14.

Transportation

Air Travel

Getting to Amherst College by air can be achieved by using either of two nearby airports. The closest airport to Amherst College is Bradley International Airport (BDL) in Connecticut. It is about an hour from campus and has a few shuttle services available. Logan Airport (BOS) in Boston is about two and a half hours away from campus but is serviced by the same shuttle services as Bradley. These shuttle services include Valley Transporter (<http://www.valleytransporter.com>; 413-253-1350), Seemo Shuttle (<http://www.seemoshuttle.com>; 800-908-2829), and Bluebird Airport Shuttle and Car Service (<http://www.bluebirdairporttransportation.com>; 413-221-4512). Many cab companies in the area have fixed rate airport prices as well.

Driving to and around Amherst

The main north-south highway to Amherst is I-91. To get to town you'll want to take exit 19 or 20 to Route 9 east to Route 116 south. Reaching Amherst from the east or west will also involve I-91 which you'll reach by taking I-90 to Exit 4. The weather should not be a problem for the highways in June, but be sure to check the major highways for other traffic delays just in case.

While Amherst College is in Amherst proper and thus within easy walking distance of most things in town, there are Zipcars available on all Five Colleges campuses if you should wish to drive into the surrounding areas of Western Massachusetts.

Parking

Parking on Amherst College campus is restricted between 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM. During this time guests are asked to park in town or to get a temporary permit from the College Police Department for extended on-campus parking. Much of the town parking is also metered, so parking can be tricky. You can learn more about these parking regulations and attain a short term permit from the College's Summer Programs Office. For general College parking rules and regulations please visit: <https://www.amherst.edu/services/parking#visitors>.

Taking the Bus

Depending on your point of embarkation, there are two bus services you could use to reach Amherst. From New York City, Megabus (<https://us.megabus.com>) has daily service to Amherst through Hartford and Burlington. From New York or other locations, Peter Pan Bus lines runs a regular service to Amherst in partnership with Greyhound. For more information please visit: <https://peterpanbus.com>.

Transportation (continued)

Taking the Train

While no passenger train currently serves the old Amherst station, the Vermonter line of Amtrak does service the nearby Northampton station (NHT) twice daily, once northbound and once southbound. The Northeast Regional also runs between Washington, DC (WAS) directly to Springfield, MA (SPG) twice daily Monday to Friday with three weekend options. If the more direct options don't fit your schedule, Amtrak runs connector shuttle trains from New Haven, CT (NHV) to Springfield (SPG). There are four weekday options and four weekend options, with an extra Sunday train.

To get from Northampton or Springfield to Amherst, you'll have to make use of the various bus options in the area or take a cab. From Northampton, a reliable yet affordable way of getting to Amherst College is via the college bus system. As part of the Five Colleges Consortium, Amherst College has access to the bus system shared by the University of Massachusetts Transit System and the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority. These buses run a variety of routes between all five of the colleges. The 39 or 43 buses are likely the most direct route from the Northampton Amtrak station. Please check <http://www.pvta.com/schedules.php> for bus schedules and routes. The best way to get from Springfield to Amherst is probably to take a Peter Pan bus or a cab. The Five Colleges buses do have routes that reach all around Springfield, but using them to get to Amherst would be unnecessarily complicated.

Advance Advices

What to Bring

At RBS, dress is business casual for all events. Summer in Amherst is generally warm, with highs averaging 79 degrees, and nights at about 57 degrees. The room we use at the Frost Library tends to maintain a cool temperature, so if you chill easily under air-conditioning, *you should certainly bring a sweater*. In general, a light rain jacket or umbrella is also a good idea.

RBS participants are encouraged to come to class prepared, and are required to be on time. Bring a watch. If you wish to take notes, plan accordingly. Pencils, paper, and other supplies are available at nearby convenience stores. Before leaving home, check both the H-150 course description website and its reading list for specific instructions on what to bring. (It is not, for instance, always necessary to bring copies of your advance reading.)

Pharmacies & Medical Facilities

For RBS students, the nearest pharmacy will be the CVS located at 76 North Pleasant Street, about a ten minute walk north of the Frost Library (413-253-9307). While the store itself is open daily, 8 AM–10 PM, its pharmacy hours are Mon–Fri, 9 AM–8 PM; Saturday, 10 AM–6 PM; Sunday, 10 AM–5 PM.

The closest emergency room is at the Cooley Dickinson Healthcare Center (listed as Amherst Medical Associates on Google Maps), located at 170 University Drive, about one and a half miles west of the Frost Library (non-emergency phone: 413-549-7080). As always, if you need immediate help, dial 911.