

Benjamin Nourse & Kurtis Schaeffer
H-140: The History & Culture of The Tibetan Book
22-27 July 2018

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. Pre-course reading materials were well chosen.
2. They were great, but I wish I had received them a few weeks earlier.
3. The readings were essential. Maybe not in toto, but if you haven't read at least half, you may be overwhelmed.
4. Very useful!
5. The pre-course readings were extremely helpful, though I think Kurtis's book should be "required," not "recommended."
6. Very helpful. Regretted not self-directing more study of Buddhism and Tibetan history.
7. Yes, the reading assignments were useful. Some of them were new to me, and it helped me to think of new questions with which I would approach the class. I also read some articles. I think if you can recommend journals to browse (whether area-specific or not), that would be wonderful.
8. Yes, it was all helpful, particularly to a student not familiar with the subject matter in advance.
9. The readings were excellent. Additions might include a short selection of primary materials, for example, KS's translation of "The Boy Who Wrote Sutras on the Sly."
10. Yes, the pre-course readings were extremely relevant. I wish I had more time to do the supplementary reading. The additional preparation I did was to review my notes and some reading from Soren Edgren's "H-85: The History of the Book in China" 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. Content was useful and appropriate. I will continue to use the abundant materials received.
2. {no response}
3. I enjoyed the content although more descriptive labels would have been nice. For talking about specific features and items it may have helped for everyone to gather around the object while the teacher explained. Passing it around was fine, but by the time you can examine it, the course has already moved on.
4. The materials were appropriate and useful. Perhaps, if possible, it would be helpful to distribute the workbook ahead of time.
5. The workbook was helpful, but I wish it had been given to us earlier. Also, with so many handouts, an RBS folder would have been a nice addition to help keep everything straight.

6. Very appropriate. Will definitely keep materials for reference.
7. I really like the handout sheets and enjoyed the multi-media components in the class. I didn't get to delve deeper into the descriptions in the workbook, which included a lot of useful information. Once I go back, I plan to take some time to process/review using the handouts.
8. The teaching material was good. The list of resources could be refined and perhaps numbered...particularly for those who do not read Tibetan.
9. All content and handouts were extremely useful and I'll be using them as references into the future.
10. The workbook was extremely informative. Would it be possible to distribute this in advance (even an electronic surrogate)?

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

1. N/A
2. {no response}
3. It was very good.
4. N/A
5. I liked this one much better!
6. All of the highest quality.
7. N/A
8. This was one of my favorites—good hands-on exercises. Blue Annals and student assignment were particularly interesting.
9. N/A
10. This course was similar to Soren Edgren's "H-85: The History of the Book in China" course. Both included knowledgeable and engaging teachers with many relevant visual artifacts.

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. I liked the hands-on experience with books, especially at LC.
2. {no response}
3. The discussions of how the book functions culturally were very important. There is so much more to it (i.e., the book) than just paper and ink.
4. I enjoyed everything, but the trip to LC was worth the price of admission alone.
5. This course was wonderful—it deepened my knowledge of the material, and gave me new insights every day.
6. Discovering the significance of the cult of the book in Tibetan culture. Discovering a culture with a strong reverence for handcraft.
7. The parts on production, labor, and cost were really interesting. I think it's in order to appreciate the scale of these projects, {illegible} the {illegible}, be it the amount of silver used or the number of blocks carved. It really helped to drive home the point. {Illegible} is the opportunity to actually {illegible} the actual object.
8. Talking with the Tibetan curators and practitioners. Learning about the research areas of other students.
9. I would have trouble creating a hierarchy of relevance. The entire course was excellent. I appreciated how the instructors put things in a clear historical context.

10. I especially enjoyed hearing/seeing information about printing houses, the notable editions they produced, and tensions between them. Viewing a wide range of Tibetan pechas was useful and I will share images of those with musical notation with a colleague working on chant.
- 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. Both instructors were extremely well informed and competent.
 2. {no response}
 3. Yes. I can't think of anything.
 4. Yes!
 5. The instructors were great!
 6. Yes, my expectations were met.
 7. Yes, the instructors came very prepared with their presentation and handouts. Given the various angles from which this topic could be approached, I felt they did a wonderful job in giving a holistic overview of the larger academic discussion surrounding Tibetan book and print culture.
 8. Yes. They were fantastic, especially since they were teaching for the first time. I was impressed at how well it went.
 9. The instructors went above and beyond in delivering information and room to develop skills.
 10. Yes. No. Yes. Instructors were amazing, knowledgeable, and widely experienced, having visited many places of book production.
- 6) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*
1. The knowledge I acquired in this class will be an enhancement to my own work, which is translating Tibetan texts.
 2. {no response}
 3. {no response}
 4. To further my professional development and research.
 5. The skills developed here will greatly benefit my research.
 6. As a foundation for further study.
 7. I'll be processing the information I gained here. I came here wanting to know more about the topic on a content level while also exploring methodologies to approach book history. We touched on colophons and {illegible} display, and I will be spending some time thinking about what I learned here.
 8. It reinforces some directions I have already taken, in part by having me re-examine and confirm assumptions.
 9. I plan to bring these skills and knowledge to bear on my own research, and I will use many of the resources and images I collected this week in my teaching.
 10. I will apply them to a current project I am working on involving creating Tibetan Buddhist meditation and chant texts.
- 7) *Please briefly describe the intellectual level of the course. What sort of person might benefit the most from taking it?*

1. High intellectual level. Advanced students and professionals would benefit.
2. {no response}
3. It is not greatly demanding, but does require someone who'll read ahead and be prepared. It's not easy either, but outside work is necessary.
4. About as advanced as a graduate seminar. Grad students, junior faculty, librarians, &c.
5. I liked the diverse mix of students who brought different kinds of expertise to the course. Anyone with any interest in Tibetan books, even in passing, would benefit from the course!
6. Being a student of Asian culture would be helpful.
7. I think between someone with either interest in book history, but doesn't have {illegible}, or someone with {illegible} background, but not in book history; the latter would benefit more.
8. The instructors did an excellent job of meeting each of us at the intellectual space we were in. I greatly appreciated the diversity of student backgrounds. It made for a great course.
9. This course requires a high level of engagement with the advance readings and a strong interest in research, whether in conservation, history, language, or the arts. A flexible but high-commitment course.
10. Someone working in academia or engaged in a similar level of research or scholarship.

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. {no response}
2. {no response}
3. I'll remember them ten seconds after turning this in.
4. The LC visit.
5. Seeing the rare Tibetan works at LC was a life-changing experience.
6. Visit to LC, and meeting the curator of the Tibetan collection.
7. I would actually say that the student presentations were a wonderful way to end the course. Given varied individual interest and creativity, it was encouraging to see an academic community forming around the topic of Tibetan book history.
8. The LC treasures were amazing. I was really touched by the role of the book in Tibetan culture.
9. Our times looking at books together when the faculty members wove them into a lecture were particularly compelling. The knowledge the faculty members shared by weaving different sources together put the collection within a rich context for me.
10. Seeing printed chant musical notation, and visiting LC's Tibetan collection.

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

1. {no response}
2. {no response}
3. See Q2. Or joint session with Soren Edgren's course.
4. I think as RBS collects more materials in this area, it will help—not that anything

- was missing, though.
5. When books are passed around, I wish a small note had been included on what it was, and why it was important. Sometimes by the time materials got to me, I had forgotten why we had been looking at them.
 6. Not sure.
 7. I can't think of any suggestions at the moment.
 8. For those who do not read Tibetan, having names/titles and locations written on the board for our notes would have been useful. That being said, they did a great job of integrating Tibetan speakers and non-Tibetan speakers.
 9. I do not have any suggestions for improvement. I hope several courses on Tibetan books will be offered in the future.
 10. No.
- 10) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? Would you recommend the course to others?*
1. Yes—I got my money's worth, and I would certainly recommend it to others.
 2. {no response}
 3. Yes. Yes.
 4. Yes, and yes.
 5. Yes!
 6. Yes.
 7. Yes.
 8. Yes, absolutely!
 9. Yes, I would heartily recommend this course, and am grateful for the grant funding that made my visit possible.
 10. Yes. Yes.
- 11) *If your course made any trips outside of the classroom, do you feel that they were time well spent?*
1. Yes, LC was wonderful.
 2. {no response}
 3. Yes, LC is great. Susan (the librarian) was great, too.
 4. Absolutely, the trip to LC was a highlight for me.
 5. Yes!
 6. Yes.
 7. Yes.
 8. The items at LC were amazing. I found the SC visit less interesting; we maybe only needed half the time. The driver to DC was not the best and added to our delays in getting home.
 9. Yes, our trip to LC exposed us to rich archives and resources, and I think paved the way for us to broaden our research and access to that institution.
 10. Yes.
- 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. {no response}
3. Enjoyed the lecture, but think the woodblock printing should be offered every year.
4. I did not attend any. I appreciated that they were offered, but I was just too exhausted.
5. N/A
6. I would like more interaction with Buddhist practitioners and craftspeople involved in production of traditional Tibetan books.
7. N/A
8. The Tuesday night printing demo was well organized and so much fun.
9. Yes, the printing demo was very helpful. I did not attend Booksellers' Night. One visiting lecturer was also compelling, and it was great that he visited with our class.
10. N/A

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

1. {no response}
2. {no response}
3. Take it. You'll learn a lot and you'll have two of the nicest instructors ever.
4. Do it!
5. Take notes on the pre-readings to help you keep straight what you read when.
6. Excellent course.
7. Not at the moment.
8. Especially if this is a new topic, please do all the required reading. I would have been lost without them. An advanced class in this subject would be well received.
9. Please consider offering an advanced (or Level II) seminar on Tibetan books. I would love to continue with these studies.
10. Please notify students in advance that they will have to write a five-hundred word essay and do a seven-minute presentation.

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

1. Good job!
2. {no response}
3. {no response}
4. Go book nerds!
5. Intellectually invigorating and exhausting, in the best way possible.
6. Definitely delightful.
7. The cult of the book lives on!
8. I fell in love with the topic. If I were twenty years younger, my career might have taken a different path.
9. Thank you.
10. Extremely satisfying.

Student Data

Number of respondents: 10 (of 11)

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

My institution/employer gave me professional leave time: 2 (20%)

My institution/employer did not give me professional leave; I used paid or vacation days:
4 (40%)

I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible summer schedule:
3 (30%)

I am retired, and can arrange my own schedule: 1 (10%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

I paid 100% myself: 3 (30%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 3 (30%)

My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (10%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 1 (10%)

I exchanged goods or services in lieu of tuition: 1 (10%)

I had an RBS course tuition credit from a previous year: 1 (10%)

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 4 (40%)

My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (10%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (10%)

I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 3 (30%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (10%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 5 (50%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 3 (30%)

I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 1 (10%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (10%)

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

Library disciplines:

Conservator/binder/preservation librarian: 1 (10%)

Library administrator: 1 (10%)

Subject specialist/bibliographer: 1 (10%)

Student working toward a/n:

Ph.D./D.Phil: 2 (20%)

Professional educator:

Lecturer/adjunct: 1 (10%)

Associate professor: 1 (10%)

College/university administrator: 1 (10%)

Other occupations/vocations:

Other: 2 (20%)