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M-90: Advanced Seminar in Medieval Manuscript Studies
10–15 June 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. I found the assignments challenging and useful.
2. There were a lot of pre-course reading assignments—all helpful (I'll use the booklet stuff in my dissertation). I'd like to have spent more time discussing the reading, and pairing the theory with examples specifically. Love Marc Smith's scripts.
3. Yes. Extensive, but worthwhile. I admit I didn't do all of the required reading (just the transcriptions), but I think my experience would have been improved by having done so.
4. Yes, they were useful and I do recommend working on them before going to the course. A longer reference list of works on the website would be useful.
5. The readings and prepared assignments were extremely useful. My only word of caution is that skill with Latin and prior familiarity with paleography is HIGHLY recommended. You can get a lot out of the course if you're not well-versed in either of these, but it's worth refreshing or taking the time to learn beforehand (above and beyond the readings).
6. Yes, very useful to know reference works in the field of manuscript studies.
7. The transcription assignments were well-selected—they were adequately challenging, interesting, and from a diverse array of manuscript contexts.
8. Yes. Readings were useful and you will reference them throughout the week, so know the content of them fairly well. Perhaps more online resources or a crowdsourcing of tools between classmates?

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. All great.
2. The material we got during class was really helpful and stuff I've been looking for elsewhere unsuccessfully.
3. More complete bibliography, please! Hard to take organized notes while walking around looking at manuscripts. I wonder if brief slides with overview of script/illustration elements to look out for could be prepared?
4. Yes, although, of course, not everything was equally relevant to my interests.
5. I thought they were very good and I fully intend to use them in the future. They'll be exceptionally helpful for anyone who will continue to work with manuscripts in the future.
6. Yes.
7. I was glad to receive the booklets on scripts, binding, inks, and pigments. I foresee

- them being useful after the course for teaching.
8. Very useful. Don't be intimidated by the pre-course assignments. The transcriptions will take time, but are worthwhile to finish before the class.
- 3) *If you've taken previous RBS courses, how did this one compare?*
1. This has been my favorite course.
 2. A bit of overlap with the pigment and binding sessions, but good to have it reinforced. It's been such a privilege to be able to use the Beinecke like this.
 3. {no response}
 4. I have not.
 5. N/A
 6. Much more intensive than the last one.
 7. N/A
 8. This course was much more intense, with much more hands-on experience. There will be some sight transcriptions on screen, but you will see so many wonderful manuscripts in person.
- 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 particularly enjoyed transcribing, identifying origins of manuscripts, and working on a project. Will assist with future research.
 2. Too many. One Dante plan. Five pages on my dissertation. A renewed zeal to track down images of cats and lions.
 3. Learning features (of text or decoration) particular to specific regions was very interesting and useful; too many project plans to list.
 4. It has helped me understand in a more comprehensive way the manuscript as an object of research.
 5. I have a renewed drive to improve my Latin, certainly. It's also my plan to study paleography more. While I learned so much, I know I need to continue to be exposed to more manuscripts to continue to learn. There's so much left to learn and refine with my skills and knowledge.
 6. Yes, I discovered more materials for my dissertation.
 7. The course was fascinating and reinvigorating! I most appreciated all of the hints for locating manuscripts that BAS shared, and I look forward to applying that knowledge to my future cataloging.
 8. I appreciated the encouragement and also all the manuscripts I viewed in person that I might not have looked at otherwise.
- 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—I learned all I wanted and more.
 2. BAS and Kristen {course assistant –RBS Staff} are amazing. It was so helpful to bounce various ideas off them.
 3. See above (Q2) re: some sort of general overview of material to introduce sessions. Some more comparative work would have been helpful, too. It's easy to identify a

Spanish manuscript when it's in a room of Spanish manuscripts—not quite so when faced with something entirely unidentified. Same re: dating. More side-by-sides of disparate examples.

4. Yes, although there's a limit as to what you can "fully" develop in a week. This is why it is convenient to come prepared and with specific questions ready.
5. Yes. I learned a great deal, but this is the type of course I could take multiple times and STILL learn more from. Again, exposure is the best teacher.
6. Yes. No. Yes.
7. I thought the course syllabus was very thoughtfully constructed—we seemed to cover a semester's worth of content in a week, and I'm very satisfied with what I got out of the course.
8. Yes, the instructor was excellent, helpful, knowledgeable, and an authority in the field—to have her personalized assistance was invaluable.

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

1. Future research. Maybe I will incorporate a chapter on manuscripts into my dissertation.
2. To finish my dissertation, and write a really good book about a book.
3. Improving catalog records, and in the classroom wowing students.
4. I will apply them during my D.Phil. research.
5. I hope to work with manuscripts at some point in my career.
6. I plan to use manuscripts from the Beinecke for my dissertation research.
7. Freelance manuscript cataloging transcription for editions, research with manuscripts, and (hopefully) future teaching.
8. I plan to apply them further to my skills as a cataloger of manuscripts. There is always something to learn in this field, especially from one another.

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.
2. Ph.D. student focusing on manuscripts or book history.
3. Manuscript cataloger; librarian/archivist for specialized collection; or Ph.D. student. Quite technical and detailed.
4. Scholars interested in research will benefit the most.
5. Advanced. This isn't for a beginner; definitely at least Master's students or librarians with a lot of experience with manuscripts. You NEED Latin.
6. Should be very eager to transcribe Latin texts.
7. Graduate students and rare book librarians, and booksellers with experience working with manuscripts, and a background in Latin and paleography.
8. High. You will do well to practice your Latin and pronunciation and grammar, as well as work on the assignments before arriving in New Haven. Have a serious interest in medieval manuscripts and you will be rewarded for your effort in your research.

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. It was a rooster, not a Gual. I really enjoyed the whole course. BAS and Kristen did a fabulous job.
2. Overall, I learned how to articulate my thoughts about manuscripts more coherently and with a more sophisticated and standardized vocabulary.
3. I can collate a manuscript now. Yay!
4. Every time I have worked on a manuscript and I figured out what it was, and how it was composed.
5. Again, for me it was the diverse exposure to so many manuscripts and the expertise of the instructor.
6. Found more material for my dissertation.
7. {no response}
8. I enjoyed the wide variety of original manuscripts (over one hundred and sixty) you'll see in person. A unique opportunity to study script and codicology with some of the best books and descriptions!

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

1. I thought that the pigment and binding presentations were a bit too technical—but that's just me. I would have liked to spend more time classifying scripts. I'm still iffy on certain variants.
2. Have a full-year, multi-term version...oh, wait.
3. Some treatment of documentary hands.
4. It could be imparted over a longer period of time or with a weekend in between.
5. Perhaps a crib sheet explaining the main points or similarities for the various manuscripts and sections.
6. BAS was a delightful presence as a teacher engaged with students.
7. No suggestions.
8. Time spent with research project presentations at times felt short.

10) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? Would you recommend the course to others?*

1. Yes, and yes.
2. Yes.
3. Yes, if you have a solid Latin background (often BAS will comment on content of Latin text without offering translation).
4. Yes.
5. Yes, and yes!
6. Yes. Yes.
7. My institution paid, but yes.
8. Yes, incredibly so. And, yes, I would recommend.

11) *If your course made any trips outside of the classroom, do you feel that they were time well spent?*

1. {no response}
2. No.
3. Parchment/ink and binding sessions were fantastic, but too rushed!

4. Yes.
5. No trips, except to different classrooms.
6. Yes.
7. N/A
8. The class is held primarily in the Beinecke Library.

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. Wish the printing press weren't during lunch.
3. Reception was awkward as hell!
4. Yes.
5. They were all great, especially for socializing and networking.
6. Since they are optional, I would keep them optional because day-long courses take a sustained focus of attention.
7. N/A
8. Yes. They were an opportunity to meet others in the field.

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

1. It's a lot of work, and you should be comfortable and experienced with a variety of scripts, and have good Latin.
2. If you can, work on your manuscript a bit before you come.
3. {no response}
4. Come prepared and work on your specific project before arriving at the course.
5. Feel free to step out of your comfort zones.
6. Make sure to choose a course that is absolutely relevant to your project. I felt that the course provided insights for my dissertation research.
7. Do the assignments before leaving for the course.
8. There is a rather large amount of transcriptions, readings, and assignments, which will seem daunting, but try to parse it out and know that it will help immensely to have these done before you start the course. You hit the ground running with a project to research as well. Come prepared!

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

1. I will be sad to make an "explicit" to this course.
2. Avoid the loquacious scribe.
3. {no response}
4. It's been a wonderful experience and a very intense one.
5. I have been thrown into an ocean of knowledge, and emerged with a cup of water.
6. Intensely satisfying to work with experts who challenged and inspired me in my own research.
7. I'm so grateful that I had the opportunity to work with BAS and all of the manuscripts used in the course—the experience was invaluable for my

- professional development.
8. Fast-paced. Intense. Interesting. Rewarding.

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:
5 (62.50%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

- I paid 100% myself: 1 (12.50%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 1 (12.50%)
My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (12.50%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 5 (62.50%)

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

- I paid 100% myself: 1 (12.50%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 2 (25%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 2 (25%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (12.50%)
I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 2 (25%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

- I paid 100% myself: 2 (25%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 2 (25%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 2 (25%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (12.50%)
I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 1 (12.50%)

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

Library disciplines:

- Cataloger/metadata librarian: 1 (12.50%)
Public services librarian: 1 (12.50%)

Student working toward a/n:

- Ph.D./D.Phil: 5 (62.50%)

Book trades:

- Other: 1 (12.50%)