

Cathleen A. Baker
G-75: Paper as Bibliographical Evidence
12 – 17 June in Charlottesville, VA

Narrative Course Evaluations

1) *Were the pre-course reading assignments useful? Are there any readings that you would like to see added or removed in future years?*

1. Yes.
2. {private response}
3. Yes, the reading lists were very helpful.
4. Yes, they were. Particularly CB's book. I think that reading it should be encouraged over other readings since it really clarifies a lot of the later material we will study in class.
5. YES.
6. I did some of the readings and found them helpful. We reviewed a lot of the information from the instructor's book in class, so it might be helpful to emphasize different readings if one is strapped for time.
7. Yes, the pre-course reading assignments were useful, though I'm not sure the articles about watermarks were necessary since we didn't really focus on that aspect of paper (though I adore watermarks and find them fascinating).
8. Yes—the instructor's book in particular. For required, would add the instructor's chapter on the Baskerville Virgil from "Papermaker's Tears;" would add chapters from Tim Barrett's "European Paper Book" as required. I would remove the older journal articles.
9. Yes.
10. {private response}

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. I loved the course workbook. It might be worth adding extra "notes" pages at the back—I found it easier to take notes in the workbook instead of my regular notebook. I look forward to referring back to it after. And we got free sample paper to keep!
2. The workbook will be very useful to refer back to.
3. The course workbook was very useful.
4. I loved it. CB took a lot of time to create a book that has all of the information I will need going forward in trying to identify paper. I think it's material I will continue to use going forward.
5. YES.
6. The workbook was the anchor of the class lectures. It will certainly be useful though I also took notes to reinforce learning. {private response}

7. Yes, quite useful—perhaps more useful if the pictures were in color rather than printed black and white as this reduced the ability to discern some fine details.
8. Workbook was very helpful: full of information and easy to make notes into! Will be very useful as a reference source.
9. A close rendition of the formal parts of the course. Useful as a place for annotation as we went along, and useful in future as a great summary of the week.
10. Very helpful. The workbook made it easy to follow along, and the materials (like paper) made it easier to practice paper identification skills.

3) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your RBS course? Did you walk away with any “aha!” moments, new ideas, or project plans?*

1. Yes! I can't wait to more closely analyze all the paper in my institution's collection.
2. I have a much better sense of how to talk to people about what printed materials were made of and how to think about the process of making paper.
3. {no response}
4. I have so many ideas now! I want to go back to the books I've been researching as of late and apply all of my new knowledge in order to see if new readings appear. I will also use it in the cataloging process I'm currently going through in my institution.
5. Better appreciation for handmade paper.
6. I now have a much firmer grasp on identifying European papers and some ideas on how to apply that knowledge in research. {private response}
7. I have a greater ability to describe the physical properties of paper in the catalog records I create, which will hopefully be useful to scholars and patrons.
8. I will never look at seventeenth- through twentieth-century paper in the same way again!! Will use the new "tools" I have to examine book paper as I make repairs in books and flat paper items. Many myths were dispelled, which are "aha!" moments.
9. For teaching and bibliographical research.
10. I want to examine so much paper now, and I'm thrilled to practice my papermaking skills.

4) *Did the instructors help you to acquire all the skills and information promised in the course description? Did you learn what you had hoped to learn?*

1. Yes, and more.
2. Yes!
3. Yes, CB was very helpful.
4. Yes! I learned more than what I hoped I would learn. I was not expecting us to have a hands-on workshop and I'm so happy we did. I encourage this course to have it again going forward since it illuminates so much of the process of what papermaking is. I really liked how there were different pedagogical approaches to the subject.
5. YES.
6. {private response}
7. Yes.

8. Yes! I learned much more than I hoped. I learned to let the paper speak through close examination with an open mind. I learned that sometimes questions about a particular paper can't be answered and that was so liberating!!
9. Yes, especially about nineteenth-century paper. Instructor has a wonderful curiosity that benefits the class. Helps us understand not only the what of what we were looking at but also the how and why—and would speculate with us when the answers were not clear.
10. Yes!

5) *Are there other ways in which the course could have been improved?*

1. I think it would be great if it weren't exclusively book paper but did encompass paper in general since many of us work with archival material, art, &c. — it's all interrelated. I think we could have used SC better too and maybe pulled more objects. {private response}
2. {private response}
3. None.
4. I wish we had seen videos for the mechanical papermaking part of the class. Other than that I loved it!
5. More paper samples, more readings related to modern papermaking.
6. I think the helpful sessions handling materials firsthand could have been supplemented by a session where we looked at paper under a microscope, just to reinforce what we were learning.
7. Spending more time with paper samples from Asia and places beyond Western Europe and the U.S. would have been appreciated, if it's possible to work them in a bit more, since we work with those items in our collections and I don't feel as able to describe them as I do the European/American papers.
8. Perhaps a bit more book and flat paper examination time by taking some time from a reduced PowerPoint presentation (since we have the PowerPoint slides as a handout). Loved the far-ranging conversations gleaned from CB's professional life in paper!
9. Some slack time as a result of uncertainty about how much time activities would take in the first iteration of the course. But that gave time for additional questions from the class. Something that went well: observations from students about books they were looking at. The students' inexperience of looking at these features of books meant that a) the instructor could clarify and reinforce important points, and b) the students often came up with observations new to the instructor because they were looking at the examples with fresh and innocent eyes. Some of this occurred without planning and could be formalized in future course planning.
10. I think the order of class sessions should be adjusted. I would have liked more alteration between lecture and practice identifying rather than full days of one or the other.

6) *Who might benefit the most from taking this RBS course?*

1. Anyone who wants to learn more about how paper is made and how you can identify it/various characteristics.
2. {no response}
3. Conservators and catalogers.

4. Catalogers, conservators, and bookbinders.
5. Bibliographers and archivists.
6. People who have never made paper and want to know the basics of identification.
7. Catalogers, dealers, conservators. Any paper and book enthusiast.
8. All walks of book people can benefit from this course, getting the tools to approach paper examination in their own way in their own field!
9. Helps to have some bibliographical understanding into which to integrate this and make it more meaningful.
10. Conservators and librarians.

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

1. I was on scholarship, so hard to say. But YES, I will recommend this course to others!
2. {no response}
3. Absolutely!
4. Yes! and Yes!
5. Yes. Yes.
6. Great course for beginners to the study/analysis of paper in the fifteenth to the nineteenth century.
7. Yes.
8. Yes! Yes!
9. Yes. Yes.
10. Yes.

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

1. Papermaking was AWESOME—but we probably would have benefitted from an additional assistant to help with set up and clean up. SC could have been more productive with more objects.
2. Making paper in the studio was very enlightening. Having someone so knowledgeable with you while you make sense of small differences in paper was informative.
3. Yes! The trip to the papermaking studio was vital to our class.
4. Yes! We made paper at Ruffin Hall and it was an amazing experience.
5. Trip to SC. Only a few books examined but useful.
6. I think we could have examined a great number of items in SC rather than zooming in on just three. The deep dive was helpful but perhaps a balance between depth/breadth? The papermaking workshop was very helpful for beginners.
7. The visit to SC was worthwhile, but I wish we'd been able to handle the materials and see more things. Papermaking in Ruffin Hall was time very well spent.
8. We went to SC to see a few special books, which is always stimulating; but the teaching items in the classroom were so excellent, and we got to hold/examine them, that the SC trip was not as necessary as another course's.
9. Yes; to the papermaking lab. Crucial to understanding class concepts.

10. Yes.

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

1. Do it! You will be hard pressed (ha!) to find a more knowledgeable and generous paper expert than CB.
2. {no response}
3. {no response}
4. I would love to recommend this course or any of CB's courses she gives in the future. She is very attentive to pedagogical practices, she's really generous with her knowledge as well as materials and it was a pleasure being able to learn so much from her. The overarching knowledge that she has about her field is amazing and a definite must to all paper lovers.
5. Read references in advance.
6. You will leave the class confident on identifying wove/laid papers and their properties, as well as the limits of what one can know from examining paper as an object.
7. It was a wonderful class and I so appreciated CB's knowledge and passion for this subject. She's generous in sharing her experiences and all she's learned and I'd take this again in a second.
8. Take it! You will really never look at paper the same way again! You will be armed with great tools for paper examination.
9. {no response}
10. Bring waterproof shoes for papermaking day.

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

1. Come for the books, stay for the hard boiled eggs. Just kidding—fabulous teaching collections! There's nothing like learning directly from the object. :) Thank you!!!
2. {no response}
3. Awesome!
4. I learned a lot. I just wish there was more diversity in the student body.
5. Greatly increased my knowledge of handmade paper.
6. Dandy-roller?
7. {no response}
8. Our class is going to form a rock band called "The Deckle Edgers."
9. As the instructor says (for those who might not know it), everything is complicated!
10. Paper is incredibly exciting (no joke!).