

Tim Barrett & John Bidwell  
H-60: The History of European & American Papermaking  
2–7 June 2019

**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. Yes.
  3. Yes. Though too extensive. This is the last time this course will be taught by these two. Please keep it listed for a few years with the reading lists.
  4. I did not get a chance to do any pre-course reading but don't think that hampered me—already quite familiar with the topic.
  5. Yes.
  6. Very useful.
  7. Yes, useful. I liked how they were split into tiers of importance and type. Required, recommendations.
  8. Pre-course reading set an excellent foundation for the course. I appreciate that there were cost-effective and time-effective options for completing the readings. Also, that extra readings were provided depending on area of interest (paper conservation, history, &c.)
  9. The assignments were useful in providing a broad overview of papermaking.  
{private comment}
  10. Yes, they were very helpful.
  11. Yes—would be nice to see a few suggestions for areas of the world in addition to Asia, US, Europe.
  12. {private comment}
  13. Yes, they are useful.
  14. Yes.
  15. Very useful and well targeted. If this course were to be taught again, would definitely include TB and JB's new books.
- 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. Yes.
  2. Good use of practical images in the workbook. I will definitely be able to use it!
  3. The workbook was relevant but dry. It felt a little stale, with this being their last class.
  4. Updated information would have been appreciated. Some major absences of recent publications.
  5. Very useful.
  6. The quality of a couple of the diagrams was very poor (low resolution).
  7. Yes. The two professors have different lecturing and material/handout styles that complement each other.

8. The workbook was helpful. It was especially helpful for note-taking, so I could actually listen to the instructor instead of furiously scribbling all class long. The graphs and charts about paper chronology and fibers will be especially helpful.
9. It was a great balance between history and hands-on activities.
10. Yes, it was helpful, and I will continue using the workbook.
11. Would love to have copies of slides. Course workbook is great.
12. Organizing the information into categories that correspond to the lecture topics would be helpful for when I refer to the course workbook again in the future, such as in the form of an outline or contents page.
13. The course workbook is very useful. It would be better if we could have it before the course so that we could have more time to read through it.
14. Yes—the entire workbook will continue to be helpful after the course. The bibliography and charts will be particularly good.
15. Teaching materials excellent, especially paper samples and reference books. Materials for papermaking in the paper studio were fun and instructive to work with. Course workbook most helpful as a reference to take home.

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. I will, over the course of the next few months, examine for exhibit purposes the books and manuscripts from my library’s collections. This course will inform my understanding and decisions as a curator.
2. I will use this information every day as a conservator, as I assess the papers that come across my bench.
3. The hands-on component was nice. Too bad we did not have a chance to make a watermarked paper. Lectures and videos were nice as well. And the watermark field exercise.
4. I attended primarily to prepare for an upcoming course in 2020—so to know what was/was not covered here and especially to know how practical papermaking was done, where, equipment, &c.
5. I will need to digest, but an amazing amount of material. Hands-on (papermaking and watermark ID) was especially welcome. I am sure to use much of this in a current research project.
6. Definitely look forward to sharing Asian removable screen papermaking techniques.
7. Yes, my institution uses our library collection as a teaching collection, and I have been wanting to more robustly include paper as material evidence and information into the curriculum and be able to share with the curators and librarians my contribution of paper knowledge.
8. This class was an unexpected history of the cities in which I work and live. I’m going to research some ways to learn more about local papermaking when I return.
9. The main takeaway for me will be a new way of looking at and appreciating everyday objects like paper. I plan to learn more about Japanese and Chinese papermaking traditions using texts in the course packet.
10. Definitely. I’m highly motivated to keep learning about the history of papermaking.
11. Present in my own workplace—have more to offer students and researchers. Help

- to evaluate my own institution's collections.
12. I plan to use the information for considering possible avenues of further research and scholarship.
  13. This course provides a very good starting point to further my study and research on this subject.
  14. I plan to incorporate my new understanding of paper and its history into special collections information literacy sessions, exhibits, reference, and curatorial duties. I also have some new ideas for research.
  15. Will use this new information to study paper (condition, age, and location) in the books I work on. AHA: I want to be a papermaker, too!
- 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.
  2. Yes!
  3. Yes; yes.
  4. I learned new things about a topic I know well, so that was great!
  5. Yes!!!
  6. Yes.
  7. Yes. Yes.
  8. Yes. We got to make paper the very first day, which was a real treat.
  9. Yes!
  10. Yes.
  11. Yes.
  12. Yes. I learned so much in just five days.
  13. Yes.
  14. Yes. The delightful combination of TB and JB offered two experienced, knowledgeable perspectives on the subject—one from the craft and the other from scholarship.
  15. Yes!! Introduction to the skills of making paper and to the history for context and identification.
- 5) *Are there other ways in which the course could have been improved?*
1. {no response}
  2. Visit a mill, but there are none in the area anymore, as JB explained.
  3. A shortened reading list.
  4. More hands-on examination of papers.
  5. N/A
  6. {no response}
  7. No complaints. I enjoyed the break-out sessions and extra care in mixing up the groups so all of us got the best of all worlds. Small-group experience as well as meeting each classmate and having our own discussions.
  8. No, this was a wonderful experience all the way through.
  9. {no response}
  10. It would have been great to be able to make more than two sheets of paper. More practice at the vat. More time for hands-on session. Maybe more vats so people can practice.

11. Clear, written identification of paper samples on display would be nice.
12. {no response}
13. Wish we could have more time to look at the reference collection and some teaching materials that were introduced during the course.
14. More hands-on paper identification.
15. More time in paper studio: evening hours?

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

1. All special collections librarians and archivists.
2. Conservators, library professionals, scholars of material history.
3. Librarians, archivists, rare book folks, dealers, students. The usual crowd.
4. Someone new to the field of paper history.
5. N/A
6. {no response}
7. Those who want a more comprehensive understanding of both a maker's perspective and a socioeconomic/historical-geographical point of view, with a wider picture of papermaking within a week.
8. Anyone, at least anyone who likes fun.
9. As someone who isn't an archivist, conservator, scholar, or papermaker, I still found a lot of value in the course.
10. People related to book arts. Artists, librarians, conservators, &c.
11. Everyone in library work for sure.
12. Graduate students and early career professionals.
13. Conservators, librarians, historians, artists.
14. Archivists, rare book librarians, book artists, collectors, papermakers.
15. People who work with paper as a material in their professional (library, collecting, or craft) lives, so that they can better appreciate its qualities and history.

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

1. Yes.
2. Yes and yes.
3. Yes. Yes.
4. Yes/yes.
5. Yes!!!
6. Yes.
7. Yes, I highly recommend TB and JB. It was an honor to be in the class and absorb through JB's lively lecture style and TB's generosity in hands-on experience with the steps in papermaking.
8. Absolutely.
9. Yes; yes.
10. Yes!
11. Yes, and I hope that future iterations of this course are as good.
12. Yes, absolutely.
13. Yes.
14. Yes, yes.
15. Yes. Yes.

- 8) *If your course made any trips outside of the classroom, do you feel that they were time well spent?*
1. N/A
  2. Trips to Ruffin Paper Studio A++.
  3. Yes. The studio hands-on portion was well managed and thought out.
  4. N/A
  5. N/A
  6. {no response}
  7. N/A
  8. We made trips to the art building to make paper. It was the best.
  9. N/A
  10. {no response}
  11. Studio time was great and essential.
  12. {no response}
  13. {no response}
  14. Hands-on papermaking was invaluable.
  15. Yes—paper studio crucial!
- 9) *Do you have any additional thoughts or advice for anyone considering taking this course in a future year?*
1. Take this course! You will see the world of paper as never before!
  2. {no response}
  3. My condolences—knowing this is the last time it will be offered.
  4. {no response}
  5. N/A—last time course taught ☹
  6. {no response}
  7. At first it seems so overwhelming to approach such a large timespan of European and American papermaking in addition to the brief but important inclusion of other world cultures' papermaking contributions and techniques; however, being in class live made it more digestible and doable to improve one's mindset and understanding of such a vast topic. Very, very helpful resource books were shared and good bibliography for follow up.
  8. Take this course. Expect to get wet while making papers and pack clothes you don't mind getting dirty.
  9. {no response}
  10. {no response}
  11. Come with good questions about your native region and/or paper problems you encounter in your study/work.
  12. {no response}
  13. {no response}
  14. {no response}
  15. Just sadness that this is TB and JB's last class! ☹
- 10) *If you had to sum up your RBS experience with a single sentence, phrase, or haiku, what would you say?*

1. To be in the hands of these great masters TB and JB for five days is transformative and inspiring.
2. Paper is an art  
Tim and John could not help but impart their wisdom.
3. Awesome.
4. RBS is to be experienced at least once in a bibliophile's life, and once will never be enough!
5. An affirmation of lives devoted to pursuit of knowledge and evidence of the critical importance of human scholarship to our society.
6. Wonderful.
7. Thank you, team Barrett and Bidwell, the good cop, bad cop profs of the History of Papermaking!
8. This was like a vacation masquerading as professional development.
9. Finding new ways of seeing familiar things.
10. Love to spend time with people that are aligned with their life's purpose.
11. Laurel and Hardy / Barrett and Bidwell.
12. This course was a rare and once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.
13. Excellent!
14. As usual, RBS was an extraordinary experience!
15. "As thin as this paper is, it contains everything in the universe." Thich-Nhat Hanh / paraphrased by TB.

## **Student Data**

*Number of respondents: 15 (of 15)*

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

My institution/employer gave me professional leave time: 10 (66.67%)

My institution/employer did not give me professional leave; I used paid or vacation days: 1 (6.67%)

I am self-employed, and can arrange my own schedule: 3 (20%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (6.67%)

*Who paid your RBS tuition costs?*

I paid 100% myself: 2 (13.33%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 7 (46.67%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 2 (13.33%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive part; I paid the rest: 1 (6.67%)

I exchanged goods or services in lieu of tuition: 2 (13.33%)

I had an RBS course tuition credit from a previous year: 1 (6.67%)

*Who paid your RBS housing expenses?*

I paid 100% myself: 4 (26.67%)  
My institution/employer paid 100%: 6 (40%)  
My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (6.67%)  
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 1 (6.67%)  
I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 2 (13.33%)  
My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (6.67%)

*Who paid your RBS travel expenses?*

I paid 100% myself: 5 (33.33%)  
My institution/employer paid 100%: 6 (40%)  
My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (6.67%)  
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 1 (6.67%)  
I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 1 (6.67%)  
My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (6.67%)

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

**Library disciplines:**

Archivist: 1 (6.67%)  
Conservator/binder/preservation librarian: 4 (26.67%)  
Library administrator: 1 (6.67%)  
Library assistant/clerk: 1 (6.67%)  
Special collections librarian: 2 (13.33%)  
Other: 1 (6.67%)

**Student working toward a/n:**

M.F.A.: 1 (6.67%)

**Professional educator:**

Lecturer/adjunct: 1 (6.67%)

**Book trades:**

Book artist, artisan or printer: 1 (6.67%)  
Publisher: 1 (6.67%)

**Other occupations/vocations:**

Independent scholar: 1 (6.67%)