

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. They were the perfect preparation.
 2. {No response.}
 3. I found the readings useful, but it should be noted that they overlap quite a bit. The online transcription practice, especially from the UK National Archives, was tremendously helpful.
 4. David Postles' site is down. Link should be removed. National Archives was the most useful website.
 5. Very useful, especially working through the National Archive (UK) series of practice manuscripts to transcribe.
 6. I think one of the links was dead/website inactive—possibly the David Postles? Overlap on the readings but useful. We did go over most of it in class, though.
 7. Readings helpful. Add Finlay, M. *Western Writing Implements in the Age of the Quill*; Steward, A. & Wolfe, H. *Letter Writing in Renaissance England*; Beat, P. A. *Dictionary of Manuscript Terminology*.
 8. The pre-course reading assignments provided useful background information to help us hit the ground running on day one, all without being too heavy a load. Dr. HW also included useful interactive web tutorials. This all feels like a ready-made resource I'll return to in the future.
 9. Definitely.
 10. Yes. It would be helpful to have the list prioritized for those with limited advance preparation time.
 11. Yes! I highly recommend doing as much studying of the recommended reading as possible. I felt very prepared coming into the class because I was at least familiar with terms and letter forms I may have felt lost without.
 12. For this course, interactive websites for practicing with and paleography were included in our pre-course assignments. I found them more useful than the reading I was able to access.
 13. Yes. I will have to explore some of the additional books I wrote down while here to say.

- 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. The course workbook is going to come to great use! The worksheets passed out were good practice tools.
 2. {No response.}
 3. Absolutely. Well-organized, clear, with a good mix of basic and more advanced information.

4. Yes! Wonderful collection of examples and explanations.
 5. Amazing amount of thought, care, and work went into this. I plan to continue making use of it.
 6. The course workbook is amazing and will be super useful after the course.
 7. Useful compilation of materials. Additional handouts useful.
 8. Dr. HW's "Alphabet Book" contains useful historical handwriting examples, keys, guides, lists of web resources, and a bibliography to boot. I can't imagine visiting the archive without it! The content is useful, practical, and straightforward.
 9. All of it was really helpful.
 10. First-rate. Thoughtfully assembled, with an excellent range of examples. So useful I will take both course workbook and worksheets with me to the archives—and I am a light packer!
 11. Very good. Worksheets were helpful and my notes on them will surely aid my work in the future.
 12. Very helpful, and I think we used it in class more than any other course I've taken. A good reference work for the subject.
 13. The workbook is an amazing tool that I anticipate returning to a lot.
- 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 be using my new skills in my daily work.
 2. {No response.}
 3. For now I expect to simply take part in some of the crowdsourced transcription efforts, but maybe someday I'll have a job where this is useful.
 4. {private response}
 5. Lots of new insights into social aspects of sixteenth- through seventeenth-century Britain and America and the relation of medieval manuscript culture to later manuscript culture. Really thrilling to see a mass of unintelligible content come into focus as readable words and meanings.
 6. The skills will be super useful to me in future research. I'm really intrigued by the hybrid print/manuscript books and plan to look into them more.
 7. Into formulation and notebooks and reusable pages.
 8. I'll be working on an RBS-UVA Fellowship Project based in manuscript studies. Our "Choose Your Own RBS Manuscript Adventure" project was a great way to engage firsthand with materials housed here, which I'd like to continue studying. Dr. HW's last lecture on hybrid print and manuscript texts' entanglement was a great note on which to end the class. Beyond sharpening our paleography skills, Dr. HW's course taught us so much fascinating and useful information on materiality (filing, letter writing, etc.) that I hadn't learned about anywhere else.
 9. I left with about 20 new projects I'd like to work on and the skills I need to finally start working with manuscripts.
 10. Early modern archival research. This course has given me tools I need to check my transcriptions and understand transcribing conventions. {private response}
 11. I am excited to return to my institution and try transcribing documents from this period I may not have attempted otherwise. I hope to continue helping patrons and staff read manuscripts.
 12. I don't have any specific plans, but I've worked with enough early modern manuscripts in the past that I expect the skills I learned in this course will be good

- things to have in my toolbox going forward.
13. I would like to read and transcribe more manuscripts!
- 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! I got exactly what I was hoping for.
 2. {No response.}
 3. This week was everything I hoped it would be.
 4. Yes! Though see 4.5.
 5. Yes, yes.
 6. Yes.
 7. YES. Multiple ways to learn about English secretary hand, was helpful.
 8. Yes! Dr. HW focused on giving us both practical paleographical knowledge and plenty of opportunities for hands-on transcription and description. I learned all I'd hoped to and more.
 9. Definitely. I walked in unable to read secretary hand and now I can read it. I would have liked the "culture" section of the course to be a bit more advanced, but I recognize that this is a general course.
 10. Yes and yes.
 11. Yes! I learned what I expected and more!
 12. Very much so.
 13. Yes, although more practice will help.
- 5) *Are there other ways in which the course could have been improved?*
1. A transcription night could have been fun to do after class ended one night.
 2. {No response.}
 3. I think we could have spent less time on numbers if it meant more time in SC.
 4. I would like more examples of secretary hand, which I realize is tough to cram into so short a course, but I'd rather work through more tough hands than, say, the easier recipe books (though these were interesting!). Also, perhaps a brief overview of where secretary fits relative to italic and court hands.
 5. {No response.}
 6. Maybe going straight through the content more, and then leaving some time at the end of sections for questions/discussion.
 7. Send out some transcription assignments in advance.
 8. None that I can think of!
 9. I really appreciated that Dr. HW went around the room and let us read lines so we all could work at our own pace. In Des Bib we broke up into smaller groups based on career/background and I know this is a much smaller course, but I wonder if that might have been an efficient strategy for one session? I wasn't nearly as good as some people were, but I moved more quickly than others did, and it would have been nice to work with a group at my level.
 10. Make the first interactive reading assignment a team assignment (rather than calling on students individually) to give more reserved students time to build skills and confidence before putting them on the spot. Have staff ready to help students with borrowed laptops learn to navigate on screen (during the first session).
 11. More time with quill and ink! I'm sad it's over and wish there was more!

12. I enjoyed writing with the quill and ink on appropriate paper and wish we had done more, or even made our own ink, but that's minor.
13. I would have liked to explore some manuscripts I found on my own.

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

1. Anyone who needs to read early modern hand.
2. {No response.}
3. Anyone interested in the relevant time period.
4. Anyone needing an introduction to English secretary hands.
5. People studying lit or list of early modern Britain or people like me who want to expand their knowledge and skill just for the fun of it.
6. Everyone.
7. Paleographers, historians, development of handwriting systems.
8. The especially exciting element to this course is its wide appeal. Students, historians, teachers, genealogists, bookdealers, and more could all equally benefit from taking this course.
9. Anyone who needs to learn to read secretary hand.
10. Anyone.
11. Anyone working with manuscript handwriting can benefit from this class.
12. Any scholar of the period, whether of British (not just English) or colonial history or of literature.
13. Anyone who wants to read early modern handwriting.

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

1. Yes! Absolutely—I have already recommended it to several people.
2. {No response.}
3. I would certainly recommend it.
4. Yes and wholeheartedly.
5. Yes. Yes.
6. Yes, definitely. Extremely dense informationally but very pleasant/interesting.
7. YES.
8. A hearty yes to both!
9. Absolutely! I learned so much in one week!
10. Yes.
11. Absolutely! I cannot recommend this course enough.
12. Yes indeed.
13. {No response.}

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

1. Yes.
2. {No response.}
3. Yes, but I wish we'd had longer in SC.
4. Yes. Useful to see other examples of these hands and manuscripts.
5. Visit to rare book collection not too useful—not enough time to study each item.

- Much more useful to use RBS materials in the classroom.
6. To SC—yes.
 7. Yes, chance to look at relevant manuscripts in depth.
 8. The field trip to SC here at UVA introduced us to some unique and exciting manuscripts. I definitely would like to revisit some of those sources.
 9. Our trip to SC was great and was one of the most well-curated special collections visits I've been on.
 10. To SC. Definitely well spent. One of the manuscripts selected for our use turned out to be germane to my research, so I will return to consult it again.
 11. Yes, looking at actual manuscripts was very helpful and fun.
 12. Yes. I discovered some great documents in the UVA SC that I want to follow up on.
 13. {No response.}
- 9) *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. Practice before coming. It really helps!
 4. Definitely take it!
 5. {No response.}
 6. Make sure you bring your laptop since there is a lot of online work and it's easier with your own device.
 7. Bring magnifiers, lighting devices to view watermarks.
 8. I cannot recommend this class highly enough—it was an absolute pleasure. Intellectually engaging and challenging, and all around fun; the class has so much to offer in terms of helping students explore the early modern world. Plus, Dr. HW, in addition to being a world expert in her field, is incredibly warm, encouraging, and kind.
 9. Take this class if you want to learn secretary hand. If you don't know much about manuscript culture, you'll get a lot of that in this class, too. If early modern manuscript and print culture are your area of study, the info you get will be largely review, but it's great to have the opportunity to ask Dr. HW questions.
 10. An opportunity to learn from HW is not to be missed!
 11. Study the recommended reading, come to class excited to learn from the best!
 12. Though serious scholars of the era would especially benefit from this course, I think there is much to offer lay people and the way it is taught would still make it accessible to them.
 13. HW is a wonderful and patient, but scrupulous instructor.
- 10) *If you had to sum up your RBS experience with a single sentence, phrase, or haiku, what would you say?*
1. {No response.}
 2. A great way to gain and hone research tools in a friendly and supportive environment.
 3. A dream come true.
 4. This class has been a joy and a laugh, with instruction as gracious as it was

- effective.
5. {No response.}
 6. {No response.}
 7. Universal formulation for early writing inks, use of quill pens gave a practical aspect to the material being learned in class.
 8. I feel that my RBS experience will undergird the rest of my postgraduate studies, providing a strong foundation in and amplifying my sense of curiosity for early modern manuscript culture.
 9. The arc of my week was fantastic!
 10. {No response.}
 11. The most fun learning I've had in a while, enjoy!
 12. This is my fifth RBS course in three years, and I think it may have been the best and most enjoyable of them all.
 13. {No response.}

Student Data

Number of respondents: 13 (of 13)

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

My institution/employer gave me professional leave time: 5 (38.46%)
 My institution/employer did not give me professional leave; I used paid or vacation days: 2 (15.38%)
 I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible summer schedule: 4 (30.77%)
 I am retired, and can arrange my own schedule: 1 (7.69%)
 My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (7.69%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

I paid 100% myself: 5 (38.46%)
 My institution/employer paid 100%: 5 (38.46%)
 My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (7.69%)
 I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 2 (15.38%)

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 7 (53.85%)
 My institution/employer paid 100%: 3 (23.07%)
 I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 3 (23.07%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 9 (69.23%)
 My institution/employer paid 100%: 3 (23.07%)
 I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 1 (7.69%)

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

Library disciplines:

Archivist: 1 (7.69%)

Cataloger/metadata librarian: 1 (7.69%)

Library assistant/clerk: 2 (15.38%)

Student working toward a/n:

M.A./M.S.: 1 (7.69%)

M.L.I.S./M.L.S.: 1 (7.69%)

Ph.D./D.Phil: 3 (23.07%)

Professional educator:

Lecturer/adjunct: 1 (7.69%)

Full professor: 1 (7.69%)

Book trades:

Other: 1 (7.69%)

No Response: 1 (7.69%)