

RARE BOOK SCHOOL

Information Guide | African American Print Cultures in the Nineteenth-Century United States

Welcome to Rare Book School!

FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS, the bibliographical community has been supported and nourished by the work of Rare Book School (RBS). From its tentative beginnings at Columbia University, the School has educated two generations of librarians, collectors, academics, conservators, and booksellers, producing a network of loyal alumni, talented faculty, and dedicated friends around the globe. In the process, it has also earned a reputation as the world’s premier institution for the study of bibliography and book history. We are delighted that you will soon be a part of that distinguished tradition and of our School’s promising future. We look forward to welcoming you to an online Rare Book School course this summer.

This *Information Guide* should answer most of your questions about practical matters relating to your RBS course. Prior to your course, you’ll also receive a copy of the *Important Information Guide specific to your course including Zoom link information and a detailed schedule*, and the *Student’s Vade Mecum* with additional information to ensure that your experience is as productive and enjoyable as possible. In the meantime, we eagerly await your attendance and look forward to another wonderful session!

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RBS Online

This summer, Rare Book School is excited to once again offer a selection of virtual courses. Courses will take place synchronously over Zoom, and although class sessions will be recorded for the purpose of supporting students who experience technical difficulties, attendance at all synchronous class sessions is expected. Optional student orientation sessions will be scheduled in advance of your course week to allow you to test the course platforms and ask questions. Readings and other course materials will be shared through Google Drive; further details about software and your course schedule will be provided in an *Important Information Guide* in advance of the course. This information guide includes schedule information for H-185v “African American Print Cultures in the Nineteenth-Century United States” taught by Derrick Spires.

We’re excited that you’ve decided to join us this summer, and we want to do all we can to deliver an exceptional educational experience. If you have any questions about the course or RBS in general, please email us at rbsprograms@virginia.edu.

The RBS Week

All RBS students are expected to be in attendance and on time for all regularly scheduled classes. This is to ensure the quality and community of RBS as a School, and we insist that participants attend all sessions of their courses, unless presented with the most extraordinary of circumstances. Some courses will involve a mixture of synchronous class sessions and asynchronous independent exercises, and students are expected to treat any asynchronous work as required class time (unless designated as optional or recommended).

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY and FRIDAY

11 a.m.-5 p.m. ET Course Sessions

Courses will run synchronously primarily between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. ET, including breaks.

10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. **First Course Session (includes 10 minute break)**

12:30-2 p.m. **Lunch**

2-4 p.m. **Second Course Session (includes 10 minute break)**

5 p.m. ET Monday after the Course Week **Course Evaluations**

Students receive RBS course evaluations by email. Please return the evaluation by 5 p.m. ET on the Monday after the course concludes.

Optional Events

RBS offers a series of public lectures during the summer. Details will be made available in the coming weeks for watching the lectures virtually.

Information about the lectures and the upcoming schedule can be found on our [Lectures page](#).

More details about your course, including the Important Information Guide, will be sent to you via email!

Advance Advices

Before the first class session, check the course description on the RBS website, the reading list linked to in the course description, or your course Google Drive folder (to be shared soon) for specific instructions on what to have on hand. It is not, for instance, always necessary to have copies of your advance reading available. Other tips on what to bring can be found in the previous year's course evaluations, also available on the course webpage.

Logistics & Technology Requirements

You will be required to use Zoom to participate in class sessions and optional RBS events. **Classes will be held synchronously; attendance at all class sessions is mandatory.** Courses may also utilize Google Drive, or other course-specific software. It is a good idea to download, test, and practice using these platforms prior to your course's start date, to verify whether you have the latest version installed, and to make sure you have a strong, reliable internet connection. We strongly recommend using a laptop or desktop computer rather than a smartphone or tablet.

There will be short breaks between class sessions; the exact timing of the breaks will be provided several weeks before the start of class in a detailed course schedule.

Problems

Please let us know if you encounter problems on any front. If such problems occur before your course begins, email (rbsprograms@virginia.edu) or telephone us (434-924-8851, 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.; voicemail after hours). If you encounter issues with tuition payments, contact RBS Accounting Specialist Michael Taylor at michael.taylor@virginia.edu, or by phone at 434-243-2920.

Should any difficulties arise during the course, please bring your concerns to the course session assistant, to the RBS staff (rbsprograms@virginia.edu), or your course instructor(s).

Reading Lists

Most RBS courses have advance reading lists or assignments that RBS instructors expect their students to complete before the class meets. These are outlined at www.rarebookschool.org/reading. Some readings may be provided by the instructors via Google Drive. Instructions on how to access these materials will be provided in advance of the course.

Students should come to class prepared. Those who have trouble locating required readings might try obtaining them through interlibrary loan (ILL), from used or antiquarian booksellers through the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America (ABAA), or online via sites such as www.bookfinder.com or www.vialibri.net.

Student Orientations

Prior to every course week, RBS will host an optional student orientation session so that students can practice using Zoom and ask questions about the virtual aspects of their courses. Details about the sessions, including dates, times, and links, will be sent to you in the coming months. If you have any questions relating to the technological aspects of RBS, please contact rbsprograms@virginia.edu.

Recordings

Unless otherwise informed by the course instructors, you may take screenshots of teaching materials for your own reference (avoiding images of people's faces), but you may not record audio or video without first receiving permission from the instructors and your classmates. If, through extraordinary circumstances (such as a lost internet connection), you find yourself unable to attend a session, please contact RBS staff at rbsprograms@virginia.edu for temporary access to a recording of the session.

Accessibility Accommodations

Zoom's auto transcription feature will be available for all course sessions and lectures. When you accept your place in your course in myRBS, please enter your accessibility accommodation requests in the form found under the "Requests" tab of your myRBS account. The information from this form will be accessible to the RBS staff who will work with the instructors to meet your needs.

Still to Come

Two weeks before your course, you will receive an updated, detailed course overview in the form of the *Important Information Guide*. That document will include Zoom login information for your course and contact information for the session assistant who will be your main point of contact throughout the week. You will also receive information for participating in optional orientations and lectures.

Parting Thoughts

RBS participants are encouraged to come to class prepared, and are required to be on time. All Rare Book School faculty, staff, and students should familiarize themselves with the Rare Book School [Statement of Values and Code of Conduct](#). The University of Virginia's Policy for Preventing and Addressing Harassment may be found at eocr.virginia.edu/policies. First-time RBS participants are often surprised by the intensity of the experience, so be sure to get some sleep before classes start!