

Information Guide | Philadelphia

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 Philadelphia for your Rare Book School course.

This *Information Guide* will provide general information about what to expect during your course week. *More detailed information about course schedules and events and accommodations in Philadelphia will be sent to you soon. We thank you for your patience as we work to finalize this information.* Upon arrival, you’ll also receive a copy of the *Student’s Vade Mecum* with additional information to ensure that your stay is as productive and enjoyable as possible. (N.B., Please bring the present guide with you when you come to RBS; it contains valuable information not repeated in the *Vade Mecum*.) In the meantime, we eagerly await your arrival, and look forward to another wonderful session!

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RBS in Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, is a city of more than one and a half million people, located at the confluence of the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers. A hub for North American cultural, artistic, and intellectual life for more than three hundred years, the city also boasts a central place in the history of print: Benjamin Franklin—arguably the most influential printer in early America—owned and operated various presses here during the eighteenth century.

In this session, Rare Book School is excited to contribute to this storied bibliographical history with two courses taught at the University of Pennsylvania (3420 Walnut St.) and one at the Library Company of Philadelphia (1314 Locust St.). Penn’s Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts will host “The Bible and Histories of Reading,” taught by Peter Stallybrass, Annenberg Professor in the Humanities Emeritus at the University of Pennsylvania, and assisted by Lynne Farrington, Senior Curator of Special Collections at the Kislak Center and “Textual Mobilities: Works, Books & Reading Across Early Modern Europe,” taught by Roger Chartier, Professeur in the Collège de France, and John Pollack, Curator and Research Services Librarian at the Kislak Center. The Library Company will host “The History of the Book in America, c. 1700–1830,” taught by James N. Green, Librarian Emeritus of the Library Company of Philadelphia. This Information Guide will cover the Library Company course, specifically.

We’re excited that you’ve decided to join us in Philadelphia this summer, and we want to do all we can to deliver an exceptional educational experience. If you have any questions about the city 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, labs, and field trips. 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. Practically speaking, this involves a full-time commitment of one-and-a-half hours on Sunday evening, 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m. Friday. Please make your travel plans accordingly!

SUNDAY, 5–6:30 p.m. **Opening Reception**

RBS students will convene for registration and a meal at Sang Kee Noodle House. Once there, all students will receive a copy of the *Student's Vade Mecum* and a name badge.

N.B., If you plan to attend this event, RSVP by email (rbsprograms@virginia.edu) no later than 12 May.

Late arrival: We strongly suggest attending the Sunday night registration, but if you are unable to make it, please email us (rbsprograms@virginia.edu) and let us know. If you do not attend, you will need to register at the Cassatt House (1320 Locust Ave.) at 8:30 a.m. sharp on Monday morning.

MONDAY through THURSDAY

8:30 a.m.* **Final Registration (Monday Only)**

Registration for those not in attendance Sunday evening. If necessary, this is also the last good opportunity to obtain wireless connection information from the library staff.

N.B., Students who did not attend the Sunday Night Opening Reception *must* register outside of the Cassatt House (one of the Library Company buildings) before classes start at 9 a.m.

9–10:30 a.m.* **First Period**

10:30–11 a.m. **Morning Break**

Light refreshments available in the first floor parlor of the Cassatt House.

11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.* **Second Period**

12:30–1:30 p.m. **Lunch**

Class breaks for lunch. There are several restaurants in the surrounding neighborhoods.

1:30–3 p.m.* **Third Period**

3–3:30 p.m. **Afternoon Break**

Light refreshments available in the first floor parlor of the Cassatt House.

3:30–5 p.m.* **Fourth Period**

FRIDAY

9–10:30 a.m.* **First Period**

10:30–11 a.m. **Morning Break**

11–12 p.m.* **Second Period**

12:30–2 p.m.* **Lunch**

Classes break for a long lunch. By tradition, though not compulsion, students take their instructor to a group lunch on Friday. Advance reservations are strongly recommended.

2–3:40 p.m.* **Third Period**

3:40 p.m.* **Course Evaluations**

Students receive course completion certificates and fill out RBS course evaluations.

4–6 p.m. **Farewell Reception**

RBS will host a closing reception on the terrace of the University of Pennsylvania's Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts. Drinks and hors d'oeuvres will be provided.

** Required activities are noted by asterisk*

Before You Arrive

Reading Lists

Most RBS courses have advance reading lists or assignments that RBS instructors expect their students to complete before they arrive. These are outlined at www.rarebookschool.org/reading.

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.

Arrival & Departure Logistics

When thinking about your transportation arrangements, please remember that staying over Friday night after the last day of class can be an excellent idea, if you can swing it. Early evening ground and air travel is seldom much fun anywhere, but it can be especially difficult in a major city like Philadelphia. Arriving a day early may also be a good idea, as it can provide an opportunity to settle in, overcome jet lag, &c. First-time RBS participants are often surprised by the intensity of the experience, so be sure to get some sleep before classes start!

Problems

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

Should any difficulties arise during the course, please bring your concerns to a faculty member or contact us at Rare Book School.

Accommodations

Perhaps the most inexpensive and convenient lodgings are available through Penn Hospitality Services (215-898-9319; Mon–Fri, 9 AM–5 PM), which offers short-term summer housing in the Penn dormitories.

A registration portal for the dormitories is available through this link:

<https://upenn.irisregistration.com/Form/2022RareBookSchool>. Students will need to create an account to access the reservation site.

Students will also be able to use this link to purchase linen packets (\$110), which include sheets, a comforter, towels, and a washcloth (pillows are provided with the room). For parking around the dormitories, the Chestnut 34 parking garage is recommended. More information about nearby parking for the dormitories can be found here:

<https://www.facilities.upenn.edu/maps/parking>. Parking options around the Library Company include nearby paid parking garages or street parking, but owing to possible difficulties with securing a spot, driving to the Library Company is not recommended if you can avoid it.

Students taking a class at the Library Company of Philadelphia also have the option of staying in a nearby hotel; however, nearby options have been selling out quickly, and rates tend to increase in the summer. Students are encouraged to book as soon as possible or investigate alternatives, such as AirBnB.

Transportation

Air Travel

The major airport servicing Philadelphia is Philadelphia International Airport (PHL; 215-937-6937). It is located almost seven miles from Penn and ten miles from the Library Company. It is accessible either by car or by the airport line on the subway.

Driving to Philadelphia

The main north-south route into Philadelphia is Interstate 95, one of the nation's busiest and potentially most frustrating highways. Coming from points to the west of the city will usually involve a combination of either I-76 E and I-70 or I-71. No matter what route you take, know that rush-hour traffic can be intense, and parking spaces in Philadelphia are rather pricey.

Taking the Train

If your place of embarkation is on the Northeast corridor, it may be more convenient and affordable to use Amtrak (www.amtrak.com; 1-800-872-7245) as your means of travel. Philadelphia's 30th Street Station (PHL); (2955 Market Street) is the city's hub for Amtrak travel and is only a ten-minute walk from Penn. To get to the Library Company from 30th Street Station, take the Market-Frankford elevated line or the Trolley subway line to 13th and Market St station and then walk south until Locust St. The Library Company is to the right.

Advance Advice

What to Bring

At RBS, dress is business casual for all events. Summers in Philadelphia are generally hot and humid, but the weather can fluctuate wildly: it can be 75 degrees Fahrenheit one day, and 100 degrees the next. The rooms we use are very cold, so if you chill easily under air-conditioning, bring a sweater. In general, a light rain jacket or umbrella is also a good idea.

RBS participants are encouraged to come to class prepared and are required to be on time. Bring a watch. If you wish to take notes, plan accordingly. Pencils, paper, and other supplies are available at nearby convenience stores. Before leaving home, check the course description on the RBS website and the reading list for specific instructions on what to bring. (It is not, for instance, always necessary to bring copies of your advance reading.) Other inside tips on what to bring can be found in the previous year's course evaluations, also available on the course webpage.

Pharmacies & Medical Facilities

The nearest pharmacy to the Library Company is the CVS at 1500 Spruce Street (215-790-3290). The nearest pharmacy to the Penn Libraries is a CVS (215-662-1333) located at 3401 Walnut Street, a one-minute walk west from the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center.

The closest emergency room to the Library Company is in Thomas Jefferson University Hospital (111 S 11th St; non-emergency: 215-955-6000). The closest emergency room to Penn is in the University of Pennsylvania Hospital, located at 3400 Spruce Street, less than a half mile from the Penn Libraries (non-emergency: 212-662-4000). As always, if you need immediate help, dial 911.