

# Information Guide | Philadelphia

## Welcome to Rare Book School!

FOR FORTY 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 several 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* should answer most of your questions about transportation, housing, and other practical matters. 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.

This year, Philadelphia will host five Rare Book School courses across two sessions. Four will be taught at the University of Pennsylvania (3420 Walnut St.) and one at the Free Library of Philadelphia (1901 Vine St.). Penn's Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts will host three courses this June: "The Bible and Histories of Reading," taught by Peter Stallybrass and assisted by Lynne Farrington, "Japanese Prints and Illustrated Books in Context," taught by Julie Nelson Davis, and "Textual Mobilities: Works, Books & Reading Across Early Modern Europe," taught by Roger Chartier and John Pollack. The Kislak Center will also host one course in July: "The History of the Book in Antebellum America," taught by James N. Green and Michael Winship. The Free Library will host one course in June: "Introduction to Islamic Manuscripts," taught by Marianna Shreve Simpson and Kelly Tuttle.

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](mailto: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 5–6:45 p.m. Sunday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Friday. Please make your travel plans accordingly! Below is a basic schedule for the week, though this may be subject to minor changes which will be reflected in the *Important Information Guide* you will receive closer to the start of your course.

## SUNDAY, 5 p.m. **Opening Reception**

RBS students will convene for registration Sunday afternoon (location TBA). 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 26 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 your course location at 8:45 a.m. on Monday morning.

## MONDAY through THURSDAY

~8:45 a.m.\* **Final Registration (Monday Only)**  
Registration for those not in attendance Sunday evening.

N.B. Students who did not attend the Sunday Night Opening Reception *must* register at their course location before classes start at 9 a.m.

9–10:30 a.m.\* **First Period**

10:30–11 a.m. **Morning Break**  
Light refreshments will be provided.

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 neighborhoods surrounding both locations.

1:30–3 p.m.\* **Third Period**

3–3:30 p.m. **Afternoon Break**  
Light refreshments will be provided.

3:30–5 p.m.\* **Fourth Period**

\* Required activities are noted by asterisk

## FRIDAY

9–10:30 a.m.\* **First Period**

10:30–11 a.m. **Morning Break**  
Light refreshments will be provided.

11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.\* **Second Period**

12:30–2:30 p.m. **Lunch**  
Classes break for a long lunch. By tradition, students take their instructor to a group lunch on Friday (you are not obligated to attend). Advance reservations are strongly recommended.

2:30–4 p.m.\* **Third Period**

4–4:30 p.m.\* **Course Evaluations**  
Students receive course completion certificates and fill out RBS course evaluations.

4:30–6:30 p.m. **Farewell Reception**  
Friday afternoon classes will break by 4:30 p.m. for a final reception at the Kislak Center.

*Look out for more details about your course via email in early May!*

## MONDAY EVENING, 5:30 p.m. **Lecture**

Join your fellow students for an evening lecture in the Class of 1978 Orrery Pavilion, Kislak Center, Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center, sixth floor.

N.B. A lecture will only take place during our first summer session in Philadelphia.

## Before you arrive

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### 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](http://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](http://www.bookfinder.com) or [www.vialibri.net](http://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](mailto: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 434-243-2920, or by email ([michael.taylor@virginia.edu](mailto:michael.taylor@virginia.edu)).

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

## Accommodations

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Perhaps the most inexpensive and convenient lodgings are available through Penn Hospitality Services (215-898-9319; Mon–Fri, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.), which offers short-term summer housing in the Penn dormitories. This year, RBS students will be able to stay in multi-occupancy suites (2–4 rooms) with private bedrooms and shared bathrooms and living spaces at \$57 per person per night plus 15.5% occupancy tax and a one-time registration fee.

Please use the following link to request housing: <https://upenn.irisregistration.com/Form/RareBookSchool2023>. 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) as well as a temporary ID card for building and room access (\$29).

Students taking a class at Penn or the Free Library also have the option of staying in a nearby hotel; however, nearby options may sell 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

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### 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 Free Library. 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 arriving via I-76 E. 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](http://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 Free Library from 30th Street Station, take the subway to JFK Boulevard & 19th Street station and then walk north past Logan Square.

## Advance Advices

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### 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 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.)

### Pharmacies & Medical Facilities

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 nearest pharmacy to the Free Library is the CVS at 2001 Pennsylvania Avenue (215-575-9227).

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). The closest emergency room to the Free Library is in Hahnemann University Hospital (230 North Broad Street; non-emergency: 215-762-7000). If you need immediate medical help, dial 911.