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L-150: Modern Special Collections Cataloging
9–14 June, 2024, Charlottesville, Virginia

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. Being in a cataloging position, I had easy access to the reading assignments within my library.
3. The pre-course reading assignment was useful.
4. Yes, I thought they were useful.
5. The pre-cataloging exercise was exactly right—it wasn't too much work, and was very useful during the week. It was a great springboard for discussion, and we referred back to them multiple times over the course. The RDA and DCRMB readings were also good.
6. Yes, the pre-course assignment gave me a sense of what the instructor was looking for and the type of material we would cover. It was also a great reminder to begin to start gearing up for the class.
7. I think our pre-course readings were useful for the course. I appreciate that the readings were just enough to prepare us for class but not overwhelm us with work prior to arrival.
8. Yes, I thought they were useful and well-chosen so as not to be overwhelming, but to feel prepared.
9. My class was specifically for cataloging focusing on RDA and DCR(B), and the instructor was thoughtful to ask students to read and think about the two standards before the class. It was an opportunity to think about these two before and my work in cataloging. So, I think the reading assignments were appropriate.
10. The pre-class cataloging assignment was not very time-intensive, but it was extremely helpful during the class—having a “before” example to work from (especially one that everyone in the class had in common) was hugely helpful, and also helped us see in concrete terms the progress we were making throughout the course.
11. They were somewhat helpful; I think more in-depth readings or commentary on them could have been additionally helpful in setting up the background/context for the course.
12. Yes, very useful. I can't think of any additional 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. The workbook was very useful. Having the content on a class Google Drive was also good. The materials used were varied and interesting. I feel that I have a better understanding of cataloging a broader mix of special collections materials.
2. Very well organized. I plan to review it when I return to my home institution and put it to use as soon as possible.
3. The teaching material will continue to be useful to me after the course.

4. The course workbook was excellent. I was pleasantly surprised (since this is my first time here!) at getting an organized binder with all of the slides, as well as many helpful cataloging examples and additional resources too. I will definitely be referring back to this when I return to work and start in on my cataloging projects. It will live on my desk for sure!
5. Again, very useful. I will take this back to my institution and use it in my daily work. It's well organized and informational, but concise. I can't think of anything I'd add at the moment.
6. The course workbook will be an invaluable asset when returning to my workplace. The content was incredibly detailed and exactly what I was hoping for from this class. I know I will have this binder on my desk permanently.
7. The workbook was very useful! The workbook will definitely live on my desk as part of my cataloging ready-reference.
8. Yes, I thought the slides, exercises, and other teaching materials distributed during class were appropriate and useful, and it will continue to be extremely useful to me after the course ends. The one addition I might suggest is tips for artists' books and zines, since those are things several of us talked about how to tackle during breaks; we can apply what we learned about limited editions and ephemera, but BB might have more to say about the particulars of artists' books and zines.
9. The course workbook was one of the best things. This is my second time at RBS, and it was much better than the first time. The instructor also provided students with additional references and sample records which would be helpful. I can't wait to use the workbook at my work on a regular basis.
10. The workbook is amazing! I am definitely going to keep it at my desk and refer to it as I do my daily cataloging work. It's super well-organized, and the fact that we're also getting the slides virtually means that we can benefit from all the hyperlinks as well.
11. The course workbook is amazing—such a helpful resource; it will be immensely helpful after this course.
12. Excellent—Appropriate, useful, and I'm keeping the material at work to use on the job.

3) *Which aspects of the course were most intriguing and relevant for you as an individual? Did you walk away with any new insights, ideas, or project plans?*

1. All of the class was great. BB was a great instructor and had an appropriate mix of lectures and hands-on exercises.
2. I learned “what I didn't know” and relearned some things as well. It is important to the specificity of the work to spend time with those who are doing the same work and talk about how you do the work or will do the work.
3. Every aspect of the course proved to be pertinent. I especially appreciated how the instructor delved into a diverse array of formats and pertinent topics related to cataloging special materials, providing examples and encouraging interactive engagement through questions and discussions.
4. Honestly all of it was intriguing and relevant, as the entirety of my institution's rare books could be classified as modern. I'm the first “real” librarian at my institution (a small museum) and prior to me, our library materials (and in this case, particularly rare books/special collections materials) had not been properly cataloged in an ILS. This class and the information I learned from BB will be integral to diving into this

cataloging work in the new ILS and getting our collections where they need to be in terms of discoverability.

5. I appreciated learning about material that I haven't worked with before and material that I don't usually see. I also appreciated going in-depth on material that I work with only occasionally. I kept a list of ideas and projects to work on when I get back to my institution. From the Friday open discussion, I gleaned more ideas and suggestions for dealing with issues at my work that others are also dealing with at their institutions.

6. First off, I am walking away with even more passion, confidence and comfortability in my career. My ideas have been strengthened while my insights into the profession and process have been vastly deepened.

7. I think this course will help me somewhat reset some of our cataloging standards. I think we've been possibly over-complicating things and devoting too much time and cataloging things to too high of a level.

8. The whole approach to cataloging the way that BB taught it was really useful to me, and probably to others who have had a hodgepodge of descriptive cataloging training, which may have included little to no classroom instruction. It was an excellent refresher of RDA guidelines blended very well with specific tips for cataloging different types of modern special collections. It will definitely help me be a better cataloger in all the metadata management I do, and a better trainer of other, newer catalogers.

9. As a cataloging librarian, I have limited resources at my own institution and even outside the library. This course helped me learn new knowledge in special collections cataloging to apply to my work, some possible projects that I can't wait to start.

10. Literally every single topic we touched on was extremely relevant to my work and filled in gaps in my knowledge. Not only did the content of the class address specific categories of materials and cataloging scenarios that I have struggled with, but it also addressed the more conceptual, underlying principles that I had never been taught (or had not been taught thoroughly enough). I came away from this class with a firmer understanding of the principles of cataloging, more know-how about specific cases, a whole host of examples and materials to refer to in the future, and (perhaps most importantly) the confidence that I can do my work well and reach out for help when I need it.

11. Each lecture and exercise/assignment was relevant to me and my work; I am bringing back several ideas and projects to my institution.

12. It was a truly inspiring course, which has encouraged me to continue to build my skills.

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. The course exceeded my expectations.

2. Yes, I have a lot of good information to take back with me. I plan to review in a deliberate manner the work I have been doing and how I can make it more accurate and better overall for the betterment of the library community, especially our patrons.

3. I learned more than I had hoped to learn.

4. Yes—100%! (And more!)

5. I learned all I had hoped to learn and more. And I walked away with reference sources and a network of people to contact in the future. Invaluable.
6. YES. I had high hopes for this course and the knowledge I gained was leaps and bounds of what I expected. The skills and information promised were delivered in addition to a clearer sense of purpose while also creating a cohort of incredible individuals.
7. Yes! BB was a fabulous instructor, and she talked about both the topic covered in the course description but also so much more. I wish we had more sessions of class time, not because I didn't learn the topic, but because I really value her opinion and there's so much else I'd like to learn from her.
8. Yes, I feel more confident in my ability to catalog modern special collections in a variety of formats, as well as to make the best decision I can for the material in hand.
9. I can't say enough how wonderful BB is. She was thoughtful and knowledgeable, and I am so fortunate to be in her class. The class had wonderful conversations, shared knowledge and experience, and had unique practical experience. The class was beyond my expectations.
10. BB was incredible! She is so knowledgeable about the subject matter, yet managed to put us all at ease immediately and create a classroom atmosphere where we all felt safe to ask questions. I learned everything I was hoping to learn, and a lot more!
11. Yes, BB was an encouraging, knowledgeable, and open instructor; I learned so much. And yes, it exceeded my expectations.
12. Yes, absolutely to both questions.

5) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*

1. The skills learned will help me to more confidently catalog a broader range of materials.
2. Put into immediate practice much of what I have learned and will do differently to adhere to cataloging standards.
3. I will apply what I have learned to my daily work as cataloger
4. As mentioned before, I plan on using my skills when cataloging our rare books and special collections into our new ILS system (for the first time!).
5. I'll make better special collections catalog records! And I have a few projects in the realm of reparative description to take back to my institution and implement.
6. I plan on integrating the knowledge and skills I acquired into every aspect of my daily work. Everything I learned is absolutely relevant for my everyday work.
7. I really plan on examining cataloging procedure and policy once returning to my organization.
8. I have a specific collection of early prints that I plan to finish cataloging, but also much more material beyond that, which I will be able to catalog more knowledgeably and confidently thanks to this class.
9. I will pay more attention to my work when creating cataloging records. Not only we add information into records for discovery, but this class also taught me to think about the users. When I am back, I am certain that my cataloging records and work will be more user-centered.
10. The skills I gained in this class will be invaluable literally every day in my cataloging work. I also spent most of the class writing down all kinds of ideas and thoughts about how to improve the cataloging policies and procedures at my institution, which I gained not just from BB but also from my fellow classmates.

11. They directly impact my own personal practice and equipped me to better train team members.
12. To improve and continue to expand my work skills.

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

1. Special collections catalogers who catalog modern materials. They don't need to know everything, but they should have a solid understanding of MARC.
2. Catalogers! Anyone working with metadata in their library catalog.
3. Catalogers and metadata librarians working with special collections.
4. I would say anyone who works with late-Nineteenth- or early-Twentieth-century books/materials and either needs to learn how to properly catalog them, or needs to brush up on their skills. BB is extremely knowledgeable on these topics, but also has a warm and welcoming personality, so even if you are not the most advanced cataloger, you will feel welcomed in this course and will learn a lot (like I did!).
5. Any cataloger working with special collections material. There is a special benefit, I think, for catalogers from small institutions or solo librarians who do not have the ability to collaborate with other library professionals at their places of work.
6. Special Collections Metadata/Catalog Librarians. Every one of them that are out there.
7. I think any catalogers working with more modern materials, but especially catalogers working solo or in very small departments. I think an unexpected highlight of this course has been the sense of community BB cultivated amongst all of us (I'm a cataloger, networking isn't necessarily our forte).
8. Practicing catalogers looking to learn about RDA, either as a refresher or for the first time, and its guidelines for modern special collections, as well as to get great tips from an experienced special collections cataloger.
9. This will benefit catalogers whose job is creating cataloging records. The class was from various backgrounds (academic, public, museums), and this was very helpful to learn from various perspectives. I firmly believe that this class applies regardless of just librarianship.
10. Anyone who works with special collections materials that date after 1800, or who catalogs primarily in RDA. Honestly, anyone who does special collections cataloging and doesn't have a firm grasp on the differences between DCRM(B) and RDA would get a lot out of it as well!
11. Any cataloger that ever works with special collections.
12. Catalogers, especially at libraries, special collections, university or public libraries. Even museum catalogers will benefit.

7) *If applicable, what were the most original, powerful, or otherwise noteworthy educational moments in the course? Were there any "aha!" moments you'd like to share?*

1. The community we built was unexpected and amazing. BB created a safe space for us to ask questions and help each other.
2. Understanding things I have seen in OCLC records but have not known how to do myself. Thinking more about what I am cataloging and how parts of the record I create relay to other parts of the record.
3. {no response}

4. I think when BB stressed that the work we do is important, and provided insights on how to best advocate for ourselves and our time (as catalogers) to the administration at our institutions. I definitely gained more professional confidence from this course.
5. Comics! Ephemera! Really, just seeing things I wouldn't have the opportunity to encounter in my everyday work.
6. Every day was filled with “aha!” moments with BB. I can honestly say that there isn't JUST one moment, but the entire course was incredible overall. The support and knowledge within this classroom was astounding.
7. There isn't much training in-person training on this topic, so really my “aha!” moment was talking to other people in my profession and seeing just how challenging this work can be for us all, not just me.
8. BB's teaching is so approachable, but will absolutely arm you with the knowledge you need to be a better and more confident cataloger. Getting hands-on practice with special collections of all kinds in the classroom and in the UVA SC was such a unique experience. It is hard to imagine a better RBS experience than I had here.
9. Discussions! Most catalogers work by themselves, and they do not have time or chance to work with others. I often felt so isolated, and I was very happy to be in the classroom this week to have open conversations without being scared. I truly appreciate the opportunities! Also, the class offered an open practice session, and it was extremely helpful for me to ask questions and get clarifications. I do not think I would have an opportunity like this elsewhere.
10. There were so many (in all honesty, the entire class from start to finish), but I think the most important one was just the realization that all of us deserved to be here. BB opened the class by addressing the pervasive feeling of impostor syndrome, and being able to spend a week in a classroom full of smart amazing people who were all in the same position as you and were also learning and doing their best was the perfect antidote to that. More than all of the considerable information I learned over the course of the class, the confidence boost and feeling like I truly deserve to be doing this work has been the most important educational takeaway for me.
11. There were numerous “aha!” moments. I think what feels most powerful is not a single but that I now feel so much more confidence to tackle cataloging items that have been in the special collections backlog.
12. I was amazed at the variety of people in various venues who use these skills in the workplace.

8) *Are there any other ways in which the course could have been improved?*

1. {no response}
2. {no response}
3. {no response}
4. {no response}
5. Not really— the lectures were excellent and my classmates were engaged, interesting and had great insights on all topics.
6. None whatsoever. I'm so thankful for the opportunity.
7. I wish there was more discussion time! I don't think any content should be cut, and I feel the pacing of course was appropriate, but somehow, I wish we could find more hours in the day to just talk more amongst ourselves.
8. No.

9. No.
10. Nothing I can think of— except that it should be taught regularly so that everyone can take it!
11. None that I can think of.
12. Maybe not try to cram as many exercises in. The group exercises were great, but took a lot of time.

9) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? How likely are you to recommend this course to others? On a 1-10 scale, 1 would indicate that you disagree that you got your money's worth, 5 would indicate a neutral response, and 10 would indicate that you agree that you got your money's worth.*

1. 10
2. 10
3. 10
4. 10
5. 10
6. 10
7. 10
8. 10
9. 10
10. 10
11. 10
12. 10

10) *If your course made any (virtual) field trips outside of the classroom or had guest speakers, do you feel that they enhanced the course experience?*

1. Yes, it was fun to work on materials in SC.
2. Yes, definitely—we went to SC and worked with books pulled from the collection here at UVA— this give a “real feel” to what we learned.
3. The field trip provided valuable hands-on experience applying the best practices we covered in class, specifically tailored to working with certain types of materials.
4. Yes. We took a field trip to SC and got to catalog some items there. I found that session challenging—but in a good way!
5. Absolutely— the items we cataloged from UVA's SC were one-time-opportunity examples. It made all the difference to be able to (gently!) handle and look through this material while working on it.
6. No, I am not interested in virtual trips. There was no need for a speaker as BB was incredible through and through.
7. It was interesting to get to visit UVA's SC library and work with their materials. I got an opportunity to work with something that definitely seemed too special to leave the library, and I am glad I got to see in person.
8. The field trip to the UVA SC was a really nice way to get access to more material. I had a really special and personal experience cataloging one of their items. I do feel that the UVA SC staff (these were *not* RBS faculty) regulated the experience a bit too much—some of us felt afraid to even touch the pages to turn them—but if anything it made me appreciate how hands-on RBS classroom instruction is (while still protecting the collections!).

9. Maybe, I felt like this course was pretty intense for the five days, and could have been offered longer, so I am not sure if it is a good idea to add more activities within the five-day class.

10. Being able to visit SC to work with some of their material was a really great experience—it allowed us to look at some different types of material, and it was also neat to then be able to compare what we did with the existing records in the catalog.

11. Yes—it was nice to get a change of scenery and to meet other UVA staff and see another part of the collection.

12. Yes, the SC trip was eye-opening.

11) *Do you have any additional thoughts or advice for anyone considering taking this course in a future year?*

1. Do it!

2. Take it, even if you think you know a lot about what you are doing (as you probably do) you will learn new things, and it will expand the way you approach your position.

3. {no response}

4. BB is awesome!

5. Take it! If you're interested in special collections cataloging, you'll get a year's worth of experience and knowledge.

6. Whoever takes this course with BB is in for a treat! An absolutely incredible experience will be had by all.

7. I have deeply valued my time here and it definitely made me a better cataloger.

8. If you need to use RDA to catalog modern special collections (limited editions, ephemera, comics, &c.), or even just need an RDA primer/refresher, and want to meet a great instructor and like-minded catalogers, then don't hesitate and apply!

9. I would definitely say go ahead and apply. This is a unique opportunity that people would not find elsewhere. Especially, BB's teaching was just amazing, and I can't say enough that she is the best instructor that I've had in cataloging. I really hope she can offer more classes at RBS so that I can come back!

10. If you work with special collections materials from after the hand press period, you should take this course. If you don't understand RDA well enough, you should take this course. If you think you would benefit from taking this course but don't think you'd be able to get in, *you should take this course*.

11. They should do it, without a doubt.

12. Make sure you feel comfortable engaging in a group setting and learning new information at a fast pace. You will learn a *lot* and meet new people.

12) *If you had to sum up your RBS experience with a single sentence, phrase, or haiku, what would you say?*

1. The experience was worth more than the monetary cost to attend.

2. It was an informative experience that will enhance the work I do at my home library immediately!

3. This course proved enriching as it afforded me the opportunity to both acquire knowledge and engage with fellow catalogers who share a similar passion for working with special collections.

4. CONFIDENCE! I feel more confident in myself both professionally and personally.
5. Satisfying!
6. WOW... supportive, knowledgeable, enthralling and absolutely wonderful!
7. {private response}
8. I'm just so grateful and happy that I got this unforgettable opportunity.
9. RBS always inspires me to pursue more knowledge and learning, and you all are great!
10. Taking this class was like a breath of fresh air—I feel like I'm finally learning what I've wanted to know all along, and I've met so many people that I hope I'll get to stay in touch with!
11. I knew the RBS experience was likely going to be something special and helpful, but I could not anticipate how strongly I would feel that that is true. "Awareness of enrichment is what satisfaction is." I am immensely satisfied.
12. Charlottesville, Va./Rare Book School is here to stay!/So many fun times...