

INTRODUCTION TO HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Mid-Atlantic Regional Center for the Humanities, Rutgers University—Camden
Fall Semester 2018

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This course is an introduction to the preservation of the built environment, examining the history and philosophy of historic preservation and how the discipline is practiced today. It will provide the historic framework of how preservation has emerged as a field of specialization and will expose the students to the terminology used by its adherents.

At the end of this course you should understand:

- that historic preservation is a multi-disciplinary field and the roles that various professions and perspectives play in achieving preservation outcomes;
- the key concepts that have informed and continue to guide modern preservation practice in the United States;
- the core programs and terms used in preservation practice;
- how preservation in the United States relates to preservation in other parts of the world.

Suggested Text: Tyler, Norman. *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to its History, Principles, and Practice*. 2nd Edition. New York: WW Norton Company, 2009.

NOTE: A third edition of this book will be released in October 2018. This book is not required for this class, but it is strongly suggested as supplemental reading and future reference.

Required readings are required. Suggested readings are not required, but contain valuable information and are provided to students as supplemental resources. Additional readings may be assigned during the course and will be made available electronically or during class.

Suggested Reference Books:

An architectural style guide such as McAlester, Virginia. *A Field Guide to American Houses (Revised): The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture*. New York, Alfred Knopf, 2015.

Week 1 (September 5) – What do we preserve? Why do we preserve it?

- Explore the rationales for engaging in historic preservation. Why do historic resources matter to us? What are the benefits of preserving historic resources? Aesthetic, commemorative, economic, educational, environmental and quality of life rewards will be discussed.
- Discuss the various types of resources and places we define as historic. In addition to exploring traditional definitions and categories we will look at efforts to identify and preserve intangible heritage.

Reading:

- Why Old Places Matter: <https://forum.savingplaces.org/blogs/forum-online/2016/03/30/blog-series-why-do-old-places-matter>

Week 2 (September 12) – How do we preserve?

- Introduction to the various players and programs common to preservation practice in the United States. This subject will be broken down and explored in greater detail throughout the semester, but this class is meant to provide a foundation for terms and concepts that you will hear in subsequent classes.
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Week 3 (September 19) – The role of history, commemoration, and interpretation in historic preservation

- What role does history play in preservation today? How does our understanding of the past influence decisions about what should be preserved? How does the interpretation of historic places influence preservation?
- Discuss the concepts of significance and context and the mechanisms for capturing and communicating significance. What roles do professionals play in these discussions and how should non-professional input be considered?
- *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/>
- Bond, Gordon, "My History Too," *Garden State Legacy*, 22, 23: December 2013; March 2014
http://gardenstatelegacy.com/files/My_History_Too_Intro_Bond_GSL22.pdf
http://gardenstatelegacy.com/files/My_History_Too_Bond_GSL23.pdf

OPTIONAL: September 20 – Philadelphia Historic Preservation Task Force public meeting

- 6:30-8:00
- Congregation Rodeph Shalom, 615 N. Broad St., Philadelphia
- The Philadelphia Historic Preservation Task Force was created in Spring 2017 by Mayor Jim Kenney to identify and discuss issues related to current preservation policy and practice in Philadelphia and make recommendations on how to better balance preservation and development. Cory Kegerise is an appointed member of the Task Force and this meeting will include, amongst other topics, a discussion of best practices from other cities in the United States.

Week 4 (September 26) – The role of conservation and historic fabric in historic preservation

- What role do historic fabric and materials play in how we value and manage historic places?
- Discuss the concept of integrity, how it relates to significance, and how these ideas influence decisions about value, interventions, and management of historic places.

Reading:

- "William Morris and the Anti-Scrape Society: Reflections on the Origin of an Ethos," by William Chapman, *Heritage*, Volume 8, Number 3, Summer 1990

<http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph45427/m1/6/>

- A History of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/history-of-standards.htm>
- The Secretary of the Interior's Standards, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/standguide/index.htm>

Week 5 (October 3) – The role of planning and design in historic preservation

- How can historic places be adapted and accommodated in a world that is constantly changing? How should new buildings respond to existing buildings?
- Discuss the concepts of sensitivity and compatibility and the roles that architects, planners, and design professionals play in historic preservation.

Reading:

- "An Introduction to Authenticity in Historic Preservation" Pamela Jerome, *APT Bulletin: Journal of Preservation Technology*/ 39:2-3, 2008
<http://www.apti.org/clientuploads/pdf/JeromePamela-39-2-3.pdf>

ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE AT THE END OF CLASS ON OCTOBER 3

Week 6 (October 10) – The relationship of historic preservation to other policies and programs?

- How should historic places factor into decisions about other needs and issues that communities face?
- Discuss the role of historic preservation in economic development, public health, sustainability, livability, and quality of life.

Reading:

- "Conserving the Future: The Need for Sustainability in City Planning and Preservation" Mark Holland, *APT Bulletin: Journal of Preservation Technology*/43:1, 2012
http://www.apti.org/clientuploads/publications/2012/Bulletin/43_1/Holland_article_43_1.pdf
- Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/sustainability-guidelines.pdf>
- http://www.placeeconomics.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/economic-impacts-of-hp_findings.pdf
- "The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse"
http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/sustainable-communities/green-lab/lca/The_Greenest_Building_lowres.pdf
- "Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation Activities in Pennsylvania"
<http://www.preservationpa.org/uploads/economicbenefits/EconBenefitsBaseDocumentLowRes.pdf>

<https://www.nps.gov/tPS/tax-incentives/taxdocs/economic-impact-2014.pdf>

- "The Economics Associated with Outdoor Recreation, Natural Resources Conservation and Historic Preservation in the United States."
http://www.trcp.org/assets/pdf/The_Economic_Value_of_Outdoor_Recreation.pdf

Week 7 (October 17) – Putting the pieces together – Part 1

- How has the Federal government responded to the need to preserve historic places? What are the tools and policies in place to help identify, protect, and enhance these places?
- Discuss the National Historic Preservation Act, National Register of Historic Places, Section 106, and Historic Tax Credits

Reading

- National Historic Preservation Act (54 USC §3000)
<https://www.achp.gov/sites/default/files/2018-06/nhpa.pdf>
- An Introduction to Section 106: <https://www.achp.gov/protecting-historic-properties/section-106-process/introduction-section-106>
- Tax Incentives for Preserving Historic Properties: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>

Week 8 (October 24) – Putting the pieces together – Part 2

- What role do State and local governments play in protecting historic places? How are these decisions influenced by politics, economics, and other factors?
- Discussion of state-level preservation laws, municipal preservation ordinances and zoning.

Week 9 (October 31) – No Class

Week 10 (November 7) – Presentations of ASSIGNMENT 2

ASSIGNMENTS

There will be brief (3-5 question) quizzes at the start of each class covering content discussed in previous classes.

Assignment 1—Visit a Historic Site, Due October 3

Visit a historic house, park, ruin, archaeological site, battlefield or another interpreted site. The purpose of this assignment is to have you visit, explore and observe what makes a historic site—the site itself, interpretation, visitation practices, providing for visitor needs, etc.

At a minimum, collect the following information:

- Any hand-out or interpretive documentation available
- What is the historic significance of the site?
- Is this significance easily understood and well-conveyed?
- Hours of operation/visitation
- How the historic site is operated, specifically, who owns and/or operates the site?
- If available, the site or operating organization's mission

- Is the operating organization a membership organization? If so, what is the cost of membership and what are the benefits of membership?

Investigate/Observe the following:

- How the site is used (house museum, historic park, memorial)
- How visitation is conducted (docent guided tour, self-guided, etc.)
- The focus of interpretation (architecture, history of the occupants if a house museum, collections)
- How is the historical significance of the site interpreted? When you are at the site, how do you understand or perceive its significance?
- What, if anything, has been added to the site specifically for visitors? ADA ramp? Toilet rooms? Lighting? Security systems? Raised walkways through an archaeological site? Ropes or carpeting to control visitor access to historic spaces? Do these additions take away from the interpretive experience?

Analyze

- Did you learn anything?
- Did you enjoy yourself?
- Will you revisit?

Your submission should be brief, limited to a couple of pages.

Assignment 2—Short Presentation, November 7

The goal of historic preservation should be to make old buildings relevant and useful in today's society. How can we as preservationists ensure that older buildings are a living part of our community?

Find a public historic building or place in your community that you believe is successfully used. Whether an adaptive use or an old building that continues to serve the purpose for which it was constructed, examine and explain why you find it a productive community asset.

Some questions you should consider:

- Is the building still legible as a historic resource?
- What feelings, if any, does it engender?
- Is the building historically significant or just an old building?
- Does a building have to be historically significant to continue to be used or can it simply be a well-built, old building?
- If modern amenities have been added, does the place still convey a sense of its history?
- Is the building you are studying listed on the National Register? If it is, how has listing helped? If it isn't, should it be? Would it make a difference?
- If the building has been rehabilitated, were the Secretary of the Interior Standards followed? Which overall philosophy was applied? In what way was the chosen preservation philosophy effective?
- Are there other preservation issues that apply? Have green design principles been used? Is the building from the recent past?

The presentation should be short, about 5 minutes, and should be supplemented with photographs. Be creative and try to remember that historic buildings should be used buildings. Unless a building can be made useful for today, it won't be saved.

Please do not use an interpreted historic museum

Receipt of a passing grade is dependant on course attendance, class participation, successful completion of the written assignment, and final presentation.

More than two absences should be discussed with the instructor.