

Syllabus for Course on Architectural Research
ARCH-DES 597F-01
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The goal of this course is to prepare students to research and write about historical resources. Beginning with the distinction between primary and secondary sources, students will learn where to find documentation, how to use and interpret documents; they will develop the architectural and use history of properties and how to place them within the larger context of their place and time. Primary focus will be researching buildings, but the course will also address the researching of structures, landscapes, objects, cemeteries and sites. At the practical level, students will demonstrate their research and writing skills by preparing historical narratives at the state inventory and National Register nomination levels. Students will also gain experience giving presentations of their research. Classes will be lectures followed by hands-on exercises using and interpreting documentation.

Readings: Carter, Thomas and Elizabeth Collins Cromley, Invitation to Vernacular Architecture: A Guide to the Study of Ordinary Buildings and Landscapes, The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 2005.

Lanier, Gabrielle J. and Bernard L. Herman. Everyday Architecture of the Mid-Atlantic: Looking at Buildings and Landscapes, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1997.

Class 1: Primary sources, secondary sources, repositories, and the orderly process of research. In this class students learn how to find the maps, old photos, directories, government records, and other primary sources as well as the memoirs, local histories, newspaper accounts, and other important secondary sources for developing the history of a building.

Off-week. Students will choose a resource for research at inventory level. The assignment will be to conduct initial primary documentation on the selected building, the results of which will be submitted on a draft inventory form by the Friday before the next class meeting. This assignment will be graded.

Class 2: Organizing and writing an historical narrative and placing a property in its historical context. Completing inventory form data, photography and mapping resources. In this class we will address how to prepare a digital inventory form, where to find the data and how to organize a narrative.

Off-week. During the week students will do deed research and write a draft narrative, will photograph and collect graphics for their selected resource, and put the research and visual material into Powerpoint form. The Powerpoint will be submitted to me with a working bibliography by the day prior to class number 3.

Class 3: Presentations and major project options. Fifteen minute presentations with photographs, maps, brief architectural descriptions and historical narratives will be given and graded. We will discuss the parameters of choosing a major project.

Off-week. During the week students will revise and complete their inventory forms, which will be submitted at the end of the week. Students will also write and submit a two-page summary of a major project choice with methodology, initial bibliography, and representative photos. Work will be submitted by Friday before our next class meeting.

Class 4: Guest speaker. An historic preservation consultant and author will present methodology for a broad study of an architectural resource type. We will discuss the National Register nomination form, its organization and supporting materials, as well as the level of documentation required at the federal level for a nomination.

Off-week. Individual field trips to the Registry of Deeds, local library, and historical society gathering information for the major project. There will be a project check-in at the end of the week to describe where students went, what they read, what worked and what didn't. As part of their field trips, students will be reading this week in order to develop the historical and social context of their selected projects.

Class 5: Field trip to the David Ruggles Center for Study of the Underground Railroad. We will hear a talk on researching suppressed populations with case studies that show how one may develop building history of fugitive slave houses and how they were used.

Off-week. Submit at the end of the week an outline of history using National Register format. Sample nominations will be distributed at the beginning of the week. The assignment for the end of the week will be to complete portions of the nomination form and to read the Dorsey-Jones Contextual History.

Class 6: Researching historic structures, objects, cemeteries, archaeological sites, and landscapes. We will talk about the specialized research required for these resources and identify locations for documentation.

Off-week. Students will have a brief assignment this week to read sample inventory and nomination forms to become familiar with their research and writing.

Class 7: Field trip to 18th century historic house. This class will use the house as an example of approaching the description and dating of an historic building in an organized manner from exterior to interior. We will learn about conflicting documentation and how to reconcile it with community expectations.

Off –week. There will be no class assignment this week as students will be working on their major projects.

Class 8: Students will submit their final projects, which will be graded, and there will be a practical, hands-on final exam.

The following policies are in place for students taking the course:

Accommodations Policy

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), Learning Disabilities Support Services (LDSS), or Psychological Disabilities Services (PDS), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements.

Academic Honesty Policy

Since the integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required of all students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. [See [Appendix B](#) for detailed examples of behavior that constitutes academic dishonesty.] Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Instructors should take reasonable steps to address academic misconduct. [See [Appendix C](#) for some suggested ways to deal with issues of academic integrity.] Any person who has reason to believe that a student has committed academic dishonesty should bring such information to the attention of the appropriate course instructor as soon as possible. Instances of academic dishonesty not related to a specific course should be brought to the attention of the appropriate department Head or Chair. The procedures outlined below are intended to provide an efficient and orderly process by which action may be taken if it appears that academic dishonesty has occurred and by which students may appeal such actions.

Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent.

Graduate School Interim Statement on Academic Honesty

It is expected that all graduate students will abide by the Graduate Student Honor Code and the Academic Honesty Policy (available at the Graduate Dean's Office, the Academic Honesty Office (Ombud's Office) or

online at http://www.umass.edu/gradschool/handbook/univ_policies_regulations_a.htm). Sanctions for acts of dishonesty range from receiving a grade of F on the paper/exam/assignment or in the course, loss of funding, being placed on probation or suspension for a period of time, or being dismissed from the University. All students have the right of appeal through the Academic Honesty Board.