

A 6741

Architectural Finishes in America

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Course Syllabus Spring Semester 2014

Architectural Finishes in America is about the decoration, ornamentation, and protection of buildings with a wide variety of finishes. Buildings and preservation should not merely be about the outer shell of the building but how people saw themselves and expressed themselves in the finishes of their homes and public buildings. We can not of course cover every finish but we will look at paint, clear finishes, wallpaper, plaster, stucco, twentieth century wall and ceiling finishes, tile, linoleum, and glass. The course will be a mix of lectures, demonstrations, site visits, and some hands-on work in the form of conservation treatments.

There will be two demonstration/lecture by guest speakers on gilding and wood graining

As a part of this course, the class will perform hands on work in the form of analysis, and conservation treatments.

The class is held from 9am to 11am on Tuesday. Several sessions will involve travel time to sites for investigative and conservation work. The remaining sessions will be held in the Conservation Laboratory in Schermerhorn.

Session 1: Introduction to American Finishes

Tuesday - January 21, 2012

An overview of the course work will be presented along with the requirements and expectations. This class will examine the constituents of paint and the use of these materials. The class will also make two of the earliest types of paint by hand to examine some of the characteristics of these types of paint.

Class to be held in the Conservation Laboratory.

Session 2: Early American Finishes

Tuesday - January 28, 2012

This class will be a lecture on American Finishes from the Colonial period through the First World War. The class will also include a synopsis on paint color investigations and how they are performed.

Class to be held in the Conservation Laboratory.

Assignment 1 is given out.

Session 3: Twentieth Century Finishes

Tuesday – February 4, 2012

A lecture will be presented on twentieth century finishes. In addition, there will be an examination of contemporary finish trade materials and a discussion of various investigative techniques and research methods.

Class to be held in the Conservation Laboratory.

Session 4: Conserving Architectural Finishes

Tuesday - February 11, 2012

The class will meet at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum to examine the philosophy for conserving this museum and its finishes. We will look at various techniques used to conserve finishes and some of the testing that was done to develop a conservation program.

Assignment 1 is due.

Assignment 2 is given.

Session 5: Decorative Finishes

Tuesday - February 18, 2012

Decorative finishes were an integral part of American homes, public buildings and how American's perceived their built environment. While some of these finishes are understood in their primitive form, much information about decoration has been lost. This class will look at types of decorative finishes and how to look for them in historic buildings.

Class will meet in the Conservation Laboratory.

Session 6: Wallpaper - Investigation and Examination

Tuesday - February 25, 2012

Wallpaper is an ephemeral finish and is often found in fragments or badly damaged. How to investigate and date wallpaper along with conservation issues regarding this paper thin finish will be discussed.

Class will meet in the Conservation Laboratory.

Session 7: Plaster, Plaster Board and Stucco

Tuesday – February 28, 2012

This class will cover some of the wall finishes that are common to many American buildings. In addition to discussing the composition of these finishes, the types of deterioration and conservation techniques will be examined.

Class will meet in the Conservation Laboratory.

Assignment 2 due.

Assignment 3 given.

Session 8: Conservation Problem

Tuesday - March 4, 2012

The class will meet at the conservation site.

Session 9: Laboratory Work

Tuesday - March 11, 2012

Samples removed from the study site will be examined and tested in the Laboratory.
Class will meet in the Conservation Laboratory.

Session 10: Spring Break

Tuesday - March 18, 2012

Spring Break

Session 11: Wood Graining Demonstration

Tuesday - March 25, 2012

The class will carry out treatments at the conservation problem site.

Session 12: Undertaking treatments Conservation Treatments

Tuesday - April 1, 2012

The class will carry out test conservation treatments at the conservation site weather permitting.

*.Assignment 3 is due
Assignment 4 is given.*

Session 13: Gilding Demonstration

Tuesday - April 8, 2012

The class will carry out conservation treatments at the conservation site.

Session 14: Tile, Linoleum, and Glass

Tuesday - April 15, 2012

Conservation issues will be discussed regarding the issues involving twentieth century finishes such as tile, linoleum, and glass.
Class will be held in the Conservation Laboratory.

Session 15: Final Class

Tuesday – April 29, 2012

The final class will be used to put our report together for the client of our study site.
Class will be held in the Conservation Laboratory.

Assignment 4 is due.

Course Assignments:

Grading is based upon course assignments. In addition, it is important that all course work be handed in on a timely basis. If assignments are handed in late, they will be reduced a grade for each week the assignment is late.

Four Assignments will be given in this class.

Assignment 1: Produce a bibliography on an assigned topic and a short history of a technology.

Assignment 2: Perform a basic Paint Color Investigation.

Assignment 3: Investigation report.

Assignment 4: Treatment Report.

Office Hours:

There are no scheduled office hours, but the instructor will meet with students at their request.

Method of Evaluation

Grading for the Class:

Attendance is 15% of your grade.

Participation is 15% of your grade.

Course Assignments are 70% of your grade.