

Course Syllabus

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PAST AS PROLOGUE:

Preservation as a Tool for Social Inclusion Poughkeepsie, NY

A core aim of this studio to engage students in evidenced-based preservation planning and project development at a scale beyond the individual building or site, so as to understand the role heritage and plays within larger community, urban, and regional dynamics, and to ensure that preservation generates positive long-term outcomes for populations and environments.

This studio will focus on the downtown (“middle Main”) area of Poughkeepsie. Once a thriving, mixed-use hub of the city, it has declined significantly, having been cut off from the waterfront and other areas, in part due to past urban renewal efforts and the construction of arterial highways as well as the loss of industry in the region.

Students will undertake research into the evolution of the city, map and analyze current physical and socio-economic conditions, and develop policy and project proposals that utilize preservation as a tool for:

- retaining affordable housing in the downtown area,
- fostering economic vitality, especially through the incubation of small businesses, and
- engaging a diverse citizenry in the use of Poughkeepsie’s history and significant places.

This studio will involve community engagement, archival and historical research, visual analyses, as well as a range of mapping and survey methods to understand the physical and social context and evolution of the study area. It is recommended (though not required) that students take the *GIS for Preservation* course along with this studio if they do not have prior GIS experience, as it will be an important analytical tool in the studio and in their preservation career. Their GIS course project can focus on one or more of the studio analyses, thereby creating “joint” deliverables.