

UMBC UGC New Course Request: HIST 418: The American House

Date Submitted: 4/23/2015

Proposed Effective Date: Spring 2016

	Name	Email	Phone	Dept
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COURSE INFORMATION:

Course Number(s)	418
Formal Title	The American House: The History of Domestic Architecture and Life
Transcript Title (≤30c)	Architectural History
Recommended Course Preparation	HIST 101 or HIST 102; Hist 300
Prerequisite NOTE: Unless otherwise indicated, a prerequisite is assumed to be passed with a "D" or better.	none
Credits	3
Repeatable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Max. Total Credits	3 This should be equal to the number of credits for courses that cannot be repeated for credit. For courses that may be repeated for credit, enter the maximum total number of credits a student can receive from this course. E.g., enter 6 credits for a 3 credit course that may be taken a second time for credit, but not for a third time. Please note that this does NOT refer to how many times a class may be retaken for a higher grade.
Grading Method(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reg (A-F) <input type="checkbox"/> Audit <input type="checkbox"/> Pass-Fail

PROPOSED CATALOG DESCRIPTION (no longer than 75 words):

Our homes are a central part of the American dream. This course explores the relationship between the ideal house and family and the reality of American domestic life from colonial settlement to the mid- twentieth century. Topics include the development of domestic architecture; evolving standards of living; the "consumer revolution" and household consumption; household labor and production; class formation and identity; residential space and domestic artifacts; industrialization and home life; and evolving domestic technologies.

RATIONALE FOR NEW COURSE:

We want to create more upper-level courses that will of use to the Public History minors at Shady Grove as well as the main campus. Currently, the instructor for this new course teaches a 300 level course on the American city. For students at SG, this new course would be a logical follow-up. We don't want to make the American city course a prereq, however, b/c we do not have the resources to offer it regularly on the main campus. So we want to create a 400 level course that moves at a higher pace than 300 level courses, that will be of interest to history majors, minors, and esp. Public History minors, but that is in principle open to any upper-level students at UMBC not afraid of reading a lot, writing a lot and catching up on what they do not know as non-majors. We run all of our 400 level courses that way. We do think that having taken an intro course in American history may be useful to suggest as a recommended course prep, along with History 300, which is the intro to public history course. Again, students do not absolutely HAVE to HAVE these courses under their belt, but making them recommended course preps clues them in that some prior knowledge of American history and the field of public history will be helpful.

ATTACH COURSE OUTLINE (mandatory):

See attached

HIST 4xx
The American House

Course Syllabus
Spring 2016

DAYS, TIME, Building, Room

Instructor: Melissa Blair
Office: SG-Building III, Room 4131
Office Hours: DAYS and TIME, or by appointment
Phone: (301) 738-6283
Email: mfbclair@umbc.edu

Course Overview and Objectives:

This course provides an overview of American domestic life from colonial settlement to the mid twentieth century with an emphasis on domestic architecture. It is geared towards students of American social history who may not have extensive training in architectural history. In structuring the course I have avoided the “march through the styles” approach common to surveys of architecture. Instead, the readings draw on the work of social historians, architectural historians, and material cultural scholars to deepen students’ understanding of the historic contexts of domestic spaces, and to broaden their knowledge of the major transformations of American life. Students with little exposure to material culture studies will become more familiar with the role of things in history.

Throughout the course we will be discussing several themes and topics, including evolving standards of living; the “consumer revolution” and household consumption; household labor and production; class formation and identity; residential space and domestic artifacts; industrialization and home life; and evolving domestic technology. Each week during class we will engage in an “*Architectural Investigation*,” where we will learn more about architectural historians’ research methods or take virtual field trips to historic houses.

Course Requirements:

Readings: Your first responsibility is to do the reading and discuss your reactions in class. On most weeks, you will be required to read several articles or chapters related to the week’s major topic. Usually, this will be from 75 to 100 pages of reading per week.

The required books for the course are:

Carson, Cary and Carl R. Lounsbury, eds. *The Chesapeake House: Architectural Investigations by Colonial Williamsburg*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013. **TCH**

Clark, Clifford Edward. *The American Family Home, 1800-1960*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986. **AFH**

Wright, Gwendolyn. *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995. **BTD**

All other readings for this course will be available on Blackboard. Bring a paper or electronic copy, marked with your notes and questions, to class.

“The Material Culture of Home” Paper and Presentation: At the midpoint of the semester students will write a nine- to ten-page paper on an object type found commonly in American homes. Examples include cooking utensils, textiles, a furniture type, appliances, or technological systems. Alternately, students may chose to focus on a specific room, such as kitchens or bathrooms, or a dwelling type, such a rowhouses or ranch houses. The students will explore the history of their object, room, or structure and consider how and why it has changed over time. They will present their findings to their classmates.

Mid-Term Examination: There will be a mid-term exam on DATE during the regularly scheduled class time. It will concentrate on the assigned readings and class discussions.

Article Prospectus: In our final week, students will hand in an eleven- to twelve-page prospectus for an article on an aspect of American domestic life. The prospectus should include ideas drawn from the assigned readings and other books and articles pertinent to the topic. Student should explain the importance of their topic, state their research question, relate the topic to the themes discussed in class, present the relevant literature, describe research methods, and prepare a brief annotated bibliography (not included in page count).

Final Examination: There will be a final exam on DATE. It will cover the assigned readings and class discussions since the mid-term.

Grading:

Class Participation	15%
Material Culture Paper (DUE DATE)	15%
Material Culture Presentation	5%
Mid-Term Exam (DATE)	15%
Article Prospectus (DUE DATE)	30%
Final Exam (DATE)	20%

Assignments receive grades on the following scale: A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, and F=59 and below. Individual assignments may receive pluses or minuses; the overall final grade will not. There will be no incompletes given in this class. You must complete all assignments and exams to receive credit for this class.

Class Policies:

Academic Integrity: Please be advised that the penalty for academic dishonesty – including plagiarism and other forms of cheating – in any UMBC History Department course is an "F" for the course. ALL cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Academic Conduct Committee. For further definitions on what academic misconduct is and how to avoid it at all costs please see <http://library.acadiau.ca/tutorials/plagiarism/>.

Attendance: More than one unexcused absence from a scheduled class will have a significant adverse affect on your participation grade.

Due Dates and Deadlines: Papers and projects are due at the beginning of class on the assigned dates. Any late submissions will be penalized a grade level for each day they are overdue. For example, a C+ paper turned in one day late would receive a grade of C; two days late, a C-; three days late, a D+, etc.

Electronics Policy: Use of electronic devices for non-class related activities is not permitted in this class. If you ignore this policy I will mark your class participation for the day as a zero.

UMBC Statement on Disabilities and Information for Obtaining Accommodations:

UMBC is committed to eliminating discriminatory obstacles that disadvantage students based on disability. Student Support Services (SSS) is the UMBC department designated to receive and maintain confidential files of disability-related documentation, certify eligibility for services, determine reasonable accommodations, develop with each student plans for the provision of such accommodations, and serve as a liaison between faculty members and students regarding disability-related issues. If you require certain accommodations, please submit an application (found at <http://sss.umbc.edu/files/2014/05/RequestForServicesForm-Updated-2.docx> and all disability documentation to Student Support Services (Math/Psych Bldg, Room 213,

UMBC, 1000 Hilltop Circle, Baltimore, MD 21250) as soon as possible. Please see the application for details on appropriate documentation guidelines. For information or questions about the application, please call 410-455-2459.

Once your accommodations have been approved, you will meet with the UMBC Shady Grove Program Coordinator, Ms. Ashley Waters (awaters@umbc.edu), who will work with you and your instructors to ensure you receive the proper accommodations. If you have any questions or concerns, please notify Ms. Waters immediately. For students at the Shady Grove campus, the Center for Academic Success (CAS) provides additional support. CAS provides test proctoring services and can act as a liaison between students at USG and their home campus, as well as between students and their professors. For more information on the services CAS provides, please visit <http://www.shadygrove.umd.edu/campus-services/cas/dss>.

Class Meeting Schedule

Week 1: Course Introduction

Carson and Lounsbury, "1. Introduction," "2. Architecture as Social History," & "3. Fieldwork," **TCH** pp. 1-28.

Architectural Investigation: Fieldwork Methods

Week 2: Domestic Life in Colonial America

Carson and Lounsbury, "6. Plantation Housing Seventeenth Century," **TCH** pp. 86-119

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich. *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987. Chapters 1-4.

Wright, "1. The Puritan Way of Life," **BTD** pp. 3-17.

Architectural Investigation: Working with Probate Inventories and Land Records.

Week 3: Gentility in the Eighteenth Century

Bushman, Richard. *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*. New York: Knopf, 1992. Chapters 1-4.

Zierden, Martha. "Trans-Atlantic Merchant's House in Charleston: Archaeological Exploration of Refinement and Subsistence in an Urban Setting." *Historical Archaeology* 33, no. 3 (1999): 73-87.

Carson and Lounsbury, "7. Town House & Country House," **TCH** pp. 120-155.

Architectural Investigation: Exploring Hampton Mansion (use CDHE project)

Week 4: What about Everyone Else?: The Domestic Life of Slaves

Carson and Lounsbury, "8. Housing Slavery," **TCH** pp. 156-178.

Wright, "3. The "Big House" and the Slave Quarters," **BTD** pp. 44-57.

Architectural Investigation: Archeology at L'Hermitage, Monocacy National Battlefield

Week 5: What about Everyone Else?: The Domestic Life of Free Workers

Smith, Billy. "The Material Lives of Laboring Philadelphians, 1750-1830." In *Material Life in America, 1600-1860*, ed. Robert Blair St. George, 233-260. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1989, pp. 233-260.

Hayward, Mary Ellen. *Baltimore's Alley Houses: Homes for Working People Since the 1780s*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008. Chapter One, "Small Streets and Small Houses" and Chapter Two "Antebellum Free Blacks" pp. 1-60.

Architectural Investigation: Working-class housing in Fells Point, Baltimore.

Week 6: The Single-Family House as American Ideal

Clark, "1. Reforming the Foundations of Society," "2. Dreams and Realities," "4. The House as Artistic Expression," **AFM** pp. 3-71, 103-130.

Wright, "5. Independence and the Rural Cottage," **BTD** pp. 73-89.

Architectural Investigation: Pattern Books

Week 7: Domesticity and its Critiques

Wright, "6. Victorian Suburbs and the Cult of Domesticity," **BTD** pp. 96-113.

Hayden, Dolores. *The Grand Domestic Revolution*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982. Chapters 1, 4-6.

Architectural Investigation: Godey's Lady's Book.

Week 8: Student Presentations – The Material Culture of Home

Week 9: Housework and Domestic Technology: Part I

Nylander, Jane. *Our Own Snug Fireplace: Images of the New England Home*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994. Chapters 4 & 5

Cromley, Elizabeth Collins. *The Food Axis: Cooking, Eating, and the Architecture of American Houses*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010. Chapters 1-4

Architectural Investigation: Domestic Outbuildings in Maryland

Week 10: Housework and Domestic Technology: Part II

Cowan, Ruth Schwarz. *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave*. New York: Basic Books, 1985. Chapters 1-3.

Ierley, Merritt. *The Comforts of Home*. New York: Clarkson, Potter, 1999. Part 2.

Architectural Investigation: U.S. Patents

Week 11: Domestic Interiors

Ames, Kenneth L. *Death in the Dining Room and Other Tales of Victorian Culture*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995. Chapters 1 & 2.

Katherine C. Grier. "The Decline of the Memory Palace: The Parlor after 1890," in Jessica H. Foy and Thomas J. Schlereth, eds. *American Home Life, 1880-1930: A Social History of Spaces and Services*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992.

Architectural Investigation: Trade Catalogs

Week 12: Government Involvement in American Housing

Wright, "12. Public Housing for the Worthy Poor," "13. The New Suburban Expansion and the American Dream," **BTD** pp. 215-261.

Joseph Heathcott, "'In the Nature of a Clinic': The Design of Early Public Housing in St. Louis," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 70, No. 1 (March 2011), pp. 82-103.

Architectural Investigation: Analyzing Floor-plans

Week 13: Twentieth-Century Suburbanization

Jackson, Kenneth T. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*.

Oxford University Press, 1985. Chapters 10-16.

Architectural Investigation: Working with Historic Aerials

Week 14: Article Prospectus and Class Evaluation

In our final week students will explain how the study of housing has contributed to developing the main themes of American history through discussion of their article prospectus.