



Successful intervention in any historic setting, whether a building, site, or district, always begins with an understanding of the existing condition of the resource. Developing this understanding of a building or site requires a careful process of research, visual assessment, measurement, and analysis. This approach allows designers, conservators, and preservationists to develop a set of recommendations that are specifically tailored to the needs of the building or site, taking into consideration other factors such as project budget and any applicable regulations (ie, Section 106 review).

Preservation Lab: Introduction to Building Assessment will be a primer on the examination of a historic structure and its condition, and preparation of recommendations for repairs and interventions. Students will learn about the challenges of preparing a Building Assessment Report for a historic building, and the proper approach to address these challenges.

Using a case-study building, the course will combine hands-on site work with in-class lectures. Lectures will address topics ranging from Creating Measured Drawings to Digital Photography to Structural Failures in Historic Buildings. Field survey work will include measurement, photography, mapping of deterioration conditions, and sampling of paint/mortar.

Over the course of the semester, students will prepare a Building Assessment Report for the case-study building. This group project, prepared by the class as a whole, will incorporate lessons from the lectures and the field sessions.

The final choice for the case-study building is to be determined. Potential sites are: Rittenhouse Town, Philadelphia, PA, or the Germantown Town Hall, in Philadelphia, PA.

The class schedule will be split between Saturday and Monday-evening classes. Lectures will be held on Monday evenings, with field-survey sessions on Saturdays.

