

Building Assessment & Preservation Planning: Navajo Mountain School – Arch 462/662 005

Southwest Summer Institute for Preservation and Regionalism

Instructors: Lillian Makeda & Francisco Uviña-Contreras

Summer Semester – 2012

University of New Mexico School of Architecture and Planning

June 18 – 23 at Navajo Mountain, Utah

Contact:

lmakeda@unm.edu/505-728-7960

fuvina@unm.edu/505-967-9422



Day School, Navajo Mountain, Utah, 1936, photographed by Milton Snow, National Archives, Washington, DC

Economic benefits occur when revitalized neighborhoods begin to experience increased personal wealth. As the buildings are rehabilitated and public facilities improved, the area attracts business, jobs are created, personal incomes increase, property values grow, and businesses profit. As the benefits increase, revitalized and economically viable neighborhoods emerge. –Floyd Argersinger

Located on the slopes of Naatsis'áán (Navajo Mountain), Utah, the Navajo Mountain Day School is one of four "hogan schools" that were built on the Navajo Reservation as part of the Indian New Deal. The hogan is the vernacular dwelling of the Diné (Navajo) people and the school's pioneering design is symbolic of the federal government's attempt to embrace Native American culture during the 1930s. The New York architectural firm of Mayers, Murray, and Phillip drew up the plans for the school and members of the Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Department were responsible for constructing it. Situated in a remote area of the Navajo Reservation, the school possesses an exceptional degree of integrity and is presently being nominated as the 15th National Historic Landmark in Utah.

Course Overview

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This course will begin on Monday, June 18 and end on Saturday, June 23 in Navajo Mountain, Utah. The purpose of this course shall be to give students training in how to produce a Historic Structures Report (HSR) by developing a preservation treatment and adaptive-reuse plan for the 1930s New Deal school complex at Navajo Mountain through both practical and classroom instruction *in situ*. Students will not only receive detailed information about the school's historic context and traditional building technologies, but they will also learn about a variety of documentation processes. We will be working closely with community members and local high school students in order to obtain traditional knowledge and oral histories on the school buildings. Students will learn about traditional Diné "hogan" construction methods and histories through a thorough investigation and documentation of all architectural elements. The class will include local participants and record the community's recommendations for the future adaptive re-use of the school buildings while respecting the historic fabric. Students will explore building technologies including stone masonry, earthen mortars and plasters, and corbelled log construction under the guidance of a trained architectural preservationist. Documentation, investigation, analysis, and scholarship will provide the foundation for an understanding of the significance, historic context, and interpretation of the Navajo Mountain Day School. Students will acquire the essential skills needed to compile a Historic Structures Report and successfully provide recommendations for various preservation treatment options and possibilities for the reuse of historic buildings based on collected evidence.

Course Objectives

- 1) Students will develop an understanding of the purpose and components that make up a Historic Structures Report.
- 2) Students will examine ways to use and apply various media formats to clearly present the evidence and data collected in the field and articulate their recommendations to produce the Historic Structures Report.
- 3) Students will develop an understanding of building materials properties including wood, stone masonry, earthen plasters, roofs and mortars, as well as an understanding in various traditional construction techniques and methods.
- 4) Students will develop the ability to analyze various levels of deterioration and structural integrity needed to perform a thorough condition assessment.
- 5) Students will learn various documentation methods to gather information including but not limited to photography, measured drawings, oral history, and research.
- 6) Students will develop preservation treatment plans and adaptive-reuse options and make recommendations for all structures comprising the school complex based on the information and evidence collected in the field.

Methodology

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Through classroom lectures, documentation, oral history, research and scholarship, field trips, readings, and class discussion, students will to gather the necessary information needed to produce the individual components of a Historic Structures Report. We will be working closely with Navajo community members in order to obtain traditional knowledge and oral histories on the school buildings as well as working with the instructors and using the required readings (see below) to develop the ability to analyze, assess the condition, and document the architectural elements of the Navajo Mountain Day School. Collected information and recommendations will be translated and placed into a final report format specified by the course instructors. Students will be assigned tasks that address their particular interests and strengths.

Communication

Students will communicate and work with faculty instructors and fellow classmates while on-site at the Navajo Mountain Day School, and also off-site by email and/or instant messenger.

Evaluation

Students will be evaluated on participation, which will include mandatory attendance at the Orientation and six days of fieldwork at the Navajo Mountain Day School. The final grade will be based on each student's ability to work mostly individually, as well as in teams when needed, to document, analyze, investigate, research, and collect information about the Navajo Mountain Day School in order to develop a preservation treatment plan and make recommendations on various adaptive-reuse options available. Participation will include active and intense involvement while working *in situ* to gather all the essential data needed to formulate a Historic Structures Report. Participation will also include each student's active involvement in class discussion, and interaction/communication with students, community members, and faculty instructors. A presentation to be given to the Navajo Mountain community at the end of the week will be evaluated based on the student's ability to work within a team to present preliminary recommendations on a preservation treatment plan and various adaptive re-use options available for the Navajo Mountain Day School. Students will present their assessment of the materials and their condition, identifying various stages of deterioration and future expected deterioration. Each student will also design possible interventions as well as recommend preservation treatments in their presentation. Furthermore, students will make recommendations on potential repairs and uses by employing their understanding of the historic context, historic significance, and structural limitations of the buildings at the school.

Students will also be evaluated on the quality and accuracy of the individual products that will make up the Final Project. Each student will be given two weeks to complete the off-site Final Project, which shall consist of tasks that will be adapted to each student's specific interests and background. These tasks may include writing text based on oral histories collected from community members; documentation of digital scale drawings (to be completed in AutoCAD from field measurements collected on-site) including the site plan, the floor plan, exterior elevations, cross-section, and element details; producing a thorough architectural description of all buildings; providing a condition assessment; and/or writing up the Treatment Recommendation section for the HSR.

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Course Reading

All course readings and historical documents will be available on eReserves (accessible at the main website for the University of New Mexico libraries) two weeks prior to the site visit to Navajo Mountain. Course readings posted on eReserves can be accessed using the password “lobo 662.” Students should also print a copy of “Preservation Brief 43: The Preparation and Use of Historic Structure Reports” at <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief43.htm>. Students should have read all articles and documents before the site trip. Further information about accessing this information will be included in an e-mail from the instructors to be sent two weeks prior to the site visit.

Course Supplies

Personal Sketchbook (preferably 8 ½” x 11”), drawing pencils, scales, and digital camera. Any other necessary supplies will be provided by the instructors *in situ*.

Grading and Assignments

Grading will be based on attendance and participation (50%) and a final project (50%).

Attendance and participation: Since this class will only meet during the week of June 17 – 23 at Navajo Mountain, Utah, attendance is mandatory. Participation in site activities (including a presentation to the Navajo Mountain community) and discussions will also be included as a basis for the final grade.

Final Project: Students will be assigned final projects/components at the end of the week at Navajo Mountain. When complete, these final projects/components will be compiled into a Historic Structures Report. Students will be required to meet with instructors or communicate via email when not physically present to discuss the structure and content of the HSR. It may be necessary to work in groups to produce some of the components of the HSR. Final submissions must include Data Files.

Data Files

Each student is responsible for maintaining an inclusive database of all individual text and images utilized in all report layouts. Submission of these organized files is required for course completion. Students will receive an incomplete grade for failure to submit organized and complete data files. Submissions should be placed in a Dropbox or other format and labeled according to the instructors’ specifications.

Expectations

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The success of this Summer Class will be directly related to each student's willingness to learn. All students must actively participate in site activities and discussions, as well as complete work to be performed outside of the class time at Navajo Mountain. Students will be assigned to work individually and/or in teams by the instructors. Students assigned to a group will be expected to demonstrate a dedication to their group and bear a shared responsibility for the group's final project.

The class will be working together to create the Historic Structures Report and teamwork will be essential. Deadlines for the submission of required work must be met.

Grading Criteria

Criticism should be understood by students as a positive means for learning. In all cases, criticism is directed at a project or a process, not at the student who has produced the project. Specific criteria for the class will be determined independently for each student and will include class participation, on-site work, and the quality of the student's final project. General criteria for evaluation will always apply as follows:

1. Work effort and resourcefulness *in-situ*: Did the student test or give various solutions to the recommendations given to the building assessment? Did the student make enough effort to improve/strengthen community relationship during the building assessment? Was the student resourceful in finding and accessing information? Was the process inclusive and complete?
2. Positive Attitude and Class Participation: Did the student produce quality work and exhibit professionalism? Was the student receptive and responsive to comments from instructors and classmates? Did the student participate in discussions, shared ideas and experience?
3. Presentation: Did the student produce all required drawings or written reports? Are the ideas correctly and thoroughly communicated? Has the student crafted the graphic, written and report format with care, precision, and critical thinking?

Grading Scale

A+:	100+	A:	93-100	A-:	90-92
B+:	87-89	B:	83-86	B-:	80-82
C+:	77-79	C:	73-76	C-:	70-72
D+:	65-69	D:	60-64	F:	Below 60

Letter grades (and their numerical equivalents) should be interpreted as follows:

A=excellent, superior; exemplary; greatly exceeds satisfactory standards. Student is a self-starter and routinely takes initiative, does outside research, develops work through multiple and complex iterations, generates

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thoughtful and innovative solutions, and carries work to a high level of finish, going well beyond assigned elements.

B= very good, thorough; exceeds satisfactory standards. Student shows consistent progress in studio, does some outside research, develops work through multiple iterations, generates good workable solutions, and always carries work to full completion, going beyond requirements and assigned elements.

C=acceptable, perfunctory; meets satisfactory standards. Student completes all assigned work, but with little evidence of taking initiative or going beyond minimum assignments. Shows inconsistent progress, does little outside research, does some iterations.

D=marginal; somewhat below satisfactory standards. Lack of steady performance of assigned work. Student does not complete all work, shows little initiative, does not do outside research, does minimal iterations, and lacks consistency in meeting minimum requirements and including assigned elements.

F=unacceptable; does not meet satisfactory standards. Serious deficiency in meeting satisfactory standards and performing assigned work. Student shows no initiative, does not do outside research, does not develop evidence of iteration, generates inappropriate solutions, shows little or no care in finished work, and is missing assigned elements.

I=Incomplete. This is awarded only in special or extreme circumstances, by advance arrangement with instructors. It is not available as a last-minute option for students unable to complete work as assigned.

All assignments are to be completed by the dates assigned unless a medical certificate is supplied, or in the case of extenuating circumstances, as discussed with, and agreed upon by, the instructors. One letter grade reduction will be implemented from your final grade for every day late, and work more than a week late will not be accepted. Students will receive an "F" for assignments not turned in.

Student Work

The University reserves the right to retain original and copies of papers, work and designs developed in this class, to display and distribute copies or originals, and to be credited in any publication of the work.

Travel, Accommodations, and Meals

All expenses, including travel, accommodations, and meals will be included in the tuition and fees for the class. We will be traveling to Navajo Mountain by van, where we will be staying in the dormitory of the Navajo Community School. Each student will have a private room and meals will be taken at the school. Breakfasts and lunches will be prepared for us and we will work together to prepare dinners. Navajo Mountain is located approximately 40 miles from the closest convenience store (Inscription House Trading Post) and 95 miles from the closest town (Page, Arizona) so pack carefully and be sure to bring any personal articles that you may need.

A Note about Reservation Etiquette

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Our class will be operating under a permit from the Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department allowing us access to the Navajo Mountain Day School. Be aware that we will be working on tribal lands that are off-limits to unauthorized visitors. You will be free to walk around while on the reservation, but please stay on established roads unless you are in the company of a local resident. These rules apply particularly to Navajo Mountain itself, which is a site sacred to several Native American groups.

Accessibility

Should any student require assistance with access during the course, please communicate this to your instructors or the program director. It is the responsibility of the student to inform his or her instructor of any special needs before the course begins, and to understand that academic adjustment does not apply retroactively. The School will work with the student and with Accessibility Services to provide the adjustment as soon as possible.

“The University of New Mexico is committed to the recognition and to the proactive pursuit of the compliance of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The University makes reasonable accommodation to the religious observances/ national origins practice of a student, an employee or a perspective employee and to the known physical and mental limitations of a qualified student, employee, applicant or program user with a disability, unless such accommodations have the end result of fundamentally altering a program or service or placing an undue hardship on the operations of the University. Qualified students, employees and program users with disabilities should contact the Office of Equal Opportunity or Accessibility Office for information regarding accommodations in the academic and employment setting.” –University of New Mexico Course Catalog

(Please refer to the University of New Mexico Course Catalog and UNM Pathfinder for further information)

The Week at Navajo Mountain: A Daily Breakdown

ORIENTATION – Saturday, June 16th

-We will be having a brief orientation meeting on Saturday, June 16. We will meet for lunch at Frontier Restaurant (2400 Central Avenue) at 12 noon and then hold an hour-long presentation in Room P130 in George Pearl Hall (the School of Architecture and Planning Building) beginning at 1PM.

Day 1 – Monday, June 18th

TRAVEL

-Travel to Navajo Mountain; meet early in the morning on the North side of George Pearl Hall. We will be taking two side trips to visit historic architecture in the Navajo Nation during our journey. The first stop will be at the capitol of the Navajo Nation, Window Rock, which was designed by the architects of the Navajo Mountain School and constructed during the same period. Our second side trip will be to Shonto, Arizona, the site of one of the last historic Navajo trading posts still in operation. While at Shonto, we will also visit a historic school that will provide a contrasting example to the Navajo Mountain School and serve as an introduction to the concept of architectural integrity.

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Day 2 – Tuesday, June 19th

INTRODUCTION

- Morning, Student introduction to the community and high school students
- Student site visit and weekly plan run-down, and group breakdown
- Lunch
- Group in-situ assignments & documentation
- Afternoon discussion on report layout

Day 3 – Wednesday, June 20th

BUILDING ASSESSMENT

- Building assessment and documentation
- Lunch
- Continuation of bldg. assessment and documentation
- Community Presentation on Past Rehabilitation Projects

Day 4 – Thursday, June 21st

BUILDING ASSESSMENT

- Building assessment and documentation
- Lunch
- Continuation of bldg. assessment and documentation
- Afternoon discussion on individual assigned projects

Day 5 – Friday, June 22nd

BUILDING ASSESSMENT

- Building assessment and documentation
- Lunch
- Continuation of bldg. assessment and documentation
- Community Meeting to discuss findings and preliminary recommendations

Day 6 – Saturday, June 23rd

TRAVEL

- On our return from Navajo Mountain, we will have several sightseeing options including Monument Valley and Tohatchi, the site of a Navajo boarding school dating from the early 20th century.

Friday, July 6, 2012 at 5:00pm MST – Final Project Due to the Faculty Instructors by email

Monday, July 30, 2012 at 5:00pm MST – Evaluations and Grades Due from Faculty Instructors to the UNM Registrar

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