This course is the third leg of a three term sequence in the history of American architecture as seen within the context of cultural heritage and historic preservation. This term will focus on the design of “ordinary” environments, that is, buildings and spaces that host everyday activities of living, working, and playing. Students will consider the nature of “vernacular” sites and the forces that shape ensembles of designed spaces into cultural landscapes. While the course will include classic ideas of vernacular in general, it will highlight example of these buildings and spaces in the American West. Students will learn the characteristics and origins of vernacular building types and will explore the cultural meanings of these sites, particularly in light of contemporary ideas about socioeconomic issues.

The format of the course will include lectures and discussions based on readings, written assignments, oral presentations, and, if circumstances permit, field trips. The major task will be a term project (written, graphical, or a combination) investigating a particular aspect of the vernacular and cultural landscapes.

This course is required for the MS degree in historic preservation and as an elective for the both the Specialization and the Minor in historic preservation for architecture students. There are no prerequisites for this course.