

NOVA COLLEGE-WIDE COURSE CONTENT SUMMARY HIS 187 – INTERPRETING MATERIAL CULTURE (3 CR.)

Course Description

Survey's America's material culture and provides techniques to interpret artifacts. Lecture 3 hours per week.

General Course Purpose

This course will examine America's cultural and historical resources and the historic, social, economic, political, and environmental forces that shaped them. Students will learn how to interpret and understand objects within their historical context.

Course Prerequisites/Corequisites

None.

Course Objectives

Upon completing the course, the student will be able to:

- a) Identify various theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of material culture.
- b) Develop research techniques to locate, identify, and explain sources of material culture.
- c) Utilize objects as primary sources in historical research and understanding.
- d) Explain the relationship between material culture, historic preservation, and public history.

Major Topics to be Included

- a) Introduction and definition of terms related to material culture
- b) Identification of material culture sources, such as physical objects, artifacts, the landscape, and documents
- c) The meaning of material culture and historic preservation
 - a. Artifacts and their historical/contemporary context
 - b. Broad cultural trends
 - c. Spatial relationship
 - d. Historic houses/
 - e. Museums