

American Architecture  
58-314  
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### **Paper and Presentation Guidelines**

Each of you has already been assigned a building in Lowell. For the final project for this course, you must prepare a presentation and a paper. The presentation should be between 10-15 minutes, and the paper should be about 10 pages long. Here are some guidelines.

#### **Presentation**

The presentation should be based upon your paper, but you should not just read the paper. Because you will be speaking to a classroom full of people that know nothing about your building, you must make the presentation easy to follow with clear statements and visuals. You can use powerpoint, or with enough notice, we can make slides. However, you must use some type of visual documentation: current photos, historic photos, architectural plans, atlases or maps, etc.

You must provide the students in the class with a one-page synopsis of the project, with a small picture of the building in the upper right hand corner.

#### **Paper**

The paper is a formal writing assignment. It must be typed, double-spaced, with page numbers. You must **PROOFREAD** it ahead of time! These papers will be submitted to the Center for Lowell History as a permanent research tool.

As you discuss your building, it is essential that you document your sources. Whether you use footnotes, endnotes or parenthetical documentation is your choice, but a reader should be able to backtrack through your text to your sources. This means textual information as well as visual. All illustrations—photos, maps, etc. must have a citation that includes the date and the location of the image. **PLEASE KEEP TRACK OF YOUR SOURCES!** This typically includes author, title, date and page number. Any paper without documentation of sources **WILL NOT** be accepted.

Documenting your sources allows other interested researchers to follow up on related areas of interest; it also protects you from the charge of plagiarism. Plagiarism on this assignment will not be tolerated. Please see the accompanying handout on what constitutes plagiarism. If you plagiarize, you will fail the course.

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What should be included in your paper and presentation (note: you need not follow this order; these are just suggestions).

*Introduction:* provide the name, date and location of your building. What was it used for? Who was the patron?

*The architectural description:* what style is it and what details indicate this? What materials? This is where you want to demonstrate the proper vocabulary.

*Provide a national context for this style:* what are the best known examples? Who are the best architects associated with it?

*Provide a local context for this style.* How does your example follow the national examples or deviate from them? Is the architect for your building known? If so, what other structures did they design here or elsewhere? Are there any other buildings in this style in Lowell?

*Provide a local context for the building.* What were the local constraints that accompanied this building? What was happening in Lowell at the time? Where did the money come from? Was much building going on or a dearth? What other buildings were around your building—has the character of the locale/neighborhood changed?

*Historical and social context:*

If your building is domestic then you must address housing issues in Lowell. What were the major trends?

If your building is commercial or civic then you must address the social and cultural context of the building (return to the question “What was it used for?”). What does it tell us about the life of Lowellians, their interests, the type of activities that took place.

*The building over time:*

Has your building remained the same or changed over time? Answer this both in terms of architecture and in terms of use. What explains the changes/lack of changes? Is the building in good shape currently?

Keep in mind as you organize your paper/presentation that a visual example might help make your point effectively (i.e. using an atlas page, an historic photo, etc).

*Resources at the Library and at the Center for History.*

In order to get a sense of the history of Lowell, be sure to ask at the Center for History about any pertinent articles or books. Although dated, Coburn’s *History of Lowell* may be of some use.

At O’Leary I have put the following on reserve:

Parrot, C. *Lowell Then and Now*. 1995

Blewett, M. *To Enrich and To Serve*. 1995.

Handlin, D. *American Architecture*. 1985

Whiffen, M. *American Architecture 1607-1976*.