

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING



What intrigued Will Cruthers on his first visit to the College of Charleston was how the city and the campus function together. He didn't know it then, but he'd make great use of this dynamic by majoring in historic preservation and community planning. Now, as he puts it, "the city has become my classroom."

Interestingly, it was marine biology that lured Will from Connecticut to coastal South Carolina. But he began to change his mind when he took the introduction to historic preservation course. He followed that with a study-abroad experience in France, during which he took conversational French and a special topics course on the history of Parisian architecture.

"That class in Paris really opened my eyes. In the afternoons, we would walk around the city with Prof. Russell, sketching buildings and listening to him talk about their history, their style, and why they'd been built as they were. For me, it was so much fun because I realized then that I was really interested in city planning and how an urban space actually works."

He took another special topics course – Old and Green – which focused on the ways in which environmental conservation is incorporated into historic preservation. And then, in a preservation planning studio course, he really began to come into his own.

"For me, the studio has been a really cool part of the program. Much of the time, you're on site, taking measurements at a historic structure, but soon enough you're back at your drafting table, creating elevations and detail drawings. It's nice. Instead of just sitting in a lecture, you take a very hands-on approach, and you get to create your own project."

Will likes that the program starts off with the basics. "Anyone can use a computer, type in the numbers and create a drawing, but if you know what goes into creating that computer-generated image, that's stronger preparation for understanding the structure."

What he really appreciates is that you don't have to pick either community planning or historic preservation in this major. You can absorb both, or you can specialize. "And," he says, "there are so many things that you can do with this training. You can become a museum curator, or a woodworker, or part of a planning department for a parks and recreation office."

COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

The College of Charleston is the only university in the U.S. that offers an undergraduate degree in Historic Preservation and Community Planning. And, we're in the ideal location for this – peninsular Charleston – which has set a national standard for community-based preservation.

Facts

This program prepares you for a variety of careers as well as graduate study. Recent graduates from our program have secured important, rewarding roles, including:

director, Main Street Edenton, Edenton, N.C.

preservationist, Milner-Carr Conservation, Philadelphia, Pa.

urban planner, Washington, D.C.

preservationist, Richard Marks Restoration, Charleston, S.C.

Opportunities

A required, semester-long internship offers real-world context for what's learned in the classroom. In Charleston, the possibilities are unlimited. Recently, students have served internships with:

The City of Charleston, Department of Planning and Neighborhoods

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Gibbes Museum of Art and School of Fine Art

The City of Charleston, Office of Cultural Affairs

Palmetto Craftsmen