Our School
The University of Notre Dame, founded in 1842 by the Congregation of Holy Cross, is an independent, national Catholic university located in Notre Dame, Indiana, approximately ninety miles from Chicago. It became the first Catholic university in the United States to establish a program and award a degree in architecture in 1898. Once the Lemonnier Library, the School has been housed in Bond Hall since 1964, and underwent an extensive renovation in 1997. In the near future, the School will move to a new facility, the Matthew and Joyce Walsh Family Hall, designed by John Simpson, to accommodate ongoing growth in research, student enrollment and new programs. And after more than 40 years located in the historic center of Rome near the Pantheon, we likewise have a new home in the Eternal City, one block from the Colosseum, which offers ample space and technology on the doorstep of one of the greatest conservation sites in the world, the Roman and Imperial Forums.

Today, the School is internationally recognized as the leading institution teaching classical architecture and traditional urbanism, disciplines and intellectual approaches which have shaped the bulk of the historic environment, both in the United States and abroad. The program in historic preservation, therefore, brings the long-standing strength of the School’s curriculum to bear on a closely related and expanding field in the midst of transition. Growing debate about the relationship between contemporary and historic architecture, and rising public support for policies and practices that seek continuity rather than contrast between them, make this approach particularly timely. Our emphasis on a conservation ethic, emboldening students to preserve and enhance our built environment, offers them experience that prepares them for leadership in civic, cultural, and professional endeavors.

Our Approach
The School of Architecture’s pedagogical approach is, in part, based on the methods developed by the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, the great French program of architectural education that produced many of the cities and monuments culturally valued most highly today. For the Ecole, Rome was the centerpiece of the curriculum, and so it is for us. Graduate students spend one semester there and undergraduate students their entire third year, studying the history, design, and ongoing relevance of the classical heritage in the Eternal City. The lessons of Rome are then applied to the challenges that architects, urban designers, and preservationists find wherever they may practice.

Our Graduates
The School’s curriculum seeks a balance between a broad humanistic cultural perspective and the technical knowledge and skills demanded by the profession. The success of this approach is evidenced by the placement opportunities of our graduates, who are sought by leading architectural firms and employers and who are prepared to work for society’s common good and be faithful stewards of cities that are beautiful, sustainable, and just.

The mission of the Master of Science in Historic Preservation program is to prepare talented, avid, and socially conscious students to become leaders in architectural design, preservation consulting, government service, and heritage advocacy. The program emphasizes respect for cultural heritage as the basis for informed conservation and the design of harmonious new development. These objectives are pursued in the context of community, environmental stewardship, and civic engagement, ideals which are critical to the support of great places and are a natural fit for the principles espoused by Notre Dame’s Catholic tradition.

Master of Science in Historic Preservation
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The Master of Science in Historic Preservation program at Notre Dame is a multi-disciplinary course of study integrating a range of disciplines within a distinctive perspective on the relationship between the built environment and contemporary art and culture. The curriculum emphasizes not only the tangible heritage of physical structures and landscapes, but also the intangible heritage of bodies of knowledge, craft traditions, and formal languages that produced our historic places and that, in many cases, survive or are recoverable today. Preservation, from this viewpoint, becomes a bridge uniting past, present, and future.

The Masters of Science in Historic Preservation program covers two calendar years—four semesters (including one semester in Rome), one introductory summer course, and one summer internship. The program’s faculty includes recognized leaders in the field, and the semester in Rome offers a unique opportunity for students to work with international professionals and researchers involved in heritage conservation at the highest level. Interdisciplinary coursework, field study, and individual research will offer students opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and perspective necessary to graduate with readily marketable skills, excel in this growing field, and advance the discipline in both the academy and the profession.

Recent graduates and working professionals with professional or non-professional degrees in architecture are invited to apply. Further information about the program and the application process is available at architecture.nd.edu/mshp.

Historic Preservation is a field that embraces both art and science. Preparing students to enter this field requires a multi-disciplinary approach to a broad range of subjects, including art and architectural history, social sciences, building materials and systems, conservation methods, environmental science, transportation, urban and regional planning, and landscape design.