Beginning in 2007, Airbedandbreakfast.com, commonly known as Airbnb.com, has expanded accommodations options in the hospitality industry. As more and more people have maximized their historic building’s potential income by renting their spare bedrooms as hotel rooms in cities and towns across the world, the Airbnb trend is now impacting historic preservation. Developers are renovating abandoned historic residences, and other buildings, using federal, state, and local tax credits and investment incentives to rehabilitate and convert them into small lodging facilities.

In this design studio, students will design a rehabilitation and an addition to the Gilmer Chapel, a small historic rural chapel, located in southwestern Virginia. This project will entail the design of a kitchen, full bathroom, storage, and living accommodations for four people.

Detail design and rehabilitation analysis in a historic building will be the focus of this studio. Students will learn the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Historic Preservation and Rehabilitation, traditional architecture, and light frame construction.