Race, Health and Privilege in Community Design

http://www.slvhealth.org/programs/healthyCommunities

PREMISE:
Race, health and privilege are fundamental influences on community design. Intentional or not, attitudes relative to these topics have led to a disproportionate division of public support in terms of access to open space, protection from environmental hazards, physical activity, mental well-being, and/or economic opportunity. By foregrounding these issues, and collaborating across disciplines, a more equitable and healthy community planning process should evolve.

CONTENT / METHOD:
This course is a hybrid. As such, 50% of the coursework will be delivered online via Moodle. Classroom sessions will include lectures, films and class discussions.

Course content will include: the relationship between public health, community design and disparities from the perspective of race and ethnicity; defining and measuring public health and systemic racism in the city; patterns of urban settlement, racial segregation and demography in the United States; civic engagement and public health education; environmental injustice; urban renewal and community displacement in Charlotte’s Brooklyn neighborhood and the Garden District; gated communities; Charlotte’s neighborhood schools versus busing; the politics of streets, sidewalks and greenways; segregation in Charlotte’s Overstreet Mall, the Transportation Center, the Gantt Center, the Bechtler, NASCAR, Football, Basketball, the Music Factory and the Mint.

RESEARCH CONNECTIONS:
Professor Ryan is the editor of Small Town Fit: Healthy Programs, Places and Policies. She is leading the public education component of the Town of Davidson grant from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and their Healthy Communities Initiative. Dr. Smith’s research interests include race, media and health. She is currently assisting the Mecklenburg Health Department in creating public service announcements to address minority health disparities in the Northwest Corridor of Charlotte.

REQUIRED READINGS:

PROJECTS/EVALUATION/MEASURES:
Students will be asked to propose a multi-cultural public education campaign about the role of community design and public health, as well as complete quizzes that will cover course readings and lecture materials. Students will also be evaluated relative to their participation in online and classroom discussions.