Lectures: TR 11:00-12:15PM  
Instructor: Charles Davis (charles.davis@uncc.edu)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course explores the ways that *diversity* and *design* influence one another in the creation and experience of the built environment. The ultimate goal of this course is to provide students with a critical vocabulary for addressing the cultural meaning of the built environment, as well as examining the manner in which architecture collaborates with other design disciplines in everyday life. A secondary goal of this course is to complicate overly simplistic definitions of diversity that limit its consideration to the reification of personal identity, as well as to reform autonomous design practices that fail to properly consider the physical and cultural contexts of a project.

We will begin the semester by defining the two terms mentioned in the course title. This includes unpacking the shifting meaning of diversity in the United States, from the legal and economic discourses of the 1960s and 70s to the culture wars of the 80s and 90s and the global definitions of the present. Implicit in each of these transitions is a political ethos, both liberal and conservative, for managing the various impacts of social difference. We will also consider design broadly as the range of professions that creates the physical objects and places that constitute the built environment. This includes the disciplines of product design, architecture, landscape architecture, engineering, city planning and mass media. Each subsequent week, students will examine a physical case study that illustrates the profound, and often hidden consequences that design decisions and processes have on the human experience. Tuesday mornings will consist of a class discussion and debate of each week’s themes. Thursday mornings will consist of an in-class review of an overnight design exercise that deconstructs the case study examined in class. The final step of each week is the construction of a response paper that synthesizes this work into a coherent design ethos. Each student will be responsible for maintaining a blog of their semester’s work and creating a printed dossier that collects these weekly items that clarifies their critical biases toward design.

There are no prerequisites for this course. Students are required to obtain the course textbook, *Diversity and Design: Understanding Hidden Consequences* (Routledge, 2015) as a paperback or e-book before the start of classes in January.