

Premise

Economics, social forces, attitudes about density, ideas about sustainability, and incentives to encourage good design are all forces that affect contemporary urban form. A city's plans illustrate a response to these forces and together, can define a vision for its future. However, underlying these forces is a history of intentional segregation, a byproduct of explicit government policies at the local, state, and federal levels. The impact from these policies has been devastating for generations of African-Americans and other people of color who have suffered from state-sanctioned violations of the Bill of Rights.

Throughout the twentieth century, the legal system in the United States upheld discriminatory policies to maintain the segregation of whites and blacks, significantly contributing to the racial unrest now taking place on the streets of American cities. Charlotte is no exception. Here, racial and economic segregation are not age-old givens, but products of a decades-long process. While Charlotte once had a salt and paper pattern where whites and blacks lived in racially integrated neighborhoods, it eventually and intentionally became a city of distinct neighborhoods segregated by both race and class.



historically black and white neighborhoods of note, and local exhibitions like at the Levine Museum of the New South that illustrate Charlotte's history from "Cotton Fields to Skyscrapers."

Content

This is a class about how local, state and national policies have combined to create Charlotte's urban form, and how race was a fundamental contributor especially in terms of redlining, urban renewal, revitalization, and gentrification. Half the class will be spent hearing from local leaders who are working towards building more equitable solutions for housing, neighborhoods, cities and urban mobility. The other half of the class will be spent researching and visiting the city's

Method

Students will become familiar with urban form through films, readings, class presentations, discussions, research projects and local field trips.

Objectives

- To understand how public policies and actions have resulted in the segregation of cities
- To consider the impact of segregation, urban renewal and evictions on individuals and communities
- To examine the role textile mills and mill villages have played in Charlotte's history
- To become familiar with Charlotte's historic neighborhoods, and consider the disparate forces that have contributed to their rise/fall
- To become familiar with the evolution of public housing in Charlotte
- To consider how gentrification is affecting Charlotte neighborhoods and the people who live in them
- To consider how race can affect people's attitudes, actions and experiences on public streets and in public places
- To become familiar with how Charlotte is reimagining the city and mobility within it through an equity lens
- To consider the range of remedies available to correct past inequities

Evaluation & Grading

Evaluation will be based on the following:

Participation 10%; Readings Awareness 20%; Research Projects 45%; Final Project 25%

Textbooks

- Tom Hanchett, [Sorting Out the New South City: Race Class and Urban Development in Charlotte, 1875- 1975](#), Second Edition (First edition online at UNCC Library)
- Richard Rothenstein, [The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America](#)
- Matthew Desmond, [Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City](#)