

# DESIGN ACTIVISM AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

ARCH 430/530, CRN 37096/37096  
Tuesdays: 10:30 am - 1:20 pm  
WSB 451

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This course examines the history, theory and mechanisms through which architects, planners, designers and other socially-conscious activists put their professional skills in service of social justice for people, place and planet

Embracing the professional role of public problem-solvers rejected by the field decades ago, students and practitioners concerned by the widening gap between the haves and have nots are leading a resurgence in the area of socially-conscious design, more commonly described as public interest design. Empowering people to take direct control over their environmental conditions, the resulting design work vanguard has been both impressive and promising

Labeled as “social entrepreneurs” by some “design activists” by others, this loose but rapidly growing group of designers has mashed the issues of accessibility, affordability, mobility, sustainability and aesthetics into a small, but exciting field of design activism. The work of these broad-minded, multi-talented designers is impacting and improving lives, preserving local cultures and providing hope for the future in this country and all over the world. Their efforts bring balance to the perception that architecture is only concerned with the object by drawing attention to the kind of design that has the inherent ability to transform and in some cases, actually save lives

The course examines the creation and development of theories, strategies, tactics, interventions, and projects in the public interest, which hold the potential for significant social change over the long haul

<b>Community Design</b> <i>a practice that promotes change in the built environment from the neighborhood to regional scale, and aims to meet community needs through participatory decision-making at all levels</i>	<b>Pro Bono Design &amp; Research</b> <i>services of a professional nature rendered for the public good without compensation or expectation of a fee; research that addresses humanitarian concerns independent of principal client for which practitioners may or may not receive financial compensation</i>
<b>Design &amp; Social Justice</b> <i>a belief that design is an intentional aesthetic, social, economic and political act, which should address issues confronting less-advantaged groups as a matter of professional responsibility</i>	<b>Design &amp; Social Entrepreneurship</b> <i>a proactive design practice that works to transform society through innovative, entrepreneurial, revenue-generating design solutions for humanitarian problems</i>

## SPECIAL NOTE:

You do not have to be an architecture, planning or design major to take this course. You should; however, have the desire to spend some time, in your own way, making our shared environment a better place to live...

Degree requirement fulfillment: Core Course (Substitution for ARCH 4/535)  
Meets in Portland