

Invites you to attend a Seminar presented by:

**Professor David Wilson**

**University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**



## “Toward a Dracula Urbanism: Smart City Mania”

**Date: 4th October 2023**

**Time: 2-3.30pm**

**Location: Rocque Lab or via Teams**



This experimental provocation discusses the rise of what I term Dracula Urbanism as an ongoing form of city building across the globe. Dracula Urbanism is seen as a deep-reaching, human punishing unfolding that, working through its leading edge, smart city building, is simultaneously a state of mind, a mode of institutional operation, a vision of people, one gaze onto growth's true needs, and a kind of growth produced. I demonstrate the everyday realities of this city building in two places, Jakarta, Indonesia and Flint, USA. My ruminations suggest that Dracula Urbanism has four dominant features. First, the political and economic resources to drive smart city building are secured through ever-thickening parasitic relations, particularly with upper-level sources of power and authority. Second, city building involves unrelenting drives to kill and destroy (not rehabilitate or therapeutize) supposed deep civic “cancers” in the city. Third, city building is promoted through strategically deploying the materiality and discursive terrors of decline. Fourth, driving governances are decisively integrated into “planetary urbanizations” through circuits of smart-growth capital investment and techno-scientific claims to expertise. I conclude that the cultural politics of in-your-face revanchism that Neil Smith helped us to see, and is still present in cities such as Jakarta and Flint, is today accompanied by an equally punishing, complicated and adroitly adapting state politics in these places.

*David Wilson is: Professor of Geography, Urban Planning, and the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. David is Living in Germany this Fall and Winter, where he is 2023-2024 Research Fellow at the University of Heidelberg's Center for Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Studies.*