

Biography

Dr. Russell M. Smith is a Professor of Geography in the Department of History, Politics & Social Justice and the Faculty Lead for the Spatial Justice Studio at the Center for Design Innovation (SJS @ CDI). He received his doctoral degree in Geography from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. His research interests include a variety of topics related to spatial justice including: local government boundary change, urban form and the built environment and urban sustainability. Recently, Dr. Smith has been selected as a Fulbright Specialist for his expertise and experience in urban planning.

Dr. Smith is the author of numerous research publications (20), contracted reports, and presentations. In 2018, Dr. Smith published a book titled, Municipal Incorporation Activity in the United States: Patterns, People and Procedures, which highlighted his decade long investigation into new municipalities in the United States. He is also the 2017-2018 recipient of the Cedric S. Rodney Distinguished Service Award and the 2018-2019 Bill Sheppard Master Teacher Award. Prior to joining Winston-Salem State University, Dr. Smith was an AICP certified urban planner for a variety of local governments where he specialized in land use planning and urban redevelopment.

He is the principal investigator of a \$250,000 NSF funded research project, which seeks to incorporate data science skills into the Urban Studies & Sustainability curriculum at WSSU. This project offers students practical experiences related data science in an urban context. Additionally, Dr. Smith is the lead researcher for the development of a Spatial Justice Index for North Carolina Communities. This project was funded through a UNC System grant and is housed within the newly established Center for Applied Data Sciences at WSSU.

Dr. Smith has made a concerted effort and had been committed to supporting a variety of projects, programs and initiatives aimed at addressing spatial justice issues on campus and in our community through his service work. He has served as the Chair for the Alliance for Sustainable Communities within the Department of History, Politics and Social Justice, had classes participate in the development of a strategic plan for the Waughtown neighborhood and served as the Vice President of the S.G. Atkins Community Development Corporation. Dr. Smith also has served his academic profession by regularly attending academic conferences and served as the Vice President of the North Carolina Geographical Society (NCGS).