

Research Statement – Part of a Self-Sustaining Scholarly Agenda  
Based on Teaching, Outreach, & Research  
Campbell ♦ 2019

I believe research is an essential component of informed design practice. As an educator and researcher, I support the study and development of socially conscious design methods to proactively increase inhabitant well-being. This is because the built environment can enhance or inhibit life quality. Some buildings support life quality and health while others negatively impact these. As buildings are designed and built today, some structures are much used while others are underutilized. This, too, is due in part to building design. As a result, I believe understanding the interaction between people and their environment is crucial.

**Supportive Housing for Older Adults & Collaborative Partnerships**

During my early graduate education, I began developing my research program focused on housing community design for older adults. Since environments designed with only young, healthy individuals in mind result in spaces usable by a limited scope of people, I became intrigued with designing environments for older adults. That is because, by contrast, designs considering needs and capabilities of older adults actually suit the widest possible range of potential users.

As my education progressed, my focus tightened into utilizing community and building design to enhance social interaction among seniors to improve life quality. Upon joining the University of Florida's Interior Design Department in 2011, my research continued advancing this program. By establishing a collaboration with North Florida Retirement Village ("The Village"), I investigated how to design planned retirement communities to support resident social needs. Fully funded by The Village, this research informed a new housing type I coined: Enhanced Independent Living. Based on my study's findings, this new housing type is being developed to fill a housing need between Independent and Assisted Living within this retirement community.



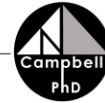
Expanding this work's applicability, the subsequent study examined residential neighborhood design to better support aging in place. Through a second collaborative partnership I formed with Plum Creek, a national development company, I conducted two fully-funded studies. The initial study informed the development of a new community type I coined Ageless New Urbanism. With this, my research contributes to the body of knowledge by providing insights into supporting older adults among the general public seeking to age in place.

*Inspired by this research and evidence-based building design, The Village Retirement Community launched a promotional campaign with the tagline: Better by Design.*

With the initial study identifying twenty factors for the neighborhood scale and twenty factors at the individual building scale, the second study increases the utility of those findings. To better guide developers and designers, the latter study uncovers the relative importance of the first study's 40 factors by using Multi Attribute Utility Theory (MAUT) to provide the needed mathematical insight. The advantage of MAUT analysis is it reveals not just *what* is important but *how* important each factor is as well. This is particularly useful for designers and developers needing to establish design priorities in the context of budget and time constraints.

**Tool for Evidence-based Design Practice**

Despite its usefulness, MAUT's complexity presents some challenges in its use. To provide a more user-friendly tool for use by not only researchers but also by evidence-based design



practitioners, I developed an improved tool for establishing design priorities. By innovating a more user-friendly method of accomplishing MAUT's functions, this makes a valuable contribution to design research methodology and practice. A publication describing this new method I coined ALE analysis is currently in progress.



*A discussion of study findings with residents.*

As these examples indicate, one benefit of this self-sustaining scholarly agenda is I can successfully engage my ongoing research program by partnering with stake-holding organizations. The purpose of these collaborations is to enhance applied teaching, learning, and research experiences for students. Having an interest in solving design issues, organizations like Plum Creek find it mutually beneficial to financially support my research. Especially in tough economic times, this ability to research without relying heavily on more typical external funding types is often critical to research progress.

### **Affordable Healthy Housing for Older Adults**

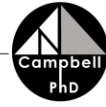
Upon progressing from the Interior Design Department into The Shimberg Center for Housing Studies within UF's Construction Management Department, my research program adapted to Shimberg's mission of housing affordability. With this, I began gaining experience attracting traditional grant funding. For instance, I am currently Co-PI for a project awarded \$559,000 by HUD in 2017. This study, called The Re-envision Project (formally the Repurpose Project of UF), seeks to identify low-cost yet aesthetically pleasing alternative design solutions to support disabled individuals living independently. To test these alternatives, this study engages virtual reality and other strategies. In addition to contributing to the body of knowledge by uncovering more viable solutions for maintaining independence. Further this study addresses dissemination methods making findings more accessible by the individuals most needing these.

### **Proactive Socially Conscience Design**

I find this area of study rewarding for several reasons. Socially conscious design planning, such as anticipating the needs of our growing elderly population and proactively building to suit those needs, will minimize negative impacts designed environments can have on users while reducing monetary and materials waste that occur if inappropriate spaces are built and later must be remodeled to suit user needs. Not only does research in the area of design for the elderly promote optimum building for seniors but also it supports a knowledge base that enables good design for the broadest possible group of users.

This research program consistently attracts grant funding from corporate as well as traditional sources. Generating a number of peer-reviewed works, these study findings appear in a range of academic publications including:

- *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*
- *Journal of Architecture and Planning Research*
- *Journal of Interior Design*
- *Housing and Society*
- *Journal of Housing for the Elderly*
- *Journal of Gerontology & Geriatrics Research*
- *Handbook of Interior Design*



With success publishing across an array of publications, this implies this research program has wide appeal. Going forward, the need and import of this research agenda is likely to grow further in accordance with the rapidly expanding aging population. Consequently, it is increasingly crucial housing communities are designed to be usable by all.