The last decade has seen tremendous changes in cities as innovations such as ride-sharing, car-sharing, bike-sharing and e-scooters have flooded urban areas. At the same time e-commerce has exploded, completely altering the way we shop, where we spend time, and the ways goods are warehoused and delivered. This has overflowed into the restaurant world as food delivery has been a new source of orders but has also impacted transportation and the activity seen inside restaurants themselves. And autonomous vehicles are on the horizon with pilots throughout the country and ride-share options now being offered or planned in various locations.

All of these innovations will have an impact on transportation and the retail/restaurant businesses, but – critical to this seminar – also on design. In this course, we will investigate the current state of deployment of these innovations, chart their potential futures, and focus in on the impacts this will have on both urban design and building design.

Through lectures, reading, invited speakers, discussion and research projects, we will build a body of knowledge that will build student expertise around these topics and help them understand how design needs to adjust – both in terms of process and product – to this changing world. An emphasis will be given to finding avenues of communicating this knowledge outside of the seminar and on how this knowledge can impact student roles in the professional world.

The seminar will be done in coordination with University of Oregon’s Urbanism Next Center with an eye towards using the center and our yearly conference as a means for disseminating some of the knowledge created in the course.

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Urbanism Next.