FARHANA FERDOUS, Ph.D., Assoc. AIA

Department of Architecture, College of Engineering and Architecture

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Visionary and equity-driven scholar, architect, and public health researcher with over 15 years of interdisciplinary expertise in environmental psychology, environmental gerontology, and the relationship between health, well-being, and the built and natural environments. As an Associate Professor at Howard University, Dr. Farhana Ferdous integrates design, research, and policy to advance evidence-based, inclusive environments for aging and underserved populations. Her work bridges architecture, environmental design, urban planning, and public health to address health disparities and promote resilience. She has unique experience in environmental design, deep expertise in culturally responsive care, and a track record of leading collaborative research initiatives and translating interdisciplinary knowledge into design strategies that support cognitive, social, and environmental well-being across diverse communities.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Associate Professor

Howard University | Washington, DC

08/2023–Present

- Leading interdisciplinary curriculum in health design and urban equity.
- Teaching graduate students in architecture, design, and health equity, focusing on environmental justice and the design of healthy communities.

AARP | Washington, DC

02/2025–09/2025

- Serve on the Brain Health team, leading initiatives to advance cognitive health equity across diverse populations.
- Advising on national brain health policy initiatives and aging-in-place strategies.
- Collaborating with AARP's Brain Health team to advance culturally inclusive health interventions for older adults.

Assistant Professor

Howard University | Washington, DC

08/2017–08/2023

- Teaching graduate students and fostering community-based studio projects.

- Led federally funded interdisciplinary research on aging, spatial segregation, and minority health disparities.
- Serve as a key advocate for inclusive, trauma-informed built environments that promote mental and behavioral wellness.

Lecturer/ Global Urbanism Faculty Fellow
University of Kansas | Lawrence, KS
09/2011–08/2017

- Teaching graduate and undergraduate design studios and seminar courses
- Led federally funded interdisciplinary research on aging, the built Environment

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PEDAGOGICAL FOCUS & STUDENT OUTCOMES

I teach and mentor students at the intersection of **architecture, environmental design, health, and community well-being**, preparing them for leadership in evidence-based design and health equity. Key courses include:

- **Designing Healthy Communities**: Equips students with tools to evaluate urban design through a public health lens.
- **Health and Design**: Introduces concepts of health equity, community planning, and environmental determinants of health.
- **Aging and Sustainable Health**: Focuses on spatial strategies for aging populations and cognitive accessibility.
- **Foundations of Research Methods**: Trains students in interdisciplinary qualitative and quantitative research with application to public health and design.
- **Health and Design Certificate** – Played a key role in initiating and shaping an interdisciplinary certificate program at Howard University to integrate health and design education.

EDUCATION

- **Master of Public Health (class of 2028)**
  Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health, Massachusetts
- **Ph.D. in Architecture and Environmental Design**, 04/2012
  The University of Sydney, Australia
- **M.Arch in Architecture and Urbanism**, 05/2007
  Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka

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SELECTED AWARDS & HONORS

- **ACSA Faculty Scholar:** Academy for Public Scholarship on the Built Environment: Spatial Determinants of Health (2026)
- **Fulbright Austria: U.S. Scholar** -Graz University of Technology Visiting Professor (2026–27)
- **Teachers of Lighting Workshop Award-** Nuckolls Fund for Lighting Education (2026)
- **Health and Aging Policy Fellowship** – Columbia Aging Center (2024)

- **ARCC New Researcher Award** – Architectural Research Centers Consortium (2022)
- **History Maker** - Innovations in Pedagogy/ Teaching Fellowship (2021)
- **GIA (Grant Makers in Aging)** Fellowship (2014)
- **AAUW International Fellowship** – American Association of University Women (2013)
- **Global Urbanism Faculty Fellow**, The University of Kansas (2016)
- **Endeavour Postgraduate Award**, Australian Government (2008–2012)
- **Multiple national academic awards** and gold medals (2000–2007)

SELECTED FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS/GRANTS

2026-29 Lesley Wheel Introductory Lighting Program Grant- ($20,000)
Nuckolls Fund for Lighting Education

2022-24 National Endowment for the Humanities (Diversity Grant) (PI: $60,000)
"Urbanization, Urbanicity, and Well-being in the City of Baltimore"

2022-23 Graham Foundation Grant (PI, Research Grant) ($9,000)
"The (pathogenic)-CITY: A History of Urbanization, Minority Health and Racial Disparities in the American Landscape (1900s to present)."

2022-24 Alzheimer's Association Research Grant for Diversity (PI: $119,974.20)
AARGD-21-852381
"Development of a Valid Spatial Environment Assessment tool (SEAL) for LTCFs"

2017-18 Academy of Architecture for Health Foundation (AAHF) (PI: $20,000)
"Positive Health Outcomes by Environmental Design: The role of spatial configuration in designing the physical environment for people with dementia."

2017-19 Toyota Individual Research Grant (PI, Research Grant) (PI: $10,000)
"The role of spatial configuration in designing physical environment for dementia"

2016 Service Learning Grant by the Center for Civic and Social Responsibility
In support of teaching a course (Designing Sustainable Future) at the University of Kansas

2013-14 Alzheimer's Disease Center (University of Kansas as Postdoc Fellow)
"Neighborhood Walkability and Sedentary Behavior in Alzheimer's Disease"

2012-13 Office of Research and Graduate Studies: Strategic Initiatives Grant
"Resilient Lifestyles for Older Adults"

2009-11 Post Graduate Research Support Scheme, The University of Sydney
"Evaluative Image of Urban Plazas: Urban Morphology, Aesthetic Response and Social Use."

SELECTED PAPERS & PUBLICATIONS

Edited Book

- **Ferdous, F**., Roberts, E. (Ed.) (2023). "(Re)designing the Continuum of Care for Older Adults: *The Future of Long-Term Care Settings*". ISBN: 978-3-031-20970-3 Springer Publication. https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-20970-3

- **Ferdous, F.** & Bell, B. (Ed.) (2021) All In: All-Inclusive Engagement in Architecture. Routledge Publication. ISBN 9780367341954 https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367341985

Book Chapters

- **Ferdous, F.** & Bell, B. (2021). Introduction Chapter in **Ferdous, F.** & Bell, B. (Ed) All In: All-Inclusive Engagement in Architecture. Routledge Publication. Page 1-12 https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367341985
- **Ferdous, F**., Julie L., Kapila S. (2019). Sustainable Urbanism and Historic Urban Landscape Conservation. In Kapila Silva (Ed) The Routledge Handbook on Historic Urban Landscapes in the Asia-Pacific, Routledge, Chapter 21, page 363-376.

  https://www.routledge.com/The-Routledge-Handbook-on-Historic-Urban-Landscapes-in-the-Asia-Pacific/Silva/p/book/9781032400808
- **Ferdous, F.** (2017). The Historic Urban Landscape of Old Dhaka, Bangladesh. In Amita Sinha and Kapila Silva (eds.) Cultural Landscapes of South Asia: Studies in Heritage Conservation and Management, Routledge, pages 76-91.

  https://www.routledge.com/Cultural-Landscapes-of-South-Asia-Studies-in-Heritage-Conservation-and/Silva-Sinha/p/book/9781138601574
- **Ferdous, F.** & Rahman. M. (2015). Chawk Bazaar and Shankhari Bazaar: Morphology of two organically developed cultural spaces of Old Dhaka. In M. Rahman (ed.) Dhaka: An Urban Reader, The University Press Limited (UPL) Dhaka, page 29-50.

  https://www.uplbooks.com/shop/9789845061490-dhaka-an-urban-reader-8368#attr=13827

Peer-Reviewed Journal

- **Ferdous F.** (under review). Mitigating Social Isolation in Older Adults: Evidence-Based Environmental Design Strategies for Resilient Memory Care Facilities: Health Environments Research & Design (HERD) Journal.
- **Ferdous F.** (under review). Designing The Pathogenic City: Mapping Inequity, Segregation, and Urban Health in Baltimore. Journal of Cities and Health
- **Ferdous F.** (2021). Redesigning Memory Care in the COVID-19 Era: Interdisciplinary Spatial Design Interventions to Minimize Social Isolation in Older Adults. J Aging Soc Policy. 2021 May 7:1-15. doi: 10.1080/08959420.2021.1924345. PMID: 33957853.
- **Ferdous, F.** (2021). Social Distancing vs Social Interactions for Long Term Care Facilities in the Midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Rapid Review and Synthesis of Action Plans. INQUIRY: The Journal of Health Care Organization, Provision, and Financing, Volume 58, September 2021. https://doi.org/10.1177/00469580211044287
- **Ferdous, F.** (2019). Positive Social Interactions by Spatial Design: A Systematic Review of Empirical Literature in Memory Care Facilities for People Experiencing Dementia. Journal of Aging and Health https://doi.org/10.1177/0898264319870090
- Watts, A., **Ferdous, F.,** Moore, K. D., Burns, J. (2015). Neighborhood Integration and Connectivity Predict Cognitive Performance and Decline, Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine, January-December 2015 vol. 1, page 1-9, doi: 10.1177/2333721415599141

- **Ferdous, F.** & Moore, K. D. (2015). Field observations into the environmental soul: Spatial configuration and social life for people experiencing dementia, American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias, March 2015 vol. 30 no. 2, page 209-218. doi: 10.1177/1533317514545378
- **Ferdous, F.** (2014). If You Could Know, What Users Think: Urban Design and the Preference of the Physical Attributes of Urban Open Space, Journal of Advances in Humanities, (JAH), ISSN 2349-4379 Vol. 3 (1), page 143-151. DOI:10.24297/jah.v3i1.5116. Corpus ID: 54509467
- **Ferdous, F**. (2013). Examining the Relationship Between Key Visual Characteristics of Urban Plazas and Aesthetic Response SAGE Open April-June 2013 Vol. 3 (2), doi: 10.1177/2158244013485581, page 1-10
- **Ferdous, F.** (2012). The spatial analysis and morphological evolution of the 'Bazaar Streets' and urban structure of Dhaka city, URBAN DESIGN International (UDI), Vol. 17 (3), pp. 206-220. doi.org/10.1057/udi.2012.10
- **Ferdous, F.,** & Nilufar, F. (2008). Cultural Space - A Conceptual Deliberation and Characterization as Urban Space. *Protibesh*, Journal of the Department of Architecture, BUET, ISSN: 1812-8068, January 2008, Volume 12, No. 1. (29-36).
- **Ferdous, F**. (2008). Organic Morphology and Cultural Spaces: The Case of Old Dhaka. *Journal of the Asiatic Society (Humanities),* Harun-or-Rashid (ed) Volume 53, No. 1, June 2008, (27-50).
- **Ferdous, F.,** & Nilufar, F. (2007). Morphological Transformation and Evolution of *Panthapath* as a Commercial Belt of Dhaka City. *Protibesh,* Journal of the Department of Architecture, BUET, ISSN: 1812-8068, July 2007, Volume 11, No. 2. (55-66).

Peer-Reviewed Conference Publications and Presentations

- **Ferdous, F.** (2026). Mitigating Social Isolation in Older Adults: Evidence-Based Environmental Strategies for Redesigning Memory Care Facilities. Paper presented at ARCC-EAAE Atlanta, GA, April 8-12, 2026
- **Ferdous, F.** (2024). The (pathogenic)-City: A History of Urbanization, Minority Health, and Racial Disparities in the City of Baltimore. Paper presented at EDRA55 Portland, Oregon, June 19-22, 2023
- **Ferdous, F.** (2023). The Risk of Social Isolation in Older Adults: Evidence-Based Action Plans in Redesigning Memory Care Facilities Beyond COVID-19 Pandemic. Paper presented at EDRA54 ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH: Global / Local Challenges and Actions. Mexico, June, 2023
- Nduom, D**.** & **Ferdous, F.** (2021). Challenges and Opportunities in Teaching Architecture Design Studio during the COVID-19 era: an HBCU Perspective**.** 109th ACSA Annual Meeting: Expanding the View.
- Bell, B., **Ferdous, F.** (2020). All-Inclusive Engagement in Architecture. Paper presented (virtually) at the EDRA 51 Annual Meeting, Tempe, April, 2020.
- **Ferdous, F.** (2020). 2020 HiBR Conference**:** Health in Buildings for Today and Tomorrow: Making Connections-Research to Practice May 5-6, 2020 (NIH Campus) https://hibr.nih.gov/conference/cancelled-2020-hibr-conference (Cancelled due to COVID-19)

- **Ferdous, F.** (2019). Well-being in Memory Care Facilities: Identifying the Role of Spatial Design for Social Interaction in Empirical Literature. Paper presented at ARCC Annual Meeting, Toronto, Ontario, May 2019. ARCC Conference Repository, 1(1). Retrieved from https://www.arcc-journal.org/index.php/repository/article/view/598
- **Ferdous, F.** (2018). [Re] Connecting the creative community corridor: A community design intervention to foster diversity along Georgia Avenue, Washington D.C. Paper presented at the EDRA 49 Annual Meeting, Oklahoma, June, 2018.
- **Ferdous, F**. (2018). Positive Health Outcomes by Environmental Design: The role of spatial configuration in designing physical environment for people experiencing dementia. Paper presented at the EDRA 49 Annual Meeting, Oklahoma, June, 2018.
- Watts, A., **Ferdous, F**., E. Grandfield, & Diaz-Moore, K. (2016). Perceived neighborhood characteristics differentially impact sedentary behavior in older adults with and without Alzheimer's disease. Paper presented at the 68th Annual Meeting for the Gerontological Society of America, New Orleans, LA, Nov, 2016.
- Sanguinetti, P., Cai, H., Colistra, J., Sheward, H., **Ferdous, F**. (2016). Connected healthy living for smart cities. Paper presented at *Building for Health and Well-Being: Structures. Cities. Systems* 2016 ACSA-ASPPH Fall Conference, Honolulu, HI, September 2016.
- Watts, A**., Ferdous, F**., & Diaz-Moore, K. (2016). Effect of Neighborhood Characteristics on Sedentary Behavior in Alzheimer's Disease. Paper presented at the 24th Meeting for the International Association of People-Environment Studies, Lund, Sweden, June, 2016.
- **Ferdous, F.,** Watts, A., Diaz-Moore, K. (2016). Neighborhood Characteristics Influence Active Living and Cognitive Performance among Older Adults. In Global Impact through Design Research Symposium, the University of Kansas, USA, April 2016.
- Liebmann, E., Breda, A., Watts, A., **Ferdous, F**., Diaz-Moore, K., & Burns, J. (2015). Neighborhood Characteristics and Dementia Status Predict Physical Functioning in Older Adults. Paper presented at the 67th Annual Meeting for the Gerontological Society of America, Orlando, FL. Nov, 2015.
- Watts, A., **Ferdous, F**., Diaz-Moore, K., & Burns, J. (2014). Neighborhood characteristics predict health and cognitive function in older adults with and without Alzheimer's disease. Paper presented at the 66th Annual Meeting for the Gerontological Society of America, Washington, DC. Nov, 2014.
- **Ferdous, F.** (2013). Sedentary behavior and older adults: The role of neighborhood walkability Oral presentation, Grantmaking in Aging (GIA) *Annual Conference.* Kansas City, USA, October 16-18, 2013.
- Moore, K. D. & **Ferdous, F**. (2013). The Impact of Spatial Configuration on Social Interaction in Long-Term Care Facilities: A Brief Overview of Pilot Studies symposium presentation in *Place making in the Third and Fourth Ages*. In Jeremy Wells and Elefterios Pavlides (eds.) EDRA 44 Proceedings: *Healthy + Healing Places* (pp. 251-252), Providence, May 2013.
- Moore, K. D. & **Ferdous, F**. (2013). Spatial Configuration and Social Life for People Experiencing Dementia (Referred Full Paper). In Architectural Research Centers Consortium (ARCC) Spring

Proceedings: *The Visibility of Research* (pp. 685-691), University of North Carolina, Charlotte, March 2013.

- **Ferdous, F**. (2012). Aesthetic Response and Urban Plazas: The appreciation of physical characteristics for designed urban open spaces In Rula Awwad-Rafferty and Lynne C. Manzo (eds.) EDRA 43 Proceedings: *Emergent Placemaking* (pp. 234), Seattle, June 2012.
- **Ferdous, F**. (2011). The Morphological Evolution of the 'Bazaar Streets': A Configurational Analysis of the Urban Layout of Dhaka City (Refereed Full-Paper). In Mittleman D. and Middleton D. A. (eds.) EDRA 42 Proceedings: *Make no little plans* (pp. 50-61), Chicago, May 2011.
- **Ferdous, F.** (2010). Developing an Empirical Research Model to Evaluate the Aesthetic Image and Social Use of Urban Plazas from Photo Simulation Techniques (Abstract). In Bissell J. and Meldrena C. (eds.) EDRA 41 Proceedings: *Policy and the environment* (pp.251), Washington DC, June 2010.
- **Ferdous, F**. (2009). The Aesthetic Image of Urban Plazas: An Empirical Approach toward the Evaluating of Built Environment. In Meldrena C., Bissell J., Alice M., Moore K., Rashid M. and Spreckelmeyer K. (eds.) EDRA 40 Proceedings: *Re: The Ethical Design of Place* (pp. 395), Kansas, City, MO, USA, May 2009.
- **Ferdous, F**. (2007). Morphological Identity of Old Dhaka: The Notion of an Indigenous Settlement, (Full paper) paper delivered at *CSAAR* 2007 Conference Proceedings, *Regional Architecture and Identity in the Age of Globalization*, Tunis, Tunisia, 13-15 November 2007. (pp. 301-318). Publisher: CSAAR.
- **Ferdous, F**. (2006). Extermination of Zinjira Canal: The Southern Fringe of Buriganga. In M. Rahman (ed.), (Full paper) *Society, Architects and Emerging Issues: Proceedings of 18th Commonwealth Association of Architects International Conference.* London: Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA), and Dhaka: Institute of Architects of Bangladesh (IAB), (pp. 35)
- **Ferdous, F**. (2006). Morphological Transformation and Evolution of a Commercial Spine. In S.R. Eghbali (ed), *Urban Design from Theory to Implementation:* Oral presentation, *1st Urban Design International Congress (UDIC1)*, September 4-7, 2006, Isfahan, Iran.

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