

Department of Urban Studies and Planning

Highlights

Academic year 2012 represented a period of reassessment and renewal for the [Department of Urban Studies and Planning](#) (DUSP), with efforts to simultaneously realign the department's strategic vision and bring in new faculty members to reinvent MIT's approach to city planning and urban design.

The department was able to undertake a faculty search with the ultimate goal of hiring up to six new faculty members. To inform this search, the department devoted its fall weekly speaker series to a semester-long symposium, "Reinventing the City," that included high-profile speakers and panels on a wide range of topics related to the future of cities, planning, participation, economies, technology, design, and development.

In November, the department hosted the Institute Visiting Committee. These meetings were quite positive and served to highlight the exciting potential for the department to grow, change, and experiment as a result of the recent hiring process; at the same time, the committee stressed the need for the department to think strategically about how to maximize this opportunity and pushed the faculty to develop a strategic vision before proceeding too quickly to reinvent itself. As a result of the recommendations, faculty in the department worked together to draft a new strategic vision.

In the spring, the "Reinventing the City" symposium gave way to a packed series of job talks—18 in all—featuring candidates in the fields of urban economics, real estate development, urban ecology, technology and spatial visualization, governance, immigration, international development, and urban infrastructure. The faculty identified three candidates to hire, effective fall 2012, as a result of the symposium: Albert Saiz, an assistant professor from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania; Gabriella Carolini, an assistant professor in the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University; and Sarah Williams MCP '05, director of the Spatial Information Design Lab at Columbia University.

The faculty also identified one additional candidate to pursue for a faculty hire, effective fall 2013, and agreed to continue the hiring process in the coming academic year with the explicit goal of focusing on the field of international development.

The department was saddened to mark the passing of two notable members of the DUSP community:

- Alice H. Amsden, an expert in economic development who served as the Barton L. Weller professor of political economy, died on March 14 at her home in Cambridge at the age of 68. Alice was a prolific scholar who wrote extensively about the process of industrialization in emerging economies, particularly in Asia.
- Charles "Hank" Spaulding '51, a devoted alumnus and longtime member of the MIT Corporation, died November 24 in Kennebunk Beach, Maine, at the age of

84. Spaulding's extensive service to the Corporation began in 1986, when he was elected as a term member; he was elected as a life member in 1991.

Research and Teaching on Urban Planning

The intellectual life of the department is organized largely around the activities of four program groups and several cross-cutting research initiatives. The program groups are City Design and Development (CDD); Environmental Policy and Planning (EPP); Housing, Community, and Economic Development (HCED); and the International Development Group (IDG). The cross-cutting initiatives—Urban Information Systems, Transportation, and Regional Planning—are intended to bring together faculty from across the four main program groups.

City Design and Development

In 2011 the School of Architecture and Planning established the Center for Advanced Urbanism, a research-based institution dedicated to implementing new integrative design and development models for cities and regions.

The long-term research effort on “Making Clean Energy Cities” continued to be a focus of the CDD group. Researchers in this initiative have developed a web-based tool that measures the energy performance of existing (or proposed) designs of neighborhoods and complex real estate developments. The aim of the project is to provide the framework and tools for national energy standards for urban development.

Work on “New Century Cities” broadened this year with the opening of the Center for Art and Technology (CAT) in Zaragoza, Spain, and the successful launching of Ciudad Creativa Digital in Guadalajara, Mexico. CAT is a new research and educational institution, laboratory, and incubator focused on incorporating digital technologies into the physical public realm. The center will be inaugurated in November 2012 during the fifth New Century Cities Conference, which is being organized by Michael Joroff and DUSP alum Francisca Rojas MCP '00, PhD '10.

Ciudad Creativa Digital is a major urban regeneration project located in the historic heart of Guadalajara. Announced in November 2011 by President Calderón and sponsored by Mexico's national government, the project's aim is to be the global center for production of Latin media content. Professors Dennis Frenchman and Carlo Ratti are among an international team that has been selected to complete the official master plan for the project.

The results of a research project by Chris Zegras and Eran Ben-Joseph on the travel behavior and neighborhood preferences of older adults (sponsored by the New England University Transportation Center) were published in a series of papers and reports. The project is entering a new phase involving collaboration with researchers from the “Future of Urban Mobility” project in Singapore.

The department sponsored three urban design research studios this year: 11.338J Urban Design Studio: Shrinking Cities, focused on St. Louis, MO, and taught by professor Brent

Ryan; 11.304 Site and Urban Systems Studio-Israel, Professor Ben-Joseph's Reinventing Planned Cities studio in Kiryat Gat, Israel; and professor Alan Berger's 11.S944 Advanced Research Workshop in Landscape + Urbanism (also known as Eco-Agro Networks: The Culture Now Project studio) in California. Additionally, the 2012 CDD forum "Strategies for Shrinking Cities" was organized by Professor Ryan to coincide with—and showcase the efforts of—the Shrinking Cities Studio.

Professor Larry Vale was named president of the Society for American City and Regional Planning History.

Professor Berger was named a faculty associate at the Harvard University Center for the Environment.

Professor Terry Szold received the American Planning Association's Charles E. Downe Memorial Award. In December, students from her 11.360 Practicum: Community Growth and Land Use Planning class won the student project award from the association's Massachusetts chapter for the second year in a row.

In spring 2012, Professor Zegras was awarded tenure in the department and promoted to the rank of associate professor.

Environmental Policy and Planning

An interdisciplinary team of 10 MIT students won two awards in the Better Buildings Case Competition sponsored by the US Department of Energy.

Professor JoAnn Carmin released the results of a survey showing that 95% of major cities in Latin America are planning for climate change, compared to only 59% of such cities in the United States.

The Mercury Game, a negotiation simulation developed by professor Larry Susskind with professor Noelle Selin (Engineering Systems Division) and doctoral candidate Leah Stokes to teach the role of science in international environmental policy making, was officially launched on July 24 at a demonstration in Halifax, Canada, as part of the International Conference of Mercury as a Global Pollutant.

Following last academic year's faculty search, the department hired Stephen Hammer to serve as a lecturer in the EPP group for three years, effective fall 2011. Hammer is an expert in energy policy, with special experience in the regulation of microgrid systems and mechanisms to encourage urban green growth.

Housing, Community, and Economic Development

Professor Xav Briggs won the National Academy of Public Administration's 2011 Louis Brownlow Book Award for his book *Moving to Opportunity: The Story of an American Experiment to Fight Ghetto Poverty* (with Susan Popkin and John Goering).

Mel King, emeritus senior lecturer in DUSP, was inducted into the NAACP's New England Civil Rights Hall of Fame.

HCED faculty offered practicum classes in Boston and Lawrence, MA.

Working with a group of urban scholars and activists, Sage Publications, and the Miller-McCune Center for Research, Media and Public Policy, DUSP's Community Innovators Lab (CoLab) established the new Urban Research-Base Action Network. This multi-disciplinary network of scholars and practitioners is committed to the use of community-based research for collaborative generation and testing of knowledge. Also this year, CoLab staff, students, and alumni published an American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy white paper on innovative local solutions for energy efficiency. The paper summarized three years of research on community solutions to carbon emission reduction through building efficiency.

The department's commitment to help rebuild New Orleans and its neighborhoods in a just and sustainable manner continued. This work has taken many forms and is part of DUSP's long-term commitment to assist in rebuilding efforts while enhancing learning and public service opportunities for DUSP students. Over the past seven years, the department's involvement has included work on affordable housing, community organizing, economic development, education, and neighborhood planning, but at its core it seeks to enhance the capacity of organizations on the front line of rebuilding to better understand key rebuilding issues and options and to take action to advance their agendas on a neighborhood, city, and regional scale.

International Development Group

On the occasion of her retirement this year, professor Judith Tandler was honored at a Festschrift celebration co-hosted by the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, the Special Program for Urban and Regional Studies (SPURS), and the Department of Political Science. More than 100 faculty, alumni, SPURS fellows, students, and others members of the MIT and global community attended the all-day session, with 12 of Tandler's former advisees presenting their current research.

In November, over 50 professors and students from the Rhode Island School of Design, MIT, and Harvard met to hear professor Annette Kim present her latest research project, "SLAB: Sidewalk Laboratory." This work employs critical cartography to unveil greater knowledge about this important public space and to propose changes in planning paradigms.

In April, students and faculty in the department held a two-day conference titled "Reframing International Development."

Professor Diane Davis left the department to accept a faculty position at Harvard University.

Urban Information Systems

New research projects emerging from the SENSEable City Laboratory ranged from those focused on large-scale data analytics to projects examining the role of digital technologies in creating bottom-up urban infrastructure and research that is developing new tools for data visualization.

In total, the SENSEable City Lab was responsible for over 60 publications on urban information, visualization, and spatial analysis. The lab has also been widely featured in the popular press, including *Wired*, *The Economist*, the *New York Times*, and *Scientific American*. During academic year 2012 the SENSEable City Lab was a recipient of the Living Labs Global Award and the Green Dot Award; also, the lab entered two other competitions: FastCoDesign's 22 Best Info-graphics of 2011 and Visualizing Data's 10 Significant Visualization Developments of 2011.

Faculty Publications

Over the 2011–2012 academic year, faculty in the department published several books, as follows.

- Bishwapriya Sanyal, Lawrence J. Vale, and Christina D. Rosan, editors, *Planning Ideas That Matter: Livability, Territoriality, Governance and Reflective Practice* (MIT Press, 2012)
- Eran Ben-Joseph, *ReThinking a Lot: The Design and Culture of Parking* (MIT Press, 2012)
- Brent Ryan, *Design After Decline: How America Rebuilds Shrinking Cities* (University of Pennsylvania, 2012)
- Lawrence Susskind, *Water Diplomacy: A Negotiated Approach to Managing Complex Water Networks* (RFF Press, 2012)
- Eran Ben-Joseph (with Andrew Scott), *ReNew Town: Adaptive Urbanism and the Low Carbon Community* (Routledge, 2012)
- Judith A. Layzer, *The Environmental Case: Translating Values Into Policy* (3rd ed.; CQ Press, 2012)
- Judith A. Layzer, *Open for Business: Conservatives' Opposition to Environmental Regulation* (MIT Press, 2012)
- Harry T. Dimitriou and Ralph Gakenheimer, editors, *Urban Transport in the Developing World: A Handbook of Policy and Practice* (Edward Elgar, 2011)
- Dennis Frenchman, *Ciudad Creativa Digital: Strategic Plan for Urban Regeneration* (ProMexico, 2012)
- Anne Spirn, *The Eye Is a Door* (Wolf Tree Press, 2012)
- Sam Bass Warner and Andrew Whittemore, *American Urban Form, a Representative History* (MIT Press, 2012)

Graduate Degree Program Enrollment and Activities

The department's graduate programs enrolled 62 new MCP students, two new SM students, and 10 new doctoral students. The department granted 67 MCP, six SM, and 13 PhD degrees.

The department established a doctoral research workshop required of all entering PhD students. The focus of this class is on formulating researchable questions (to help students write their first-year papers) while also understanding how research knowledge informs public policy.

Undergraduate Program

In August the department participated in MIT's Freshman Pre-Orientation Program, offering 20 freshmen a two-day session to learn about cities and design. For the first time, DUSP partnered with the Department of Architecture to offer an expanded joint program.

Ezra Glenn, a lecturer in the department, and professor Eric Klopfer, director of the Scheller Teacher Education Program, received funding from the MIT d'Arbello Fund for Excellence in Education for 11.S195 Data Diggers: Uncovering Data across the Institute, a new class to engage undergraduates in the practice of data analysis.

Alumni

Local alumni continue to play an active role in sponsoring internships for students, providing career advice at the alumni career forums organized by each of the program groups, and participating as guest lecturers in numerous classes. Alumni across the country offered summer positions for current students and served as employers for recent graduates. Alumni also continue to play a role in the implementation of the practicum requirement, a significant element in the revised MCP core curriculum.

DUSP maintains connections with alumni across the country. The reformatted monthly electronic newsletter, SA+P DUSP News, reaches more than 80% of alumni, is well received, and has prompted numerous updates from alumni on their personal and professional lives. The department held alumni events in Cambridge, San Francisco, New York, New Orleans, and Washington, DC, and hosted on-site reunions of alumni from 1962 (50th reunion), 1986–1987 (25th reunion), and 1991 (a "20-ish" reunion).

Alumni once again participated as panelists in each of the four annual alumni career forums associated with the department's four program groups, as well as serving on panels for alumni in transportation planning. They also served on a panel examining professional practice in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

The DUSP career resources website and the DUSP career development director continue to serve alumni and current students seeking continued professional development. They also meet the needs of potential employers of DUSP students and graduates.

International Connections

The SPURS/Humphrey Fellows Program continues to provide an important link between MIT and the international community, fostering a mutual exchange of knowledge and understanding about issues of common concern in the United States and other countries. During the academic year, SPURS hosted 17 SPURS and Humphrey fellows in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning.

In the spring, a group of students and faculty established the China Urban Development Group, dedicated to bringing together students and scholars who share academic and professional interests in China's urbanization and development. The group organized an eight-part lecture series on topics related to development in China, including "Making the Clean Energy City in China," "Urban Public Finance in China," and "Affordable Housing in China."

A number of students from DUSP were winners of 2011–2012 MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI) grants as part of the MISTI 2.0 initiative. Students will use the grant money to collaborate with international partners in Germany, Mexico, Brazil, Japan, and Spain. In addition to the student awards, CoLab received a MISTI grant for a biodigester project and "learning hub" in partnership with women waste pickers in Mumbai, and the SENSEable City Lab received funding to investigate smart city technologies in developing countries.

Research Funding

In FY2012, DUSP faculty submitted approximately \$9 million in proposals; awards during the year totaled \$4.3 million. Of particular note, Professor Klopfer was awarded \$2.8 million from the Gates Foundation for his three-year project "COSMOS: Learning About Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Practices through a Massively Multiplayer Online Game."

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