

## Department of Urban Studies and Planning

### Highlights and Events

Last summer, we were pleased to hold a special ceremony to dedicate MIT's Building 9 as the new Samuel Tak Lee MIT Real Estate Entrepreneurship Lab (STL Lab). Alumnus Samuel Tak Lee '62, SM '64, was present with his family and many prominent faculty and staff from the School of Architecture and Planning. Also attending were several of the lab's fellowship recipients for AY2016. Following on this dedication (and the department's receipt of a record-breaking \$118 million donation), the [Department of Urban Studies and Planning](#) (DUSP) and the School of Architecture and Planning proceeded with plans to redesign and renovate the building and to upgrade department offices and facilities. Construction is under way, with work anticipated to be substantially completed by the end of August. When completed, the STL Lab will feature energy and code updates, new offices and classroom space, and a multi-purpose "city arena" to serve as the new heart of departmental activity.

In October 2015 the STL Lab, in conjunction with DUSP and the Center for Real Estate, awarded its first round of faculty research grants, totaling \$1.5 million, to 13 MIT researchers and their teams. The grants will support inventive projects that advance the understanding of opportunities and challenges in real estate development and entrepreneurship. In June 2016, the lab awarded a second round of grants, totaling \$1.1 million, to nine research teams.

In January 2016, the department published a retrospective of student work titled [Planning Practice: Studios + Workshops, 2005-2015](#). This 128-page book showcases more than 10 years of MIT/DUSP studios, practica, and workshops from the United States and around the globe.

Over the spring semester, DUSP began work on a new strategic plan. To assist with this effort, the department hired Francine Crystal of Crystal Clear Consulting, who conducted an in-depth series of interviews and facilitated a pair of visioning sessions with faculty members, including a full-day planning retreat at the close of the semester. The planning effort is expected to continue into the coming year, led by an ad hoc faculty committee.

On October 17, 2015, the department held a memorial event to celebrate the life and career of Judy Layzer, who died on May 28, 2015. The program included remarks by students, colleagues, friends, and family and an informal luncheon reception. Layzer had been on the faculty of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning since 2003 and had served as associate head of the department since 2014. Her research explored the politics of environmental policies and the role of science in shaping public debate on these matters.

In April, MIT named its Center for Advanced Urbanism in honor of Norman B. Leventhal '38, a visionary developer and philanthropist who was a major contributor to Boston's postwar revival. A life member emeritus of the MIT Corporation who died

in 2015, Leventhal was a vital part of the Institute community for three quarters of a century. The center was officially named the Norman B. Leventhal Center for Advanced Urbanism at a signing ceremony attended by Alan and Sherry Leventhal and other members of Norman Leventhal's extended family.

In June, DUSP alumna and former Nigerian Minister of Finance Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (MCP '78, PhD '81) served as the keynote speaker at the Institute's 2016 Investiture of Doctoral Hoods, urging MIT's newly-minted doctoral graduates to solve "the world's toughest challenges."

### **Appointments, Promotions, and Visitors**

Four new tenure-track faculty joined DUSP in the fall semester.

Assistant Professor Mariana Arcaya is a social epidemiologist and urban planner whose work explores dynamic relationships between geographic contexts—particularly neighborhoods—and health.

Assistant Professor David Hsu researches and teaches urban environmental policy and planning. Topics of particular interest include energy and water networks, information policies to encourage efficiency, and data analysis.

Associate Professor Janelle Knox-Hayes researches the ways in which social and environmental systems are governed under changing temporal and spatial scales as a consequence of globalization. She has studied the political and economic interface of financial markets and environmental systems and how individuals and organizations plan and make decisions under conditions of socioeconomic uncertainty.

Assistant Professor Justin Steil conducts research on the intersection of law and urban policy. Broadly interested in social stratification and spatial dimensions of inequality, he writes about property, land use, and local government law and their interaction with community development and housing policy.

Associate Professor Brent Ryan was awarded tenure in the department in spring 2016.

James Buckley returned to teach 11.201 Gateway: Planning Action and 11.404 Housing Policy and Planning in the US and Abroad.

Miloon Kothari continued as a visiting scholar for fall 2015, teaching 11.S938 Responding to Displacement: Strategies, Methods, Tools, Outcomes.

Fadi Masoud returned to co-teach 11.332J/4.163J Urban Design Studio.

Mary Anne Ocampo returned to co-teach 11.328 Urban Design Skills.

Jota Samper returned to teach 11.488 Urban Development in Conflict Cities and to co-teach 11.328J / 4.240J Urban Design Skills.

Susan Silberberg returned to co-teach 11.360 Community Growth and Land Use Planning with Terry Szold.

As usual, the Special Program for Urban and Regional Studies (SPURS)/Humphrey Fellows Program hosted a group of distinguished planners from around the globe. In 2015–2016 we welcomed fellows from 14 countries: Argentina, Bangladesh, Cape Verde, China, El Salvador, India, Italy, Kosovo, Norway, Pakistan, Palestine, the Philippines, Russia, and Turkey.

Ken Reeves, former mayor of Cambridge, will be a Martin Luther King visiting scholar during the upcoming year. An attorney by profession, Ken served the people of Cambridge for 24 years as mayor, vice mayor, city councilor, and chair of the Cambridge School Committee. He was the first black mayor in Massachusetts and the first openly gay black mayor in the United States.

Xav Briggs, Amy Glasmeier, and Karen R. Polenske were on leave during AY2016. In addition, Gabriella Carolini was on leave during fall 2015, and David Geltner, Janelle Knox-Hayes, and Anne Whiston Spirn were on leave during the spring.

### Research and Teaching

The following new courses were developed and offered for the first time in 2015–2016:

- 11.S195 Energy Management for a Sustainable Future
- 11.S940 Development, Planning, and Implementation: The Dialectic of Theory and Practice
- 11.S950 Transportation Research Design: How Are Ideas Born?
- 11.S951 The Future of American Cities: Real People, Real Cities, Real Issues
- 11.458 Crowd Sourced City
- 11.S196 Massive: The Future of Learning at Scale
- 11.S197/11.S945 Cities and Immigration: Law and Policy
- 11.S199/11.S941 Healthy Cities: Assessing Health Impacts of Policies and Plans
- 11.S946 Development and Urban Informality: Planning for Technological Change
- 11.S952 Oppositional Consciousness and Social Change
- 11.S953 Infrastructure Systems in Theory and Practice

The department engaged in a number of both local and global practicum/studio/workshop classes, as follows.

- 11.332 Urban Design Studio in Florida (fall)
- 11.360 Community Growth and Land Use Planning in Brookline (fall)
- 11.S945 Roxbury Design and Planning Workshop (fall)
- 11.384 Malaysia Sustainable Cities Seminar (fall)
- 11.304 Site and Environmental Systems Planning in Houston (spring)

- 11.386 Malaysia Sustainable Cities Seminar (spring)
- 11.438 Economic Development Planning in Brockton (spring)
- 11.458 Crowd Sourced City in Nairobi (spring)
- 11.S949 Transit-Oriented Development in a Mega City in Mexico City (spring)

## Major Events

### China Real Estate Delegation

On October 5, 2015, DUSP and the STL Lab hosted a delegation from Tongji University to engage in a unique dialogue about socially responsible real estate development and urbanization in China. One week later, the department hosted the MIT China Real Estate Innovation Conference, which included discussions of interdisciplinary and international innovation in real estate.

### DUSP Faculty Research Lightning Talks

On November 9, 2015, DUSP continued its new tradition of hosting department-wide “lightning talks” to showcase faculty and student research. During the November event, approximately a dozen DUSP faculty members were given three minutes to explain one of their research projects in layperson terms. The event also included brief “elevator pitches” given by current PhD students.

### Visiting Committee

In November 2015, the department hosted the biannual visiting committee. In its final report to the administration, the committee noted that “the department is playing a leadership role in a number of Institute initiatives” and that “the mission of the department has never been more important to the Institute and the Institute’s focus on solving important global challenges.” The committee praised the leadership of the department and concluded that morale was “high among all levels of faculty and students.” To take advantage of this position of strength, the committee recommended the department conduct a “strategic review” to manage and prioritize its mission for the future.

### DUSPx San Francisco

In January 2016, alumni from the San Francisco area convened to share their work and to renew and update connections with their classmates and colleagues. The evening was the third in a series of events established by the department to promote the exchange of ideas and to foster connections among DUSP alumni and current faculty and students. It followed similar events in New York and Los Angeles.

### Four School + APA Planning Symposium

In March 2016, the department hosted the annual Four School + APA Planning Symposium, bringing together students and faculty from the region’s four accredited planning schools (MIT, Harvard, the University of Massachusetts, and Tufts University) along with professional planners from the Massachusetts chapter of the American Planning Association. This year’s topic was “Planning Practice: Projects and Partnerships.”

## MIT 100

On April 23, 2016, the department participated in a campus-wide open house to celebrate the 100th anniversary of MIT's move to Cambridge. One particular highlight included the return of DUSP Master in City Planning (MCP) alumnus James Rojas, who helped organize an interactive city-building workshop for children and adults alike.

## Phillip Clay Retirement

At the end of the spring semester, DUSP celebrated the career of Professor Phil Clay, who retired after more than four decades with the department. Clay served as department head from 1992 to 1994 before leaving to assume the role of associate provost, a position he held until 2001, when he became chancellor. Among his many accomplishments in this role, he was the driving force behind the Campaign for Students, raising more than \$500 million. In 2011 he returned to teaching, where he soon became a favorite with students as an advisor and thesis supervisor.

## Awards and Research Highlights

DUSP's Comprehensive Initiative on Technology Evaluation (CITE) released its first two technology assessment reports: one on solar lanterns in Uganda and one on household water filters in India. Launched in 2012, CITE is the first-ever program dedicated to establishing methods of product evaluation in global development. CITE researchers evaluate products with respect to suitability, scalability, and sustainability.

Lawrence E. Susskind, Ford Professor of Urban and Environmental Planning, received the Graduate Teaching Award at the 2016 MIT Awards Convocation in recognition of his many contributions to the lives of his students and advisees. Students praised his devotion to their academic, personal, and long-term success.

Professor P. Christopher Zengras SM '01, MCP '01, PhD '05, has been named the lead principal investigator for the Future of Urban Mobility interdisciplinary research group at the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology. The mission of the group is to develop, in and beyond Singapore, new paradigms for the planning, design, and operation of future urban mobility systems.

Three of the 12 MIT teams that won awards at the 2016 IDEAS Global Challenge were from DUSP. The winners were Sera Tolgay and Sezen Genc ("Digitizing Turkey's Muhtar System to Allow for Collaboration with Citizens in City-Making"), Rebecca Hui ("Connecting Rural Artists to Consumers by Uploading Their Art for Licensing into an Online Repository"), and David Chin-Fei Wang ("Bamboo Bicycles Beijing").

Professor of the Practice Carlo Ratti was appointed as a special advisor to the president and commissioners of the European Commission. The appointment runs from March 5, 2015, to March 31, 2016.

The following year-end departmental awards were announced during the departmental commencement ceremony on June 2, 2016:

Outstanding Undergraduate Thesis: Jenny Lin '16, "Implications of Electoral Gender Quotas on Women's Empowerment Outcomes in Latin America and Africa"

Outstanding MCP Thesis: Arianna Salazar MCP '16, "The Shape of Segregation: The Role of Urban Form in Immigrant Assimilation"

Outstanding PhD Dissertation: Kelly Heber Dunning PhD '16, "Communities of Coral: An Institutional and Ecological Analysis of Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Services in Southeast Asia," and Christa Rachel Lee-Chuvala PhD '16, "Patchwork Places: Regional and Historical Variations in Suburban Poverty in the United States"

Outstanding PhD Teaching Assistant: Cauam Cardoso

AICP Outstanding Student Award: David Vega-Barawchowitz MCP '16

Flora Crockett Stephenson Writing Prize: Lizzie Yarina MCP '16

O. Robert Simha Prize: Gabriel Silberblatt MCP '16

Excellence in Public Service Award: Colleen McHugh MCP '13 and Jasmine Tillu MCP '11

Outstanding Contribution to the Intellectual Life of the Department: Margo Dawes MCP '16

Student Departmental Service Award: Sasha Schyderoff MCP '16

Rolf R. Engler Award for Outstanding Service: Ellen Rushman

Excellence in Advising: Larry Vale

Excellence in Teaching: Justin Steil

Staff or Faculty Contribution to Student Life: Ellen Rushman

Hebbert Award for Student Contribution to DUSP: Ellen Morris

## Graduate Program

The department's graduate programs enrolled 71 new MCP students, three new SM students, and 10 new doctoral students. The department granted 58 MCP, four SM, and 10 PhD degrees.

The following table reports data on the 2015–2016 admissions cycle for the department.

### DUSP Admissions Cycle, 2015–2016

	Applications	Admitted Students	To Be Enrolled
MCP (including dual)	435	92	67
SM	2	2	2
PhD	106	18	15

## Doctoral Program

As noted above, the department graduated 10 new PhD students. The following dissertations were completed in 2015–2016:

“A Political Ecology of Design: Contested Visions of Urban Climate Change Adaptation” (Kian Goh)

“Deciphering Human Activities in Complex Urban Systems: Mining Big Data for Sustainable Urban Future” (Shan Jiang)

“Transforming Waste Management Systems Through Location Tracking and Data Sharing” (David Lee)

“Patchwork Places: Regional and Historical Variations in Suburban Poverty in the United States” (Christa Rachel Lee-Chuvala)

“Role-Play Simulations: A Tool for Transformative Civic Education and Engagement Around Science-Intensive Environmental Issues” (Danya Lee Rumore)

“Institutionalizing Uncertainty: Exploring How Infrastructure Stakeholders Can Prepare for Uncertain Climate Futures” (Todd Edward William Schenk)

“Power for the Public Good: Energy, Race and Class in the United States” (Christopher Michael Jones)

“Seeing the City for the Trees: Public Space, Climate Adaptation, and Environmental Justice in LA and New York’s ‘Million Trees’ Campaigns” (Jessica Erin Debats)

“Escaping an Institutional Poverty Trap: Learning Behavior as a Collective Action Problem in Brazil’s Pharmaceutical Industry” (Victoria Marie Del Campo)

“Communities of Coral: An Institutional and Ecological Analysis of Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Services in Southeast Asia” (Kelly Heber Dunning)

Volumes 11 and 12 of *Projections: The MIT Journal of Planning* were published over the past year. The doctoral student editors for volume 11, “Global Ecologies: Politics, Planning, and Design,” were Kian Goh and Eric Chu (with faculty advisors Amy Glasmeier and Lawrence J. Vale). The student editor for volume 12, “New Approaches to Law and Planning,” was Karthik Rao-Cavale (with faculty advisor Balakrishnan Rajagopal).

**Eran Ben-Joseph**

**Head**

**Professor of Urban Studies and Planning**