

Department of Urban Studies and Planning

Highlights

In September 2016, the [Department of Urban Studies and Planning \(DUSP\)](#) celebrated the renovation of Building 9 as the new Samuel Tak Lee Building. At a grand opening celebration and tour on September 12, visitors found a gleaming new facility with 21,000 square feet of new classrooms, offices, and workshops.

In January DUSP welcomed Professor Siqi Zheng, the department's new Samuel Tak Lee Associate Professor of Real Estate Development and Entrepreneurship. Siqi will also serve as the inaugural faculty director at the Samuel Tak Lee Real Estate Entrepreneurship Lab. She brings her formidable knowledge of China's urban development, particularly housing markets and policy, the environmental impact of urbanization, and the behavioral foundations of development in the country. Her research draws upon an interdisciplinary approach leveraging her expertise in economics, urban planning, environmental science, and engineering.

Thanks to the generous support of two alums, the department has a new fund to support doctoral candidates. Established by and named in honor of two of the department's alumni, the Lynne Sagalyn and Gary Hack DUSP Fund will provide grants of up to \$20,000 per student to enable research leading to doctoral dissertations; the funds can be used for travel, data acquisition, student stipends, and other research expenses.

In the fall, eight student-led teams hoping to launch ventures ranging from real estate development to urban diagnostics and novel design solutions for schoolchildren were selected as the inaugural cohort for DesignX, the new School of Architecture and Planning (SA+P) entrepreneurship accelerator.

According to the latest edition of the Planetizen Guide to Graduate Urban Planning Programs, DUSP is the top planning program in North America. Planetizen's guide has included rankings since 2007, and DUSP has consistently been ranked first.

In addition to the overall ranking, the guide includes top programs in a number of planning specializations. MIT was ranked as a top school in multiple categories, including Community Development, Environmental Planning, Urban Design, Housing, International Development, and Technology/GIS. Finally, the guide included an additional "top 25" ranking based on a survey of planning educators, and MIT ranked first in that listing.

Promotions, Appointments, Visitors, Leaves, Departures

Janelle Knox-Hayes was awarded tenure in the department in spring 2017.

Sarah Williams was promoted to the rank of associate professor without tenure, effective July 2017.

Jinhua Zhao was also promoted to the rank of associate professor without tenure, effective July 2017.

Following a yearlong multi-position faculty search, the department hired two new faculty members, both at the level of assistant professor.

Jason Jackson received his PhD in political economy from MIT in 2013. He also holds an AB in economics from Princeton University, an MSc in development economics from the University of London School of Oriental and African Studies, and an MPA from the Harvard Kennedy School. In addition to serving as a visiting lecturer in DUSP, Jackson has previously served as a senior fellow and lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and as a postdoctoral research fellow at the Lauder Institute. His research focuses on the historical origins and evolution of the institutional arrangements shaping the relations between business and the state that reside at the core of modern capitalism.

Delia Duong Ba Wendel holds a PhD in urban planning from Harvard University (2016), as well as an MDes in the history and theory of architecture with distinction (Harvard, 2007) and an MSc in cultural geography with distinction (University College London, 2006). Her dissertation, "The Ethics of Stability: Rebuilding Rwanda after the 1994 Genocide," was conducted under the supervision of Neil Brenner, Jean Comaroff, Diane E. Davis, and K. Michael Hays.

Jason will start in the department in fall 2017. Delia will arrive a year later, in fall 2018, after completing a postdoctoral position at Princeton.

In addition, Professor Erica Caple James joined the DUSP faculty in June 2017. James is a medical anthropologist who works on community health, with a focus on political factors such as post-conflict transition processes, race, gender, and security. She is the founding director of MIT's Global Health and Medical Humanities Initiative and has been a faculty member in the Department of Anthropology since 2004.

New York University professor Ingrid Gould Ellen joined the department as a visiting professor of urban policy and planning for the year, teaching 11.202 Planning Economics and 11.203 Microeconomics along with a new subject, 11.S942 Designing Policy Relevant Research in Housing and Community Development (with Mariana Arcaya and Justin Steil).

Peter Del Tredici served as a visiting lecturer of applied ecology and planning; in the fall, he taught the new 11.S938 Urban Ecology: Plants, People and Climate Change subject. Peter holds an MA in biology from the University of Oregon and a PhD in biology from Boston University. He is a senior research scientist at the Arnold Arboretum and a lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

Marie Law Adams joined us as a lecturer in urban design and planning to co-teach 11.328J/4.240J Urban Design Skills in the fall and two subjects in the spring. Marie is a partner at Landing Studio, a design and planning practice that works with large-scale

industrial operations and infrastructures in urban environments. She received her master of architecture from MIT, where she was a presidential fellow and a recipient of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Medal.

Louise Elving, a DUSP alum and former member of the department's visiting committee, joined the Special Program for Urban and Regional Studies (SPURS) team for the year. Louise is a specialist in affordable housing and a partner at Viva Consulting, where she has helped establish more than 4,000 affordable and mixed-income homes in diverse urban, suburban, and rural communities, along with related schools and commercial and community facilities. She served as a lecturer in the department, teaching a seminar focusing on the American planning experience.

Bruno Verdini returned as a lecturer in urban planning and negotiation, teaching the undergraduate version of 11.011 The Art and Science of Negotiation in both the fall and spring semesters.

Jason Jackson returned as a lecturer in international development and urban planning to co-teach 11.201 Gateway with Chris Zegras in the fall and spring.

Kairos Shen, who served 13 years as the Boston Redevelopment Authority's director of planning, returned as a visiting lecturer in the Center for Real Estate and DUSP to teach the 11.S967 Mediating Private Development with Public Planning seminar in the fall and 11.303J/4.254J Real Estate Development Studio (with Dennis Frenchman) in the spring.

As usual, the SPURS/Humphrey Fellows Program hosted a group of distinguished planners from around the globe. In 2016–2017, we welcomed fellows from 16 countries including Argentina, Bhutan, Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kosovo, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, and Suriname. Their fields of interests were urban and metropolitan growth management, housing and infrastructure development and finance, the revitalization of urban cores, sustainable and resilient design and planning, and transportation and land use planning.

The MIT-Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) Malaysia Sustainable Cities Program successfully completed its fourth year, hosting another cohort of visiting scholars from a number of developing countries and organizing its fourth graduate student practicum over the Independent Activities Period (IAP). The 36 international scholars spent the fall semester at UTM and the spring semester at MIT completing their research on a range of issues regarding sustainable development in five Malaysian cities. The scholars have written about climate change, energy and low carbon development, ecosystem protection, water supply and infrastructure, flooding and disaster preparedness, housing, displacement and community engagement, tourism, transportation and urban design, and protection of cultural assets in Johor Bahru, Kuala Lumpur, Georgetown, Putrajaya, and Kuching.

Xav Briggs, Joe Ferreira, David Hsu, Karen R. Polenske, and Phil Thompson were on leave during fall 2016. During the spring, Alan Berger, Xav Briggs, Larry Vale, and Jinhua Zhao were on leave.

Although he had been on an extended leave, the department officially said goodbye to Professor Xav Briggs in spring 2017.

Research and Teaching

The following new subjects were developed and offered for the first time in 2016–2017:

Fall

- 11.S938 Urban Ecology: Plants, People and Climate Change
- 11.S942 Designing Policy Relevant Research in Housing and Community Development
- 11.S950 Planning in Practice

Spring

- 11.169 Global Climate Policy and Sustainability
- 11.S939 Research Seminar in Urban Ecology
- 11.S941 Industrial Urbanism: Places of Production, Ashdod, Israel
- 11.S944 World-Making
- 11.S945 Emerging Patterns in Urban India
- 11.S947 DesignX Accelerator
- 11.S948 Dream Revisited: Contemporary Debates about Racial and Economic Segregation
- 11.S951 Finance, Geography and Sustainability: Lessons for Urban Planning, Development, and Beyond
- 11.S952 Socially Responsible Real Estate Development: Learning to Use Impact Assessment Tools Effectively

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

Fall

- 11.360 Creating a Vision for MIT West Campus (fall)
- 11.S945 Roxbury Design and Planning (fall)
- 11.332 Urban Design Studio: Coding Resilient Urbanism in South Florida (fall)

Spring

- 11.303J/4.254J Real Estate Development Studio (spring)
- 11.320 Digital City Design Workshop (spring)
- 11.332J/4.163J Urban Design Studio (spring)
- 11.386 Malaysia Sustainable Cities Practicum (spring)
- 11.439 Revitalizing Urban Main Streets (spring)
- 11.S941 Industrial Urbanism: Places of Production, Ashdod, Israel (spring)
- 11.S945 Emerging Patterns in Urban India (spring)
- 11.S947 DesignX Accelerator Workshop (spring)
- 21G.227 Advanced Workshop in Writing for Social Sciences and Architecture (spring)

Major Events and Speakers**DUSP Faculty Research Lightning Talks**

DUSP continued its new tradition of hosting department-wide “lightning talks” to showcase faculty and student research. During each of this year’s two events, approximately a dozen DUSP faculty members were given three minutes to explain one of their research projects in layperson terms.

Ross Silberberg Lecture

The Ross Silberberg (1990) Memorial Fund supports student research travel grants and a biannual lecture exploring the interaction of design and social justice. This year’s event (“Divided: Communication and Planning within Contested Space and Contemporary Populism”) featured a panel discussion with Richard Parker, Suzanne Morse Moomaw, Karen Abrams, and Ceasar McDowell focusing on topics related to America’s founding and how its history continues to echo across geographic divisions. Other topics included neighborhood-based strategies to build social capital and financial capacity and the importance of communication in planning.

Finance, Geography, and Sustainability Speaker Series

Organized and facilitated by Associate Professor Janelle Knox-Hayes and PhD candidates Jung WooChung and Shekhar Chandra, this speaker series brought together leading thinkers during the spring semester to address the crucially important relationships among finance, geography, and sustainability.

DUSPx

In April, the department hosted a special DUSPx event in New York City to provide DUSP alumni with opportunities for networking and catching up with old friends.

Conscripting Climate Forum

In April, the department's City Design and Development Group hosted a half-day symposium that brought together scholars, policy experts, and practitioners to discuss opportunities and risks related to urban planning and the adaptation of an evolving climate security agenda. The group also organized a number of evening events, including book talks and public lectures on planning and urban design.

The Spirit of Detroit: 1950 to 2050

The department hosted a one-day symposium focused on the city of Detroit's past, present, and future, organized as an extension of the work of Kenneth E. Reeves, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Visiting Scholar in DUSP. This year is the 50th anniversary of the 1967 Detroit riot, and the symposium focused on Detroit's heyday in the 1950s and 1960s and the city's journey from 1967 to a potentially promising yet uncertain future. The event looked back at the history of Detroit in order to look forward and featured two panels exploring a wide range of topics.

Family, Work, and Leadership: Having Them All

Special guest Myra Strober (professor emerita at Stanford University's Graduate School of Education and professor of economics at the Stanford Graduate School of Business) led a discussion focused on collective action as a tool for increased equity. Building on work from her new book, *Sharing the Work: What My Family and Career Taught Me about Breaking Through (and Holding the Door Open for Others)* (The MIT Press), she engaged with students to discuss their experiences with job offers, wages, and working conditions.

Day of Action/Engagement

At a grass-roots event in April, students, faculty, and others tackled political, economic, and social challenges related to civic engagement. DUSP participated, along with more than 1,000 others, as MIT came together to discuss approaches and solutions to a broad range of challenges in these areas.

Remembering Judith Tandler

In October 2016, the department hosted a memorial event to remember and celebrate the legacy of DUSP professor Judith Tandler.

Other Departmental Events

Additional fall and spring events and speaker series were as follows.

- **EPP Lunch Speaker Series:** The department's Environmental Policy and Planning Group (EPP) hosted a series of lunch discussions with distinguished faculty across and outside the Institute. The discussions focused on exploring opportunities for cross collaboration within and beyond the Institute for DUSP students.
- **Planning Ideas That Matter:** In the fall, Professors Larry Vale and Jinhua Zhao once again offered their popular series of biweekly planning debates.

- SPURS Series: The department's SPURS program hosted a fall series on the topic of "Myths about America (and American Planning)."

Awards and Research Highlights

In June, DUSP alumnus Jeff Hebert (MCP 2004) served as the keynote speaker at the department's 2016–2017 commencement celebration. Jeff holds three different titles in the city of New Orleans: deputy mayor, chief administrative officer, and chief resilience officer. A number of year-end departmental awards were announced during the ceremony, as follows.

- Outstanding PhD Dissertation: Lyndsey Rolheiser PhD '17, "Three Essays on Urban Economics"
- Outstanding PhD Teaching Assistant: Jeff Rosenblum
- Outstanding MCP Thesis: Dennis Harvey MCP '17, "After Retreat: Buyout Programs and Local Planning Goals after Hurricane Sandy" (first place), and Jess Myers MCP '17, "Here There Be Dragons: Broadcasting Identity and Security in the Parisian Region" (honorable mention)
- O. Robert Simha Prize: Jaswanth Madhavan, Scott Margeson, Fernando Montejo, and Billy Ndengeyingoma (from the fall 11.360 Community Growth and Land Use Planning class)
- Excellence in Public Service Award: Justin Bates MCP '12 and Andy Cook MCP '14
- Flora Crockett Stephenson Writing Prize: Grant Tank Williams MCP '17
- AICP Outstanding Student Award: Maya Abood MCP '17
- Outstanding Contribution to the Intellectual Life of the Department: Sam Jung MCP '17
- Student Departmental Service Award: Carey Dunfey MCP '17
- Rolf R. Engler Award for Outstanding Service: Jim Harrington, SA+P director of facilities
- Excellence in Advising: Larry Susskind
- Excellence in Teaching: Gabriella Carolini
- Staff or Faculty Contribution to Student Life: Duncan Kincaid
- Hebbert Award for Student Contribution to DUSP: Carey Dunfey and Maya Abood
- Special Acknowledgment: Mike Foster

Ellen Rushman, DUSP's academic programs coordinator, received one of three 2017 SA+P Infinite Mile Awards.

Lawrence Vale, Ford Professor of Urban Design and Planning, was named one of the 2017 Frank E. Perkins Award recipients for excellence in graduate advising.

DUSP PhD candidate Cauam Ferreira Cardoso was awarded the 2017 MIT Goodwin Medal for excellence in teaching. Cardoso has taught a wide range of subjects at MIT, from introductory undergraduate subjects to international graduate practicums.

PhD candidates Parrish Bergquist and Hannah Teicher were named to the 2017–2018 Martin Family Society of Fellows for Sustainability.

DUSP doctoral candidate Aditi Mehta won the 2017 Priscilla King Gray Award for Public Service.

DUSP MCP students Amarillys Rodriguez, Rachel Belanger, and Will Monson were named 2016 Kuehn Fellows. The Kuehn Fellowship is designed to enable promising students to work with housing organizations in furthering access to and capacity for affordable housing in Massachusetts. Fellows share and assimilate knowledge through networks of mentors, practitioners, and government officials.

PhD candidate John Arroyo was awarded a fellowship from the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education.

Professor Eran Ben-Joseph was named co-director of the MISTI (MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives) Israel program.

Graduate Degree Program Enrollment and Activities

In 2016, the department's graduate programs enrolled 65 new MCP students, one new SM student, and 16 new doctoral students. The department granted 61 MCP, three SM, and eight PhD degrees.

The following table reports data on the 2016–2017 admissions cycle for the department.

Table 1. DUSP Admissions Cycle, 2016–2017

	Applications	Admitted Students	To Be Enrolled
MCP (including dual)	399	90	73
SM	1	0	0
PhD	120	7	7

Undergraduate Program

In 2016–2017, six students graduated with an SB from DUSP. In addition, two undergraduates declared a Course 11 major, bringing the new total to nine majors for the coming year.

Over the past year, the department's undergraduate committee has been exploring the possibility of a new focus on urban science and technology and has recently begun

discussions with faculty and leadership in Course 6 to develop a new joint degree in computer and urban science.

In addition, Lecturer Bruno Verdini and Professor Lawrence Susskind were tapped to lead a collaborative effort among the five Institute schools to create an interdisciplinary, MIT-wide Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS) concentration in negotiation and leadership.

Doctoral Program

As noted above, the department graduated eight new PhD students. The following dissertations were completed in 2016–2017:

- “Socio-Spatial Entanglement Theory, the I2S2A Method, and Civil Legal Service Realized Accessibility” (Eric Schultheis)
- “Alone at Home: Post-9/11 Military Veterans and American Housing and Homelessness Policy” (Kerry Anna Spitzer)
- “Urbanization Process Models, Internal Rural-Urban Migration, and the Role of Institutions in China: Three Essays on Urbanization and Migration” (Liyan Xu)
- “Urban Spatial Structure, Housing Markets, and Resilience to Natural Hazards” (Chin Il Kim)
- “Wasteways: Regimes and Resistance on the Path to Sustainable Urban Infrastructure” (Lily Baum Pollans)
- “Three Essays on Urban Economics” (Lyndsey Anne Rolheiser)
- “A New Climate for Regionalism: Metropolitan Experiments in Adaptation to Climate Change” (Linda Shi)
- “To and Fro: Digital Data-Driven Analyses of Pedestrian Mobility in Urban Spaces” (Anthony Vanky)

Eran Ben-Joseph
Department Head
Professor of Urban Studies and Planning