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URBAN PLANNING NEWSLETTER MARCH 29, 2019

Contributions or ideas for this newsletter can be submitted to Tim O'Grady. Newsletters will be sent on a bi-weekly basis. For jobs, internships, and fellowships, please see the new career portal.

FIRST-YEAR STUDIO PROJECTS

Columbia's Urban Planning curriculum requires all first-year students to partake in a semester-long studio project to engage with a real-world planning issue on behalf of a client.

On March 6th, first-year students presented their studio midterm reviews in front of fellow classmates, UP faculty, and other planning professionals. The midterm review is integral in that it allows seasoned academics and professionals to provide constructed feedback in terms of how to proceed in the second half of the semester to enhance final deliverables.

During the week of March 11th, the three travel studios spent several days exploring and conducting research in their study areas. These trips are transformative experiences that prompt new lines of inquiry that influence the groups' final recommendations.

Below are brief updates of the five first-year studios. Students will give their final presentations on May 8th in Wood Auditorium.

Madrid Future City Lab: Exploring the Urban Commons

During the travel week, students of the Madrid Future Cities studio met with various stakeholders involved with the Madrid Nuevo Norte site. In addition to spending time at the site, the studio group visited a myriad of cultural centers throughout the city, such as the Matadero Madrid and MediaLab Prado, which are publicly-funded cultural institutions that foster cultural production and civic innovation. The group also visited the architecture and design firms of Imagina Madrid, Paisaje Transversal, and the Norman Foster Foundation. While much of the work occurred down a flight of red floating stairs in the conference room of Ecosistema Urbana, Professor Luis Vallejo's Madrid-based firm, the group experienced the vibrant Madrid street life whether through walking tours down narrow streets and alleys, prototyping engagement methods in the city's many plazas, or a bike tour of the Madrid Rio from Fernando Porras, the architect behind the project.

The Future of Pier 76: Opportunities and Strategies

The studio is addressing the planning challenges and future possibilities of Pier 76, a 5.5-acre site abutting the Hudson River in the Midtown West district of Manhattan. As prompted by their client, The Hudson River Park Trust, the objectives of the studio are to evaluate existing conditions, assess the barriers to redevelopment, engage the key stakeholders, and explore future opportunities for the pier. By the time of the midterm presentations, students had already visited the site, investigated zoning and land use considerations, and identified key stakeholders. For the remainder of the studio, students will establish communication channels with stakeholders, develop a speculative site plan and design, and explore the fiscal viability of development options.

Chile: Disaster Management and Recovery

The Chilean studio is a two-part research study being funded by the Columbia President's Global Innovation Fund that will analyze the recovery phase of the disaster management process in Santa Olga, which this past year experienced the worst wildfire in Chile's modern history. The team's case study analysis will focus on how effectively or ineffectively the State and key stakeholders rebuild, repair, reconstruct, and return Santa Olga to a functional state. Some of the places students visited during their week-long research trip included ONEMI (the Chilean National Office of Emergency of the Interior Ministry) and El Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos (Museum of Memory and Human Rights).

Supertall Studio: New York Rising

The Supertall studio is exploring solutions to address the recent proliferation of out-of-scale supertall skyscrapers (over 1,000 feet tall) in Manhattan. Working with the Office of the Manhattan Borough President, students are exploring two central research questions:

1) What are the planning and development practices that define supertalls?
2) How do these supertalls affect the people, neighborhoods, urban fabric, and environment of NYC?

For the remainder of the semester, students will conduct interviews with stakeholders, explore a suite of related case studies, and contextualize their analyses to produce a final deliverable for their client.

New Paradigms for a Resilient Vieques (Joint UP/Arch Studio)

During the trip to Vieques, the "New Paradigms for a Resilient Vieques" joint planning/architecture studio visited key sites and met with key stakeholders to help inform how their projects may be useful in promoting a more sustainable and self-sufficient Vieques. Students met with members from client organizations: the Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust, the Municipal Government of Vieques, the Institute for Puerto Rican Culture, and Hope Builders. Additionally, students toured relevant sites across the island like the city landfill, community farms and gardens, public schools, and historical bunkers, among many others. Participants had the opportunity to kayak the Bioluminescent Bay, walk along Mosquito Pier, and visit the 300-year-old Ceiba Tree. The trip culminated with a presentation of students' projects, adjusted based on their initial findings, and began a dialogue with attending community members on how students can enhance evolving iterations of their projects.

LEAH MEISTERLIN PRESENTS AT COLUMBIA GLOBAL CENTERS | BEIJING

Leah Mesiterlin, Assistant Professor of Urban Planning, recently traveled to Beijing, China to present her current research on techniques of digital mapping. On March 17th, Mesiterlin gave a presentation, "Cartographies of Distance and Difference" at the Columbia University Global Center in Beijing. With historical and contemporary examples, the talk focused on the current research on techniques of digital mapping, in pursuit of pluralism in geospatial representation. The project reveals unrepresented variations between communities and groups, variations that are etched onto cities by structural differences in daily constraints and concomitant spatial practices, particularly between the genders.

Her talk was followed by a reception for the audience that included UP alums and prospective students. Meisterlin and **Weiping Wu**, Director of the UP Program, answered questions about Columbia's Master's and Doctoral Urban Planning programs. In total, approximately 70 people attended the event and over 185,000 people watched the live stream of the presentation online.

Additionally, on March 18th, Meisterlin visited a local Beijing high school (RDFZ Chaoyang Branch School) to run a workshop exploring various urban planning concepts. The twenty participating high school seniors were divided into groups to create models of urban systems using paper, chipboard and other materials. At the end of the exercise, students gave short presentations about their urban models. More info

STUDENT & FACULTY NEWS

Eddy Almonte (MSUP '19) presented his research project, "Mapping the Vulnerability to Flooding of Affordable Housing Properties in East Harlem, NYC" on March 15th at the Science for Decision-Making in a Warmer World summit at the New York Academy of Sciences. Almonte, along with his research partner Veronica Olivotto, PhD at

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Douglas Woodward, Adjunct Professor of Urban Planning, has been recently been quoted in numerous international news outlets for his expertise on the Hudson Yards project in addition to the rise of Supertall buildings in New York. Below are a few of the quotes, along with their English translations.

En español
In response to the construction of several new supertall skyscrapers in NYC.

"El diseño es decepcionante en su mayor parte", dice Woodward. "La esperanza de los constructores era tener una nueva era de grandes rascacielos en Nueva York y, con un par de excepciones, no creo que esto realmente esté sucediendo".

"The design is mostly disappointing", says Woodward. "The builders' hope was to have a new era of great skyscrapers in New York and, with a few exceptions, I do not believe this is really happening." More info

En français
In response to the development of Hudson Yards:

"Au-delà de la volonté de récupérer de l'espace dans une ville extrêmement dense, ce nouveau quartier se veut pleinement intégré dans la ville, explique Douglas Woodward, professeur à l'école d'architecture de l'Université de Columbia qui a participé à l'élaboration du projet."

"Beyond the desire to reclaim space in an extremely dense city, this new neighborhood is intended to be fully integrated into the city," said Douglas Woodward, Professor at Columbia University's School of Architecture, who participated in the development of the project. More info

FIRST-YEAR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Kirthana Sudhakar

Where are you from?
Bangalore, India

Where did you study for your undergraduate degree? What was your major?
R.V. College of Architecture (Bengaluru, India), Bachelors in Architecture

Do you have any professional experiences?
Architect at CnT Architects, Associate Professor at CMRUSOA

Why did you choose to study at Columbia University?
It was important to have the opportunity to study urban planning at a university that offers a holistic approach to the field, and is situated in a city that provides an equally-rich education with the possibility of experiencing tangible urban conditions first-hand. Additionally, GSAPP offers the opportunity for collaboration between the departments of Planning, Architecture, Real Estate and Preservation, which made Columbia stand out from other institutions.

What is your interest within the urban planning field?
Research within the built environment, urban renewal, and urban-based writing.

If you could pick up a new skill in an instant what would it be?
The ability to learn new languages to be able to connect with people instantly. Too many voices go unheard because of cross-cultural communication barriers.

Do you have any hidden talents?
Mosaic Art and teaching people yoga.

What's your favorite city you've ever visited, and why?
Barcelona. Historically, it is a city that has faced political tensions and stands testament to the will and determination of architects and planners towards achieving rich, adaptable public space. Having visited a number of Gaudi's sites, I would especially commend the vision, creativity, and determination required to create architecture that defies replication while simultaneously fulfilling functional and aesthetic aspirations, even today.

SECOND-YEAR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Michael Andrew Neil Montilla

Where are you from?
I have moved around a lot. I grew up mainly in Miami, Florida, but I was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

What and where did you study for your undergraduate?
Northeastern University (Boston, MA) and Harvard University (Cambridge, MA), Psychology and Economics

Why did you choose to study at Columbia University?
I have always wanted to live in New York, and I've always wanted to attend Columbia. When I was given the opportunity to study here, I accepted the offer almost immediately. I think I submitted my enrollment deposit the day after receiving my acceptance email.

What has been your favorite urban planning class so far and why?
Probably History and Theory of Planning with Hiba Bou Akar because it expanded my perceptions of what planning is. I used to think of planning in a very technical way, and Hiba's class widened my perceptions of how transformative planning could be. I loved all the core classes, but History and Theory changed me in a fundamental way.

What is your interest within the urban planning field?
Mainly transportation and law, but I've become interested in the public health and resiliency aspects of planning as well.

What is one advice that you have for the first-years?
Read and follow the write-ups for the GIS assignments word for word!

What is your favorite spot on campus?
The terrace behind the Mudd Building that overlooks 120th street. From there, you can see the gothic buildings of Teachers College, the Union Theological Seminary, and the Riverside Church all in a row. It's a hidden spot that few GSAPP people know about, and it's beautiful.

Tell me something that most people don't know about you.
I have ridden over 150 roller coasters.

UPCOMING DEADLINES

Tamer Social Enterprise Summer Fellowships, Application Currently Open
The Tamer Center for Social Enterprise provides financial support to students engaged in summer internships with social and environmental value. You may be eligible to apply if: (1) You are a non-graduating student (currently in year 1 or 2 of a graduate program or an undergraduate freshman, sophomore, or junior); (2) You will be working at a social venture or a social or environmental entrepreneurship-focused organization which is less than 7 years old (or solely dedicated to social enterprise); (3) Your internship is 6-10 weeks long, full-time, and concludes on or about August 31st. More info

Falling Wall Lab New York – Pitch Contest, Deadline: March 31st
Talented scientists and entrepreneurs will answer the following question by presenting their cutting-edge idea and innovation in just three minutes: *Which walls will be the next to fall?* Present your research project, business plan or social initiative – in just 3 minutes on 3 slides – to a jury. A distinguished jury will select a winner who will compete again in the finale in Berlin. More info

Global Urban Studies Doctoral Program at Rutgers University – Newark, Deadline: April 1st
The Ph.D. program in Global Urban Studies at Rutgers University-Newark has funding available for highly qualified candidates to begin studies this Fall 2019. The program offers funded opportunities to take part in collaborative faculty-student research projects on many aspects of global urban studies. Review of applications is from March 1st to April 1st. Global Urban Studies is part of the Joint Ph.D. program in Urban Systems, a collaboration between Rutgers University-Newark and New Jersey Institute of Technology. More info

TDC-MIT Transportation & Infrastructure Summit, Deadline: April 8th The Transportation Diversity Council (TDC) and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) are pleased to announce the 2019 TDC-MIT Transportation and Infrastructure Summit on Monday, April 15th. This year's conference features keynote presentations and panel discussions addressing the theme of "Exploring Innovations in Meeting Transportation Challenges." More info

IFHP Urban Planning and Design Summer School, Deadline: April 12th
The 25th IFHP Urban Planning and Design Summer School in Finland, the oldest ongoing summer school in the field of urban planning, will be held August 5th to 16th, 2019. The course is co-organised by Tampere University and Aalto University together with International Federation for Housing and Planning and is open to students and young professionals from all disciplines related to spatial planning. More info

2019 Waterfront Conference – Waterfront Scholar Program, Deadline: April 12th The Waterfront Alliance, in partnership with The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, invites students to apply to attend the Alliance's annual Waterfront Conference as a "2019 Port Authority Waterfront Scholar". Now in its fourth year, the Waterfront Scholars program brings together a diverse group of students for a day of learning and networking on the waterfront. The annual conference will take place on Tuesday, May 7th. This year's theme, "Rising Seas, Rising Risks", will explore progress on major resiliency projects and climate change adaptations from across the region while assessing the challenges and opportunities for better preparedness. More info

2019-2020 Enterprise Rose Fellowship, Deadline: April 14th
The Enterprise Rose Fellowship partners community-engaged architects and artists with local community development organizations. Together, the program facilitates an inclusive approach that creates and preserves sustainable, healthy and affordable communities. All fellowship candidates will be prompted to select their preferred location and host organization when they apply. More info

2019 Salve Regina University Cultural & Historic Preservation Conference – Call for Papers, Deadline: April 15th
Salve Regina University invites proposals for individual papers as well as complete sessions on the theme "Preservation and Memory." Potential topics include position papers, conceptualizing preservation and memory, historical analysis, and case studies. Papers in any field of academic or applied preservation (e.g. architecture, architectural history, archaeology, museum studies, preservation planning/policy) and public history are welcome. Selected academics will present their work at the Cultural & Historic Preservation Conference in October 2019. More info

CityLab Summer School: "The Sustainable City: An Integrated Perspective", Deadline: April 15th
This summer school, based in Antwerp, Netherlands, approaches the sustainable city from a profoundly interdisciplinary perspective – bridging natural sciences, urban technology, and social sciences and humanities. It examines the relationship between the introduction of new types of analysis and new technologies, on the one hand, and social, economic and political dynamics, on the other. More info

Westchester Municipal Planning Federation Scholarship, Deadline: May 3rd
This scholarship for $2,000 is available to an undergraduate or graduate planning student (or a student in a closely-related field such as public administration, public policy, geography, architecture or landscape architecture) with a demonstrated interest in planning issues affecting older suburban communities. Strong preference will be given to those students who have lived, worked or studied in Westchester County, New York or have some other relevant connection to the County. The scholarship is available only to those students who will be continuing their studies in the summer and/or fall semesters of 2019. More info

UPCOMING EVENTS

"GSAPP Incubator Spring Presentations", April 4th, Ware Lounge
Join us as current members of the GSAPP Incubator will present and discuss the work that they have been undertaking during the fourth year of the school's new initiative to support recent alumni developing experimental work. Functioning as a platform for entrepreneurship and expanded modes of practice, the GSAPP Incubator located in NEW INC is a launch pad for new ideas and projects about architecture, culture, and the city. More info

"Art of Data Conference", April 4th, Brown Institute at Columbia
The Art of Data conference is an annual gathering of researchers, practitioners, artists, and journalists, to discuss issues related to data, cities, and visualization. This year's theme is Processing New York, which emphasizes how we produce, collect, clean, analyze, and process the data that we use. More info

"Data Publics and Public Data", April 4th, Ware Lounge
This event will feature new work by Mellon Associate Research Scholars Brian House & Jia Zhang underway as part of their fellowships with the Center for Spatial Research in the 2018-2019 academic year. Brian House is developing a platform to collect geographic data through mobile devices using the distributed web. Jia Zhang is building an interactive atlas that bridges between large public datasets and everyday experiences of urban space. The discussion of both projects will center around the politics of personal data and its relationship to the development of urban policy and the built environment. More info

"Exclusion by Design Workshop", April 5th, 203 Fayerweather Hall
This workshop, led by FXCollaborative Architects, is a design exercise exploring how equity & inclusion physically manifest in the built environment. Over a five-hour period, students work on the equity and inclusion issue by physically reconfiguring spaces to serve the needs of previously excluded populations, while building design skills. Please email Margaret at mjw2228@columbia.edu to sign up. More info

"Climate Change at the Building Scale", April 5th, Wood Auditorium
In this session, speakers will address climate change at the scale of the building by looking at building materials and techniques beyond western modernist methodologies, construction systems which explore biodiversity, and strategies for building in arid climates. They will also consider buildings as assemblages where alternative relationships between humans, ecosystems, and territories can be fostered. More info

"Stonewall 50: Defining LGBTQ Site Preservation", April 6th, Wood Auditorium
This symposium examines the progress and challenges of preserving sites of significance to LGBTQ communities and, by extension, to the heritage of cities and nations around the world. More info

"NYU Planning Series: Eric Klinenberg", April 8th, NYU Puck Building
NYU's Urban Planning department presents Eric Klinenberg who will discuss his new book, *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life*. More info

"Careers in Affordable Housing: Panel and Networking", April 9th, Offices of Nixon Peabody (55 W 46th Street)
New York State Association for Affordable Housing (NYSAFAH) invites you to an Affordable Housing Panel to hear from experts in (1) Finance & Syndication, (2) Design, Development & Construction, (3) Non-Profit Development & Advocacy, (4) Law & Policy, and (5) Municipal Finance & Government. More info

"Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development (ANHD) 2019 Annual Conference", April 11th, Grand Hyatt New York
ANHD's annual #BuildCommunityPower policy conference is the event for New York City's community groups, mission-driven developers, neighborhood organizers, banks and bank regulators, foundation funders, and government decision makers interested in affordable housing and equitable economic development. More info