Immersive Learning, Sustainable Planning

www.bu.edu/cityplanning

Edited by Andrea Ciminelli and Jill Serron with contributions from: Ben Cares, Andrea Ciminelli, Dr. Madhu-Dutta Koehler, Delanie Fico, Alayna Graham, Jill Serron, Joyce Sanchez, and Meghan Woolhouse
Welcome to our first Annual City Planning and Urban Affairs Magazine! With the photo articles featured in our inaugural issue, we hope to capture our focus on community building, both with the world around us, and within our Program.

As a network of urban experts and enthusiasts, our students, faculty, alumni, and advisory board, are deeply invested in solving the most pressing urban challenges that we are facing everyday in our cities. We approach education and practice from a human-centered framework, one in which planning solutions must be understood and evaluated in their specific socioeconomic and political contexts. This vital perspective, though not new, is often underutilized today, in our rush to embrace technological innovation, sometimes for its own sake, and often at the cost of deepening our societal inequities. Here at the City Planning and Urban Affairs Program, we strive to create an interdisciplinary experience, while advancing sustainable planning in an immersive learning environment. We are at a place in human history where we need to make decisions in the face of escalating uncertainty: not an easy task, and certainly one that requires a new way of teaching, engaging, and training, to prepare our students for the unique challenges of tomorrow. That is our aspiration for the Program, and we are so grateful to have the continued support of all our community in getting there. Our steady growth and success have been only possible because of all of you. On behalf of all of us at the BUCPUA, Peace and Hope!

Madhu C. Dutta-Koehler, Ph.D.

We are at a place in human history where we need to make decisions in the face of escalating uncertainty: To accomplish this, we need new ways of thinking, teaching, engaging, and training our students.
in this issue:

**students**
- building community
- bu urban planning association
- stadtbummel in new york city
- learning on the ground in puerto rico

**academics**
- bridging city + university
- connecting classroom + community
- urban studies capstone highlight
- actionable sustainability

**community**
- board, faculty, + staff
- welcome new students
- the student has become the teacher
- alumni spotlights
- humans of city planning

**events**
- cpua lunch n' learn
- sustainability@BU festival
- jane jacobs city walking tour
- engaging communities
- the politics of planning
Student enrollment in our Program has grown 100% in the last five years. Our students come from 21 countries around the world.
building community
The UPA builds a community and space internally with our peers and colleagues, and share our mutual interest in all things related to conscientious, sustainable planning and development.

Between our First Friday events, Table Talks, networking, and our heavy involvement with BU’s sustainability efforts, we have enjoyed considerable success in building a community and fostering relationships that center around noble and altruistic principles in City Planning and Urban Affairs.

We are always open to new members with fresh ideas and a have penchant for making new friends while nurturing their academic and professional careers.

- Ben Cares
  President, Urban Planning Association (UPA) 2019

The UPA hosts many events throughout the year, but one of their most popular events is First Friday. On November 2, 2018, UPA members Natalia Chavez, Steven Lassman, Logan Capone, Ben Cares, Matt Smith, Raquel Castro-Corazzini, Rubén Cerón, Kate White, Alayna Graham, Karey Statin, Joyce Sanchez, and Theo Brossman gather at Scoozi Boston for the November First Friday.

Visit the page: https://bit.ly/2RHqCs3
Stadtbummel in New York City

Stadtbummel is the German word for a stroll in the city
by Joyce Sanchez | April 2019

The Boston University Urban Planning Association sponsored and organized a professional trip to New York City to gain insight on urban development and potential career paths after graduation. After months of planning, ten students joined the UPA for the trip on April 4th-5th, which was led by UPA board members Joyce Sanchez and Ben Cares.

April 4th-- NYC Department of Parks and Recreation. Trip participants met with Julia Wagner, Project Planner, Sarah Neilson, Chief of Policy and Long-Range Planning, and Lia Soorenian, Project Planner, who all discussed their current projects, recent initiatives, and their published reports concerning open space in the City. Afterwards, the UPA visited the Museum of the City of New York: New York at Its Core, Future City Lab.

April 5th-- Ollie: All inclusive co-living at Alta Apartments. Ryan Murphy, Corporate Partnerships Manager, guided the UPA through Ollie’s newest developments and discussed the benefits and challenges of providing all-inclusive living in one of the most expensive cities in the world. The next stop was the NYC Department of Planning in the Bronx. The UPA sat down with Michael Kavalar, Senior City Planner, and Oscar Oliver-Didier, Senior Urban Designer, to discuss upcoming planning projects and initiatives happening in the Bronx, and the potential impacts the projects could have on quality of life and affordability in the area.
Natalia Chavez’s spring break in Puerto Rico was not the kind of sun-and-sand getaway touted in travel brochures. A graduate student in city planning, Chavez (MET) visited Puerto Rico to learn about the ways that Hurricane Maria, one of the deadliest storms in US history, altered life for the island’s residents. She found more than she expected: communities where most of the working-age residents had fled, displaced families, and people rebuilding while grieving storm-related deaths. And all of it occurring as tourism surges to record-breaking levels. “Puerto Rico is in an interesting situation,” says Chavez, who hadn’t been to the Caribbean island before. “There are many questions I’d like to look into more.”

Chavez got the idea for the trip after attending a talk by Carmen Yulín Cruz Soto (CAS’84, Hon.’18), the mayor of San Juan, who appeared at Harvard last year. Along with fellow urban planning grad student Michael Zayas Morales (MET), Chavez spearheaded the trip for more than a dozen BU students, including nine city planning graduate students and three students studying public health or the environment in a five-year bachelor/master’s degree program. They were also joined by Madhu Dutta-Koehler, a Metropolitan College associate professor of the practice and director of the City Planning and Urban Affairs program, Yesim Sangu-Eryilmaz, a MET assistant professor, and William Koehler, a MET adjunct business development professor.
The trip offered a glimpse of island life beyond a cabana. The group met with government officials, architects, city planners, and directors of nonprofits, as well as academics at the University of Puerto Rico, to learn about the economic, political, and environmental challenges on the island. It was also a chance to think and talk about interdisciplinary solutions for coping with climate change and the effects of increasingly dangerous storms on island and coastal communities.

The trip was not for credit. It was paid for out of pocket, although BU’s Institute for Sustainable Energy donated $1,000 toward the cost.

Dutta-Koehler says students experienced firsthand the “staggering disconnect” between what’s needed and what’s available following a major disaster—even nearly a year and a half after the storm. They also got a taste of the fierce political jockeying for reconstruction funding, as well as the profiteering that can emerge after a disaster.

“It was such an emotional trip,” Dutta-Koehler says. “It was that kind of learning experience that makes you realize how much needs to be done.”

On one of their five days on the island they traveled by bus to Yabucoa, the town on the island’s southeast coast where Hurricane Maria first made landfall, just four days after Hurricane Irma. The Salvation Army continues its work from a camp there, and on the day the students visited, more than 1,000 residents had been lined up for hours to receive free detergent, utensils, and household supplies.

Zayas Morales says the scene left a searing impression, especially when he learned that many who were waiting might walk away empty-handed once donations ran out. “They were all waiting in line, even though they might not be able to receive anything,” he says.
Thirty-six percent of students in our Program complete an internship. Eighty-nine percent of students are employed at the time of graduation.
The MetroBridge Planning Studio was a learning experience that could never be replicated in a 100% classroom setting. We worked together to strengthen design and presentation skills, and we received actual feedback from the New Bedford Economic Development Council. MetroBridge was the unique experience of fieldwork and critical feedback that I needed to finish my degree in city planning.
connecting classroom + community

Urban Studies Capstone

The capstone course integrates the principles and applications of the major area of study of city planning, urban affairs, and public policy. During the course of the semester, students are required to work in groups to complete a comprehensive project which serves as an evaluative tool for student achievement for the major learning goals of the Program. The course is primarily student driven, and aims to foster interdisciplinary partnerships and help cultivate industry alliances and cooperation. Recognizing the unique and diverse characteristics of the Boston urban environment, the capstone projects draw from a range of topical issues that are currently ongoing in the metropolitan area. The project-based course emphasizes the interdisciplinary nature of city planning and urban affairs and provides students the opportunity to gain experience with real-world projects and stakeholders.

The Spring 2019 Capstone class focused on investigating the implications of, and providing proposals for, development and densification of various urban infrastructure, particularly in relation to transit oriented development (TOD) in the Greater Boston area. The developmental pressures of the metropolitan area make such urban densification an inevitability. However, depending on how such development is deployed, the impacts and benefits are distributed differently across people and sectors, particularly in transportation. Projects from the Spring 2019 semester focused on areas including Riverside in Newton, Malden Commercial Street, and Charlestown Hood Park.
Objective:
Evaluate current conditions and analyze Greenway Study/Commercial Street Corridor plans, and facilitate collaboration between stakeholders by providing immediately actionable recommendations for the Malden River area.

Summary:
The team took a unique approach to their capstone project and chose to evaluate existing plans in order to understand how stakeholder interests can be leveraged to achieve collective action. Their project site was the Malden River, north of Boston, along the Commercial Street corridor. Through their action-based research approach, the team collaborated with the community to take a look at practical solutions to practical problems. They made sure to hear the needs of actual community members, and the main consensus was that the river was inaccessible. Stakeholders additionally wanted to promote river accessibility, coordination and cooperation, economic development, and multimodal transportation. From there, the team compiled a list of three main focuses: Environment (river access, water quality), Community (economic development, community engagement, multimodal transportation, recreation, specific sites), and Government (zoning, politics/Chapter 91, cooperation and coordination). They used their evaluations of the existing plans as a jumping off point for their project. The team put together a very thorough proposal timeline which spanned from the coming season to five years from now and beyond, integrating community and government engagement and environmental action to improve the area and its usability to the community. It included a new bus line, extended sidewalks and more storefronts on Commercial Street, trash booms in the river, a new park, and more. Their proposal would also create jobs, including an Environmental Planner, a Community Engagement Specialist, and an Alternative Transportation Planner.

See the full presentation at https://bit.ly/2TUkRGq
actionable sustainability

UA 617: Actionable Sustainability is an interdisciplinary course that is primarily experiential by nature! It is also one of the two required courses (of 4) for the Applied Sustainability Graduate Certificate offered through the City Planning and Urban Affairs Program.

During this immersive-learning course, students engage in a series of activities and field trips while learning to "Live the Talk", and learn how they can create sustainable and actionable outcomes for the future, both in their personal lives and professional and academic practice.
There are over 650 members in the CPUA community, in addition to more than 100 industry collaborations and five active social media platforms.
CPUA is proudly comprised of diverse, qualified urban experts and professionals.

CPUA Advisory Board members meet for the Fall 2018 Advisory Board Meeting on November 6, 2018, to evaluate the Program’s progress and benchmarks as well as identify academic pathways toward future program outcomes.

CPUA students, faculty, and staff assemble for the Spring 2018 Town Hall on April 12, 2018, to discuss program updates, next steps, and engage in an open forum.

Faculty Profiles: https://bit.ly/38uPXvx
welcome
new students!

Graduate Students in City Planning and Urban Affairs:
Arya Alizadeh, MCP; Emmalin Coates, MUA; Albert Engelhart, MUA; Mollie Hutchings, MCP; Shengxiang Jin, MCP; Jiawei Li, MCP; Riley McCorstin, MCP; Julia Mintz, MCP; Najee Nunnally, MCP; Aneri Patel, MCP; Gineth Vanessa Pineda, MCP; Maria Alejandra Santa, MCP; Ceping Shan, MUA; Lauren Shapiro, MUA; Ching Chium Yao, MCP

Certificate Students in Applied Sustainability and Urban Policy and Planning:
Gottlieb Jicha, AS; Daniel Loperfido, UPP; Elena Thurman, UPP; Matthew Wunderlich, UPP

CPUA new students, faculty, staff, and current students kickoff the new academic year with the Fall 2019 New Student Orientation and Reception on Friday, September 6, 2019, at the Initiative on Cities.
the student has become the teacher

Brian Creamer’s Reflection on Past, Present and Future with Boston University’s City Planning and Urban Affairs Program

by Jill Serron | August 2019

Brian Creamer is an expert when it comes to city planning. He has an undergraduate degree in landscape architecture and a Master of City Planning. Brian is a Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) provider, a Sustainable Sites Institute (SITES) Accredited Professional, and a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). He is currently employed as a Project Designer with Nitsch Engineering.

Brian’s breadth of work over his eight years of sustainable planning and design experience spans a variety of project types. From campus and institutional master planning to municipal open space and resilience planning efforts, Brian has consistently shown keen interest in the intersection of ecology and cities. He is especially focused on designing sites which sustainably integrate stormwater into the landscape.

Some of his recent projects include the Princeton University 2026 Campus Plan, DC Water Clean Rivers Project, Upper Harbor Terminal in Minneapolis, and the Moakley Park Vision Plan. He believes that the best way to build community is to get involved locally. Brian has worked on numerous small projects, grant applications, and planning processes in his current home of Malden, MA, and served as the Chair of the Malden Mayor’s Advisory Committee on Walkability, on the Malden Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee, and is a Commissioner with the Malden Conservation Commission. He was also named APA-MA Emerging/Rising Planner. After completing his undergraduate education at Pennsylvania State University, Brian went on to graduate from the Master of City Planning degree program at Boston University in 2015. “The City Planning and Urban Affairs Program’s flexible scheduling allowed me to keep a full-time job in real estate development while pursuing my degree,” Brian said.
“I was encouraged to explore all aspects of urban planning, from public health to budgeting and even urban design challenges. Upon graduating, I found my current position as a project designer with the planning department at Nitsch Engineering, and I entered the workforce prepared to make a difference.”

Brian reflected that, as a student, he spent too much time focusing on a small number of specialties instead of rounding out his skill set. Looking back, Brian would tell his younger self that planners, as generalists, should have working knowledge of a multitude of topics.

“From urban design issues, transportation modeling, conservation, site development, historic preservation, place-making, [to] public engagement, planners are expected to have an understanding of all the moving pieces that make up our cities and regions,” Brian explained.

Throughout his undergraduate and graduate education experiences, Brian had several teachers and professors who stood out as inspirational.

“I had many excellent teachers both in undergrad and during my time at BU. Madhu has served as a mentor both professionally and personally and inspired me to push myself towards teaching. Yesim has also served as an important mentor and has helped me make the transition to becoming an adjunct instructor. I also keep a connection with professors from my undergraduate education, like Eliza Pennypacker, the Department Head at Penn State's Stuckeman School Landscape Architecture.” Dr. Madhu Dutta-Koehler is an Associate Professor of the Practice and Director of the City Planning and Urban Affairs Program, and Dr. Yesim Sungu-Eryilmaz is an Assistant Professor in the Program.
Akayo Maruyama, MCP ’13, is the Creativity Lab Design Lead for The Design Studio for Social Intervention (DS4SI), where she helped design the very first Social Emergency Response Center (SERC) in January 2017. Maruyama and the DS4SI team created a space for people to congregate after the 2016 presidential election “to help people understand the moment we’re in, from all different perspectives.” The Social Emergency Response Center required four things: collective food-making, collective art-making, space for healing, and space to plan for the future. Since that first SERC, dozens of other groups around the country and the world have replicated the model, including in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. Maruyama and the DS4SI team aim to explore new ways in which “social justice is imagined, developed, and deployed here in the United States. The Studio and Maruyama also worked on capturing and crystallizing community response for neighborhoods in Go Boston 2030, the City’s sweeping transportation plan for the future.

Beyazmin Jimenez, MUA ’17, is currently the Resident and Civic Engagement Manager at Madison Park Development Corp. (MPDC) in Roxbury. The role focuses on empowering, educating, and engaging residents in the Roxbury area of Boston and across MPDC’s housing portfolio so that they are able to make informed and autonomous decisions that help promote higher quality living and equitable results for the future of the neighborhood. The work includes managing the RoxVote Coalition, a cohort of area organizations promoting nonpartisan political efforts through candidate forums, civic education, and community outreach. Prior to this role, Beyazmin served as the Program Manager at Citizens’ Housing and Planning Association, a housing advocacy nonprofit in Boston, MA. At the agency, Beyazmin managed three programs: a statewide homeownership education network consisting of 48 agencies, a mentoring program targeting young professionals of color with over 40 participants, and the Mass Access Housing Registry, an online data tool for accessible and affordable units. Beyazmin currently serves on the Board of Directors for Lawrence Community Works, Inc., a community development organization in Lawrence, MA, and on the Advocacy Committee for YW Boston, an organization focused on promoting racial equity practices for girls of color in Boston, MA.
Diego Lomelli, MCP '18, is from Merida, Venezuela, a small city in the heart of the Venezuelan Andes. After earning his bachelor's degree in civil engineering in 2015 from the University of Los Andes, he moved to Haiti to work in one of the International Development Bank's recovery projects after the 2010 earthquake. He had the opportunity to visit different cities across South America and the Caribbean, and despite remarkable differences between these economies, found a pattern of urban distribution. In many cases, economic growth did not translate into the well-being of citizens. That realization motivated Diego to pursue a degree that allowed him to understand these complex systems we call cities. The Master of City Planning degree program reaffirmed that urban spaces are his passion. Topics such as smart growth, sustainability, economic development, and urban innovation drive him. Understanding these multidimensional systems beyond just the spatial organization is critical if economic development is to be more equitable in a world that is experiencing a growing urbanization phenomenon. Currently, Diego is an Instructional Designer at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Joyce Sanchez, MUA '19, was appointed by Attorney General Maura Healey to the Citizens' Commission to advance the 28th Amendment. Joyce obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science with a minor in journalism from Georgia Southern University. As an undergraduate, she served in several leadership roles such as Service-Learning Facilitator, Alternative Break Student Board Member, Model United Nations Student Organization (Model UN) Delegate, and Founder/President of The 100 Collegiate Women of America, a women empowerment organization devoted to creating leaders, economic development, and serving the community. While at Boston University, Joyce pursued a Master of Urban Affairs and served as the 2018-2019 President of the Urban Planning Association. Joyce joined the Humphrey Fellowship Program at Boston University in July 2018 as a Senior Program Coordinator. Previously, Joyce worked to increase the number of low-income, first-generation college and underrepresented high school students who complete higher education as a College Advisor at the Boston Day and Evening Academy under the CACBU partnership. In her professional and personal life, Joyce remains active in the civic, social, and non-profit industries.

Read about our alumni: https://bit.ly/36lcHff
Humans of City Planning was developed as an engagement platform by Social Media Coordinator, Rubén Cerón, MCP ’19, to connect CPUA’s students and faculty, and to highlight the diversity of the Program. By offering insights on the lives, passions, and areas of expertise of members of the CPUA Program, both members of the Boston University community and beyond can gain a better understanding of the people who make-up the Program. Humans of City Planning originally started as an Instagram photoblog of portraits and interviews collected by Cerón, and then it transitioned to video interviews. The Humans of City Planning series can be found on CPUA’s Instagram page and YouTube channel.

Watch the videos: http://bit.ly/2SjgGoQ
CPUA has hosted over 100 events on-campus and in the Greater Boston area. More than 3000 participants have attended our Program's events.
CPUA hosted a lunch n’ learn on March 25, 2019, with guest speakers Ryan Broughton, CEM, CBCP, Executive Director, and CPUA alumna Tiana Farrant, MCP ’15, Emergency Management Coordinator, from the Mayor’s Office of Emergency Management (OEM) at the City and County of Denver.

During the lunch, Broughton and Farrant spoke about the importance of managing risk and the role of city officials and planners, and offered advice to students seeking a career in related fields. During their talk, they recommended enabling every player to manage risk by rewarding good behavior. However, Broughton stressed that a majority of risk comes from building codes, emphasizing the important role that city officials and planners have in managing and mitigating risk. According to Broughton, the key is to build for when an event happens, not if it happens. He also noted that issues such as climate change have increased the frequency of catastrophic events, which means cities need to keep this in mind when developing infrastructure.

Addressing the students in the room, Broughton and Farrant offered advice for those seeking job opportunities in emergency management and related fields. One of their main points was to start in a smaller organization or department in order to gain experience. According to Broughton, working in a smaller town or neighborhood is a reasonable goal for newly graduated professionals to reach in order to gain practical experience in the field. Then, in turn, one can use that experience to create a vision to shape change the individual wishes to make in their desired role. Broughton and Farrant also stressed that students should prepare for their future dream jobs through any experience available to them. Broughton and Farrant have been regular contributors to the City Planning and Urban Affairs Program, specifically in UA 617 Actionable Sustainability.
On Thursday, September 19th, Boston University’s Marsh Plaza was filled with students, faculty, and organizations promoting sustainable lifestyles at sustainability@BU’s annual Sustainability Festival. CPUA hosted a table — right next to some delicious smelling kettle corn — full of free swag, program information, and a fun filled trivia game with prizes!

The City Planning and Urban Affairs table had continuous momentum with festival-goers as everyone took a shot at winning their choice of BU MET magnets, a BU MET reusable tote, or a BU Sustainability travel mug by participating in an eight question global warming trivia game created by Ben Cares, UPA President.
Dr. Jim O’Connell lead this year’s Jane Jacobs’s Walk through Boston’s Fort Point Channel District, Seaport District, and Harborwalk on September 7, 2019. Activities on the walk included figuring out how much of the development in these areas--glass-box, mid-rise architecture, mixed commercial and residential uses, open space creation, place-making, cultural activities--follow the urban planning principles of Jane Jacobs—or not. Jane's Walks are a series of neighborhood walking tours across the world that are inspired by urban activist and writer Jane Jacobs.
CPUA hosted former US Representative Michael Capuano at the Fall 2019 Keynote Lecture. Capuano was the mayor of Somerville for ten years and spent twenty years in Congress where he had a fiery passion for advocating for urban issues, and spoke on the importance of engaging with communities as planners.

Brian Creamer, an adjunct faculty member, gave a warm welcome to Capuano, who began the keynote by stating: “This is not a lecture, lectures are boring, sorry professors, I hope [this keynote] is an interaction.” He opened with the importance of interacting with the people planners are planning for. He posed a question to the audience, “What are you trying to accomplish as planners?” For him, planning is about constructing a better life for multiple, different people in many different communities, with many different desires. He then asked the audience, “Who are you working for?” As planners, there is a conflict, is the answer an employer or the community?

Capuano grew up in Somerville, a densely populated city with no high-rise buildings, only two and three family homes. Growing up, Capuano felt the effects of outside planners who thought they knew what the community wanted without consulting the community. His discussion on the importance of engaging with communities picked up here.
For Capuano, honesty is the best policy because respect is driven through honesty about views and plans. Brian Creamer then opened the floor for questions, where students, faculty, and guests were eager to discuss the topic of engagement. There was a multitude of questions that followed which discussed prominent planning issues and ideas around the Greater Boston area with topics including the Green Line Extension, the Silver Line history, the push for sustainable living, the importance of condo control, and the growing population of developers in Boston who are invading neighborhoods such as Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, and Allston. Capuano closed the discussion with the importance of hearing, listening, and either respectfully agreeing or disagreeing with community members: “to not ask generates anger and distrust [among the community].”
about cpua

Boston University Metropolitan College (MET) programs in city planning and urban affairs are designed to prepare you for the myriad political, social, and technical challenges that arise in urban planning and policy-making. Learn from expert faculty with expertise in areas such as sustainable development, climate change, transportation, land reclamation, city finance, regional economics, and urban design, and benefit from a curriculum that embraces sustainability, creativity, pragmatism, and diversity of thought. You'll find highly innovative courses and a flexible schedule—whether you study part-time or full-time. Graduates of Metropolitan College’s MCP and MUA programs are trained to be critical, open-minded thinkers and creative, pragmatic problem solvers with access to a network of area and regional employers, policymakers, and analysts.

The degrees offered through CPUA at the Metropolitan College are:

- Bachelor of Science in Urban Affairs
- Graduate Certificate in Applied Sustainability
- Graduate Certificate in Urban Policy & Planning
- Master of City Planning (MCP)
- Master of Urban Affairs (MUA)

Learn more about programs and course offerings at http://www.bu.edu/cityplanning/

For more information: http://bit.ly/2ShHHJx
#BUCPUA Annual Photo Contest 2020
All members of the BU community are eligible to submit up to three photos from their urban experiences. The top judged photo will be the cover image for the City Planning and Urban Affairs Annual Magazine 2020.

How to Participate:
1. Submit links to your photos beginning April 6, 2020 at cityplan@bu.edu
2. Follow the @bucityplanning Instagram account and tag your photo with #BUCPUAurbanexperience

Winners announced: Friday, May 1, 2020.
Prize: Photographer spotlight and featured cover photo for the City Planning and Urban Affairs Annual Magazine 2020.