



Master of Urban Spatial Analytics Launched at Penn

Penn IUR is proud to announce the launch of the new Master of Urban Spatial Analytics (MUSA) degree, a one-year, nine-course professional degree program aimed at teaching students the application of spatial technology to business and public-sector decision-making. MUSA students learn the technical skills of geographic information systems (GIS) and spatial statistics and develop a program of courses in one of several urban content areas, including criminology, design, economic development, education, local and state government, public health, real estate, social welfare, transportation, and urban demography. Required analytics and methodology courses include modeling geographic space, spatial analysis in urban studies, statistics, and spatial data analysis with GIS. MUSA students, who come from a wide variety of backgrounds, will also have access to courses in the University's other schools and may pursue internship opportunities in the city. The inaugural class of MUSA students will be welcomed at Penn in the fall of 2005. For more information, please visit www.pennurbangis.org.

Undergraduate Urban Research Program Redefines Penn's "Urban Experience"

In January, Penn IUR initiated the first Undergraduate Urban Research Program (UURP), which pairs faculty conducting urban-focused scholarship with undergraduates who have an interest in developing research skills in a semester-long, credit-bearing seminar. The UURP has two overlapping components: a competitive small grant program for participating faculty to facilitate student participation in their research projects; and a weekly colloquium in which UURP student-faculty teams gather to present, critique, and discuss their projects.



The Spring 2005 course had 11 students representing three different undergraduate schools and a variety of majors. Their projects represented a variety of disciplines, including economics, history, sociology, geography, education, medicine, public health, city planning, historic preservation, real estate, and immigration studies. They examined a range of complex urban phenomena and actively sought solutions to the problems facing cities, including a study of urban obesity and its relationship to the characteristics of the built environment, and a study that explored the poorly-documented urban riots that occurred in small cities and suburbs during the 1960s.

At least eight of the 11 participating students are involved in longer-term research projects with their faculty mentors and will continue their work as paid interns or research assistants through the summer. Penn IUR will solicit proposals for the Spring 2006 UURP in September.

Faculty & Research News

Faculty Forum: Immigration, Race, & Urban Inequality

The Faculty Forum on immigration, race, and urban inequality held three well-attended sessions during the Spring 2005 semester. The first meeting focused on recent theories of international migration and featured Stanton Wortham (Graduate School of Education) and Lorrin Thomas (Rutgers-Camden). In breakout sessions, participants also discussed the formulation of the forum's intellectual and research agenda. The second session focused on attempts to conceptualize the relationships between immigrants

between immigrants and African-Americans, with commentary from Kathleen Hall (GSE) and Wendell Pritchett (Penn Law). The third meeting concentrated on Mexican immigration, the Mexican Migration Project, and the situation of Mexicans in Philadelphia. Speakers included Princeton's Douglas Massey, director of the MMP, and Peter Bloom, director of Juntos, the Philadelphia non-profit devoted to issues facing Mexican immigrants. The final session considered the comparative twentieth-century history of inequality among African-Americans and Mexican immigrants and their children. Commentators included Penn's Camille Charles (Sociology) and Thomas Sugrue (History).



Faculty Associate Spotlight: Dr. Charles Branas

Since coming to Penn in 2000, Penn IUR Faculty Associate Charles Branas, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology in the School of Medicine and Senior Fellow at the Leonard David Institute for Health Economics, has been working hard to make urban communities safer. His research currently focuses on two critical urban issues: violence and its contributors; and emergency medical services. One study, the Philadelphia Gun and Alcohol Study (PGAS - www.pgas.info), examines the interrelatedness of drinking, alcohol outlet location, and shootings in Philadelphia, with the goal of

helping community leaders reduce gun violence in their neighborhoods. This is critical because, according to Branas' research, the main threat to the health of urban youth, and especially males, is injury and death resulting from violence. Thus, the study has a two-pronged goal: to prevent violence from occurring in urban communities, and to ameliorate existing violent situations. Drawing on faculty diversity and the interdisciplinary approach taken to urban research at Penn, Branas hopes to increase the wider recognition of public health issues. Already his research is making waves: in February, Branas, along with fellow Penn epidemiologist Dr. Joshua Metlay, were selected to present a talk on geographic science and public health at the University Consortium on Geographic Information Sciences (UCGIS) Congressional Breakfast, sponsored by Senator Hillary Clinton and Representative Carolyn Maloney.



Urban News @ Penn

Franklin Conference on School Design

On March 28, Penn IUR joined forces with other members of the Penn community and the Philadelphia Inquirer to launch the Franklin Conference on School Design, a series of public conversations designed to foster citizen-developed planning principles and ultimately a series of best-practice planning diagrams for the School District of Philadelphia. Over the next decade, the district will undertake an ambitious \$1.5 billion capital improvement program, and the Franklin Conference aims to examine the impact of this initiative on the city's economic, social, cultural, and educational landscape.

To open the Franklin Conference, Penn IUR co-director Genie Birch and Faculty Associate Harris Steinberg, one of the event's main organizers, addressed the 200+ members of the Philadelphia community in attendance. Penn president Amy Gutmann then set the tone of the event with her remarks on the importance of deliberation to the democratic process, noting that "education is the most critical democratic act in our society." Following these introductions, a panel of experts on school design and pedagogy, including Ruth Curran Neild of Penn GSE, Patti Smith of Brown University's Education Alliance, Frank S. Kelly of the SHW Group, and Bobbie Hill and Steven Binger of Concordia Architects, presented a broad set of principles for the participants to consider in their deliberations.



Event organizer Harris Sokoloff, director of Penn's Center for School Study Councils, hopes that "by creating a context in which expert knowledge can inform citizen deliberation, the Franklin Conference will help ensure that the public's contribution to the whole process is more thoughtful and educated." The participation of the Inquirer editorial board ensures that the conversation will reach a broad regional audience. For more information, please visit <www.upenn.edu/penniur/civic/franklin/>.

Preying on Hope: The Impact of Predatory Lending on Urban Communities

As part of its on-going Public Interest Symposia Series, Penn IUR hosted a panel event entitled "Preying on Hope: The Impact of Predatory Lending on Urban Communities" on April 4. This well-attended event featured a panel of three experts on predatory lending and its effects of urban communities: John D. Green, Sheriff of the City and County of Philadelphia; Ira Goldstein, Director of Public Policy and Social Impact at The Reinvestment Fund; and Patricia McCoy, Professor of Law at the the University of Connecticut School of Law. Mr. Goldstein discussed the economic and social realities of predatory lending, including the issues of race and discrimination, while Professor McCoy examined the legal ramifications of, and possible solutions to, predatory economic practices. Sheriff Green then rounded out the panel with a discussion of his real-world experiences combating predatory lending and dealing with housing foreclosures and land vacancy in Philadelphia. The panel was followed by a lively question-and-answer session, during which guests both discussed and challenged the diverse views presented by the panelists.

Urban News @ Penn

President Emerita Rodin Delivers Keynote Address at APA Conference

On March 20, former Penn president and current Rockefeller Foundation president Judith Rodin delivered the keynote address at the American Planning Association (APA) National Planning Conference in San Francisco. During the opening session, entitled “Rediscovering the Urban Campus of the 21st Century,” Rodin spoke of the potential benefits to universities and cities of an active and concerted commitment to urban revitalization on the part of urban educational institutions. Drawing on the success of Penn’s “West Philadelphia Initiatives” project, which included a university-level administrative restructuring and dramatic physical improvements to the campus and surrounding neighborhood blocks, Rodin explained how “[replacing] a piecemeal approach with a comprehensive strategic approach” enabled Penn to increase private investment, create more affordable housing, reduce crime, and enhance educational opportunities, all of which strengthened Penn as an institution and West Philadelphia as a cohesive, thriving urban community.



Attended by more than 6,000 rural, regional, and urban planners, city officials, and community leaders, the annual conference took place from March 19-23, and featured sessions on topics such as diversity, affordable housing, urban revitalization, and the future of city and regional planning. For more information, visit www.planning.org/conferencecoverage/2005/.

Penn IUR Hosts the Second Annual Penn Urban Doctoral Symposium



In collaboration with the Penn Urban Studies Program, Penn IUR hosted the second annual Penn Urban Doctoral Symposium on May 13 to celebrate the work of 2005 Penn doctoral graduates who completed dissertations on urban-focused topics. To kick off the program, Penn IUR co-director Genie Birch and Penn Urban Studies co-director Elaine Simon welcomed the roughly 40 guests in attendance. Michael Katz from Penn Urban Studies then moderated a panel consisting

of five 2005 graduates – Mona Basta (Social Work), Elisha Ann Dumser (Arts & Sciences), Robert P. Fairbanks II (Social Work), Nadia Y. Flores (Arts & Sciences), and Jeanine M. Staples (Education) – each of whom presented their dissertation research and discussed its contribution to the field of urban research. Three other honorees were not in attendance: Victor Franco M. Calanog (Wharton); Kevin Gillen (Wharton); and Jordan Stanger-Ross (Arts & Sciences).

In anticipation of the Symposium, Penn IUR hosted a Winter PhD Student and Faculty Reception on January 27. The reception, which was well-attended by over 30 doctoral students and faculty members, including some of this year’s honorees, afforded present and future urban scholars the opportunity to community-build and network in an informal setting.

Upcoming Events Calendar

DATE/TIME	EVENT
<p>June 7-27 Various times & locations</p>	<p>Franklin Conference on School Design</p>
<p>June 15 Huntsman Hall</p>	<p>Spring Advisory Board Meeting and Annual Urban Leadership Luncheon: “The Role of Mayors in Urban Transformation” Panelists: Manuel Diaz, Mayor of Miami; Stephen Goldsmith, former Mayor of Indianapolis; Marc Morial, former Mayor of New Orleans; John Street, Mayor of Philadelphia</p>
<p>November 16-18 University of Pennsylvania</p>	<p>Mayors’ Institute of City Design: “The University and Public Design: The Impact of Urban University Development on Cities” Sponsored by Penn IUR and the School of Design</p>

For information about upcoming events, visit our calendar of events online at:
<http://www.localendar.com/public/penniur>

Announcements

Penn IUR is thrilled to announce that it recently received a grant to host a session of the Mayors’ Institute on City Design, focusing on “The University and Public Design: The Impact of Urban University Development on Cities,” on November 16-18, 2005. In collaboration with the School of Design, Penn IUR will host a select group of mayors and presidents of universities located in their city, to discuss how cities and urban universities can work together to further their individual development goals while advancing the well-being and viability of the entire urban area. As a signature program of the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Architectural Foundation, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the MICD will be a signature opportunity to the University of Pennsylvania and Penn IUR to foster and disseminate new, innovative knowledge about how the interconnectedness of urban and university development. While the Penn-hosted fall session is still in development, you can find more information on the MICD at <http://www.archfoundation.org/micd/index.htm>.



About Penn IUR

The Penn Institute for Urban Research (Penn IUR) is a university-wide body that builds on Penn's record as an urban institution by advancing urban scholarship, developing methodological tools for urban research, and applying research to public policy. Penn IUR enhances the field of urban-focused knowledge through a commitment to cities on a local and global scale. The Institute is premised on the belief that place matters to understanding urban phenomena, recognizing that spatially-based approaches are essential to identifying urban challenges, strategies, and solutions. As a campus-wide institution, Penn IUR stimulates research, provides opportunities for collaborative instruction, and engages with the world of practitioners and policymakers.



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