



H+U+D Initiative at Penn Annual Report | 2015-16

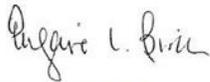


Message from Co-Directors

We have had another productive year with Penn's Mellon Foundation-sponsored Humanities, Urbanism and Design (aka H+U+D) initiative that we wish to share with you in this annual report.

Most important, we want to underline that we are now enjoying many tangible outcomes of the H+U+D initiative. The various projects under its wing have flourished. New faculty collaborations have emerged that without H+U+D would never have existed. For example nine H+U+D-sponsored courses in the School of Design and the School of Arts and Sciences at the undergraduate and graduate levels are co-taught by faculty from each school. These faculty teams have developed ongoing synergies among themselves and their students that go well beyond the actual classes.

In addition to H+U+D's substantial contributions to both schools' curricula, it has also supported public lectures, exhibitions, conferences, and course development that have greatly enriched the university community's discourse on urbanism. Student and faculty research is breaking new ground thanks to the H+U+D support. Two H+U+D Junior Fellows have joined the ongoing H+U+D Faculty Colloquium that meets bi-weekly. Faculty in the Colloquium are sharing and publishing H+U+D-sponsored research.



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Mission

The Humanities +Urbanism + Design Initiative, sponsored by the Mellon Foundation, is a ground-breaking five-year collaboration by the School of Design, School of Arts and Sciences, and Penn Institute for Urban Research that brings together students and faculty to explore cities — past, present and future — examining them at the intersection of the humanities and design disciplines and sharing research through teaching, conference participation, and publication.

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Introduction

In FY 2015-2016, the Humanities, Urbanism and Design (H+U+D) Initiative continued its five core components: the H+U+D Colloquium, course support, student research awards, public lectures and conference support, and the placement of two Junior Fellows for 2015-2016. See Appendix A. for a financial statement. The report below describes them in detail.

Activities

I. H+U+D Faculty Colloquium

The H+U+D Colloquium is the centerpiece Penn's initiative. Its twenty members, drawn from the humanities and design faculties, meet two times a month to explore mutual interests. See Appendix B for Membership. This year we focused on several member-selected themes (Adaptation in Older Industrial Cities, Design and Use of Public Space, and Representation in and of Cities around the World).¹ The meetings consist of members' presentations, field trips, and invited lectures.

The schedule for the year was:

Fall Semester

September 11- Presentations by Junior Fellows Christina Svendsen and Helen Gyger

September 18- Book Discussion w/ Stefan Al on his book, *Villages in the City: A Guide to South China's informal settlements*

October 2- Naomi Waltham-Smith - "The Sound of Precarity"

October 16- Visit to the Reading Viaduct Spur- Rail Park with Brian Hanes

November 13- Ken Lum, "(My) travels through Public Art"

¹ The Colloquium Members outlined the themes in their final meeting in 2015 as follows:

1. **Adaptation** *How are cities treating their public and private buildings and infrastructure in the face of demographic and economic change?*
2. **Design and Use of Public Space:** *How do cities around the world create and use public space suitable for collective use, congregation and free expression?*
3. **Representation:** *How do representational practices influence our understanding and experiencing the urban environment?*
4. **Representation in and of Cities and their Components Around the World:** *How do photography, sculpture and other representational practices influence the understanding and experience of the urban environment by people of different economic and social backgrounds?*

November 20- David Barnes, “Interpreting the History of Quarantine: Location, Location, Location”

December 4- Nancy Davenport discussed her multi-media artwork and her recent photography project made at the United Nations Headquarters in NY

December 18- Eric Schneider and Michael Nairn, H+U+D sponsored domestic city-seminar on Baltimore, MD

Spring Semester

January 15 Student Presentations (Melanie Young, Joseph Watson, and Kristian Taketomo)

January 29 Student Presentations (Lucas Stephens, Erin Putalik, Madeline Wattenberger and Kurt Koehler)

February 12 Andrea Goulet, “Les drames de la rue: Politics, Theater, and Crime in the Streets of 19th-century Paris”

February 26 Aaron Wunsch- “Early Power Plants of the Philadelphia Electric Company”

March 4- Lisa Mitchell, "Hailing the State: Spaces of Collective Assembly in the History of the Indian Political"

March 25 Mary Rocco, “Philanthropy, Partnerships and Innovation: The 21st Century Revitalization of Legacy Cities”

April 22- Boat Trip

April 29- Randy Mason- “Rwandan Genocide Memorials”

May 6- Trip to Governor’s Island in NYC

II. Course support

As planned, the initiative produced several new courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels. They include two types of City Seminars for undergraduates that feature travel components and a problematics seminar for graduate students. In addition, the initiative is funding faculty to develop new courses. The initiative also developed a program to introduce humanities scholars into design juries. The list below illustrates this year’s work.

City Seminars

Three undergraduate “city seminars” were sponsored (with travel support):

URBS 210/HIST 210 The City-Baltimore, Spring 2016

Through reading sociological, historical, theoretical, and primary texts, maps and photographs, and through ethnographic explorations and tours of the city, this course explored the presence of the past in the city of Baltimore. It

examined the evolution of social, spatial and physical systems, different kinds of urban and suburban places, and the encoding of wealth and power as well as inequality and poverty on the urban landscape. Co-taught by Professors Eric Schneider, History, and Michael Nairn, Urban Studies

ITAL/ARCH 311: “Venice: Self-Representation, Performance, and Reception,” Fall 2015

Defined by Petrarch as “mundus alter,” that is, another world, Venice’s seductive power stems from her subtle balance of contradictions: her architecture of masses emerging weightlessly from the lagoon, her urban gardens planted in the middle of the sea—as Henry James aptly observed—and her Veniceness—*venezianità*—taking shape alongside a melting pot of cultures.

This course examines the Venetians’ multiple attempts to pin down and represent aspects of their elusive identity in written, visual and built form; the release of their social identities in the ephemeral realities of the carnival and the theater; and the reception of Venetian character and traditions by the foreign travellers that have been fascinated with the lagunar city throughout the centuries.

Structured as a series of topics and case studies (including primary visual and written sources; buildings and gardens) the course aims to introduce students to the material and cultural landscape of Venice and develop their ability to “read” the urban fabric and its unique physical context (which in the past extended beyond the islands of the lagoon) by identifying its various features and explaining the political, social, economic and cultural agendas that brought them into existence. In addition to a trip to Venice during Fall Break, the course includes visits to Van Pelt Library’s Rare Books Room to peruse some of the primary references addressed by the 2 course, from Colonna’s *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* to Sansovino’s *Venetia citta nobilissima*, and visits to the Philadelphia Museum of Art to examine the museum’s collection of etchings by Giovanni Antonio Canaletto and Giovanni Battista Tiepolo.

Graduate “Problematics” Seminar

HSPV 638 / MUS 621: Cities and Sound: The Spatial Politics and Practices of Sound in Modern Urban Life

This seminar will examine the role of sound in shaping modern urban spaces and life. While music plays a large part in the sounds of the city, we will focus on soundscapes more broadly. From the late 19th century through the present, and in geographies spanning from Paris to Philadelphia, we will explore the making, meaning, and experience of sound for varied populations; the politics of sound as an instrument of power; and the policies of noise regulation. As an interdisciplinary seminar supported by the Mellon Humanities Urbanism and Design (H+U+D) Initiative, the course will bring together students and faculty from diverse fields to probe the subject of urban sound through the lenses of both theory and practice. We will read across a wide variety of disciplines, including urban and environmental history, sound studies, urban geography, the history of sensation, musicology, anthropology, and critical theory. We will engage with sound archives, installations, films, and photographs, and also have an opportunity to make field recordings of our own. The format of the final project is flexible and could include a research paper, theoretical essay, visualizations, GIS mapping, sonic compositions, short film, or other types of media.

Course Development Awards

Course development funds were awarded to faculty in the Department of City and Regional Planning (School of Design) and the Urban Studies Program (School of Arts and Sciences) to create and pilot a campus-wide introductory course that focuses on the intersection between the humanities and design. The anticipated outcome is the creation of a unique portal course suitable to meet undergraduate general education and urban studies major requirements.

Humanities Faculty in Design Studios

This component of the H+U+D initiative consists of working with studio instructors in design to bring humanities scholars into their courses as jury members or contributors of substantive material on the problem at hand. In the Fall 2015 semester, Elise Dainese and Christina Svendsen attended Chris Marcinkoski's studio "Negotiating Growth: Africa's Speculative Urban Future" and Siyen Fei attended Karen M'Closkey's studio "Free Range: Play Spaces For West Philadelphia." The Spring 2016 juries are in formation as of the date of this report.

II. Student Research Awards

H+U+D disseminated a request for student research proposals among undergraduate and graduate students in Spring 2015. The colloquium research grant review committee awarded five research grants for work during 2015-2016; three undergraduate and three doctoral students received awards, undertook their research and presented it to the H+U+D Faculty Colloquium. They are:

Kurt Koehler, Undergraduate, Health and Societies- "Stress, Agency and Hypertension: Perspectives Among Hypertensive African Americans in Philadelphia"

Erin Putalik, PhD Candidate, Architecture- "Revaluing Plywood: The DFPA Competitions, 1943-45"

Lucas Stephens, PhD Candidate, Art and Archeology of the Mediterranean World – "Monumental Routes: Movement and the Built Environment in Iron Age Anatolia"

Kristian Taketomo, PhD student, History- "Towards an Urban Future: Density and Development in Postwar America."

Joseph Watson, PhD candidate, Architecture- "The Skyscraper and the Suburb: Architecture's Territorial Ambitions, ca. 1929"

Madeleine Wattenbarger, undergraduate, Urban Studies- "Street Art and Political Engagement in Valparaiso, Chile"

Melanie Young, Undergraduate, Urban Studies- "The Sounds of Change: What Can Music Tell Us About West Philadelphia's Changing Neighborhood during the mid-20th Century"

Applications for 2016-2017 are now in review with the anticipation of awarding a similar number grants.

IV. Public Lectures and Conference Support

In an effort to spread the H+U+D spirit beyond the seminar room (and beyond Philadelphia), the initiative presents and co-sponsors lectures for the wider university community at Penn. It also sponsors workshops and other presentations at the annual conferences of the major professional organizations in the humanities and design disciplines. At the workshops, we share the important lessons and debates of our colloquium program and widen the discussion.

Public Lectures

Sam Katz, filmmaker, "Philadelphia: The Great Experiment" October 6

Sam Katz, founder of History Making Productions, will discuss the challenges of making his film and internet project, "Philadelphia: The Great Experiment." The winner of seven Emmy Awards, the series tells the story of the city that it calls "the single most compelling stage for the unfurling and testing of American ideals." Showing excerpts from several episodes, old and new, Katz explained the goals of the project and offer a close-up look at the filmmaking process and the lessons that he and his team have learned in eight years of work.

In addition to being a filmmaker, Katz was a founder of Public Financial Management, a nationwide public finance advisory firm, a three-time candidate for mayor of Philadelphia, CEO of Greater Philadelphia First, chair of PICA (the Pennsylvania Intergovernmental Cooperation Authority), a leader in the biotech venture capital and financial services industries, and an adviser to legislators and mayors, including Ed Rendell.

Bodek Lecture- Kurt L. Schmoke | Tapping The Wire: The Power of Social Change, President, University of Baltimore; Former Three Term Mayor of Baltimore and Discussant: Nan Feyler, Temple Law Visiting Professor and Former Philadelphia Deputy Commissioner of Public Health

Kurt L. Schmoke was appointed President of the University of Baltimore in May, 2014. Mr. Schmoke earned his undergraduate degree in history from Yale University. While at Yale he co-founded a child care center that has been in continuous operation as the Calvin Hill Day Care Center and Kindergarten since 1970. He pursued graduate studies on a Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford University and earned his Juris Doctor degree from Harvard Law School. Mr. Schmoke served as the mayor of Baltimore City for 12 years from 1987 to 1999, and was the State's Attorney for Baltimore City from 1982 to 1987.

During his tenure as mayor, Mr. Schmoke initiated a number of programs in the areas of housing, education, public health and economic development. In 1992, President George H.W. Bush awarded him the National Literacy Award for his efforts to promote adult literacy, and in 1994 President Bill Clinton praised his programs to improve public housing and enhance community economic development. The Clinton Administration named Baltimore one of six cities to receive Empowerment Zone designation in 1994.

Mr. Schmoke's other public service includes his appointment as Assistant Director, White House Domestic Policy Staff under President Jimmy Carter, and service as an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Maryland.

After completing three terms as Mayor of Baltimore, Mr. Schmoke returned to the practice of law. He was a partner in the law firm of Wilmer, Cutler and Pickering. He became actively involved in the American Bar Association and the National Bar Association, serving a term as Chair of the Council on Racial and Ethnic Justice of the ABA. He has provided countless hours of pro bono legal services to charitable organizations, such as the Children's Health Forum, a non-profit group established to combat lead poisoning among our nation's youth. Mr. Schmoke was appointed Dean of Howard University School of Law in January, 2003 and served in that capacity until July, 2012, at which time, he was appointed General Counsel for the university. During his tenure as Dean of Howard Law School, Mr. Schmoke focused much of his attention on increasing bar passage rates, and expanding the clinical law program to emphasize matters of environmental justice, fair housing and civil rights. Mr. Schmoke also served Howard in the role of Interim Provost from fall 2013 until June 2014.

December 9- Urban Book Talk w/Stefan Al- *Villages in the City: A Guide to South China's Informal Settlements* (co-sponsor) Professor Al presented the findings of his newly published, richly illustrated survey of high density residential construction in Chinese cities. Critically acclaimed, the book demonstrates several places where former villages have been overtaken by rapid urbanization.

Conference Support

April 14-15- Picturing Policy: How Visual Culture Shapes the Urban Built Environment (co-sponsor) Conference
Organized by H+U+D Colloquium Member- Francesca Russello Ammon

Images play a critical role in shaping perceptions of what cities are, have been, and should be. Documentary images, in particular, have both influenced and reflected the implementation of urban policy. In the Progressive Era, for example, Jacob Riis's lantern slides stimulated tenement reform in New York City. In the 1930s, Farm Security Administration photographs helped justify New Deal policies. In the post-World War II decades, government-sponsored images spurred urban renewal at the local level. Images from the past also drove postwar historic preservation decisions about how to restore selected properties to mimic earlier eras. In the 1960s and '70s, photographs of despoiled natural environments helped instigate passage of federal policies like the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). Moreover, across time, images of natural disasters—from San Francisco to New Orleans—have shaped local decisions about what, where, and how to rebuild. This two-day symposium explores the relationship between images—especially photographs—and the urban built environment. Through presentation and conversation among an interdisciplinary group of image makers and scholars, we will consider the often silent ways that visual representations have helped structure the policies and practices of urban life.

V. Junior Fellows

In 2015-2016, the H+U+D initiative hosted two one-year junior fellows, one each representing design and humanities selected in a stiff competition. Applicants were selected based on their ability to contribute to the mission of the initiative through research and teaching. The call encouraged a wide range of applicants from the humanities and design disciplines. The application materials included a research plan and a proposal for an undergraduate course.

Thirty-five very strong applications were received and reviewed by a selection committee of Colloquium members. The committee, with advice from the full Colloquium, selected Dr. Christina Svendsen, Comparative Literature (Harvard) and Dr. Helen Gyger, Architecture (Columbia). Dr. Gyger will be hosted by the Department of History, and Dr. Svendsen will be hosted by Architecture, placing each in regular contact with scholars from outside their usual disciplinary "homes." The two Fellows will participate in the H+U+D Colloquium and in the activities of their host departments, in addition to teaching undergraduate seminars.

Looking Forward

As this year winds down, plans are already underway for 2015-16. We shall solicit (and welcome) a new group of faculty members to the Colloquium, where they will be joined by our two Junior Fellows. The new members will continue to expand the themes undertaken by the previous and group and propose new topics for exploration.

APPENDIX A: Financial Statement

Now in its second year, the H+U+D initiative has launched all of its programmed components. The table below reports expenditures in the major programming categories discussed above. The *H+U+D Colloquium* line includes both the research funds for faculty participants and the cost of its meetings and events. *Course support* includes the costs of both domestic and international city seminars as well as allocations from the course development fund. *Public lectures and conferences* contains the expenses of guest speakers, co-sponsored events and the sponsorship of round tables at scholarly conferences. *Student research awards* began to be made in the second year. Finally, *project management* includes the costs of course replacement allocations and support staff.

	FY2013-2014	FY2014-2015	FY 2015-2016	3-year total
H+U+D Colloquium	\$79,980	\$79,980	\$79,980	\$239,940
Course Support	\$39,000	\$91,000	\$42,500	\$180,500
Student Research Awards	0	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$16,000
Public Lectures and Conference	\$2,000	\$12,000	\$2,000	\$16,000
Project Management	\$37,160	\$37,160	\$37,160	\$111,480
Total	\$158,140	\$228,140	\$169,640	\$555,920

APPENDIX B: Colloquium 2015-2016 Members and their Research Projects

Faculty Participants

Stefan AI, Associate Professor of Urban Design, City and Regional Planning, School of Design

Research Project- *The Strip: Las Vegas Architecture and America*; the only comprehensive history that links the evolution of Las Vegas architecture to cultural, economic, and economic trends in America.

Francesca Russello Ammon, Assistant Professor, City and Regional Planning, School of Design, Research Project- the history of the bulldozer in the post-World War II United States.

Rita Barnard, Professor, English, School of Arts and Sciences
Research Project- literary representations of Pretoria, South Africa

David Barnes, Associate Professor, History and Sociology of Science, School of Arts and Sciences

Research Project- *Lazaretto Ghosts: Immigration, Epidemics, and Quarantine in the Nineteenth-Century City*- an exploration of the ways in which the institution of maritime quarantine was integrated into the fabric of urban life throughout the nineteenth century

William W. Braham, Professor, Architecture, School of Design
Research Project- Beyond Net-Zero: Designing the renewable city and region using energy accounting

Nancy Davenport, Assistant Professor, Photography, Fine Arts, School of Design,
Research Project- Filming and editing at United Nations Headquarters in New York

Andrea Goulet, Associate Professor of Romance Languages, Undergraduate Chair of Comparative Literature, French, School of Arts and Sciences,
Research Project: 19th-century press culture, urban mysteries, and the serial fiction of Gaston Leroux, Jules Claretie, and Maurice Leblanc

Ken Lum, Professor and Director of the Fine Arts Undergraduate Program, Fine Arts, School of Design
Research Projects- Exploratory ideas for public art works, and *Monument Lab* project

Christopher Marcinkoski, Assistant Professor, Landscape Architecture, School of Design, Research Project- *Speculative Urbanization in Sub-Saharan Africa*

Rahul Mukherjee- Assistant Professor, Cinema Studies, School of Arts and Sciences
Research Project: telecom infrastructure and cell tower radiation in Mumbai, Jaipur and New Delhi

Randy Mason, Associate Professor and Chair, Historic Preservation, School of Design,
Research Project- The role of heritage conservation in contemporary urbanism, focusing on cases in the rapidly urbanizing Global South (East Asia and Africa).

Simon Richter, Professor, Germanic Languages and Literature, School of Arts and Sciences

Research Project- literary and filmic narratives about high water events and sea rise in urban environments situated on rivers or in deltas

Domenic Vitiello, Associate Professor, City and Regional Planning, School of Design, Research Projects- *The Planned Destruction of Chinatowns in 15 US and Canadian Cities since c.1900* (archival research), *Immigrant Integration and Urban Agriculture in Three US Cities* (interviews) and *Comparing Urban Agriculture's Community and Economic Development Impacts around the World* (literature review)

Naomi Waltham-Smith, Assistant Professor, Music, School of Arts and Sciences, Research Project- *Urban Street Sound in London and Paris*.

Aaron Wunsch, Assistant Professor, Landscape Architecture, School of Design, Research Project: *Palazzos of Power*, the generating plants of the Philadelphia Electric Company

Mellon H+U+D Junior Fellows

Helen Gyger, PhD in History and Theory of Architecture, placed in History, School of Arts and Sciences

Research Project- "The Alliance for Progress and Self-Help Housing as a Tool of Urban Development"

Christine Svendsen, PhD, Comparative Literature, placed in City and Regional Planning and Architecture, School of Design

Research Project- "Aesthetics of Transparency: Glass Culture as Threat and Desire"

Initiative Co-Directors

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