Beginning of the Year Department Meeting

We kicked off the new school year with a department-wide retreat held at Elm Street, a popular downtown Muncie restaurant. Faculty spoke, the counseling center sent two staffers to update us on their offerings, and Dean Dave Ferguson spent part of the morning with us. Ball State University Provost Dr. Susanna Rivera-Mills happened to be enjoying lunch in the main dining room and was able to spend a few minutes with us afterward, too. After lunch, we broke into groups to brainstorm new ideas.

New Alumni Board Formalized

We’ve reactivated and expanded our alumni board to help us examine curriculum matters, potential partnerships, fundraising, and other areas. Serving on the board are Gina Anderson, Brad Beaubien, Ehren Bingaman, Keith Broadnax, Tammy Butler, Lauren Day, Jake Dietrich, Ellen Forthofer, Dan Haake, Corey Hull, Beth Johnson, Adrienne Keeling, Caroline Kimmel, Carmen Lethig, John Marron, Nikkitta McCoy, Jennifer Mielke, Ed Mitro, Derek Naber, Chris Palladino, Lauren Peterson, Bithia Ratnasamy, Lisa Roberts, Craig Sklenar, Mallory Thatch, Adam Thies, Ben Thomas, Meagan Tuttle, John Urbahns, Lynette Boswell Washington, and Amy Morris Williams. Cynthia Bowen, Jennifer Milliken, and Rebecca Leonard, all members of the CAP alumni board, are honorary members.
Videoconferencing Ability Doubles Alumni Involvement

More than a dozen alumni spoke with PLAN 100 students fall semester in our newly upgraded conference room where we now have video conferencing capabilities. The students each selected two alumni to meet and wrote short papers based on the conversations.

Thank you so much to everyone who volunteered their time: Corey Hull, Mallory Thatch, Meagan Tuttle, Rebecca Leonard, Bithia Ratnasamy, John Marron, Jennifer Mielke, Jennifer Milliken, Charles Russell, Lisa Roberts, Ellen Forthofer, Keith Broadnax, Angela Rose, Craig Sklenar, and Caroline Kimmel. The first-year students tell us from time to time that they have trouble understanding “exactly what planners do.” You can imagine why that is difficult for them to visualize since the field is so diverse. Being able to make a personal connection to the field could be a real game changer!

Many of you have offered to help us this semester, and we appreciate that very much. When you have time, send us a brief bio that we can share with students. Our department email is easy to remember: planning@bsu.edu.

Alumni Return

Another way our alumni help us out is by speaking in person to students in our classes. It’s so helpful to have a variety of practitioners visit each semester to share career stories. Special thanks to this semester’s volunteers in PLAN 100: Jake Dietrich, Hailey James, John Urbahns, Lauren Day, Jake Dietrich, John Marron, Lauren Petersen, Tammy Butler, Chris Palladino, and Bill Taft, a graduate of the historic preservation program.

Piers Kirby spoke to both PLAN 100 and PLAN 629. And PLAN 240, taught by alumnus Chris Palladino, welcomed Drew and Allie Rosenbarger. Class of ’68 alumnus G. Tracy Williams reached out this fall offering to mentor some students in his retirement as well.
Indianapolis MPO Hosts Transit Workshop for Planning Students

During fall semester, the Department of Urban Planning partnered with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization to have a hands-on workshop about transportation planning and transit network design.

Urban Planning alumni Sean Northup and James Rinehart, along with MSU Grad Danielle Gerlach, led the workshop with the students.

Students were given three exercises: 1. Create proposed bus routes for “Prairieville City,” a hypothetical city with a population of 300,000 people, 2. Create a bus transportation network for the county Prairieville was located in, and 3. Create bus routes for Muncie as if the MITS and Ball State buses didn’t exist.

Students had a variety of bus options such as, different frequencies, two stops a day, a pick up service if you lived within a 1/2 mile of the stops, or a call ahead 24 hour service. Students took all options into consideration to create what they believed was the best transportation network for that specific area. Students were able to discuss with the MPO planners and faculty about their transportation network and their reasoning behind the decisions they made.

After each exercise, the students were given the opportunity to pin-up their networks and discuss with other students. At the end of the discussion and pin-up, students used their phones to vote on the transportation networks that would have the best accessibility to all, focus on the downtown, highest ridership, best access for those who have difficulty walking, and more.

The workshop with the MPO was a great success and students were able to get more insight on the process of transportation planning.
Over the Rapids and to the Carolinas We Go: Field Trip Week Excitement!

After a quick stop in Fayetteville, West Virginia, for some white water rafting, we spent the rest of field trip week in the beautiful Carolinas. In Charlotte, NC, we visited the Levine Museum of the New South, the large scale redevelopment project CAMP North End, Charlotte Department of Transportation's Cycle Track Project, and the many developing neighborhoods along the light rail. In Greenville, SC, we visited Liberty Bridge at Fall Parks on the river, city hall, and the bustling Main Street.

Organizing the Charlotte opportunities for us was amazing alumnus Scott Curry, active transportation coordinator for the city, who went above and beyond to introduce us to interesting people and places. Kathy Dennis was also a great help.

“We had so many opportunities to ask questions to professionals whether it was during presentations, on tours, public meetings or during the panel,” wrote senior Sarah Murray afterwards. “Having those opportunities made the field trip more personal for students because there was great networking happening on the trip.”

“It was very beneficial and interesting to see things we’ve discussed in class in actual practice,” wrote graduate student Gary Schultz. “I enjoyed hearing from so many different people in so many different areas of urban planning. It was more information than I can grasp right now, but a great way to get familiar with many different topics and issues in planning. It was also neat to get to know the other students and talk about all these issues as well. I especially enjoyed riding on the blue line and learning about its development, the bike tour, the industrial site redevelopment tour, and the tour in Greenville.”

Planning students before water rafting. Photo by Scott Truex.

LYNX Blue Line in Charlotte. Photo by Jack Treber.

Liberty Bridge at Falls Park on the river in Greenville, SC. Photo by Sarah Murray.
**Junior Named APA Representative**

In late August, I had the honor of being elected to the APA’s Student Representative Council as their Region IV Representative. Words could not describe my excitement and eagerness to serve such a prestigious role. As a representative, I am tasked with organizing programs and conferences, communicating with various planning student organizations, and overall being a voice that is representative of my community. I will be representing planning students of Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and Missouri. As a Council, our primary goal is to keep students engaged with APA in the form of activities, webinars, newsletters, etc. My term officially begins in January 2020 and lasts two years.

In September, I had the opportunity to attend APA’s Policy and Advocacy Conference in Washington D.C.. At the conference, I attended my leadership orientation and got to meet the other representatives serving on the Student Representative Council from each region. I was welcomed with open arms and felt inspired by the other representatives as I learned more about their backgrounds in planning. I also ran into quite a few Ball State alumni here and there. Chirp chirp!

Overall, I am forever indebted to my peers and mentors for giving me this opportunity and allowing me to immerse myself further into the world of planning. I hope to bring my unique, unparalleled perspective to the table and make my Midwesterners proud! I have high hopes for the road ahead as a student representative and am grateful to work for and with such wonderful people.

---

**Student Appointed to Regional Congress for the New Urbanism Board**

CNU Midwest is an interdisciplinary organization of committed Midwestern planners, architects, and designers advocating for smarter developmental practices. Our mission is to promote and distill the principles of New Urbanism into palatable and reasonable efforts in each of our own communities. New Urbanism is a smart growth movement spearheaded by The Congress for the New Urbanism, a nationwide coalition committed to promoting traditional neighborhood development (TND) in an effort to mitigate and reduce the long-term effects of sprawl.

As the student ambassador to CNU Midwest, I hope to build a network of future planners comprised of students at various Midwest planning schools - currently, there exists no strong link between planning departments at University of Cincinnati, Ball State, Kent State, and Ohio State - I expect to change this. Atop this, I hope to foment a network of multi-disciplinary dialogue between these schools as to produce a pipeline of talent for post-collegiate success, making the Midwest a true destination for designers everywhere.
During the first semester of academic year 2019-2020, SPA has accomplished many things despite its small size and the busyness of its members. As far as volunteering and community outreach goes, SPA members led by president Daniel Grinspan helped out with the White River Cleanup early in the semester.

Afterwards, SPA has been focused on fundraising in order to raise money for the APA Conference in Houston, Texas, this coming spring as well as the APA Conference next year in Boston, Massachusetts. Over the course of the semester, SPA has raised over $500. This was achieved through selling cookies, apple cider, hot chocolate, and custom CAP Ball Jars in the CAP atrium during lunch. Thanks to the members who have volunteered their time. We also hosted an urban planning panel on “How to prepare for local conferences.”

We are now preparing for the semester ahead. Our t-shirts are due to arrive in the next few weeks. Due to the success of “CAPATHON” last spring, a fundraiser and competition between student organizations within CAP, we will participate and volunteer with other CAP organizations again next spring.

Additionally we will continue to fundraise for the upcoming APA conferences, and hopefully we will arrange for more alumni guest speakers. If you are interested in being a guest speaker for SPA, please contact Daniel Grinspan at dazoulaygrin@bsu.edu.

SPA Executive Board Members left to right: President, Daniel Grinspan; Treasurer, Kenzie Hughes; Social Media Coordinator, Alex Pope; and Vice President; Jake McQueen.

Students Michael Terronez, Sarah Murray, and Sarah Connolly were the winners of CAPATHON 2019. Photo by Kenzie Hughes.
Students report on Studios Fall Semester

**PLAN 202- Site Development Studio**

Students analyzed and designed an overlay district for Indiana State Road 13 off of Interstate 69. Students were challenged to understand the context, but they researched the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Standards for street design for cyclists, pedestrians, bus and rail transit, stormwater management, and accessibility. Using their findings, students completed a street typologies portfolio addressing the growing number of residential and commercial developments spreading to the northeast suburbs of Indianapolis.

**PLAN 302- Neighborhood Studio**

Third-year students created a neighborhood action plan to help the Southside Neighborhood grow economically and structurally. This was accomplished by attending three neighborhood meetings where the students completed SWOT analysis with input from residents. Students also documented more than 800 homes in person in order to categorize their quality into great, fair, and needs improvement categories based on criteria such as mowed lawns, boarded-up windows, and the necessity for paint. From there, students documented case studies, contacted local political officials, created renderings, and ultimately put together a final plan to assist neighborhood committees.

**PLAN 401- Field Studio**

Students helped to craft the first resilience plan for Muncie. Students had been researching what makes a city resilient and how to implement such ideas in Muncie. The plan focuses on six elements of resilience which are: 1. Civic Leadership and Community Engagement; 2. Disaster Readiness; 3. Climate Adaptation; 4. Economic Security; 5. Social and Economic Inclusion; and 6. Health and Safety. Students presented their findings and plan to various staff members of the City of Muncie.

**PLAN 629- Planning Analysis Studio**

Graduate student conducted in-depth demographic and economic data analyses. Using the results of the analyses, students worked individually to better understand current problems and future needs of Muncie’s transportation, economic, housing, and parks and recreation systems. Conducting subject-specific data analyses, including SWOT analyses, students assembled development scenarios for each of the four selected systems. Combining their research, the final product of the studio is a State of Community Report containing the in-depth data analyses and proposed development scenarios for each of the four selected systems. Students then presented their final proposals to the staff at Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission.
Students Win NAIOP Challenge

Guided by faculty mentors Bruce Frankel and Chris Palladino, our team of four undergraduates won the NAIOP-ULI intercollegiate real estate challenge this year, defeating teams from Butler University, Indiana University and University of Indianapolis. This year’s challenge was to propose and justify a redevelopment, including legal, market, financial and operational feasibility analysis, for the former Broad Ripple High School site in Indianapolis. Their plan included high-end condominiums and the formation of a mutual benefit corporation to ensure continued public use and affordable housing of the school building itself, along with recreational open space in the back of the school and connecting trails to the Monon. The competing teams largely called for demolition of the high school at a development plan that considered no community service and at approximately twice the cost.

Team members Jack Treber, Jeffery Tompkins, Jeb Reece, and Alex Pope will split the $5,000 scholarship winnings.

“These four brilliant and courageous students from the BUPD and RED programs beat the business school competition in all three phases of scoring: the written response, the presentation before four practitioner judges, and the voting by the audience of real estate developers and their professional support firms,” said Frankel. “They are highly deserving and motivated to continue intercollegiate competitions in this field during the spring term.”

Prof. Frankel has volunteered to mentor more competition teams this spring, including the ULI-Hines, HEEF, and Kellogg. Drop him a line if you are interested in helping out: bfrankel@bsu.edu
Faculty Updates

**Michael Burayidi** is pursuing three lines of research. A grant from the Land Economics Foundation last summer allowed him to conduct site visits throughout the Midwest in a quest to document reuse options for shopping malls. His goal is to develop a typology of the various ways shopping malls are being reused and to create a model for measuring and predicting the survival and health of shopping malls. We shared some of his findings on our Facebook page this fall, and there is more to come as he expands his research in the coming year.

A Fellowship from Ball State University’s Digital Scholarship Lab last summer also enabled him to conduct research on the “dark store” theory. Across the Midwest big box stores are taking cities to court to argue for a reduction in their property taxes. This is based on the argument that their properties should be assessed on the sales value of comparable vacant properties and not the properties in use, as is done by municipalities. If they win, this could decrease the revenue available to cities for the provision of municipal services. Burayidi tested the validity of the “dark store” theory using assessment data for 9 Iowa cities. The resulting three-dimensional model shows the property taxes paid per acre of land in these cities and compared the taxes paid by big box stores to comparable properties. The Story Map that was created from this analysis can be viewed at https://arcg.is/Sb0H1. The goal is to assist municipalities in making the case that big box stores are not paying their fair share of property taxes even at the current rates.

Burayidi is conducted a study with colleagues from the University of Wisconsin, Madison/Extension using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to examine 261 cities (2010 population of 25,000-75,000) across seven Midwestern states. The goal is to develop a tool to identify economically successful downtowns and their common characteristics. This research will assist downtown leaders by providing insights on comparable downtowns that have successfully developed a business mix or economic and demographic characteristics that support a mixed-use downtown with a clear purpose. With high performing downtowns identified, some of these “top” communities can serve as models for other. There has been significant interest shown by the media in the preliminary findings that have been shared with the leading cities.

At the request of Routledge, Burayidi also brought together persons working on resilience practices from across the globe to share their work in an edited book, *The Routledge Handbook of Urban Resilience*, which includes contributions from professors Sanglim Yoo and John West at Ball State University. The book will be published in January 2020. Bringing his research to bear on the classes he teaches, he is using students in PLAN 401 Field Studio to prepare the first ever resilience plan for Muncie. Preliminary results of the plan were shared on campus and in the community.
Faculty Updates

In June 2019, Associate Professor Lohren Deeg presented a paper co-written with Taylor Metz and Richard Tursky entitled “Catena: collaboration, cohesion, and continuity in design thinking and making” at the Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken New Jersey conference of AMPS: Architecture, Media, Politics and Society (http://architecturemps.com). The authors shared their recent experiences team teaching in the CAP first year program. In recent years, design educators have examined a variety of ways to teach design to a generation described as “post-millennial.” A theme of “catena,” defined by Merriam-Webster as “a connected series of related things,” was layered over a number of studio-based projects in the spring semester of 2019. The authors questioned: What if a semester of a beginning design studio could explore a theme or line of thinking that allowed each project to lead into the next? Student feedback and a college exhibit complimented the findings in the paper and will lead the author team into further related studies in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Kelly Gregg has been essential this fall in covering our CAP first-year classes. This summer she will be in residence in May and June at the University of Antwerp as a visiting scholar at the Urban Studies Institute. Her research will examine the historic and contemporary planning process behind Antwerp’s downtown pedestrianization scheme, beginning with Victor Gruen International’s downtown revitalization plan for Antwerp in 1970. The outcomes for this research will focus on developing an expanded understanding of historic and contemporary downtown planning and pedestrianization in Antwerp, and how planning and design ideas were shared between America and Europe in the post-war.

Alumna Teresa Jeter has been assisting faculty on grant writing opportunities that support individual research efforts, the possible restructuring of the MURP program, and the CAP Think Tank. She teaches grant writing and our third-year planning studio as well. In that latter class, her students conducted an analysis of the largest neighborhood in Muncie, the Southside. Students inventoried housing, infrastructure, demographics, schools, businesses, parks, and vacant lots. Students met with residents on three occasions to gather input about neighborhood strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. They created a neighborhood action plan and a neighborhood website. The action plan, findings, recommendations and website were presented at the final meeting. Residents were elated to hear that a pre-NFL team named the Congerville Flyers had organized in their neighborhood. In addition, residents were surprised that an airport once existed in their community.
Faculty Updates

And, if you are wondering where Nihal Perera is, the answer is Asia. After completing CapAsia X in the spring, he’s taking a year-long sabbatical. He’s researching his next book and continuing his always-busy schedule of guest lectures and presentations in addition to advising a number of thesis students.

Primarily, Nihal Perera is laying the ground work for two books: The one on Colombo will be the first monograph of that city. It will focus on colonialism, postcoloniality, and urbanity but viewed through inhabitants’ standpoints, a perspective he is still developing. The second is on planning (with people) which will be built upon his previous books: Transforming Asian Cities and People’s Spaces. He finalized an article on Yangon (Myanmar) for the Journal of Southeast Asian Studies and a book chapter for the Handbook of Historic Conservation; both are expected to be published in January. He gave keynote speeches at conferences in Changsha (China) and Istanbul (Turkey), a paper at Athens (Greece), and discussed his “People’s Spaces” at the ACSP conference at Greenville, SC. He is conducting a research program for faculty at Colombo School of Architecture and instigated a class on public participation at the University of Hunan (China). In addition, basing himself in Asia, he expects to travel in Asia, expanding his knowledge on Asian urbanity and planning.

In Spring 2018, Ball State Masters of Urban Planning students in John West’s social justice course worked with community residents on the south side of Muncie to gather information and produce a book that provides practical advice for renters and landlords. The class met weekly in Avondale Methodist Church and included eight members of the surrounding community. Each community participant came with deep experience in the problems of rental housing – from professionals who help link the indigent with public services, to good landlords, to a formerly homeless man who had experienced the worst of Muncie’s rental stock. Over the course of the semester, the students and the participants researched legal protections and services offered to renters and landlords, assembled this information into the “Renter’s Book,” which contains advice, form letters, code citations, instructions and contact lists. It is organized by the kinds of problems a renter or landlord might face.

The “Renter’s Book” has been adopted by a local housing agency, Pathstone, Inc., where a Masters of Urban and Regional Planning graduate assistant is creating a program that will include a hotline for people in rental distress to call for answers to their questions. The project is the result of a collaboration between Building Better Neighborhoods, which donated $10,700, Pathstone Inc., which has fundraised over $10,000 to support the Renter’s Book program, and the Ball State Department of Urban Planning.
Faculty Updates

**Sanglim Yoo** has netted yet another grant to fund her research and the work of the second-year regional planning studio. A $12,000 grant from the Ball State provost’s office will fund the “Sustainable Muncie Project: Assessing Sustainability for the City of Muncie” this spring. Students will study and analyze a variety of sustainability measures suitable for a midsize city like Muncie and will quantify its sustainability measure with the application of GIS.

Dr. Yoo has also written a chapter titled “Vulnerability to Resilience: Assessing Urban Vulnerability to Extreme Heat-Related Weather Events” in *The Routledge Handbook of Urban Resilience*.

Part-time instructors this semester include alumni **Neil Stevenson, Mary Banning, and Chris Palladino**.
Growing the Department

Recruiting students into the urban planning profession continues to be a high priority for us.

For the freshman in CAP’s first-year program, our mission is to introduce the field of urban planning as an alternative career to architecture. Ninety-five percent of the students have predeclared architecture as their major creating a challenge for us from day one.

PLAN 100 is the main course we have to present how planning is different from architecture and landscape architecture. Alumni participation in this course has been fantastic!

The studio and the graphic courses have content focused on the commonality of the three professions with a heavy design-based curriculum.

We continue to see talented students in our undergraduate program, but our numbers are lower than we’d like. We have 32 total undergraduates; however, our goal is to have a minimum of 15 per year or 45 in the program.

We are working hard to reach students in high school to make them aware of urban planning and our program. This spring, Scott Truex is working with a group of undergrads to brainstorm ways to reach the high school market: workshops, class visits, dual credit courses, social media - much to consider!

One way you can help is to speak with young people in your orbit. Perhaps there is a career fair coming up at a school near you, and you can volunteer a few hours to talk about the profession. Planning is a growing field with lots of great jobs, but we’d like students to begin thinking about the career before they arrive at Ball State with their minds fixed on architecture.

We are also considering a second pathway into the undergraduate urban planning program, one that replaces the first-year curriculum with a less intensive design course and allows sophomore-level entry into planning. That would enable us to recruit undecided students already on campus.

We’re recruiting for the master’s program by visiting nearby universities and classrooms on campus as well. John West is serving as our graduate advisor. He has put tremendous effort into that outreach, coupling the recruiting drive with an event this semester that saw our current master’s students present their thesis topics and research to potential students.
Supporting the Department

Connecting with our alumni was a priority in fall semester. It started with reaching out through social media and emails to update our department’s alumni database. From responses to a survey we gained valuable insights on the areas of expertise that alumni have developed as well as updates in job titles, locales, and contact information. We continue to develop opportunities for alumni to partner with the department.

We have initiated an “Urban Planning Alumni Advisory Board” for the department. The following objectives have been established…

- Leverage the experiences, expertise, and knowledge capital represented by our alumni in a more effective way to benefits students, faculty, and other alumni;

- Engage the alumni directly with the program through guest lectures, symposiums, review sessions, and curriculum review;

- Embrace a life-long learning agenda that facilitates continuing education, certificate programs, on-line learning, and conferences that position the department as a resource and knowledge portal;

- Foster partnerships between professional organizations, community advocates, and civic leaders.

We have developed the first ever funding goal for our department’s Ball State Foundation account, #605. We are asking alumni, friends, faculty, and students to raise $25,000. As University resources have been reduced and we are generating initiatives to advance the department, we need additional resources to support the students and faculty. We have identified these seven areas to serve future and existing students, alumni, and faculty:

- hospitality
- professional development
- engagement support
- student scholarships
- alumni development
- guest lectures
- marketing and promoting the department

We are asking alumni and friends to consider a $10 - $25 a month donation to the Foundation to help us implement our new initiatives and support our current needs. Go to bsu.edu/foundation/give

As an example of how we use donations, we just retrofitted the conference room to accommodate video conferencing and enhanced presentations. It was finished just in time for alumni interviews with students in PLAN 100 – over 100 students had conversations with nearly 30 alumni, learning about “What Planners Do.”
If you haven’t taken our quick alumni survey, please use the link below to update us on where you are and what you’re doing!

Give us input on the newsletter @ https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/UP2019Newsletter.

We would love to hear from you! Please contact us at planning@bsu.edu or give Scott a call at 756.285.1963!

Connect with us on Social Media

BSU Urban Planning

Ball State Urban Planning

Alumni Survey If you haven’t taken our quick alumni survey, please use the link below to update us on where you are and what you’re doing!

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BSUUPalumni2020