

Department of City and Regional Planning

2015 Annual Report



Summer 2015 Study Abroad in Sicily, Italy

**Driven by
doing.**



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS

Our Mission is to educate the next generation of inspired urban planners and scholars,
conduct research that influences planning policy and knowledge, and engage with partners
in innovative local planning efforts.

January 2016

Dear Alumni and Friends:

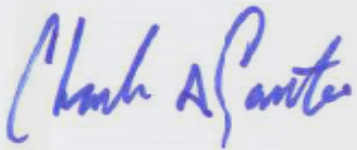
The Department of City and Regional Planning opened 2016 with a faculty retreat and strategy session held at the new Memphis Slim Collaboratory in Soulsville -- a facility that was conceived of by planning students, faculty and community partners, and developed as the centerpiece of our Memphis Music Magnet neighborhood revitalization concept. Before turning our attention to the new opportunities ahead of us, we took time to review the accomplishments of 2015. This annual report allows us to share those reflections with you. In 2015 we welcomed new faculty members, bid farewell to an influential colleague, and launched a new interdisciplinary research and outreach center. And in a symbolic victory, we were granted official University designation as the DEPARTMENT of City and Regional Planning; no longer are we the “division of” or “graduate program in” City and Regional Planning.

We recognize the importance of maintaining relationships with our graduates and local planning professionals in order to accomplish our mission of: educating the next generation of inspired urban planners and scholars, conducting research that influences planning policy and knowledge, and engaging with partners in innovative planning efforts locally.

We hope you'll enjoy reviewing the highlights of our achievements in education and career placement, research, and community engagement.

Sincerely,

Charles A. Santo,



Chair and Associate Professor
Department of City and Regional Planning



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By the Numbers: Student Enrollment and Graduation Trends

The Department of City and Regional Planning awarded 15 master’s degrees in 2015. Interest in our program continues to hold steady, with 14 new students entering the program in 2015. Our total enrollment in 2015 was 27, with 8 new students enrolling. Our three-year average for annual new enrollment is 12, up from an average of 9 for the period between 2008 and 2011. Our 3-year average for degrees awarded is 11, and our 5-year average is 12.

Over the past three years about a quarter of our new students have been Memphians. About half of our applicants and new students are from Tennessee. We typically enroll between one and three students with a UofM undergraduate degree and we tend to enroll an average of one Rhodes College student every two years. Other typical undergraduate institutions include University of Tennessee, Mississippi State University, University of Mississippi, University of Alabama, and University of Arkansas. In recent years we have attracted from all over the country and from fine institutions including Cornell University, Providence College, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Marquette, Clark, Pacific Lutheran, and Whitworth College.

Placement: Fellowships, Assistantship, and Alumni Job Notes

Thanks to an active agenda of funded research, we were also able to support the majority of our students with graduate assistantship or fellowship positions in 2015, allowing them to gain valuable practical experience and address planning problems in the City of Memphis. During 2014-2015, five of our students participated in the Housing and Community Development Fellowship program, funded by the City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development.

Our 2015-2016 Housing and Community Development Fellows are:

Lauren Crosby Memphis Heritage
Somer Smith Midtown Development Corporation
Elizabeth Treat Clean Memphis

Other externally-funded placements include:

Emily Corban School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy
Anthony Cordova TIGUrS Garden
Mandana Hooshyar Shelby Forest CCC Camp Restoration grant
Zohora Sultana, Robert Baxter and Travis Allen University of Memphis Design Collaborative

Congratulations to our 2015 Graduates:

Travis Allen	Robert Baxter
Katie Buchl-Morales	Josh Conley
Cameron Cooper	Debbi La Rue
Kamillah Kelly	Evan Morrison
Ryan Parris	Hunter Pate
Scarlet Ponder	Ian Preston
Bennett Smithhart	Jonathan Spencer
Zach Webb	

Members of the class of 2015 have already put their education to use in planning positions from Memphis to California.

Class of 2015 Job Placement

Katie Buchl-Morales	Research Associate, Community LIFT (Memphis)
Cameron Cooper	Planner+Design, Dalhoff Thomas Design Studio (Memphis)
Kamillah Kelly	Regional Planner, Southwest Tennessee Development District (Jackson, TN)
Evan Morrison	Bridge Builders Facilitation Specialist, BRIDGES (Memphis)
Hunter Pate	GIS Analyst, City of Mobile (AL) Planning and Zoning Department
Ian Preston	NEPA Planner, Tennessee Department of Transportation (Nashville)
Scarlet Ponder	Transit Planner, Memphis Area Transit Authority
Bennett Smithhart	Associate Planner, North Central Alabama Regional COG (Decatur, AL)
Jonathan Spencer	Assistant Regional Planner, San Joaquin (CA) Council of Governments

The year was also full of career advancements for many of the program's alumni. Most notably, **Paul Young** (2004) was appointed Director of Housing and Community Development for the City of Memphis. We look forward to working with Paul and the city administration to address the challenges of Memphis!



Paul Young

Here are the other changes that we've heard about:

Aarti Sharma (2014) started as a Transportation Planner and Data Manager for the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization in Daytona Beach, Florida. **Tracy Buckley** (2013) joined the team at Community LIFT as the Business Development Officer for River City Capital. **Gene Burse** (2013) joined the staff of the Memphis and Shelby County Office of Planning and Development. **Richard Donovan** (2013) moved back to Tennessee to take a position as a Planner for the City of Lebanon. **Katie McKeel** (2013) is working as a Transportation Planner for Gresham, Smith & Partners in Nashville. **Noelle Gilbreath** (2013) started as Program Officer for the Preservation Compact at the Community Investment Corporation. **Rachel McCook** (2013) was hired as a Planning Technician for the Orange County, NC Planning Department where she quickly moved up to a Planner I. **Justice Bolden** (2012) was appointed President of San Gabriel Valley Association of Southern California Municipal Athletic Federation, which encompasses 36 cities and serves a population of 2 million residents. **Liesel Goethert** (2012) started as a Transportation Planner for RPM Transportation Consultants in Nashville. **Tom Skehan** (2012) was appointed Planning Director for the City of Lakeland. **Kent Archer** (2012) is Grants Director for TNECD Rural Development. **Aury Kangelos** (2012) is advancing his academic career by pursuing a PhD at Clemson University. And **Ashley Cash** (2011) transitioned from her post at Community LIFT to take a position as a Community Development & Real Estate Manager for Habitat for Humanity of Greater Memphis.

Faculty Transitions

Dr. **Ken Reardon** left the University of Memphis in the summer of 2015 to take a position closer to family at the University of Massachusetts-Boston, where he is heading up a new master's program in Urban Planning and Community Development. As a passionate crusader for social justice, Ken changed the way our community talks about community development during his five years in Memphis. We wish him the best of luck in Boston.



Ken Reardon's farewell gathering, Memphis, TN



Laura Saija

We were able to keep our faculty lines full by hiring Dr. **Laura Saija** as a short-term Visiting Assistant Professor in 2015, and are pleased that she will join us as a tenure-track Assistant Professor next fall. Laura, who holds a Ph.D. in Architectural Engineering and City Planning from the University of Catania, was also with us between 2011 and 2013 as a European Union Marie Curie Fellow and has been instrumental in establishing our ongoing study abroad exchange program in Sicily. Laura is an internationally recognized scholar in participatory action research and has written two books on the topic of action research and planning.

We also added a new faculty position in 2015, hiring **Andy Kitsinger** as the interim Director of the newly-established University of Memphis Design Collaborative (UMDC). The UMDC is a partnership between the Department of City and Regional Planning and the Department of Architecture and the director is a jointly-appointed faculty member. As a “professor of practice,” Andy brings thirty years of experience as an architect, urban designer, city planner and educator. He holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Arkansas and a Master of City and Regional Planning degree from the University of Memphis. He is the principal of the Development Studio and previously worked as Sr. Vice President of Planning and Development for the Downtown Memphis Commission.



Andy Kitsinger

International Connections

Building upon an on-going collaboration between our department and the Simeto River Community -- a network of 10 municipalities and dozens of grassroots organizations in Sicily -- a third study abroad exchange was organized for the Summer 2015 semester. Inspired by action-research, the exchange workshop gave the students the opportunity to apply planning and design principles with the purpose of identifying a policy and design framework for the economic, social and environmental regeneration of the Simeto River Valley.

Students experienced action-research through a constant collaboration with key local actors, learned while contributing to a real process of development in one of the most disadvantaged European Regions, and enriched their knowledge on the theory and the practice of urban regeneration, through lectures, study sessions and a field trip to Ortigia Siracusa. The final report produced in this third study abroad exchange has helped the Simeto Community to be selected as a pilot area within the “National Strategy for the inlands regions” - an innovative Italian strategy to plan and fund community development in the inland areas of the country characterized by declining population and the lack of public services.



Community Engagement and Outreach

Faculty and students in the Department of City and Regional Planning continue to seek connections between research and practice, fostering mutually beneficial relationships between the University and its community.



In 2016 we took a big step in increasing our capacity for meaningful community engagement by launching a new interdisciplinary research and outreach center in partnership with the Department of Architecture. The University of Memphis Design Collaborative (UMDC) focuses on critical community challenges in urban design and community development. Through its interdisciplinary strengths, the Design Collaborative connects building and site design to community improvement in a comprehensive way. Supported by the kind of collaboration that a university setting can facilitate, the Design Collaborative seeks to make the relationship between citizens and the city (as a physical, social, and economic entity) work better.

The UMDC's launch event, *Let's Stay Together Memphis: Relationship Therapy for the City and Its Citizens*, helped set the agenda for the research center. Over one hundred and fifty community members attended and participated in the event, which was kicked off by Mayor AC Wharton and University of Memphis President David Rudd, and which featured a celebration of Memphis music and food. Participants wrote "tough love" letters to the city, engaged in interactive community mapping, and responded to "relationship therapy" question boards. A series of facilitated conversations focused on the "sticky issues" of the city-citizen relationship, including transportation, public investment, and neighborhood revitalization/ placemaking. Smaller-scale "pop-up" versions of the Let's Stay Together event were held throughout the summer of 2015, including a special youth version hosted in conjunction with the BRIDGES YOUNified celebration. Reports and presentations that summarize the outcomes of these events are posted at <http://www.memphis.edu/umdc>.



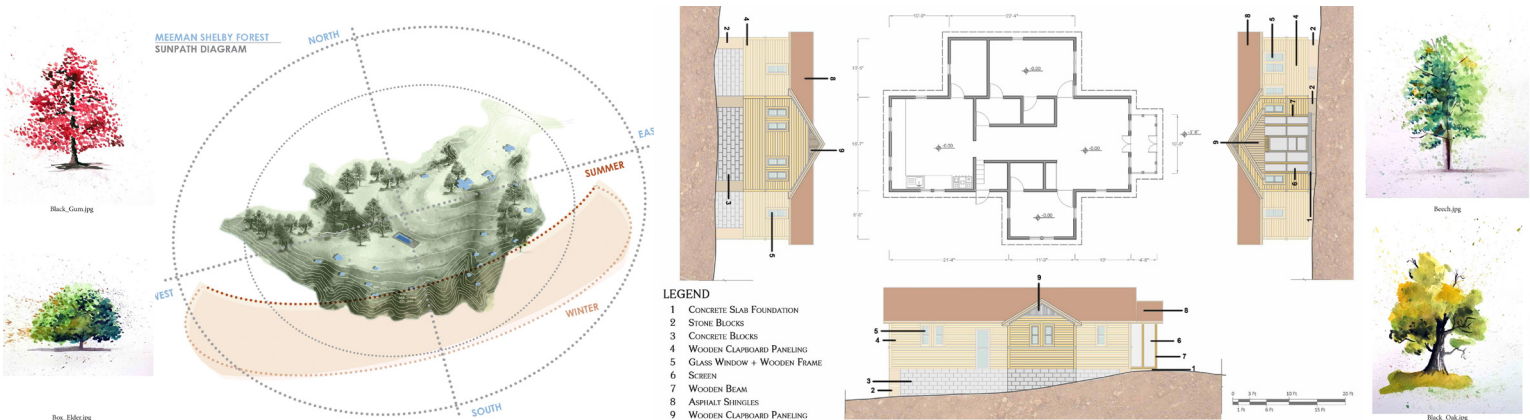
Improvements to our city’s transportation system emerged as a key community concern, and this topic became the central theme of our first Design Collaborative Studio class in the fall of 2015. The work of the studio culminated with the convening of a Workforce to Work Transportation Summit, hosted with partners from Innovate Memphis, the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, and the UofM Intermodal Freight Transportation Institute. The Knight Foundation’s Benjamin de la Pena started the event with a “provocation.” Over one hundred practitioners, students, and community members participated in sessions to learn and discuss how, as institutions, organizations and individuals, we can better connect people to workplaces in Memphis.



The UMDC was selected to be one of six new members of the national AIA Design and Health Research Consortium for our “Memphis Walks” initiative. And the UMDC received a “cyber-security” grant in partnership with the Department of Criminal Justice and the School of Public Health that will address walkability and public safety in a targeted high-risk Memphis neighborhood.

Restoration plan for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp

Planning faculty and students began work on a restoration plan for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp at Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park, in partnership with the Mississippi River Corridor -- Tennessee, Inc., the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), and University of Memphis. The University of Memphis owns and manages the Meeman Biological Field Station in Shelby Forest, which is an important asset in the restoration process. During the fall semester, students in the Project Planning Studio course were involved in developing a historical analysis of the CCC camp area, a contextual analysis of Meeman-Shelby Forest, a review of existing plans, and an analysis of existing conditions of the area. The class conducted case study research on similar restoration projects across the country, interviewed key informants and potential users, and developed possible scenarios for the restoration plan. The restoration plan will be finalized at the end of the upcoming spring semester.



Memphis Slim Collaboratory

The Memphis Slim Collaboratory, an outcome of the Memphis Music Magnet plan developed by planning faculty and students for a community partnership in the Soulsville neighborhood, has taken off as a catalyst for transformation and community building through arts and culture. Slim House members held the first annual Soulsville Festival in 2016 and the worked with Community LIFT to launch a new loan program for Memphis musicians (Slim's Front Loan).



Back yard build at Slim's

Bike Friendly University Designation

The Department of City and Regional Planning helped the University achieve the League of American Bicyclists' designation of Bicycle Friendly University. The application for the designation was developed in the fall of 2014 by students in the Project Planning Studio course and submitted in the summer of 2015. The course was led by the City of Memphis' Bikeway/Pedestrian Program Manager and University of Memphis planning alumnus, Kyle Wagenschutz, who served as adjunct faculty member.



Lookin at Slim's



Faculty Scholarship Highlights

Throughout 2015 Memphis planning faculty continued their contribution to the profession's field of knowledge.

Antonio Raciti, Charlie Santo and Laura Saija represented the Department of City and Regional Planning at the 55th Annual Conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) held in Houston.

Antonio Raciti continued to build his research agenda in the areas of public housing policy and urban food security. He was an invited speaker at the European Network for Housing Research (ENHR) Conference in Lisbon, Portugal and had an article on the future of public housing in Memphis accepted for publication in *Cities* (with Katherine Lambert-Pennington and Ken Reardon). He also wrote a chapter about the Green Machine for the edited book, *The Handbook of Community Well-being*, which will be published in 2016 (also with Ken Reardon).

Our newest faculty member, **Laura Saija** also made major contributions to planning scholarship in 2015. She completed her own book, *Action Research in Planning* (La ricerca-azione in pianificazione), and contributed to the edited work *The Future of Planning: Personal Stories in the Evolution of Planning Thought*, both of which will be published in 2016. She contributed to an "interface" discussion on partnerships of learning for planning education in *Planning Theory & Practice*.

Charlie Santo extended his research regarding culture and community development with a contribution to an interdisciplinary collection that explores civic engagement and art. His chapter, a case study of the Memphis Music Magnet plan in Soulsville, will appear in the edited book, *The Handbook of Research on the Facilitation of Civic Engagement through Community Art*. Charlie was also awarded a seed research grant, funded by the FedEx

Institute of Technology, to participate in the a new research cluster on Drones, Robotics, and Autonomous Vehicles. His research will explore the potential impact of autonomous vehicles on transportation planning and on urban form in Memphis. This work will have a particular emphasis on community engagement, bringing University resources to bear in positioning Memphis to be proactive about the inevitable impact of this technology, so that it might be used to solve current urban ills and not exacerbate them. Charlie is also working with partners on campus and in the City of Memphis to develop a proposal in response to the US DOT's Smart City challenge. The proposal seeks to use emerging infrastructure to develop on-demand flex transit options to provide better and more efficient ways to connect low-income residents to entry level jobs.

Extending their scholarly activities, our faculty also served as peer reviewers for the following publications:

Journal of American Planning Association
Journal of Planning Education and Research
Journal of Urban Affairs
Growth and Change
Journal of Urbanism

Awards and Accolades

The students of the 2014 Project Planning Studio won the Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association's 2015 Outstanding Planning Award for a Student Project for their Bike-Friendly University: Technical Review. Memphis' Bikeway/Pedestrian Program Manager and CRP alumnus Kyle Wagenschutz served as an adjunct faculty for the studio, which focused on bicycling improvements in and around the university. Students prepared an application that won the university the bronze designation of Bicycle Friendly University.



Students accept Outstanding Planning Award



Students tour Chattanooga at TAPA conference

Kyle Wagenschutz was also honored in 2015 by the White House as part of the Champions for Change program, in the Innovators in Transportation category.

The 2015 AICP/APA Outstanding Planning Student Award was issued to **Cameron Cooper** in recognition of his academic performance, valuable contributions to delivery of planning education and skills as a graduate assistant. The City and Regional Planning Community Service Award went to **Katie-Buchl Morales** in recognition of her peer leadership, pursuit of sound planning as an intern, and contributions to the University of Memphis community through a renewed Planning Student Organization. The Planners Network Social Justice Award was given to **Scarlet Ponder** in recognition of her valiant efforts in pursuit of transportation equity through both academic research and community organizing.



Kyle Wagenschutz

What's Ahead?

Looking ahead, we will continue build on our strengths in community engagement and on our international connections as we pursue opportunities to grow our graduate program.

In January of 2016 we received official approval to accept undergraduate students into a new Urban Studies concentration. This will allow us to introduce more students to the discipline of city planning and provide a natural feeder program for our Master's degree. Our intention is to use this new Urban Studies concentration as an incubator for an eventual undergraduate major within the next few years.

We will also be exploring the potential for developing some dual master's degree pathways for students in the next year, taking advantage of some recent changes in University policy that will allow students to share more credit hours between two degrees. We envision dual degree paths that would appeal to students in Anthropology, Architecture, Public Health, Civil Engineering, Social Work, Public and Nonprofit Administration, and other disciplines.

Our Department will be hosting a Fulbright Fellow for the spring semester of 2016. **Simone Tulumello**, who holds a PhD in Urban Planning and an MArch from the University of Palermo, will be conducting comparative research in urban security and planning.

During Spring 2016, the Comprehensive Planning Studio will be assisting the residents, business owners, and institutional leaders of the Klondike/Smokey City Neighborhood to initiate and complete a comprehensive community plan to enhance the overall quality of life in this historic neighborhood. Research and outreach activities for this neighborhood planning effort will be carried out in collaboration with the Klondike Smokey City partnership led by the Klondike Smokey City Community Development Corporation. The most notable features of the Klondike/Smokey City Neighborhood are its rich heritage of historic, cultural, and community assets that have been identified by the local community as a solid base to build the planning process.

Keep in Touch

If you have a new address, or any news you would like included in a future Annual Report or newsletter, or posted on our website, please contact us at cityplanning@memphis.edu or by phone at 901.678.2161.

You can also follow us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/crp.memphis> or join our group on LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/groups/University-Memphis-City-Regional-Planning-3960776>

Support the Department

If you would like to make a contribution to support the efforts of the Department of City and Regional Planning, you can do so online at www.memphis.edu/giving (be sure to specify the City and Regional Planning Foundation Fund 20729) or mail your contribution, payable to The University of Memphis Foundation*, to:

City & Regional Planning
208 McCord Hall, University of Memphis
Memphis, TN 3815

*be sure to indicate in the Memo line that the donation is to Fund 20729, City and Regional Planning

Faculty and Staff

Charles A. Santo, Associate Professor and Chair
Reza Banai, Professor
Antonio Raciti, Assistant Professor
Susan L. Roakes, Associate Professor
Laura Saija, Visiting Assistant Professor
Jessica A. Buttermore, Administrative Associate
Vickie Peters, Business Officer, School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy