

Global Cities: Migration, Capital, and Transformations in Urban Space

Proposal: Cross-School, Bring Your Own Idea Program

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This cross-school program will bring together scholars from the humanities, social sciences, architecture and urban design to consider the relation between political economy and urban space, or to address a question geographer Neil Smith asked nearly two decades ago: “What is the geography of capitalism?” Or, put another way, what specific spatial patterns and processes were characteristic of, and at the same time, helped determine the social relations of work, housing, family, civic institutions and political struggles?¹ Scholars trained in history, political science, anthropology and architecture will discuss and debate the reciprocal relationships among social processes—the movements of people and capital; political and cultural transformations—and architectural forms.

Washington University houses one of the nation’s premier architecture schools, along with an array of leading scholars in urban history and urban politics in the United States, Europe and Africa. Our students demonstrate a strong interest in cities; architecture students often sign up for courses in urban history; history and political science majors take classes in urban design. Students and faculty—too often working in separate and isolated groups—have produced remarkable studies of St. Louis. Arts and Sciences’ students—in senior theses and research papers— track the history of immigrants, racial segregation, the Black Arts movement, labor organizations, and political machines in St. Louis. Simultaneously but often unknown to their Arts & Sciences colleagues, professors and students in the architecture school study the city’s housing, civic buildings and public spaces. In addition, faculty in both schools do significant research on cities around the globe, including Nairobi, Cairo, Berlin and New

¹ Neil Smith, *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008 [third edition]) 3.

York. With so much cutting-edge research on cities and with St. Louis as a living laboratory, Washington University has an opportunity to become a leading center of urban research and urban studies education.

Scholars in the Sam Fox School and in the departments of history, political science, and anthropology in Arts and Sciences have, over the past few years, worked together in classrooms, seminars and public workshops. Most of this work occurred on an individual level with two professors team-teaching a course, or inviting an outside scholar to give a campus talk. With this proposal, we aim to establish a cross-school, multi-disciplinary forum to support and expand these classroom programs while also providing the intellectual networks to inspire and sustain new teams of researchers on cities. Discussions among scholars across fields, disciplines, and schools will allow faculty to address and debate methods, theories and evidence in the study of cities.

Faculty will gather over cocktails to discuss this topic.

With funding from the provost's office, we would invite the following faculty:

Clarissa Hayward, associate professor, political science

Nancy Reynolds, associate professor, history

Tim Parsons, professor, history and director of International and Area Studies

Shanti Parikh, associate professor, anthropology and director of AFAS

Jonathan Fenderson, assistant professor, African and African American Studies

Bret Gustaffson, associate professor, anthropology

Sung ho Kim, associate professor, architecture

Christine Abbott, visiting assistant professor, architecture

Seng Kuan, assistant professor, architecture

Igor Marjanovic, associate professor, architecture