View from the Chair—Productive Change

This past year has been productive for the Department. The foremost improvement is that this fall we will have a new faculty member, Associate Professor Anne Dunning, to take over the leadership responsibilities for transportation planning. Marcy Smalley has served in that capacity for the past two years, and she has done a wonderful job. She will continue to teach for us.

Students in the Fall can look forward to seeing Prof. Dunning teaching the Introduction to Transportation Planning class and a new one entitled “Planning Intercity Transportation Systems.” As can be seen from her background Anne takes an inter-disciplinary approach to transportation, drawing on planning and engineering.

Currently, she is finishing a Federal Highway Administration research project on reducing energy usage and greenhouse-gas emissions through transportation planning at the megaregion scale. She is starting a research project on the impacts of trucks on state and local roads and bridges for the South Carolina Department of Transportation.

Transportation Professor Hired!

Anne E. Dunning will start as our new transportation professor in the Fall 2011 semester. She comes to us from her time as Associate Professor at Clemson University. Prior to Clemson she got her Ph.D. in Civil Engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology where she also received her Master’s degrees in Civil Engineering and City and Regional Planning. Before Clemson, she was Transportation Scholar at Glacier National Park in Montana.

The new planning lab has proven to be a significant addition to student life and a nice spot for our reception after graduation this year.

During this past spring, faculty members in the School passed new bylaws. The Department of Urban Planning is now on an equal footing with the other departments in numerous areas of governance. Also, budget planning will be a more open process in which new procurements will be done in a manner similar to preparing a city’s capital improvements program. There was a slight increase in enrollment this past year, and our first-year students have proven themselves to be worthy of past entering classes.

This fall semester, Professor Kirk McClure will be on sabbatical in Washington, DC, doing research with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. It is a well deserved opportunity for him.

Planner Professor Bonnie Johnson was in charge of creating this new format to the Jayhawk Planner, and I want to thank her for doing a great job.

- Jim Mayo, Chair

Ready to Walk Down the Hill

Congratulations Class of 2011!

The Sorting Hat Has Spoken:

At the request of the Jayhawk Planner, Professor Dunning took the Hogwarts’ quiz & was sorted into Ravenclaw first, then Gryffindor.

Intelligent, creative, & courageous!

Spotlight on Faculty Publications:

KU Sustainability Plan

In April of 2010 Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little announced that KU would be putting together a sustainability plan for campus. The Center for Sustainability headed up the effort (led by Jeff Severin, 2011 MUP graduate) and urban planning classes jumped in to help.

Fall 2010 four urban planning classes worked on the sustainability plan. Introduction to Land Use Planning students created sustainable land use plans for West Campus while the Principles of Environmental Planning class researched all sorts of strategies to help KU achieve its sustainability goals. The Introduction to Transportation students focused on transportation options (of course!) while the Professional Practice class designed and hosted visioning sessions with campus and community members to gain their input. All of the student work was displayed at an open house at the Kansas Union December 9th.

The draft plan was unveiled on Earth Day—a year after the Chancellor’s announcement. In the Spring of 2011, the Environmental Planning Techniques class staffed the different working groups for the plan. Students made presentations about what went into the plan and then the Center for Sustainability presented the draft to the Chancellor.

The final version is taking shape and people all across campus pulled together to make it happen.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration Underway

Today we hear how community change requires crossing factions and creating new collaborations. The School of Architecture, Design and Planning is following suit. For the first time its three departments are undertaking a major interdisciplinary collaboration. The initiative, Creating Sustainable Communities, is a three year project of the Mid-America Regional Council to promote sustainability in the Kansas City metropolitan area. Urban planning classes will be coordinated and sequenced with classes in 3-D design, graphic design and communications. Projects are also being coordinated with interdisciplinary teams from Kansas State University and the University of Missouri – Kansas City. One major objective is to design multiple transit corridors to promote sustainability through factors such as activity centers, energy efficient structures, access to jobs, storm water management, public health, landscape design, social equity, and public involvement and education.

Students Recommend Multimodal Strategies for K – 7 Corridor

The Kansas Department of Transportation asked the Urban Planning department to conduct a multimodal assessment of a proposed six lane freeway along the 20 mile long K-7 corridor. Students in the Transportation Planning Implementation class examined best practices, conducted an assessment, and reviewed options with a corridor advisory board.

The team’s recommendations included the concentration of land use, preservation of right-of-way for multimodal travel, promotion of transit, development of consistent bike and pedestrian nomenclature with plan and map, and the installation of bike parking.
Out and About

Professor McClure’s Big Adventure!

This fall, Professor McClure will go on sabbatical but it won’t be the rest and relaxation type. He will be in Washington, D.C. conducting research as part of HUD’s first ever sabbatical-in-residence program. He’ll have access to valuable data to extend his research on affordable housing. —Go Get ‘em Kirk!

Looking Back

In Memory of John K. Nicholson

John Kennedy Nicholson died at the age of 62 on July 9, 2010. He was the first ever graduate of KU’s Master of Urban Planning program (1975).

John grew up in Lawrence, but a trip to Europe with his parents at the age of 13 set him on his path to learning “how cities work.” While at KU he met his wife Jane. A move to Utah led to his 30 year career as Associate Professor in the department of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning at Utah State University. He served for many years on the City of Logan’s Historic Preservation Commission and Downtown Alliance. He worked on Salt Lake City’s Olympic bid and regularly took students on study trips to Paris and Berlin. Over the years, John developed a love of German culture and was a guest professor in Bernburg, Germany. He was always active skiing, cycling, or hiking. He is survived by his wife, Jane, and sons, Patrick and Paul.

Remembering Moses Nkhoma

The Urban Planning family was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Moses Nkhoma (MUP 2008) in March. Moses was a Fulbright student from Zambia, who had returned home to teach planning at the Copperbelt University in Kitwe.

During his time at KU, Moses embraced every opportunity to learn about U.S. planning. His advisor, Stacey White, recalls that he became immediately enamored of American football, and used KU football games as an opportunity to study ways to plan for better recycling opportunities at sporting events. He also worked as an intern at the Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture, where he wrote and contributed to that organization’s mission to catalyze the production and consumption of locally grown foods.

Moses and his wife Jessie made many friends in Lawrence. He had planned to return to KU to begin his Ph.D. studies in Geography. We will miss him greatly, and are thankful for the opportunity to have known this kind, talented man.
As part of the Galloway Lecture Series, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk presented a lecture entitled “Designing for Community” on September 9, 2010. Earlier in the day she had lunch with students where she offered her thoughts on the future of New Urbanism and planning. Plater-Zyberk of Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company is Dean of the University of Miami’s School of Architecture and is a founder of the Congress for the New Urbanism.

After Plater-Zyberk, the next speaker in the Series was Dan Immergluck, Associate Professor of City and Regional Planning at the Georgia Institute of Technology. He spoke on February 24, 2011 and explained the housing crisis and the impact of foreclosures on urban development.

Lars Spuybroek, internationally known architectural designer, is a professor of architectural design at the Georgia Institute of Technology. He will speak at 7 p.m. Sept. 8, at the Lawrence Arts Center (940 New Hampshire).

“As designers we have to do two, seemingly opposite, things,” said Spuybroek. “One is to find our way back to beauty, the other is to start conceptualizing our new, digital tools. I think the best is to combine these into one effort.”

In May 2011, Prof. donna luckey retired. Here she is getting her retirement gift—a prairie fire photo. The Jayhawk Planner will miss her and her trailblazing ways!