

January 21, 2025

Noon - 1:20pm

In person: GLD 208J

<https://washington.zoom.us/j/96471410721>

Faculty Present

1. Christine Bae
2. Branden Born
3. Rachel Berney
4. Christopher Campbell
5. Manish Chalana - Zoom
6. Karen Chen
7. Sofia Dermisi
8. Keith Harris
9. Helen Pineo - Zoom
10. Mark Purcell
11. Qing Shen - Zoom
12. Dylan Stevenson
13. Jan Whittington  
Andy Danneberg

Staff Present

1. Edith Olguin
2. Diana Siembor

**Approval of Minutes:**

Motion to approve minutes from January 7, 2025: **Approved**

**Announcements:**

- Latin America Urbanism lectures series 2 of 4 on Wednesday Jan 22, 2025 at ARC160 by Visiting Scholar Izabele Colusso.

**Reminder in working with Academic Student Employees (TA and RA positions):**

- Recent issues include miscategorized and underpaid students due to past practices.
- Emphasis on adhering to the Union contract for graduate students.
- Clarifications provided:
- TAs (Teaching Assistants) and RAs (Research Assistants) have distinct roles and contracts that must not be overlapped.
- TAs are limited to 220 hours per quarter (approximately 20 hours/week). Any unused hours cannot be shifted to other tasks like research.
- RA positions must be funded at 0.5 FTE with full benefits ("full meal deal").
- Hourly rates for administrative tasks and research differ:
  - Administrative tasks are generally paid \$20-\$30/hour.
  - Research activities, if paid hourly, cost closer to \$40-\$50/hour due to additional overhead for benefits.
- Students cannot be volunteered for unfunded work without direct benefits (e.g., authorship or credit).
- Avoid conflicts of interest in hiring and managing students.
- Transparency is key when offering opportunities, especially for unpaid work.

## Discussion and vote on taking on the PhD degree:

- The interdisciplinary PhD program, currently managed by the Graduate School, is proposed to transition to the Department of Urban Design and Planning by Summer 2025.
- This transition has been driven by the Graduate School's decision to divest direct administrative responsibility for such programs. Similar transitions have occurred in other departments.
- Historically, the program has benefited from financial support, including five RA fellowships strategically allocated to foster cross-departmental collaboration.
- The department would need to double its financial commitment (from approximately \$200,000 annually) to fully fund the program post-transition.
- Financial sustainability may be supported by launching an undergraduate degree program in Urban Studies, which could generate additional revenue.
- Governance of the program will shift to the department.
- Faculty Concerns:
  - There was discussion over whether to adopt the existing bylaws and financial scenarios proposed by the program's steering committee or to revise them post-transition.
  - Some faculty members felt the department should retain flexibility to redesign the program while honoring its interdisciplinary roots.
- A motion was presented: The Interdisciplinary PhD program/degree will move from the Graduate School to the Department of Urban Design and Planning effective summer 2025.
- A faculty member called for discussion.
- A faculty member proposed table the motion to a later meeting. Called for a vote to all in favor of table the motion by raising hand. There was no call for a vote for those who opposed or abstained. Due to time constraints the vote was not completed.

Adjourned 1:27pm