New Department Head Comes to Aggieland

Our new department head, Forster Ndubisi (pronounced en-due-bee-see), arrived on campus in August. Forster graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in Zoology (Hons.) with a minor in Ecology. He also holds a master of landscape architecture degree and a doctorate in regional planning. Prior to accepting the position, he served as the founding director of the Interdisciplinary Design Institute and professor of landscape architecture and city planning at Washington State University in Spokane, positions held since April 1997. The design institute was established to facilitate interdisciplinary design education through a provocative and unique collaboration that allows faculty and students in architecture, interior design, construction management, and landscape architecture to work and learn within a team-oriented setting in an urban environment.

Prior to April 1997, Forster was a faculty member at the University of Georgia for 10 years. There he held a joint appointment as a tenured associate professor of landscape architecture with the School of Environmental Design and as a physical planning consultant with the Institute of Community and Area Development (ICAD). Through ICAD, he conducted applied research and consulted with public and non-profit entities across Georgia on urban design, growth management, and land use planning. His teaching, research, and practice has focused on ecological design and planning, growth management, community design, and group processes. He has published several books, most recently, “Ecological Planning: A Historical and Comparative Account.”

The search committee feels that the department’s year-long international search for a department head has brought us an outstanding teacher, scholar, and administrator.

New Faculty Join Department

Dawn Jourdan obtained her B.S. in urban affairs and theatre arts at Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. Dawn obtained a joint degree in law and urban planning from the University of Kansas. Upon receiving her degree, she headed to Chicago to work for the local government division of Holland & Knight LLP. Later, Dawn enrolled in Florida State University where she received a doctorate in urban and regional planning.

Dawn’s dissertation, funded by an Early Dissertation Research Grant from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, is entitled “Grieving for a Lost Home?: A Case Study of How Participation in an Intergenerational Planning Process Lessened the Pre-Relocation Grief Effects Experienced by the Youth and Adult Residents of the McDaniel Glenn Public Housing Community in Atlanta.” This research represents the first of many endeavors to understand the effects of youth participation in the planning process. Because of her diverse academic and professional background, Dawn will teach courses in the planning and land development programs, including Planning Law and Legislation, Land Development Law, and Planning History and Theory.

Chanam Lee is the first faculty member hired by the department under President Gate’s faculty reinvestment plan. This plan is designed to add new faculty positions in key teaching and research areas. Chanam, who received her master of landscape architecture degree from A&M in 1999, has recently received her doctorate in urban and regional planning from the University of Washington in Seattle. Her dissertation, entitled “Activity-Friendly Communities: Physical Environmental Determinants of Walking and Biking, and Their Policy Implications for Land Use and Urban Development”, relates directly to current concerns about creating healthy communities, in the broadest sense of that term. Chanam has been interested in health and design since her master’s studies, when she worked with Chang-Shan Huang on a health-oriented neighborhood development for Jonestown, Texas. Chanam is both a scholar and a designer, and will be participating in research for the Center for Health Systems and Design. She will teach both undergraduate and graduate courses, including those in beginning design, graduate design, urban planning, and a specialty course in design and planning for active living.
Class News

What We Did in Italy Fall 2003: Students Work on Local Tourism Project

It is estimated that this little valley has been occupied and farmed since about 2000 B.C. In the surrounding mountains there are ruins of temples and structures that date back to the Etruscan civilization, some remnants of old Roman roads, and early Christian churches and settlements. Many of the old Roman and Renaissance structures, such as weirs, bridges and bulkheads, still exist. Many of the canals were built above ground to intercept and transport runoff from the surrounding mountains down the valley to the main canal system in the Val de Chiana and beyond. The richness of this history and the fact that there is also a partially-developed trail system, which follows the canals, linking the historic sites, makes this a desirable place for tourism.

Students first worked with local professionals and graduate students from the University of Florence to assess the resources of the two valleys. In the second step, the students did an assessment of the tourism support facilities of the two valleys, that is, transportation, hotels, restaurants, entertainment, etc. To wrap up the semester, each student took an existing site and developed a program and a design proposal for a tourist support facility or destination attraction that would compliment and utilize the existing facilities in the valley. This project was presented to the mayor and interested citizens of Castiglion Fiorentino, who will use it in future regional planning.

By Harlow Landphair

Thirteen fifth year landscape architecture students spent the fall semester in Castiglion Fiorentino, Italy at the Italart Study Center. Castiglion Fiorentino is a small hill town located an hour and 15 minutes south of Florence. The Center is an old convent/girls school adjacent to the old cathedral and just inside the medieval wall of the town. Because of easy access to the railroad station, all of Europe can be accessed from Castiglion Fiorentino. The Italart class schedule allows students to spend three intensive days in class, while one day is reserved for organized field trips. Fridays are reserved for independent travel.

The main studio project for the semester was a tourism development assessment of the two valleys of the Castiglion Fiorentino region, the Val de Chiana (which you may recognize for its Chianti wines) and the Val de Chio. The Val de Chiana is drained by a major canal system that dates back to Roman times, when they reversed the flow of the main river so that it flowed into the Arno River instead of the Tiber. Later Florence, following plans and maps developed by Leonardo de Vinci, further improved the canals to drain malarial swamps and developed a basic system to transport grain and other goods from the lower valley to Florence. In the late 1920s and 1930s, the Nazi party of Italy enlarged some of the main canals. This system was largely abandoned after World War II and today is primarily used for drainage and flood control.

A&M landscape students and faculty in Italy: (From the left) Eric Grossman, Aileen Dryden, Robert Deegan, Harlow Landphair, Jonathan Ragsdale, Brian Halsell, Jeanette Morgan, Megan Holder, John Fielder, Travis Taylor (front), Cassie King (middle), Kurt Brandt, and Joseph Bonnot.
In April, 2003 students from urban planning, landscape architecture, and recreation parks and tourism science were awarded an American Planning Association Award, Honorable Mention, for their work on the Coastal Enhancement Master Plan Project for the City of Palacios. Directed by Associate Professor Michael Neuman, AICP, with participation from Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture Jody Naderi and other faculty, this collaborative studio prepared an urban design plan and a wetland reuse plan for the city. In this project, students from Mainland China, India, Korea, and throughout the United States participated in small town grassroots democracy and walked away with an experience and an education that is not available in the classroom.

There was an extraordinarily high level of participation in the planning process, with 29 students and faculty spending a total of 140 days in Palacios, a town of 5,000 residents three hours away from campus. The quality of the plans that resulted benefited from this level of involvement.

This project entailed the mapping of existing and projected conditions, and the preparation of strategic plans and designs for the improvement of Palacios and its coastline. The plans and designs were prepared collaboratively with the citizens of Palacios, the Beautification and Revitalization Committee, relevant city and county agencies, the city council, and other interested parties. The city identified the attraction of birders as one of its goals. To meet this goal, the landscape architecture students focused upon reclamation of a sewer treatment plant wetland for use as a bird sanctuary.

Now that the plans and designs have been completed, the city of Palacios, along with its partners, is committed to implementing them. The ultimate goal of the project is to make Palacios a travel destination for birders and nature lovers through the conservation, restoration, enhancement, and protection of the city’s coastal resources.

In May, faculty from the department participated in the 2004 Beijing International Symposium on Healthy Initiatives in China. This symposium was organized by Chang-Shan Huang in conjunction with Tsinghua University in Beijing. The symposium has been in planning for two years and was first scheduled for 2003, but the SARS epidemic caused it to be postponed. During the two day symposium, professors from Texas A&M and Tsinghua Universities presented lectures to a distinguished audience made up of city government officials, urban planners, developers, professors of architecture, architects and students from throughout China. Presentations by LAUP faculty included:

- An Evidence-based Design Approach to Healthy Communities: Recent Community Design Projects in USA and China (by Chang-Shan Huang)
- Design of Walking Environments for Spiritual Renewal (by Jody Naderi)
- Sustainable Decision Process Toward Healthy Communities (by George Rogers)
- Is the Development of Healthy Communities Profitable? (by Atef Sharkawy)
- History and Concepts of Healthy City/Healthy Community Movement in North America and Europe (by Don Sweeney)
- Research on Health Impact of Natural Environment: From Healing Gardens to Healthy Communities (by Roger Ulrich)

As a result of the symposium, an agreement for future collaboration was made between the College of Architecture, A&M and the School of Architecture, Tsinghua University.
## Department Faculty (Tenured and Tenure-Track)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Interests/Research Focus</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Sherry Bame</td>
<td>PLAN</td>
<td>University of Michigan in 1969, Michigan in 1985, Boston University in 1972, University of Michigan in 1969.</td>
<td>has a special interest in health systems planning and policy, cost and quality of healthcare, survey research methods, and environmental health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Samuel Brody</td>
<td>PLAN</td>
<td>University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill in 2001, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor in 1996, Graduate Diploma from the University of Adelaide, Australia in 1995, Bowdoin College in 1992.</td>
<td>areas of interests are environmental planning, coastal sustainability, ecosystem management, and geographic information systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Chang-Shan Huang</td>
<td>LAND</td>
<td>American Institute of Certified Planners and a registered landscape architect in the State of Texas.</td>
<td>Chang-Shan is the B.L.A. program coordinator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Byoung-Suk Kweon</td>
<td>LAND</td>
<td>University of Seoul (B.S.); Cornell University (M.L.A.); University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Ph.D.).</td>
<td>has degrees in horticulture, landscape architecture from The City College of New York and Cornell University, and in natural resources and environmental science from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Ming-Han Li</td>
<td>LAND</td>
<td>National Taiwan University, University of Texas at Austin, Texas A&amp;M, University of California at Berkeley.</td>
<td>holds a B.S. in agricultural engineering, M.S. in civil engineering, and Ph.D. in landscape architecture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Michael Lindell</td>
<td>PLAN</td>
<td>City College of New York, University of Colorado in 1975 and 1969.</td>
<td>is interested in environmental hazards, emergency management, and research methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Jody Rosenblatt</td>
<td>LAND</td>
<td>Harvard University.</td>
<td>graduated from Harvard with an M.L.A. degree. Her research and teaching interests focus on the creation of places of renewal in the landscape of the everyday. Her current research focuses on measuring pedestrian health and safety outcomes in simulated transportation corridors of urban communities in Texas. She is a registered landscape architect in Florida.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Michael Neuman</td>
<td>PLAN</td>
<td>University of California at Berkeley in 1996, University of Pennsylvania in 1986 and 1977.</td>
<td>includes planning theory and history, infrastructure, sustainable urbanism, and the integration of design, planning, and governance for sustainability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Christopher D. Ellis</td>
<td>LAND</td>
<td>University of Pretoria in South Africa.</td>
<td>holds a B.S. in Environmental Design, an MLA and a Ph.D. Dr. Ellis is the Region 3 representative for the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture. Dr. Ellis' interests include landscape architecture, landscape planning, landscape ecology, spatial modeling and analysis, and applications of information technology to planning and design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Harlow Landphair</td>
<td>LAND</td>
<td>Texas Transportation Institute, Environmental Management Program.</td>
<td>holds a Joint appointment as a research scientist with the Texas Transportation Institute, Environmental Management Program. His research interest are in stormwater quality, soil erosion control and landscape impacts on traffic and pedestrian safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Michael Murphy</td>
<td>LAND</td>
<td>University of Pretoria in South Africa.</td>
<td>holds a Ph.D. from the University of Pretoria in South Africa. His master's degree is from the University of California at Berkeley.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Walter Peacock</td>
<td>PLAN</td>
<td>Transportation Research Board Committee on Landscape and Environmental Design.</td>
<td>is interested in urban planning, sustainable community development, natural hazard, hazard mitigation, and long-term recovery quantitative methods. He is the director of Hazard Reduction and Recovery Center.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Department Faculty (Tenured and Tenure-Track)
Dr. Jon Rodiek has been a faculty member at Texas A&M for 15 years. Dr. Rodiek is the coordinator of the MLA program and the editor-in-chief of “Landscape and Urban Planning.” Dr. Rodiek’s areas of interest are in wildlife habitat planning, planting design, landscape resource management and site planning. Jon is the M.A. program coordinator.

Dr. Atef Sharkawy specializes in land and real estate development, development project feasibility and design, and international real estate. Atef received his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin in 1969, and a M.S. from the University of Oregon in 1963, and a B.S. from Cairo University in 1963. Atef is the MSLD Program Coordinator.

Dr. Andrew Seidel’s areas of interests include environmental design, planning methods and techniques, computer applications and the relationship between public policy and physical design. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the “Journal of Architectural and Planning Research.” Andrew received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in 1980, a M.C.P. from Harvard University in 1974, a Cert Arch. from the Royal Danish Academy in 1971, and a B.Arch. from the Pratt Institute in 1972.

Dr. Jim Varni’s areas of expertise are measurement instrument development, conceptual models and cognitive-behavior therapy interventions in pediatric health conditions. He also conducts research and evaluation projects into the healing environment of children’s hospitals, focusing on the effect of the built environment on child, parent, and staff outcomes as a basis for evidence-based architectural design for pediatric and healthcare facilities.

Dr. George Rogers is interested in the areas of sustainability, risk analysis and planning, technology and society, and quantitative methods. George received his Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh in 1983, his M.A. from the University of Waterloo in 1976, and a B.S. from Oregon State University in 1975. George is the urban and regional science program coordinator.

Dr. Donald Sweeney’s professional interests involve all aspects of health systems policy, planning management. His current interests include participation in the international health communities movement. Don received his D.E.D., M.Arch. and B.A. from Texas A&M in 1972, 1968 and 1967, respectively. Don is the interim M.U.P. program coordinator.

Dr. Roger Ulrich’s interests concern applications of environment-behavior and evidence-based design knowledge to healthcare buildings, landscape architecture and urban design. His research has addressed the effects of people’s experiences with built and natural environments on psychological well-being, stress and health outcomes.

Dr. Dennis Wenger is interested in the areas of sociology, natural and technological disaster research, hazards mitigation, urban ecology, collective behavior and mass communication, and disaster and emergency planning. Dennis received his Ph.D., M.A. and B.S. from Ohio State University in 1970, 1967, and 1965, respectively.

Dr. Professor Tom Woodfin graduated from Harvard with an MLA degree. Professor Woodfin’s areas of interest in landscape architecture are geographical information systems, historical cartography, and industrial development sustainability.
Student Awards and Scholarships Announced

In April, the department held its annual awards banquet, with more than 100 people attending. Thirteen of our students were recognized for their scholarship and service. In addition, interim department head, Walter Peacock, announced that George Seagraves had established a new scholarship fund in honor of Associate Professor Michael Murphy. He also announced that the department had established an award in honor of David Pugh’s service to the department and to the planning profession. Christopher T. Butler, Class of 2004, was the inaugural recipient of the David L. Pugh Outstanding M.U.P. Student Award.

Congratulations to all of our 2004-2005 scholarship recipients:

**Gene Schrickel Jr. ’50 Endowed Scholarship in Landscape Architecture**
Margarita Padilla-Ruiz  
Mahua Majumdar  
Corey Mason

**Samuel E. Garrett Jr. Endowed Memorial Scholarship**
Elizabeth Larkin

**Robert F. & Florence H. White Endowed Scholarship in Landscape Architecture**
Brian Chambers

**ASLA Texas Chapter Maurice Philips Scholarship**
Corey Seamer

**Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association Scholarship**
Kevin Gifford

**Antonio F. Sarabando Jr. “Spirit of Place Award”**
Megan Holder

**David Pugh Planning and Land Use Law Scholarship**
Sara Thornton

**R. Joseph Reeves Endowed Memorial Scholarship**
Paula Lorente

We also want to recognize and thank those who helped make this banquet possible through their donations:

Jim Gray  
Rialto Studio, Inc.  
San Antonio, TX

Bill Sweitzer  
Sweitzer & Associates  
Houston, TX

George Seagraves  
Alexandria, VA

An anonymous donor

The Department Needs Your Help to Continue Our Legacy

Meeting the financial needs of our students continues to be one of our greatest challenges. Faculty work to develop outside funding for students and programs through grants and research funding. But we also need the support of our former students, so that we can continue to fund student awards, extended student programs, scholarships, and academic enhancements, such as visiting lectures. Please take time to give what you can. Your help is vital to all of our efforts.

Enclosed is my gift of

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Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning  
Texas A&M University  
College Station, TX 77843-3137

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Thank You for Your Continued Support!
Class News

Congratulations to Melody Gray

In January, Melody Gray, Class of 2004 in landscape architecture, participated in a five-day interview for a graduate merit fellowship offered by the University of Delaware in cooperation with Longwood Gardens for a Master’s Degree in Public Horticulture Administration. Twelve people were interviewed from across the United States as well as from Canada. The interview process was intense, involving a one-hour writing exercise, a five-minute oral presentation showcasing their interests, a case study in which they determined how to handle critical administrative issues, and a 30-minute interview with the entire selection committee.

Melody received word a week later that the selection committee had voted unanimously to offer her one of five fellowships. The program for which the scholarship is offered includes two years of study at the University of Delaware and an office at Longwood Gardens. This amazing opportunity also includes a museum internship at Longwood Gardens that began in July, a tropical internship next winter and a botanic garden internship the following summer. Her fellowship also allows her to do the design thesis of her choice. Her options within the program seem limitless. We wish Melody well as she begins her master’s work.

BLA Students Win Design Competition

In Spring 2004, the LAND 321 studio participated in a San Antonio Site Redevelopment Design Competition primarily sponsored by HDR, Inc. Coordinated by Jeff Labenz-Hough of HDR, Inc. and course instructors, Nancy Volkman and Ming-Han Li, the competition solicited ideas that will provide integrated land use plans for a 500 acre San Antonio site. The intent of the competition was to gather innovative and practical alternatives for the redevelopment of this site. The students were required to emphasize the economic, social, cultural and environmental development of the south side of San Antonio.

Each student conducted an intensive, critical analysis of the site, as it relates to other city initiatives. From this, students developed specific programs that best supported their concepts about redevelopment and revitalization of the site. The entries were evaluated based upon innovation, suitability to the established goals of the client and sound land-use planning practice. Five awards were given to the following winners:

First place: Margarita Padilla-Ruiz
Second place: Jonathan Dunbar (tie) Lisa Smith
Fourth place: Amanda Stewart
Fifth place: Amrit Singh

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Second place: Lisa Smith
Fourth place: Amanda Stewart
Fifth place: Amrit Singh

Master Plan by First Place Winner, Margarita Padilla-Ruiz included commercial, residential, institutional and recreational areas arranged to preserve open space

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Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-3137

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Telephone (day): (evening):
Howdy!!

I am pleased to serve as the new head of landscape architecture and urban planning at Texas A&M University. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve in a well known department within a major research university. I am personally motivated to lead the department toward a path of excellence in the 21st century, especially in the face of the rapid changes in the design and planning disciplines.

My vision for the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning is to nurture and strengthen a culture of excellence in teaching, research, and service. The underlying value is “excellence,” that is, aggressively striving for quality in whatever we do as a department. Mediocrity is unacceptable. Competency is not enough. The good news is that the foundation for excellence already exists in the five programs represented within the department: We have a stellar faculty, excellent students, supportive former students and programs that are highly regarded nationally and internationally.

I view my position as the head as being to clearly articulate the interplay of the forces of change and lead the department toward a path of excellence in the 21st century. I intend to strengthen the quality of each of the degree programs and reinforce connections among the disciplines located within the department. I will also work collaboratively with constituents internal and external to the university, especially our former students, to advance the mission of the department and the college.

This is a very exciting time to be at Texas A&M University. I invite you to join me in articulating this vision and these strategic directions for the department, and aggressively striving for excellence in whatever we do.

Sincerely,
Forster Ndubisi

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