The Global Metropolitan Studies (GMS) program at UC Berkeley was established to address major transformations in cities around the world. Urbanization brings a range of new physical and political configurations and challenges—ecological crises, processes of democratization and de-democratization, urban marginality, and emergent strategies of recognition and resistance. The expansion of digital data and tools now provides new opportunities for study of transportation, housing, infrastructure, environment, and other critical aspects of urban form and process. GMS is a community of scholars across disciplines at Berkeley that investigates these challenges and politics of the new urban century. GMS trains young researchers to collaborate with one another to study the urban condition through its administered Designated Emphasis (a PhD minor to support scholarship on urban systems). It also facilitates interdisciplinary exchange on these topics by organizing a lecture series on international urban themes in partnership with multiple departments across campus, and hosting small workshops and sponsoring student groups. Finally, GMS works to catalyze interdisciplinary research initiatives by organizing interdisciplinary faculty workshops focused on specific external funding programs.

2019–20 GMS Co-Directors:
G. Mathias Kondolf, Professor of Landscape Architecture & Environmental Planning
Alison Post, Associate Professor of Political Science
New Core Faculty

The GMS program is thrilled to welcome two new core faculty members, Desiree Fields and Brandi Summers. They will participate in GMS’ research initiatives and the core classes in the GMS Designated Emphasis.

Dr. Fields joins UC Berkeley from the Geography Department at the University of Sheffield. Fields studies housing as a vector of urban inequality and terrain of grassroots political contestation. Her current work explores how the shift to a finance-oriented political economy and the growing reach of digital platforms reshape urban housing markets, and resulting struggles for justice.

Dr. Summers joins UC Berkeley from the Department of African American Studies at the Virginia Commonwealth University. Her research, such as her book *Black in Place: The Spatial Aesthetics of Race in a Post-Chocolate City*, interrogates identity, aesthetics, and memory, and how planning and urban design practices are implicated in the spatialization of race and racism.

Interdisciplinary Research Initiatives

During the 2019-2020 academic year, Co-Directors Kondolf and Post further developed a new form of programming: workshops intended to spearhead interdisciplinary research initiatives on urban themes. In the 2018 - 2019 academic year, GMS organized 5 workshops to catalyze applications to major research grant programs requiring interdisciplinary collaboration. These workshops were developed in collaboration with the Berkeley Infrastructure Initiative. Workshops focused on three specific NSF programs: 1) Humans, Disasters and Built Environment; 2) Smart and Connected Communities; and 3) Dynamics of Integrated Socio-Environmental Systems.

Initial sessions allowed researchers from different parts of campus to quickly learn about potential collaborators from other fields. Following these workshops, GMS faculty submitted proposals during Fall 2019 to the Smart and Connected Communities Program and the Dynamics of Integrated Socio-Environmental Systems program, the latter in partnership with the Berkeley Water Center.

We look forward to reporting back on the results of these funding competitions after the selection processes have been concluded.
Lecture Series and Thematic Workshops

GMS organized a series of lectures and workshops this year in collaboration with a wide variety of academic units on campus. Our aim was to encourage research communities that might not normally showcase scholarship on international urban studies to do so, and to encourage our faculty and graduate students to attend events in departments or research centers they might not usually visit.

Lecture series:

- Nov 14, 2019: Field Experimental Evidence on Smart City Technology and Voter Registration — Melissa Sands | UC Merced (Co-sponsored by Political Science)
- April 16, 2020: Black in Place: The Spatial Aesthetics of Race in a Post-Chocolate City — Brandi Summers | UC Berkeley (Co-sponsored by City & Regional Planning and ARCUS)

The following talks were cancelled due to the campus closure and will be rescheduled:

- What Civil Engineers and Planners Should Know About Building Infrastructure in the Real World: Lessons from Rwanda — Patricie Uwase | Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Infrastructure, Rwanda (Co-sponsored by the Center for African Studies and Institute for Transportation Studies)
- Modeling Access and Equity in the Design of School Districts and Related Transportation Decisions — Karen Smilowitz | Northwestern (Co-sponsored by Civil Engineering and the Institute for Transportation Studies)

We listed here the events where we provided significant monetary or organizational support. We also co-sponsored numerous other events on campus.

Melissa Sands’ talk in Barrows Hall, November 14, 2019

Student Group Activities

GMS sponsored one student group this year, the Latin American Cities working group. Co-led by GMS DE students Laura Belik (Architecture), Priscila Coli (City & Regional Planning), Giselle Mendonça Abreu (City & Regional Planning), and Francisco Trejo Morales (Anthropology), this group organized 3 research talks over the course of the academic year. More information about the group can be found at https://sites.google.com/berkeley.edu/latin-american-cities.
Designated Emphasis

There are currently **45 students** in the GMS Designated Emphasis, from the following departments: Anthropology; Architecture; City & Regional Planning; Civil & Environmental Engineering; Computer Science; Education; Environmental Science, Policy, and Management; Geography; Landscape Architecture & Environmental Planning; Political Science; Social Welfare; and Sociology.

We are particularly pleased to have welcomed the following **new students** into the DE this year:

- **Irene Farah Rivadeneyra**
  - City & Regional Planning
  - **Food systems; political economy; urban analytics; health inequities; Latin America**

- **Pol Fité Matamoros**
  - Landscape Architecture
  - **Critical urban theory; geographical political economy; industrial restructuring; authoritarian regimes**

- **Justin Greene**
  - Anthropology
  - **Noise; poetry and poetics; urban infrastructure; affect; discourses of health and hygiene; Brazil**

- **Catherine Park**
  - Education
  - **Global education; cultural politics of education; migration; displacement; urbanization; urban ethnography; China; East Asia**

- **Ángel Ross**
  - Sociology
  - **Suburban and exurban poverty; housing; renters; local governance; policing**

- **Valentin Sierra**
  - Social Welfare
  - **Native American youth; urban Indian health; critical suicide studies; land, space, place, and race; decolonial research methods**

- **Liubing Xie**
  - City & Regional Planning
  - **Comparative urban studies & history; urban ethnography; China; peripheral urbanization; urban governance; India**

During the 2019–2020 academic year, GMS offered its two core classes. **GMS 200**, the gateway class, was taught by Professors Alison Post (GMS/Political Science) and Joan Walker (GMS/Civil Engineering) during the Spring semester to a group of 10 doctoral students from a variety of fields (Anthropology, City & Regional Planning, Civil Engineering, Education, ERG, ESPM, and Sociology). **GMS 201**, the dissertation writing seminar, was taught by Professor You-tien Hsing (Geography).
Funding Awards

GMS was pleased to award funding for research and conference travel to students enrolled in the DE.

This year, the winners of 2020 research awards were:

- Gustavo Capela (Anthropology)  
  *Informal organizing: An ethnographic inquiry into the construction of Eko Atlantic City in Lagos, Nigeria*

- Irene Farah Rivadeneyra (City & Regional Planning)  
  *The Impacts of the Food Environment in Mexico*

- Pol Fité Matamoros (Landscape Architecture & Environmental Planning)  
  *Landscapes of Industrialization: The “Long 1970s” under the Spanish Authoritarian Regime*

- Catherine Park (Education)  
  *(Re)making the global: Education in global(izing) cities of China*

- Tawit Boom Sangveraphunsiri (Civil & Environmental Engineering)  
  *Strategies for informal, low-cost, flexible feeder service without high-tech assistance*

- Ettore Santi (Architecture)  
  *Designing the Land Revolution: The Corporate Reinvention of China’s Rural Environment*

- Liubing Xie (City & Regional Planning)  
  *Beyond Homeownership: Renting in the Urban Peripheries in China and India*

Although many academic conferences were cancelled due to Coronavirus, GMS also awarded grants to defray the cost of conference travel expenses to the following students:

- Priscila Coli (City & Regional Planning)
- Bridget Martin (Geography)
- Lana Salman (City & Regional Planning)
- Manuel Santana (City & Regional Planning)

Accomplishments by DE Students

During the 2019–20 academic year, students from the DE in Global Metropolitan Studies received prestigious fellowships from outside institutions and published articles in peer-reviewed journals, showcasing a diversity of exciting research interests. We congratulate them on their accomplishments!

Students and respective fellowships included:

- Celina Balderas Guzman (Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning): National Science Foundation Graduate Research Internship Program.
- Priscila Coli (City & Regional Planning): American Planning Association Foundation Scholarship.
- Giuseppina Forte (Architecture): Global Urban Humanities Fellow and Publication Grant.
- Kalyanaraman Shankari (Computer Science): Director’s Fellowship at the NREL.
Students and respective peer-reviewed articles included:

- Savannah Cox (City & Regional Planning):
  


- Shakirah Esmail (City & Regional Planning)
  


- Pol Fité Matamoros (Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning):
  

- Giuseppina Forte (Architecture):
  

- Chris Herring (Sociology):
  

- Bridget Martin (Geography):
  

- Matthew Stenberg (Political Science):
  

- Anneliese Sytsma (Landscape Architecture & Environmental Planning):
  