Growth and Structure of Cities

APPROPRIATE ENTRY COURSES FOR FIRST YEAR STUDENTS:

Term I: City 185 Urban Culture and Society (McDonogh/Reyes, M,W 2:40-4:00 Taylor F and Taylor G) A survey of the interactions of space, social formation and ideas across global cities, enhanced by hands-on experience and analysis in Greater Philadelphia. 40 slots are reserved for BMC and HC first year students.

Term II City 190 Form of the City (M,W 1:10-2:30, Morton) A broad historical view of architecture, urbanism and planning worldwide, from early history to contemporary issues.

Students should also develop skills and interests in a wide range of cross-listed and corollary courses at the introductory level. We especially encourage classes in economics, anthropology, sociology, political science, art history and fine arts.

DEFINING A UNIQUE INTERDISCIPLINARY MAJOR

Since its foundation in 1971, Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr College has built on a deep commitment to the city as an object of study and to interdisciplinary teaching and research both within our classes and within a liberal arts education. We integrate analysis of space, form and the history of the built environment with the theories and methods of politics, economics and socio-cultural studies, both qualitative and quantitative: the ideal Cities student should be able to look at and solve problems from multiple vantages, ranging from architectural and visual understanding to statistics. At the same time, students develop multicultural and global perspectives through comparative readings and discussions of urban formal, social and cultural issues over time and through exposure to the unique urban laboratory of Greater Philadelphia. We also encourage focused study of particular cities and problems through advanced seminars, JYA and the senior theses, which have been completed by more than 600 graduated majors from Haverford and Bryn Mawr over more than four decades.

Within Bi-Co’s wider liberal arts program, Cities students develop critical perspectives toward urban-related careers they may choose to pursue after graduation. Future architects learn to talk to community organizers and to consider public finance as well as aesthetics. Future planners learn to question the tools and categories of their field as social constructs which may blind them to people and solutions. Computer designers think about access and power, while ecologists, policy scholars and film analysts share global insights. These discussions, in and out of class, involve all students and faculty, our active alumnae/ni, distinguished visitors and citizens worldwide.
MOVING ONWARDS

Students must take a total of ten courses plus the thesis to complete the major. At the intermediate level, students should complete major requirements with an architectural survey – American, Modern, Western – and City 229 (Comparative Urbanism) by their sophomore year if possible. The first increase a sense of experience and use of spatial forms while comparative urbanism is a research and writing intensive course built around four cities and a shared theme. The theme for 2016 is global suburbia, looking at Greater Philadelphia, Paris, Buenos Aires and Beijing; in 2017 it will be Colonial and Post-Colonial cities. In addition, we offer methods classes in visual methods and quantitative qualitative methods (City 217). This is also the point at which many students explore our design studios (City 226/228, Daniela Voith/Sam Olshin) as pathways into architecture or as complements to many other urban interests. In addition, we offer courses on U.S. environmental and urban history that link Cities to the ES minor.

All these courses prepare you for Junior Year Abroad and the capstone thesis in fall of the senior year. We believe strongly in the value of one semester of JYA to expose students to new cities and language skills. Meanwhile, students develop mentoring relations with our regular faculty and visitors. Juniors also take a 0.5 credit research seminar that will prepare them for independent research in the summer and their thesis, the capstone of the Cities program, which is completed in fall of the senior year.

Ultimately, each major work plan reflects individual student interests, contributing to growth and change in the major. Yet they also should embody careful choices of Cities and related courses. This may lead you towards design, planning, social justice issues, studies of urban cultures, environmental questions or numerous other routes. Students frequently work with Environmental Studies, Economics or International Studies. Students also combine their work in Cities with Education or language and cultural studies in Spanish, French and German, and some pursue interests as varied as Mass Media and Public Health. Here again, the Senior thesis brings together ideas and issues in an intense scholarly community. Recognizing the interdisciplinary demands of urban issues today, Cities also asks that each student designate four courses that complement their major and enhance their expertise.

WHAT DO YOU DO AFTER CITIES?

Cities offers a 3/2 program in Planning with U Penn as well as possible BA/MA arrangements within BMC. Cities graduates have gone on to careers in architecture, planning, development, mass media, medicine, government, law, real estate and business. They have also pursued academic life in many fields, from History of Art to American Studies to Geography to Public Policy. Our 600+ alums worldwide continue to return and engage students and faculty in creative discussions and projects and to form nuclei for urban thought and action across the globe.
FACULTY

Jeffrey Cohen (Senior Lecturer, On Leave Term II) Philadelphia Architecture, Historic Documentation and Preservation

Carola Hein (Professor, On Leave 2015-16) History of Architecture and Planning, Port Cities

Gary McDonogh (Professor, Chair) Urban Cultural Models and Boundaries, Chinatowns,

Thomas Morton (Visiting Lecturer) Rome, Digital Urbanism, Islamic Cities

Sam Olshin (Visiting Studio Critic) Design Studio

Victoria Reyes (Assistant Professor) Southeast Asia, Borderlands, Military, Quantitative Methods

Ellen Stroud (Associate Professor) U.S. Environmental and Urban History

Daniela Voith (Senior Lecturer) Design Studio

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CHECK www.brynmawr.edu/cities, TALK to other students and faculty, JOIN our Moodle site (contact gmcdonog@bmc) AND/OR JOIN our listserve (citiesfriends@brynmawr.edu).