

Doctoral Students in Urban Planning (DSUP)
Department of Urban and Regional Planning (DURP)
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
February 27, 2009

To: DSUP members, DURP faculty
From: DSUP
Re: Fall 2008 Progress Report

Our goal with this report is to provide the current DSUP members and the departmental faculty with a clear picture of where we are as an organization and how we plan to continue to thrive as an organization.

Accomplishments

1. We successfully applied for and received SORF funding for the NARSC conference that was held in November in Brooklyn, NY. We obtained roughly \$1700 to support travel for seven students, all but one of whom presented at the conference.
2. We continued our high level of success at the PhD research seminars, averaging at least six people over ten seminars and engaging the department in a wide variety of topics. The seminars provided an opportunity for students to rehearse job talks and share research at all stages, from idea to accepted paper.
3. We updated our bylaws to clarify the responsibilities and powers of delegation for positions.
4. We worked with the previous SPO board to facilitate the transition to new leadership. This included briefing them on on-going initiatives, the DSUP-SPO Memorandum of Understanding on joint funding (whereby we include Masters students in SORF applications for events that are primarily targeted to PhD students but in which a few MUP students may be interested, and vice versa), and departmental procedures.
5. We continued to discuss ways in which DSUP might contribute to the department, including the nature of our involvement in departmental hires, assistance with UpWords, and staying attuned to the evolution of the PhD program. These are on-going discussions within our group.

Looking forward

1. Beginning this semester (Spring 2009) we will be leading the editorship of UpWords, with input from Masters students. We had offered our involvement last spring, and have been taken up on our offer by the current SPO board.

2. We are currently planning an end-of-semester lunch in place of the last research seminar. The lunch is meant to mimic the collegiality of the department's holiday party, while bringing our academic year to a close.
3. We are actively pursuing SORF funds for 2 doctoral students and 2 Masters students for the UAA conference in Chicago. As always, this is part of our mission to promote student development.
4. Through negotiations on use of space in Architecture 316, we are increasing Planning's presence in and around TBH. We believe this is to the benefit of our students and the department. While the move of four additional planning PhD students into Arch 316 was not a DSUP initiative, discussions about space and our departmental presence are issues that affect all students and which we have taken up during meetings.