

Preface

Preparing students to assist people to build livable and healthy communities has always been a primary objective of the City and Regional Planning Department. This is done through classroom work, projects with local communities, interaction with the professional planning and environmental design communities, and recently understanding more about global issues and cultures. The publication you hold in your hands is part of our overall effort to share knowledge and create interest in the Department's overall contribution to the College of Architecture and Environmental Design, to Cal Poly, and the broader civic minded community.

Thus, it is with great pleasure that we offer you the first issue of FOCUS, a yearly journal dedicated to sharing faculty and student work and showcasing special activities of interest. We want you to know what we are doing. It takes a lot of effort, dedication, and resources to produce FOCUS. It will be published every April, as a retrospective of the past year, and always in time for the Cal Poly Open House. This is a spring celebration when we share our projects and academic works with colleagues, alumni, members of the public, and most importantly with future and prospective students.

It is a proud time because we are able to show others how we implement our mission, and highlight some of the countless professional possibilities that planners face in California, in the US, and in an increasingly globalizing world. Each issue of FOCUS is a "golden key" that closes the past year, and opens a new cycle.

FOCUS is organized along five main sections. In Special Events we bring you proceedings of seminars and conferences, articles on special events and guest lectures. In this first issue, two important 2003 events comprise this section: the International Seminar Global Thinking, Local Planning – that brought to Cal Poly planners from different countries to discuss their work and different perspectives on the profession.

In Essays, faculty work is featured. In this issue Paul Crawford, one of CRP's most popular lecturers and distinguished alumni, discusses how to implement "smart growth" concepts through urban codes. Department head William Siembieda, adjunct professor Ken Topping, and Bruce Baird tell us about disaster mitigation and preparedness, a most important but overlooked planning topic. Vicente del Rio describes partial results of his on-going research on the evolution of contemporary urban design in Brazil.

The section on Student Work is a showcase for projects and papers produced by undergraduate and graduate students. This issue highlights two projects developed in collaboration with the City of Arroyo Grande: an urban design study for the redevelopment of Traffic Way by the second-year undergraduate lab, and a proposal for a mixed-use development in the South County Government Area by the second-year graduate lab, the recipient of the 2003 Academic Award from the Central Coast Session of the California Chapter of the American Planners Association.

The Exchange Programs section introduces the international opportunities offered by CRP. It gives you a taste of the experiences that our students have while studying abroad, in places such as Brazil, Italy, and Mexico

In Spotlight, the last featured section, we present work by CRP's alumni. For this first issue we include replies to a brief survey sent out to alumni on their views of the profession and education. The section also shares some of the research generated in the Master of City and Regional Planning program by including the titles and abstracts of theses. These references serve as valuable resources for further research, and are available in the department's Resource Center and through Cal Poly's Kennedy Library.

Needless to say, FOCUS represents an evolving collective effort between faculty and students; requiring a significant amount of time, energy and resources. We appreciate the dedication of our team, the support of the CRP faculty, staff and students, and the confidence and generosity of our sponsors. Special recognition is given to Professor Vicente del Rio who suggested this journal, and organized the team to make it a reality. Without his dedication, FOCUS would still be a dream. Now it is a reality.

We sincerely hope you enjoy FOCUS, and use it in ways that improve your own professional work and general knowledge to build better communities. We invite your participation to the next journal edition, and welcome your opinions, contributions, examples of professional experience, and support. We want to hear from you about FOCUS. Please share this issue with others.

William Siembieda
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