

## The City Institute at York University (CITY)

# Dr. Alison Bain's (2015-2016) Acting Director's message

Welcome to the City Institute at York University (CITY)!

CITY is an interdisciplinary research unit for critical urban scholarship that brings together faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and visiting researchers to produce and to share knowledge about cities. We are always delighted to welcome new members and we warmly invite you to join our listserv and attend our seminars and workshops. CITY Director Professor Linda Peake, currently on sabbatical, joins me in welcoming you.



*Alison Bain Acting Director,  
CITY Institute (2015-2016)  
Associate Professor,  
Department of Geography*

The 2015-16 academic year is a busy one, underwritten by the valuable administrative support provided by a team of Graduate Assistants and Urban Studies interns.

This fall, we have four visiting scholars: Dr. Natalie Oswin, Department of Geography, McGill University; Dr. Akhavan Azari, Faculty of Architecture and Planning, Islamic Azad University of Art & Architecture; and Julia Ricareda and Valentin Meilinger, Institute of Human Geography, Goethe University.

For the winter, we have extended visiting scholar invitations to doctoral students Gül Tucaltan, Technical University of Darmstadt, and Ntombini Marrengane, University of Cape Town. More information on the work of these research fellows and all of our faculty and associate members is available on the member profiles section of our [website](http://city.apps01.yorku.ca/?page_id=14) [\[http://city.apps01.yorku.ca/?page\\_id=14\]](http://city.apps01.yorku.ca/?page_id=14).

Our City Seminar series continues on the first Friday of each month. It opened this year in October with a dynamic presentation by Dr. Ute Lehrer and nine MES urban planning students who shared their first-hand critical reflections on urbanization dynamics experienced on a field course to Shanghai, China. This valuable graduate student training opportunity was integrated into a workshop hosted in Shanghai as part of the on going work of our MCRI project on Global Suburbanisms, headed by Professor Roger Keil.

Our seminar series continues this year with a celebration of the scholarly contributions of Professor Gerda Werkele, an examination of “Queer worlding in the urban age” by Dr. Natalie Oswin, a student-caucus organized panel discussion on dispossession and architecture in Palestine, and an analysis of open creative labs in German city regions by Dr. Suntje Schmidt. The talks we will host are on a breadth of topics that we hope will engage your urban imaginations and stimulate rich discussion.

To help nurture the next generation of urban studies scholars, CITY is hosting a two-day career development workshop for doctoral and post-doctoral students (November 12-13, 2015). Panelists from universities across southern Ontario will give presentations and lead discussions on a range of topics, including academic publishing, job search strategies, undergraduate course design, and grant writing. This is a valuable mentoring and networking opportunity that will foster dialogue between early career scholars and those more established in the field. We hope it will lay the groundwork for future academic exchange of knowledge and resources.



*Launch of CITY Institute (June 2006)*

Our critical theoretical engagement with urbanization will be enhanced this year through two workshops hosted by CITY in the Winter term: *Rethinking Urban Theory Through the Analytical Lens of Planetary Urbanization*; and *Sub/Urban Austerity: Impacts and Alternatives* (co-sponsored with *Alternate Routes: A Journal of Critical Social Research*).

A SSHRC-connections grant will fund the two-day, live-streamed planetary urbanization workshop (April 4-5, 2016), with keynote presentations by Professors Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid and critical paper responses from international scholars. This workshop will conclude with a panel discussion about Toronto's urban future with planners, politicians, and scholars, moderated by our board member Jane Farrow, in celebration of CITY's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We are in the midst of planning a lively anniversary party for the evening of April 5<sup>th</sup> and look forward to sharing the details with you!

At CITY we take pride in the intellectually vibrant and social atmosphere we foster. We're confident that, with the great array of scholarly and social activities we host, you will find plenty of reasons to visit us on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of the Kaneff Research Tower and participate in our programming.

I wish you a productive and inspiring academic year.

Alison Bain

Acting Director, CITY Institute (2015-2016)

Associate Professor, Department of Geography