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SPRING 2018

NYU PUBLIC
POLICY MAJOR
SENIOR
SEMINAR
PROJECTS

**WAGNER
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE**

ABOUT THE PUBLIC POLICY MAJOR

Established in 2014 by NYU Wagner and NYU College of Arts and Sciences, the Major in Public Policy prepares students to play roles in the creation, implementation, and evaluation of policies that address today's most significant domestic and global challenges. Taught by top faculty from multiple disciplines, the major offers a diverse and rigorous curriculum designed to give students the tools and expertise they need to translate their passion into real change.

FACULTY DIRECTORS

Andy Sinclair, Clinical Assistant Professor of Public Service
Neil Kleiman, Clinical Assistant Professor of Public Service

ABOUT THE SENIOR SEMINAR

The senior seminar provides students practical, real-world experience prior to graduation. The course serves as the qualitative and quantitative conclusion to students' time at NYU and connects them to top practitioners in the public policy realm.

This semester, students partnered with the National Democratic Institute (NDI), a leading international non-profit focused on democratic reform in developing nations, and Living Cities, a philanthropic collective at the forefront of city-level policy design and implementation. The students had two very ambitious assignments. One, was to identify, research and write about 70 examples of innovation that have taken root in cities around the world. The second related assignment was to determine—based on the examples—what, if any, difference existed between innovation and democratic innovation. The students conducted their work through expert interviews and more traditional policy research methods including literature and internet reviews. Their findings, informed by domestic and international leaders alike, will be published by Living Cities and NDI.

The students were organized into seven groups around five of the original global innovation cities that Living Cities and NDI studied. The cities were: Bogota-Medellín, Mumbai, New York, Buenos Aires and Mexico City.

Professor Kleiman and NYU wish to thank Steven Bosacker, Besher Al Makhlouf, Sarah Welsh, Scott Hubli, and Matthew Baer for this opportunity, and for their energy and time in this endeavor.

PUBLIC SERVICE IS THE HIGHEST AND GOOD, WHEN DONE HONORABLY AND WELL, THE MOST REWARDING.

ROBERT F. WAGNER,
MAYOR OF NEW YORK CITY
1953-1965

NYC

TEAM MEMBERS:

Jonathan Brasley, Barbara Felder, Kayla Giuliani, Laurence Hong, Izzy Khoufaify, Jae Jin Lim

The team identified eight innovative examples from the United States, Canada and Estonia, ranging from using data analytics and information sharing to identify and address areas of inequality and disparity, to providing identification to residents in order to provide access to local services. The group's examples exhibited core themes such as: utilizing technology to create a partnership between government and its constituents, promoting transparency with greater public data access, and working towards knocking down barriers to citizen engagement and accessibility.

BOGOTA-MEDELLÍN

TEAM MEMBERS:

Genesis Bellot, Oindrila Das, Nicolas Garcia, Matthew Hidalgo, Alex Hunter, Mark Khang, Hunter Nash

The Bogota team conducted extensive research on innovative policies that are being implemented in Bogota and investigated similar policies around the world. The examples that the team will present come from cities in Latin American, African, Asian, and American governments. The team's common themes include: citizen engagement, transparency, fulfilling community needs, partnership – knowledge of who the right partners are and assigning the right role – and technology as a powerful vehicle for change. The project helped the team realize that the cities of tomorrow will rely on data sorting mechanisms and on constant interaction between city government and its constituents, but strategies will not be completely implemented unless sincerity and transparency act as the bridge connecting citizens to policies.

BUENOS AIRES TEAM A

TEAM MEMBERS:

Tier McCullough, Christina Michalski, Janelle Micaela Segarra Panganiban, Madeleine Smurzynski, Christian Stallings, Nahima Fardausi Uddin

The first Buenos Aires team identified six innovation examples from South Korea, South Africa, the Netherlands and the United States in areas such as citizen engagement, government access, and transparency. The core themes identified in their analysis include the creation of physical spaces to promote civic engagement, strengthening the connection between government and its constituents, and the use of technology as a mechanism to advance these goals.

BUENOS AIRES TEAM B

TEAM MEMBERS:

Virita Ainapudi, Liz Appel, Louis Bartholomew, Maya Ephrem, Bryan Kachakji

The second Buenos Aires team's research focused on innovations that targeted civic engagement and democratic responsibility. Argentinian leaders are invested in promoting greater citizen involvement in the creation, implementation, and evaluation of civic processes. To do so, Buenos Aires has attempted to improve its transparency by granting public information to citizens in hopes of boosting civic engagement across all demographics. The group examined and compared initiatives in other cities to best determine expected success rates and scalability within Argentina.

MEXICO CITY TEAM B

TEAM MEMBERS:

Natalie Desmaris, Rachel Gindi, Jin Kong, Andrew Mei, Timothy Pamias, Ruth Rizkalla

The second Mexico City team highlighted sixteen different democratic innovations from across the world. The team focused on the following core themes: utilizing technology to increase citizen engagement with government; allowing access to crowdsourced information on policy issues; and ensuring that community-driven efforts influence actual policies. Their findings focus on five specific policies: online civic engagement tools; emergency response and management; and affordable, secure food access.

MEXICO CITY GROUP A

TEAM MEMBERS:

Aaron Bennett, Erica Hobby, Nabid Islam, Kanakadandila, Ankita Lakshmi, Juan Homar Paez, Jaylene Rosario

The Mexico City team conducted research on nine cities exploring democratic innovations ranging geographically from the United States and United Kingdom to Latin America and Spain. The group researched a wide variety of public policy initiatives, including access to open data, creativity in the public policy space, and increasing transparency between government and citizen. The core themes identified include: transparent and open data, technology as a mechanism of innovation, and diverse collaboration on issues.

MUMBAI

TEAM MEMBERS:

Olivia Gauthier, Alaina Haworth, Dhanya Madugalle, Sakshi Mahajan, Nick Nieto, Jessica Shin

Through the examination of six case studies in Mumbai and Pune, the group has seen the versatility, diversity, and universality of democratic innovation. Whether the innovation is focused on data collection in the area's slums or promoting government partnerships with previously adversarial advocacy groups. The team found themes of transparency, input, collaboration, and adaptability in other cities around the world, as well, and used them to inform their research. Through their research, the group discovered parallel innovations in cities as geographically diverse as Kigali and Rio de Janiero. These innovations similarly sought to bring recognition and legitimacy to slum communities; secure permanent housing for former residents of slums; promote citizen input to government programs; enhance public-private partnerships; and generally create more democratically innovative policy.