



DIASPORAS AND CITIES WORKSHOP

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2020
3:00 PM - 5:30 PM
HARTFORD CAMPUS, HTB 209

Examine the relationship between migrating peoples and urban spaces
Assess the ways in which cities and diasporas become mutually constituted
Evaluate and interpret the transnational dynamics of and between different diasporas
Explore ways to serve communities in Connecticut

UConn
HARTFORD
THE SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL
CITIES INITIATIVE (SGCI)

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Hosted by the Sustainable Global Cities Initiative
Co-Sponsored by the Asian and Asian American Studies Institute,
UConn Hartford, and the Office of Global Affairs

Diasporas and Cities Workshop

Sponsored by the Asian and Asian American Studies Institute
Sustainable Cities Global Initiative
March 4, 2020

Coordinators:

Jason Oliver Chang - *Director, Asian and Asian American Studies Institute*
Robert H. Wilson - *Director, Sustainable Global Cities Initiative*

The Concept. In today's world, migration is one of the most distinctive features of globalization. A *diaspora*, a term originally applied to groups migrating from ancient homelands, is a group of people migrating from the same origin to multiple destinations. While we often think of sovereign states as the place people migrate to, the actual location they become enmeshed in is more frequently the cities within a given country. Diasporas make unique contributions to the economic, political and cultural life of urban spaces. The diasporic connections within a place generate the notions we have about global cities. Within a destination city, any number of diasporic communities create a constellation of links between the city and the homeland or with diasporas located in other cities and nations.

The Diasporas and Cities Project will explore the relationship between migrating peoples and the urban spaces they live and work in and thereby help assess the ways cities and diasporas become mutually constituted. Moving beyond an accounting of mere "urban diversity," this project aims to evaluate and interpret the transnational dynamics of and between different diasporas within and across cities. This project is global in scope, but aims to spotlight the structure and dynamism of Hartford's diasporas. UConn scholars from several disciplines with expertise in particular diasporas or related topics will be invited to join the project.

Salience. Academic research on urban populations is extensive, drawing from many disciplines. Urban demography is relevant to governance, development, environmental sustainability, health, culture and other processes. The Diaspora and Cities Workshop present, potentially, a unique research lens for considering diasporas, a geographically global phenomenon, in urban space and thus achieve a more fundamental and broader understanding of the global in contemporary cities.

The Method. The initial focus of the project will be a research workshop at the UConn Hartford Campus. The workshop will explore the relationship between diasporas and urban space relying on UConn scholars. The framework of the workshop will be comparative, with a common set of concerns for the study of diaspora through brief interventions of the participants. Activities will include:

1. **Mapping Your Expertise:** Mapping of country, region, cities of interest to workshop participants, culminating in a graphic reflecting the geographical reach of the participants.
2. **Exploring Significance:** Participant interventions derived based on a 500 word description (submitted prior to the workshop) of research interests and reflections on the methodological potential for city-related dimensions.
3. **Thinking Through Interdisciplinary Methodologies:** A facilitated discussion on a set of background materials concerning diasporas and urban settings..
4. **Local Relevance:** Discussion on diasporic communities in Hartford, possible organized around a brief presentation by UConn researchers engaged in the Hartford community.
5. **Future Activities of the Workshop:** An exploration of the participants' interest in continuing workshop engagement and the form future research activities might take.