

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY News Release

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### **New downtown degree preps students for urban growth**

PHOENIX – Students in the new urban and metropolitan studies program at Arizona State University’s School of Public Affairs are learning about community and economic development, historic preservation, social justice, and acute needs in rapidly growing urban areas such as housing, transportation, and environmental quality in the classroom and in the City of Phoenix. Their trip this past week to the downtown Phoenix historic Warehouse District south of Jackson Street, hosted by artist and property owner, Michael Levine, exposed them firsthand to the challenges of making a city livable and to ongoing historic preservation and zoning debates.

Marketing major Eric Mulvin is earning a certificate in Small Business and Entrepreneurship and enrolled in the program’s Urban Studio class as an elective. He noted surprise over the historic significance of the warehouses the quality of the interiors.

“The recent explosion in land prices makes the land more valuable than the buildings and their restoration costs. I hope to own my own business someday and this visit helped me realize the intangible equity in buildings and their historic significance. Nothing beats being able to see the actual building, when trying to understand things like the placement of the windows and why one wall of bricks looks different than another. It is fascinating,” Mulvin adds.

This undergraduate program is providing the basis for a new generation of civic leaders to assume leadership positions in public, private and nonprofit fields, or to pursue advanced degrees in fields such as urban planning, public policy, public administration, law, business, arts administration, and even historic preservation and journalism. Solutions to the multilayered urban issues of today demand an understanding of historic, social, cultural, economic and political contexts of urban environments. After the hands-on experience and coursework required, graduates will be prepared to apply their knowledge and talents towards creating quality metropolitan areas.

Program director and associate professor, Nan Ellin, author of the recently released *Integral Urbanism*, is requiring students in the Urban Studies Studio this semester, to develop workable proposals for improving the livability of the Phoenix metropolitan region.

Other course offerings include Introduction to Urban America, Urban Policy, American Urban Development, and an internship.

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**PHOTO CREDIT:**

Eric Mulvin

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