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Simon Fraser launches new urban studies graduate program

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September 16, 2005

What makes a good city? The students in Simon Fraser University's new graduate program in urban studies will be looking for, and finding, answers.

It has been over two decades since a Canadian university launched a graduate degree in urban studies. "SFU has opened a new chapter in Canada's urban education," says Anthony Perl, a political scientist who recently joined SFU as director of the program. "Urban studies is interdisciplinary, drawing on geography, politics, sociology, and economics. We look at the 'why' of urban structure and function. Our graduates will blaze the trail in making cities sustainable, and Canada will be better off from their efforts. Their research projects will take full advantage of the program's downtown location at the heart of Canada's most dynamic city."The 30 students come from a mix of undergraduate arts and social sciences disciplines, a few have professional designations in architecture and planning, and some are science graduates. About half are mid-career learners employed by local governments, developers and consulting firms. Some students and faculty at the reception will be arriving directly from the program's first research forum, entitled "World Cities and the Olympic Games: What is at stake?"