

MARCH
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ISUS UOS NEWSLETTER

International School of Urban Sciences
University of Seoul

01 ISUS: Spring 2025 Semester kicks off



02 MUAP-17: Memorable Field Trip to Gangwon-do



03 MGLEP-10: Explores Korean Culinary Heritage



05 Alum of The Month | Ehab Shahat(MURD 3)



04 MUD-8: A Special Lecture on Seoul's Housing

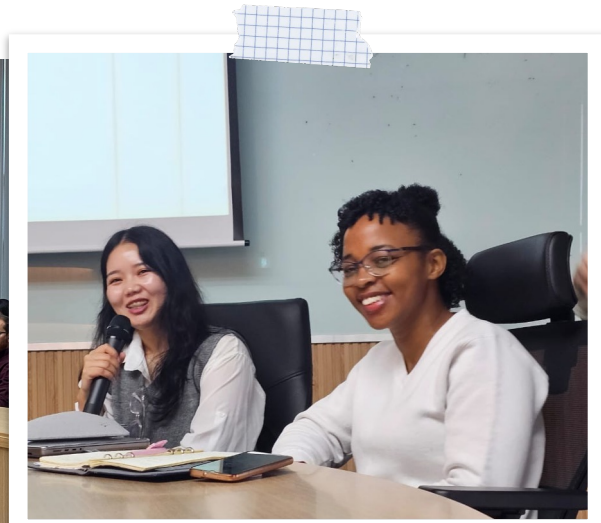
06 School Tree in full Bloom - Words from the Dean

01. ISUS Spring 2025 Semester Kicks Off



The ISUS Spring 2025 semester officially began on March 7, bringing energy and excitement to campus. Students from the four academic departments including, Global Construction (GC), Sustainable Urban Development (SUD), International Development Cooperation (IDC), and International Urban Development Program (IUDP), are eager to engage in learning, collaboration and personal growth.

Many students have shared their thoughts on the semester's start. One SUD student highlighted the supportive classroom atmosphere, while a Master's in Urban Development and Sustainable Infrastructure Planning (MUDSIP) student discussed balancing coursework and personal time. Another student from the Master of Urban Administration and Planning (MUAP) reflected on managing coursework and religious commitments like Ramadan fasting.





Meanwhile, new participants from the Master's Program for Future Global Leaders in Environmental Policy (MGLEP) Batch 11 are bonding through orientation and teamwork. On the faculty side, Professor Seung-Beom Seo expressed excitement about guiding students through complex topics and witnessing their progress.

With such an inspiring beginning, the semester is shaping up to be academically enriching and full of valuable experiences. Stay tuned for more updates! (J.T)

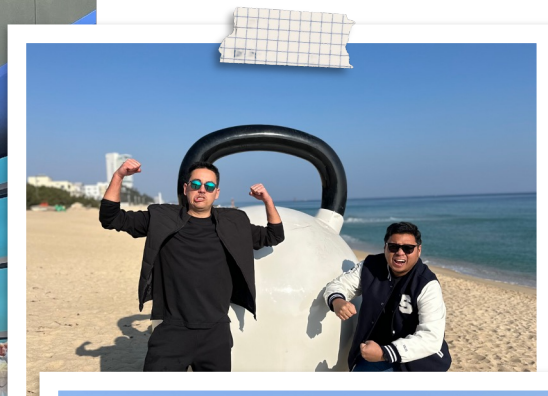


02. MUAP-17: Memorable Field Trip to Gangwon-do

Just before the new semester, MUAP-17 students were rewarded with an enriching field trip to Gangwon-do, where they immersed themselves in the culture, technology and coastal beauty of Gangneung.

The journey began at Yangyang Energy Farm, exploring sustainable energy innovations. From there, the students stepped back in time to *Ojukheon*, one of Gangneung's most treasured historical landmarks, where they fully embraced Korean traditions dressed in elegant hanbok. The scenic beauty of *Gyeongpo Beach* also provided a perfect moment of relaxation, with its glistening waves and serene atmosphere.





Bringing a futuristic contrast, students explored interactive digital worlds at the Metaverse Experience Center, followed by a visit to the Olympic Museum Gangneung, where they revisited the excitement of the 2018 Winter Olympics.

The trip concluded at Gangneung City Hall's Urban Information Center and students gained valuable insights into the city's smart urban planning initiatives. Overall, seamlessly blending culture, innovation and nature, the trip left students inspired and refreshed - a memorable way to recharge for the semester ahead (K.B).



MUAP-17

Unforgettable field trip in Gangneung!

03.

MGLEP-10 Batch Explores Korean Culinary Heritage



In March 2025, MGLEP Batch 10 immersed themselves in Korea's culinary traditions through two hands-on experiences.

On March 14th, they visited the Kimchi Museum in Insa-dong to learn about kimchi, Korea's iconic fermented dish made primarily from napa cabbage or radish, seasoned with chili pepper, garlic, ginger, salt, and fermented seafood. With over 300 varieties, *kimchi* is a cornerstone of Korean cuisine, offering health benefits such as boosting the immune system, aiding digestion, and reducing inflammation. Participants explored the Kimchium exhibition, learning about *kimjang*, the communal tradition of preparing and preserving kimchi for winter. Guided by an expert, they made and seasoned their own kimchi to take home.





A week later, on March 21st, they visited the Korea Temple Food Academy, where they explored temple cuisine, a mindful, plant-based tradition rooted in Buddhist philosophy. Under the guidance of seasoned instructors, they prepared dishes such as tteokbokki mushroom soup and mugwort and lotus root pancakes, experiencing firsthand the harmony and mindfulness that define this culinary practice.

These experiences deepened participants' appreciation for Korea's food heritage, blending history, culture, and practical learning. (J.T)



04. **MUD-8:** A special lecture on Seoul's Housing

On February 24, the MUD-8 cohort gathered for a warm welcome lunch, setting the tone for an engaging day of learning. The highlight of the event was a special lecture on Housing in Seoul, South Korea, delivered by Dr. Yeong-Hee Jang, Former Vice President of the Seoul Institute and a longtime member of the ISUS faculty until retirement.

Dr. Jang, an expert in urban development, shared her extensive knowledge of the city's housing policies and development strategies. Through her presentation, she explained the complexities of Seoul's rapidly evolving housing market and offered a comprehensive understanding of its unique challenges.



This session provided a valuable opportunity for the MUD-8 students to expand their knowledge and deepen their understanding of housing issues in one of the world's most densely populated and dynamic cities (K.B).

05.

Alum of the Month Ehab Shahat(MURD 3)

Ehab Shahat is MURD(MUD) 3rd Alumnus. He is from Egypt and when he applied for the KOICA Scholarship to join the ISUS urban and regional development master program, he was an urban planner in the ministry of housing of the Egyptian Government. After completing both his master's and Ph.D. at the University of Seoul, he is currently working at Saud Consult as a project manager.



1. Could you provide a brief description of your current workplace and explain your role there?

Currently I am working at a prestigious multidisciplinary engineering and design firm in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) called Saud Consult. The firm was established in Riyadh (Capital of KSA) more than 50 years ago in 1967, currently operating with offices that covers five continents. The firm has approximately 1.8K employees, its expertise spanning over all engineering disciplines and working on a wide array of projects.

My position is project manager, where my project intends to develop 7 studies regarding developing and upgrading several architectural and urban elements of the built environment in addition to enhancing urban development policies and procedures for Riyadh city.



The project is under the supervision of Riyadh Amanah “City Municipality” and it includes studies on various subjects such as enhancing the city public spaces, developing standards for façade openings across the city, promoting investment policies, identifying issues and finding solutions for building permits issuance, etc. The project team includes senior and junior architects, urban planners, civil engineers, GIS experts, and others.

2. How has your experience at ISUS influenced you?

My experience at ISUS was a life changing experience. It had a profound impact on both my personal and professional aspects. On the personal side, I gained rich and diverse knowledge and experiences, whether the knowledge shared by the ISUS respected staff through the program curriculum, special lectures, and field visits, or by my colleagues from the different countries across the globe. I have experienced Korean culture, and various cultures of ISUS fellow students. These experiences have enriched my character and opened my mind to further horizons beyond my own culture and understanding of life. In addition, I have built new relationships with friends from around the world leading to widening my social realm.



Professionally, the ISUS journey has developed my professional skills and led to boosting my career in several ways. Firstly, I have improved my academic skills and learned methods and ethics of research. This was a cornerstone to continue my academic path to obtain my PhD from the Architectural Engineering Department at UOS. I was able to publish research papers and successfully complete my PhD in 3 years. I believe it would have not been possible without the foundation of the research skills that I built at ISUS. Secondly, after completing my studies I was able to secure an excellent job as a senior urban designer at one of the leading design firms in the middle east and the world (Dar / Dar AL Hanadasa) where I have worked on diverse master planning and urban design regional projects. Working in such high-profile companies requires a specific mentality and methodological way of approaching issues and tasks. However, my skills in approaching issues and challenges were developed and harnessed thanks to the comprehensive and diverse knowledge gained through my study in ISUS. In our program (MURD) we had a great opportunity to learn about urban development from different aspects which entitled our vision with a wider perspective leading to better ways of addressing urban challenges.

Thirdly, the international degree of ISUS and learning about the global issues and how to tackle them helped in my moving to KSA to work on two different cities for two different topics; one is developing a road map and smart city strategy for the city of Ha'il, and the second is the current project about studies of upgrading architectural and urban elements of the built environment and development of standards and procedures of enhancing the urban environment for Riyadh city.

In addition to the above, I had a very exciting opportunity to lecture at the Architecture Engineering Department in Ain shams University (my home university from which I graduated), where I developed a course on smart city development for the senior students. I have delivered my knowledge gained through my Masters and PhD studies and reflected the Korean experience to the students to help them learn from the best practices of smart city cases and solutions.

3. What are your future plans, both personally and professionally?

A very important lesson I learned throughout my journey in ISUS, and that is continuous learning is the most valuable key to success. Continuous learning enriches your personality, harnesses your skills, and widens your ideas. That's why, after completing my Masters and PhD, I gained another certification of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and became a LEED Green Associate; however, this is not the end, I am planning to continue learning by upgrading my LEED certification to become Accredited Professional (LEED AP). In addition, I am planning to gain other certification of project management such as PMP to improve my management skills for my current project manager role. (D.K.)



06.

The School Tree in Full Bloom - Words from the Dean

Nestled in a quiet, tranquil spot near Kyung-nong-kwan (경농관) stands a special tree—a modest yet handsome San-soo-yoo (산수유) tree. It's not just any tree; it was planted by ISUS alumni and staff on a fine autumn day in 2023 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the International School of Urban Sciences (ISUS).

Beneath it, a commemorative stone proudly reads:

"In commemoration of the 10th anniversary of International School of Urban Sciences – ISUS Alumni and Staff."

Also known as Cornelian cherry (*Cornus Officinalis*), this tree carries a flower message of love, and its soft yellow blooms symbolize hope and happiness. Blooming early in spring—even before the famous cherry blossoms, forsythia (개나리), azaleas (진달래), and magnolias (목련)—San-soo-yoo welcomes the season with delicate, golden flowers and a subtle fragrance.

As the year unfolds, so does the tree's charm. Its lush green leaves deepen into a rich red as summer approaches. Then, just when you think it has finished its show, it surprises us again in autumn, adorned with vibrant red berries, as striking as gemstones. These berries, known for their medicinal benefits, have long been treasured in Oriental medicine. In winter, its bark peels back to reveal a striking inner layer, adding yet another dimension to its ever-changing beauty.



Doesn't this seasonal transformation remind you of the diverse and dynamic ISUS community? And just as the tree offers healing and nourishment, may our school continue to have a positive impact on the world.

Carefully chosen in collaboration with the ISUS Alumni Association, faculty, and staff, this tree is now in full bloom for the first time since being planted. If you haven't visited it yet, take a moment to find this hidden gem. It's more than just a tree—it's a living symbol of growth, resilience, and shared memories. (S.L)

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Editing Team:

Shin Lee, Dabin Kim, John Twumasi, Khulanzaya Bud

Contributors:

SeungHee Cha, Kanaporn, Farouk Tazi, Khurram Shahzad, Dahae Been, Fabio.T.Garrafoli, Boyoung Lee



서울시립대학교
UNIVERSITY OF SEOUL

ISUS International School of Urban Sciences

서울시 동대문구 서울시립대로 163 (우:02504)

University of Seoul 163 Siripdaero, Dongdaemun-gu, Seoul 02504 KOREA

Tel 82-2-6490-5137-8 Fax 82-2-6490-5141 E-mail isus@uos.ac.kr Homepage <http://isus.uos.ac.kr>