



- a) Supervisor: Rodrigo José Firmino
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- b) Project : Hacking the Urban Environment: Smart Cities and the Role of Civic Hackers in Remaking the City
- c) Abstract: This project unpacks how sustainability and nature in the city are being rethought/remade through an engagement with digital/smart city initiatives, analyzing cases in Brazilian cities where citizens become ‘civic hackers’ in the remaking of the city’s environment. A first wave of critical perspectives on ‘smart cities’ saw these as corporate endeavours advancing a top-down technological push upon local government. Recent research has problematized this, pointing to civic hackers (often both corporate employees and community activists) and community movements mobilizing technological tools towards environmental activism (via e.g. sensors, mobile apps, web-based platforms). This project examines the role of digital tools and grassroots activism in re-making the urban. This particular (and largely informal) smart-city configuration evolves from the actions of ‘ordinary people’ who are both empowered and co-opted by the promise of digital technologies to monitor and transform infrastructures, hacking the urban environment and short-circuiting government's autonomy as city-makers.
- d) Knowledge fields: urbanism; geography; urban studies; smart cities.
- e) Availability for international students – semester (x) year (x)
Dedication of 20 hours/week
- f) Relation to the following undergraduate courses: architecture; communication studies; sociology; design; computing science.
- g) Requirements: fluency in English.
- h) Available languages for supervision: English, Portuguese and Spanish.