



NEWSLETTER SPRING 2019

*Integrating knowledge and skills to prepare
a new generation of development practitioners*



TABLE OF CONTENTS: Issue 15

Director's Note	2
Spring 2019 Poster Session	4
Summer Field Practicums	6
2019 MDP Graduates	8
MDP Alumni Update	9
Faculty Spotlight	11
Spring Socials!	15
Final Presentations	16

Edited by Daniela Lizano

Director's Note: Glenn Galloway

I am happy to introduce our Spring 2019 newsletter providing an overview of important developments of the University of Florida Master of Sustainable Development Practice (MDP) Program. I (we) are particularly proud of our new graduates and are also excited to share with you the field practicums our first year students will be carrying out over the summer in different regions of the world.

In our last Newsletter (mdp.africa.ufl.edu/news-events/newsletter), I alluded to the fact that the MDP Program is approaching its 10th anniversary and that efforts were underway to revisit the original report of the International Commission on Education for Sustainable Development Practice that gave rise to the Program. In February 2019, representatives of eight universities of the North American Chapter of the MDP Global Association met at the University of Minnesota to discuss the draft report, and time was allotted to prepare a summary of lessons and insights we have gained since the inception of the program, recognizing that the global context has changed with regards to sustainable development (i.e. the adoption in 2015 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 192 countries). Here, I thought it would be of interest to present a concise listing of these lessons and insights:

1. The diversity and plurality of programs and perspectives is a strength of the MDP program. Contextual realities and institutional capacities have led to the development of different models, focus areas and approaches across the MDP network, and the sharing and discussion of these experiences has been enriching for all universities participating in the program.

2. It is important that the MDP program retain and foster a critical perspective with regards to Sustainable Development (SD). In our deliberations, reference was made to power and privilege and the contested history of development. These issues are central to our curricula because they will be key to successful implementation of the SDGs and other efforts to further SD.

3. Students who enroll in the MDP program identify with different SD paradigms, for example, the expanding role of the private sector and corporate social responsibility, community-driven development, indigenous peoples and SD, green economy, bio-economy, de-growth and social activism, among others. While our programs



are not ideologically neutral, it has been important to bring these different perspectives into conversation and analysis.

4. SD is best understood as bottom-up, socio-cultural transformational processes and this approach permeates the MDP programs. This understanding is reflected in meta-studies of NGO managers and international development workers when asked what they consider key knowledge areas and skills. Among others, they stress ethics, recognition and use of local abilities and cross-cultural sensitivity.

5. MDP programs possess important attributes that enhance their quality including the following:

- An interdisciplinary core curriculum involving the use of innovative pedagogical approaches, particularly opportunities for practice in individual and group exercises.
- Broad faculty support from across departments and colleges in course delivery and in the supervision of students. In UF, this support has been a strength of the program.
- A capstone field practicum with a host organization involved in some way with issues of sustainable development. As we have highlighted in our newsletters (including this one) students carry out their field practicums on a wide diversity of topics with an array of host organizations around the world. The opportunity to apply (and hone) knowledge and skills in a real world setting is often transformative for MDP students, who gain experience in the application of an array of methods and are encouraged to practice self-reflection

Director's Note: Glenn Galloway (cont.)

on their positionality and biases.

- The cohort model creates opportunities for students to learn together and forge lifelong friendships and professional contacts in many parts of the world.

- The linkage of students to sustainability initiatives in the local community and within each university. MDP students are often eager to take part in these types of activities while earning their degrees.

- Opportunities are created for students to engage with experienced development practitioners.

- Numerous opportunities to practice analytical writing and oral communication skills, for example, in the preparation of the field practicum final report.

- Most MDP programs offer students parallel opportunities to earn minors and certificates; combining in this way the advantages of having a “generalist” education with the depth obtained while earning a specialization.

- Taken together, MDP programs seek to foster in their students a balance of cognitive abilities, professional skills and social and emotional attributes important to working in SD.

One additional attribute that could be added to this list is the conviction to continue learning from experiences gained, both across the MDP Global Association and by other universities and organizations devoted to SD. The urgency, breadth and complexity of SD challenges should certainly provoke a sense of humility and an intense desire to learn in a permanent fashion.

Here, I would like to express my deep appreciation to all core and affiliate faculty members who have generously contributed to the MDP Program. Your support to the program is vital to its success and makes it an enriching experience for our students. Also, I wish to thank the Center for Latin American Studies, the Center for African Studies, the International Center and the Tropical Conservation and Development Program for their generous support and for making UF an ideal institutional home for our program.

In the Faculty Spotlight, it is my distinct pleasure to indicate that Dr. Philip Williams was interviewed as he completes his tenure as Director of the Center for Latin American Studies. Phil has been closely involved in the UF MDP program since its inception, supporting it in all its dimensions. At a macro scale, he has kept abreast

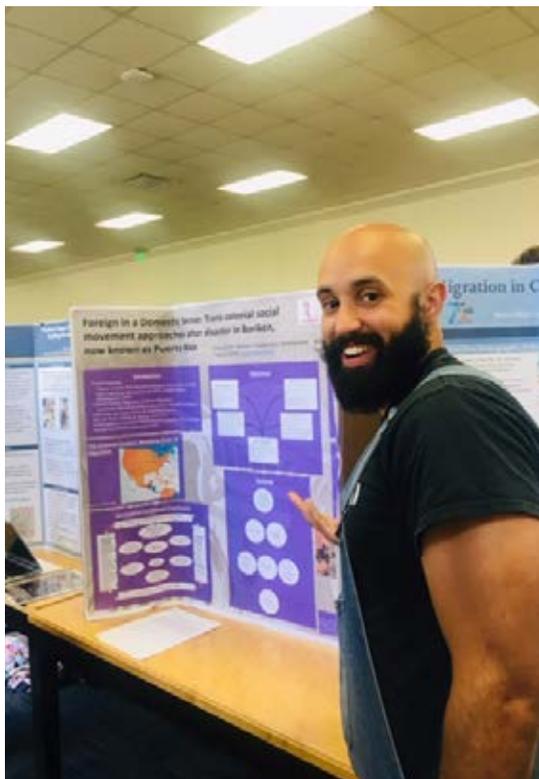
of developments across the MDP Global Association, participating in annual MDP Summits around the world. In UF, he has provided guidance to the program through his involvement in the Steering Committee, and by being available on countless opportunities, when I have sought his counsel. Finally, he has impacted individual lives, by channeling support to students who otherwise would never have earned an MDP degree. He also served as major advisor to one of our students who carried out her field practicum in Colombia. It has been a great pleasure to work with Phil these past eight years, and I want to wish him much success in his new position as Dean of the College of Liberal Arts in Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

Finally, my appreciation once more to Daniela Lizano who compiled this newsletter and carried out the aforementioned interview with Dr. Williams.

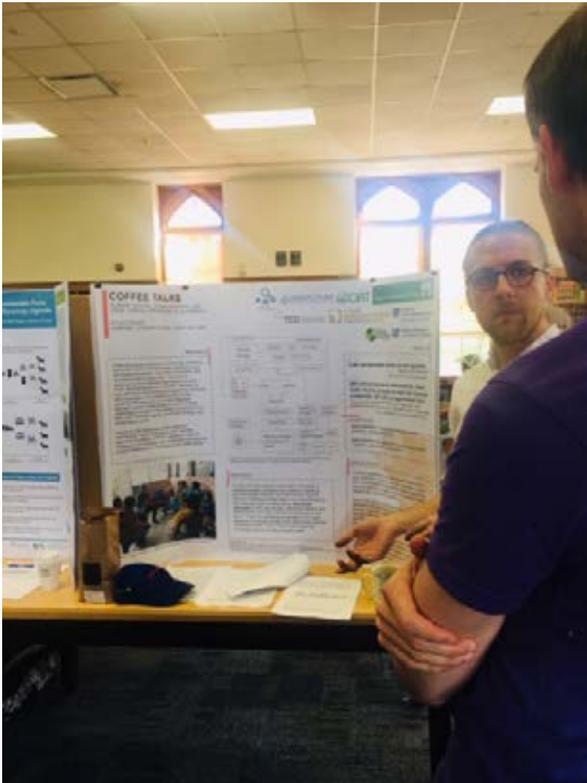
Spring 2019 Poster Session

This spring semester MDP students presented their field practicum results in the Fieldwork Festival, held at Smathers Library on March 15th, and organized by the Center for Latin American Studies.

During a 3-hour poster session, and together with other LAS and TCD graduate students, our students shared their fieldwork experiences with a diverse audience including students, faculty and the public in general visiting the exhibition.



Spring 2019 Poster Session (cont.)



Congratulations to all our Students for their effort and dedication preparing their posters!

And special congratulations to our Cohort 7 and 8 students, Maria Waked and Daniela Lizano, who won the 1st and 2nd place for Internship/Practicum Poster Awards!

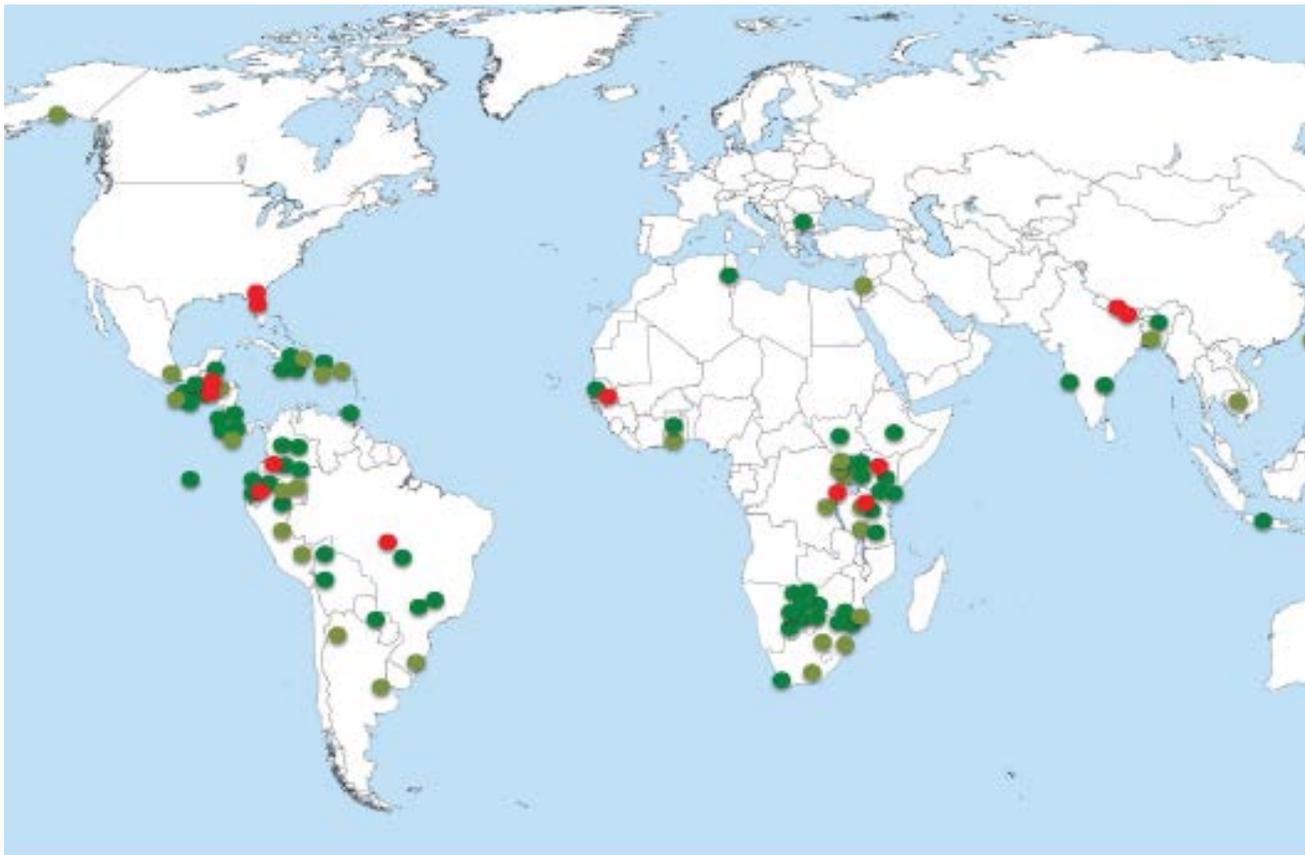
Summer Field Practicums 2019

Thirteen MDP students are carrying out their Field Practicums between May and August in ten countries and domestically in Florida and Georgia.

Name	Theme	Region/Country	Field Practicum Placement
Adi Gangga	Livestock vaccines value chains in Nepal: a gendered perspective	Nepal	Gender Integration into Livestock Vaccine / UF / IDRC
Christina Joy	Community sustained pre-primary education in rural Tanzania	Arusha, Tanzania	Tanzania School Foundation
Colleen Abel	Honduras rural livelihood change, violence and migration: a needs assessment for deported migrant reintegration	Honduras	USAID Rural Livelihoods Project / Comisión de Acción Social Menonita / UF
Gustavo Prieto	Climate-relevant and low cadmium innovations to promote sustainable cacao production in Colombia	Cali, Colombia	CIAT Clima-LoCa Project
Haaris Saqib	Strategic Planning for the Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety	Florida and Georgia, US	UF Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (SCCAHS)
Jessica Mostacedo	Agricultural production and the Florida Springs Region	High Springs, Florida	Florida Springs Institute
Mackenzie Goode	Patterns and perceptions of crop raiding by baboons in Laikipia County, Kenya: what it means for conservation and rural livelihoods	Laikipia, Kenya	Mpala Research Centre
Manuel Morales	Human-wildlife interactions in the Podocarpus-Sangay Connectivity Corridor, Andes of Southern Ecuador: A socio-ecological and geographic characterization	Cuenca, Ecuador	Nauraleza y Cultura Internacional
Paula Bak Cely	Entrelacando comunidades: Cooperative process to strengthen smallholder farmers through value chains and policy analysis	Mato Grosso, Brazil	Instituto centro de Vida (ICV)
Rio Trimono	Dissemination of innovations to improve milk production and quality in Nepal's dairy sector	Hill Regions and Kathmandu, Nepal	UF Livestock Systems Innovation Lab / Heifer International
Stephanie Muench	Evaluation in the dissemination of livestock innovations in Rwanda	Rwanda	UF Livestock Systems Innovation Lab / University of Rwanda
Weston Stitt	Green Value Tool and needs assessment for Cooperativa Cafetalera Capucas Ltda.	Las Capucas, Honduras	Fundacion ETEA / Umami Area Honduras / Cooperativa Cafetalera Capucas Ltda / COCAFAL
William Blanc	Gender integration and mapping of livestock vaccine value chains in Kaffrine, Sénégal	Sénégal	Gender Integration into Livestock Vaccine / UF / IDRC

MDP Field Practicum Map 2019

In 2019 for the first time MDP students are carrying out their field practicums in Nepal, Rwanda, and Florida / Georgia, bringing the total number of countries where UF MDP students have worked to 42.



● = Summer 2019 ● = 2011-2018

2019 MDP Graduates : CONGRATULATIONS!

Student	Location	Project Title	Committee Members	Specializations
Angela Melidosian	Argentina	Deathics: Ethical death and dying in psychosocial and spiritual palliative care in Buenos Aires, Argentina	Sarah McKune (Afr Std / Env Glob Hlth) Sheri Kittelson (UF Health Palliative Care)	Spirituality and Health TCD
Breton Homewood	Honduras	From field to table: Men's participation in nutrition decision-making in agrarian households of western Honduras	Catherine Tucker (Lat Amer Std) Becky Williams (OGRE / LSIL) Glenn Galloway (MDP)	Gender & Development Organizational Leadership for Nonprofits Latin American Studies TCD
Carlita Fiestas - Núñez	Brazil	Women entrepreneurs in Brazil recycle used cooking oil to produce artisanal soap, generating income for their vulnerable islander community	Ann Wilkie (SWS) Becky Williams (OGRE / LSIL)	Latin American Studies TCD
Christine Mavrck	Taiwan	Youth in Timur: Collaborative curriculum building for international learning	Rick Stepp (Lat Amer Std / Anthro) Muthusami Kumaran (FYCS) David Sammons (Agronomy)	Organizational Leadership for Nonprofits TCD
Dan Sarafan	Cambodia	An overview of International Justice Mission's Counter Labor Trafficking Initiative in Cambodia	Glenn Galloway (MDP) Michelle Jacobs (Law)	JD TCD
Daniel Acosta	Uganda	Supply chain analysis to reduce cost and improve availability of PPR vaccine in Uganda	Sarah McKune (Afr Std / Env Glob Hlth) Saskia Henderick (LSIL)	African Studies TCD
Emma Lannon	Tanzania	Assessing the expanding role of female entrepreneurship in ecotourism in Arusha, Tanzania	Greg McDonald (Agronomy) Abe Goldman (Afr Std / Geog)	African Studies TCD
Fiona Hogan	Mozambique	Community development and conservation: A case study from Maputo Special Reserve, Mozambique	Brian Child (Afr Std / Geog) Elizabeth Pienaar (WEC)	African Studies TCD
Maria Waked	Argentina	Pedagogical trekking as a tool for sustainable tourism in Tilcara, Argentina	Ana Puig (Education) Andrew Noss (MDP)	Latin American Studies Spirituality and Health TCD
Mary Vasilevsky	Israel / Palestine / Jordan	Building peace with water in the Middle East: Organizational risk assessment of environmental peacebuilding initiatives of Ecopeace Middle East	Sebastian Galindo (AEC) Michael Oleza (FRE) Fazil Najafi (Civil & Coastal Eng) Tamir Sorek (Soc, Crim Law)	Environmental Education and Communication TCD
Nicholas Díaz	Uganda	Assessing nutritional health behaviors and attitudes in Karamoja, Uganda	Sarah McKune (Afr Std / Env Glob Hlth) Renata Serra (Afr Std)	African Studies Public Health TCD

MDP Alumni: New Stories of Success

Eunmi Song (Cohort 6)

"After graduating from the UF MDP Program in 2017 I started to work at GDC (Global Development Cooperation) Consulting, based in South Korea. They provide consulting services throughout the entire process of ODA (Official Development Assistance) project implementation: planning, delivering, monitoring & evaluation, and feedback. GDC Consulting also provides tailored services for Korean businesses to develop their market strategies using ODA projects as a bridge-head for their overseas expansion.

I started at GDC as a manager. This year I was promoted to associate principal. I really enjoy working here. I have been involved in several projects in diverse areas such as energy, rural development, agriculture, health and education. These projects include micro-grid solar power projects for Myanmar and the Philippines, a rural development project through agricultural product processing, as well as project management and project monitoring & evaluation for a sports and education program. My experience in the MDP program has been really helpful for working in GDC consulting. All course work from development theory to evaluation and monitoring as well as the field practicum have been very helpful.

The MDP Program provided me with extensive information and knowledge in many fields like business marketing, environment, energy, education, design of training programs, urban development, human rights and gender equality.

The MDP time was a best moment in my life. Thank you. I have other good news too. Last year, I was married to Kang Ju Hyun. When I was in Gainesville, we were a long-distance couple."



MDP Alumni: New Stories of Success (cont.)

Ben Christ (Cohort 5)

“Since July 2017, I have been working as a social scientist focusing on stakeholder engagement with a USDA-NIFA funded Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP) entitled SPARC, the Southeast Partnership for Advanced Renewables from Carinata. We are a public-private partnership that aims to commercialize the oilseed Brassica carinata as a winter crop alternative for Southeastern farmers. What makes Carinata special is its sustainable production, its potential as a feedstock for renewable fuel for the aviation industry, and the many valuable co-products that can be harvested from its processing.

One of my main activities is to understand the barriers and opportunities for Southeastern producers to adopt this crop into their current rotations, so I have really tapped into the experience I gained working with producers in Brazil during my MDP.

Another focus of mine is establishing a learning network for our stakeholders called the Carinata Community of Practice, a think tank of sorts that will ideally guide the crop’s establishment well beyond the scope of SPARC.

My involvement with SPARC also allows me to focus on other interests I developed during the MDP, such as fostering effective team dynamics and facilitating effective communication between stakeholder groups. Also, as a staff researcher in UF’s School of Forest Resources & Conservation, I have been able to maintain close ties with other UF programs, particularly the Tropical Conservation and Development (TCD-UF) program. I recently facilitated their Spring 2019 Faculty and Staff retreat and hope to provide similar support in the future.”



MDP Alumni: New Stories of Success (cont.)

Rosanna Kingston (Cohort 6)

“Seed Programs International recently hired me as their new Program Coordinator in Asheville, North Carolina. Seed Programs International is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization dedicated to providing access to good quality vegetable seeds, expertise, and gardening training materials to humanitarian organizations around the world in order to alleviate hunger and poverty.

In my new role, my responsibilities are to build up new partnerships with NGOs, manage existing projects, monitor and follow up with reporting on the projects, and expand corporate engagement by implementing a new corporate social responsibility program (CSR). Within the first week in my position, I was given the task to coordinate and implement a seed packing event at the Million Dollar Round Table annual conference in Miami Beach. Over 150 volunteers assembled 19,000 seed packets in two hours and the seed will support schools and orphanages gardens project in Honduras.

I’m learning all about vegetable seeds. I’m excited to apply all the skills I learned in the MDP program, especially logical and monitoring and evaluation frameworks. My goal is to continue growing the existing programs, standardize some of them, and introduce the frameworks. I’m thrilled by what is to come with these new partnerships and the impact that it could have in many communities around the world.”

Here is a video which explains more about this:

<https://youtu.be/AcdnEhUdFh0>



Faculty Spotlight (and a great piece of history about how the MDP Program started): Dr. Philip Williams

"There are lots of ways to give back. Someone who is now working as a practitioner will be a good mentor: Time, talent, treasure."

Dr. Williams thank you so much for your time. We know there are many things going on. First, you are leaving. We are very sad but at the same time very grateful for all your thoughtful and invaluable work as Director of the Center for Latin American Studies.

We want to dedicate our Faculty Spotlight this Spring to know more about your experience during the last decade as Director of one of MDP's supporting Centers.

Let's start with your career. When, how and why did you start the path that brought you here?

PW: Sure. I would also love to talk about MDP because my directorship completely overlaps with the creation of the MDP Program.

I came to UF in 1989. I was hired in the Political Science Department but fortunately I had my office on the third floor of Grinter, because I was also an Affiliate Faculty member in the Center for Latin American Studies. I had the opportunity to teach courses in Latin American politics.

By virtue of having my office here on the third floor of Grinter I became very involved with the Center, particularly in the MALAS Program (the only Master's Program at the time). I chaired and served on many MALAS committees over the years. The Center became my intellectual home and community even more than my department.

I did a Master's in Latin American Studies before I did my Doctorate at Oxford, so my training was always interdisciplinary. My Doctorate was in Politics as they call it in the UK or Political Science here, but I always identified myself as a Latin Americanist first.

Why Latin America Dr. Williams?

PW: Well that interest started when I was an undergraduate. I took a course in Latin American Politics in the late 70s and at that time there was a lot of political conflict in Central America as you know. We were reading about Central American politics and about the civil wars that



were going on in Nicaragua and in El Salvador. I was also taking a Spanish class and one of my classmates was from El Salvador, and she had fled the country with her family because of the violence. Talking to her about those topics put a human face to something I was reading about in the abstract, and to hear her story and her family's story really drew me in. When I went to Oxford I was going to earn my Master's in Politics but I was increasingly interested in Central America and understanding the roots of the conflict there. I learned about the Latin American Studies Program and I was able to earn the Master's in Latin American Studies instead. In my early work I focused on religion and politics in Latin America: my Master's thesis was on Nicaragua and the role of religion in politics, particularly the Sandinista revolution and the political conflict between the Sandinista government and the Catholic Church afterwards. And for my dissertation I did a comparative study on the Catholic Church and politics in Nicaragua and Costa Rica. I spent five months in Nicaragua and seven months in Costa Rica as part of the research for that dissertation, that became my first published book.

I actually continued my work in religion and politics and social change in the Americas doing research in El Salvador and in Peru and with diasporic communities of Salvadorans and Peruvians in the United States. I also had the opportunity to go back to Central America on a Fulbright in 1991-1992 at the UCA in El Salvador, a year and a half after the Jesuits were massacred at the UCA. I went with my wife and she was five months pregnant! (laugh). I was

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Philip Williams (cont.)

in the Sociology Department where one of the Jesuits had been killed. I was teaching classes there and it was a very difficult time for the University because they had cut off the intellectual core of the University (the Rector and the Vice Rector of Research). I started doing new research, some related to the emergence of the Evangelical movement in the country, but then got more interested in the military and the peace process, and the experience of the everyday militarization in peoples' lives. I began to write a book with a friend who's a historian in El Salvador about the militarization of the Salvadoran state and society and the process of demilitarization starting with the peace accords. The hardest part for me was to interview active and retired military officers whose backgrounds and participation in human rights violations and atrocities I knew.

I have done work also on transnational migration in Peru and El Salvador and a project about migration to new destinations in Florida. I also worked with a interdisciplinary/multinational group of researchers in the Metro Atlantic area to study Brazilian, Guatemalan and Mexican immigrants. Our counterparts from Brazil, Guatemala and Mexico were able to do comparative research in the United States as well to see the multiple dimensions of transnational migration.

Thanks Dr. Williams. It is very interesting how it started with the story of your classmate in your undergraduate Spanish class. Many of us can relate to this experience of learning through the voices of people who participated in events that we know only by reading about them.

PW: I am sure that many Latin Americanists who are not from Latin America have had similar experiences.

Here at UF my physical location and community was here at the Center. I did have some administrative experience in my Department where I served as Chair between 2004-2007. There was a search for a new Director here in 2008-2009. I was not a candidate initially, but many events led me to accept the offer to apply and to get the position in 2009. I came in as Director at exactly the same time when the MDP Program started. A group of faculty had received a MacArthur Foundation grant so we had the seed money to start developing the MDP Program.

One of the biggest challenges was first to get the Degree Program approved. I remember going to the Faculty

Senate and various Committees before the degree was approved by the Board of Governors. Those processes were going to take some time but we wanted to advertise, recruit and select students to begin as soon as the fall of 2010. That first year students had to apply to the MALAS Program and that was a great first collaboration between both Programs. Our first MDP Cohort in the fall of 2010 took a leap of faith under the promise they would be enrolled in the MDP Program later in the fall.

We MDP students certainly appreciate the support of both the Latin American and African Studies Centers in many ways: funding, assistantships, practicum grants and advising, among others.

PW: Early on it was a team effort, of course, and not only in Latin American and African Studies but also across campus. The MDP Program initially was run by a committee and it was clear to me early on that we needed more support for the direction of the Program. As part of the MacArthur grant there were matching funds provided by UF. Initially these funds were allocated to hire faculty. We hired one faculty member in the area of Global Health in the first year. For the second faculty search in 2010-2011 I convinced the group that we urgently needed to use these funds to hire a full-time Director for the Program, and that's how Dr. Glenn Galloway started as our MDP Program Director. We met him at CATIE when he was the Dean of the Graduate Program and he was very involved with the MDP Program at CATIE as well. We were at CATIE at the Global MDP Summit. It was great for us that someone with his experience accepted to be our MDP Program Director. That is one of the decisions of which I am most proud—first deciding to have a Director for MDP (that was not planned at the beginning) and then getting Dr. Galloway on board to lead the Program. The other position was getting an MDP Coordinator on board as well. These positions are funded permanently and it provides continuity to the Program, and that is very important for us.

It is good for us to know the history of how our Program works. For us as students having Glenn and Andy working with us day-by-day is such a valuable support from both the Latin American and African Studies Centers.

PW: Yes when I look back on my tenure as Director that's one of the things of which I am most proud—on getting

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Philip Williams (cont.)

the MDP Program started, and seeing it flourish and grow over the years with the number of cohorts that have now graduated. It is being part of something that started from scratch. Obviously the MacArthur funding was crucial early on to support the two faculty hires and the staff positions and the students. The challenge now that the MacArthur funding has been used up is to achieve self-sufficiency for the Program. It is always a challenge to find funds for students and their Field Practicums. And it is going to be a challenge for the future as well.

Having said this Dr. Williams, how would you summarize the value and importance of the MDP Program for the Center?

PW: The MDP's emphases and the interdisciplinary nature of the Program are key, along with bridging the natural and social sciences. It also connects very well with the TCD Program, which also has strong support for practitioners. In some ways there was a foundation for practitioners already in place with TCD. The part that wasn't there at TCD was obviously the Global Health part. I think that the MDP Program was a natural outgrowth of this TCD foundation incorporating other elements and areas and expertise on campus to support the four pillars. And the MDP has had an impact on our Master's Program as well.

Our MALAS students previously only had a thesis option but our students requested, and an external review recommended, that we offer something similar to the Field Practicum. Many of our students want to continue on to a PhD Program or want to do a research-based thesis. But MALAS students with a more applied vision or focus can now pursue our capstone and internship options. They are not exactly the same as the field practicum but provide a more practical option for MALAS students, and are a positive spill-over effect from MDP to MALAS.

What's the importance of a practitioner and of incorporating more practitioner experiences in academia?

PW: I think the value of MDP is not just that it is a practitioner program but it is also the training the MDP students receive in the four pillars. You have your areas

of specialization but you are also generalist practitioners. I would relate it to medicine. You have a General Practitioner who can interact and engage with specialists in more particular and narrow topics. This "General Practitioner" training of MDP students is very valuable. You have in the development field people very specialized in agronomy, soil sciences, water, global health and many other specialized areas. Often they are doing very basic research but the practitioner is someone who can understand and interact with all of these people and also be able to manage whole projects with a sustainability vision. I think you are professionals who can interact, engage, understand and put people together in the development field.

That's how we feel—that we get the tools to be able to work and perform a bridging role in the development field.

PW: And it is because you have the training in the four pillars. Other people don't have this training and that is unique.

What do you think are currently the main challenges in Development Studies and Practice?

PW: In the region where I have experience working, in Latin America, I think the biggest development challenge comes from extractive industries. Putting on my Political Science hat I see that regardless of the political ideology of governments that come to power in Latin America all of them are wedded to an extractivist ideology of development, even those countries that adopted Buen Vivir in their constitution or some version of that. The difference in some of the governments on the left is that they try to increase their revenues and distribute them more equitably, but revenues are still tied to extractive industries. For whatever government we are talking about, extractivism is the silver bullet for development, to generate revenue, export earnings and GDP. Some of the post-extractivism discourse has certainly been co-opted, but there is still no vision for Development beyond extractivism in the political movements and parties that essentially control power in Latin America or have the opportunity to control power in the next elections. I see the political dimension as the biggest challenge. And then the other side is that if you look at conflicts, what is the major source of conflict in Latin America? It is extractivism. It is generating many

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Philip Williams (cont.)

conflicts or exacerbating the ones that are already happening. It is the same model even in governments that have tried to portray themselves as post-neoliberal governments.

Having said that, there are communities that are fighting back and there is a reason for optimism too. The situation is not how it was twenty years ago. There are also countries where communities have been able to hold referenda and stop mining projects for example. There are examples of successes out there.

And academia and practitioners coming from these spaces of reflection and discussion have an important role to play there.

PW: For sure, academics, practitioners and activists as well. There are communities who agree with these projects but now they want to opt in but on their own terms. They want to see benefits for their own communities. And there are others that want to opt out and they have been successful on this as well.

Dr. Williams thank you so much for your reflections about our Program and all the important topics we have talked about today. We appreciate your time and all your support and guidance through all these years. As a last question: What are your major takeaways from your experience as the Center for Latin American Studies Director during the past ten years?

PW: About the Center, the Center for Latin American Studies is a very special place and that's something I recognized early on when I was an Assistant Professor. I had the fortune to be placed here and feel the sense of community and solidarity. This is a space where you can be really engaged in interdisciplinary work and dialogue and I think it is a space that doesn't exist on campus anywhere else, or at least I have not seen it, and I have reaffirmed and continued nurturing it during my time as Director. But it is all about the staff, faculty and the students. We have been very blessed with all of you in our Center and our Programs. I have no doubt going forward that the spirit of solidarity and community will continue regardless of who they decide to appoint as Director because our staff, faculty and the students will make

sure that it does. There is a sense of loyalty and identity with the Center that again I have not seen anywhere else on campus. And it is amazing. And I have affiliate faculty all the time telling me that they want to join us. We are special. And this Center is so special to me.

What advice would you give to MDP Students?

PW: Obviously when you go out on the job market afterwards and marketing yourselves you will talk about this Program and promote it. It also is going to help students who follow you. The example that you set as professionals is going to reflect on the Program and I know that MDP students have done great work and that's the best advertisement for the Program. You should be incredibly proud of the Program you've been part of. And besides the kind of job you're going to do it is important to promote the Program as well and to let people know out in the development world about the high quality of faculty and students in the Program. And don't forget the MDP Program when you leave! It is important to support the Program too. Even if it is a small amount or whatever you can do, it makes a difference. It is important to give back to the Program not just money but also your talent. Come back. You will be part of an incredible network for future students and also through Practitioner Forums and mentoring. There are lots of ways to give back. Someone who is now working as a practitioner will be a good mentor: **Time, talent, treasure.**

Spring Socials and MDP end-of-year potluck at the Galloway-Upegui home!



And some Final Presentations...

Christine Mavrick, Breton Homewood, Dylan Rigsby, Carlita Fiestas and Emma Lannon were among the MDP graduating students who gave their final presentations during the spring.



MDP UF Foundation Donations

We have all been witness to the invaluable work being carried out by MDP Students with broad, cross-departmental faculty support and by our growing body of alumni.

Now this is an opportunity to contribute to our exciting program! The MDP UF Foundation Account will support MDP students, for example, in the realization of their capstone field practicums and to attend relevant conferences where they can present their work and engage with other practitioners. Donations can be made online at:

https://www.uff.ufl.edu/give-now/?fund_id=020485

Thanks for your support.

***Have a great summer.
Wishing you safe travels and
unforgettable adventures
from our MDP family to yours.***