Emerging Ideas

Ohio University
International
Development Studies
Program Newsletter

Editors
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Bob Walter, Program Director

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Stay Connected with IDS
Alumni, we would like to hear from you! Send your updated contact information, comments/suggestions, or questions to development.studies@ohio.edu
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Ohio University International Development Studies Linkedin Group
& IDS at Ohio University Facebook Group

New First Year IDS Cohort
Welcome to the Fall 2013 edition of Emerging Ideas, the newsletter of the IDS program. Thanks to the diligent work of Courtney Ward, you have another interesting issue introducing the new students in the program, highlighting two alumni, reporting on an innovative economics class, presenting a short biography of an affiliated faculty, and emphasizing happenings in International Development Studies. To the alumni of the program, I welcome hearing from you and learning what you are doing. In fact, I am very often amazed at how many of you stay in touch and want to share recent happenings. I recently heard from an alumnus who is working in Nepal and has been consulting on this project for 2 years. She writes:

"... it is a master plan for Agriculture commercialization in the central region, funded by JICA [for which she works]. Following this study project, the actual technical assistance project for 5 years will be implemented. Therefore, it is a very important study. In addition to the study, we implemented 11 small scale pilot projects in 5 sites, where we had work with local farmers on the horticulture, fruit, livestock activities. Accessibility to these places is not very good, being located in the hill/mountain areas in Nepal. And cars we used are really old and beat-en-up!!! Dr. Walter!! We drive on the dark road on the edge of the hills where we could fall with small driving mistakes, and none of the cars have seat belts! But we have finished those projects, and survived! We are now writing the draft final report in Kathmandu."

Doesn't this sound like fascinating, rewarding, exciting work? I am sure many of you have equally stimulating experiences, and I want to hear of them. For the next edition of Emerging Ideas, I would like to highlight things you are doing. To do that, I need to hear from you! Send me an e-mail at walter@ohio.edu about where you are and what you are doing. I look forward to learning the work our alumni do in the global community.

Out of the many applicants that applied to the program last year (a record number), we wound up with 20 new students in the class of 2015 (see the list in this newsletter). I find a number of striking things about the 2015 cohort. There are 13 countries represented by the 20 new students. The diversity of countries is surprising - Kosovo, Niger, Nepal, Chile, and Malawi to name a few. I am not sure the program has ever had a student from these countries. Of the 20 new students, four are Fulbright scholars, and this means the program now has a total of seven when combined with the 2014 cohort. Fully 25 percent of the program students are Fulbright scholars! The final prominent aspect about this class is that all were able to find financial support. Many have aid from the IDS program and from Fulbright, but others were able to be supported by different units of the university - our Global Learning Center, Office of Multi-Cultural Access and Retention, TRIO/Upward Bound, Institute for Tropical Disease, and College of Medicine. The IDS students have skills useful everywhere! My goal is to expand the financial aid pool and widen the possibilities even more.

During this fall semester, I have had a Graduate Research Scholarship (GRS) student conduct a survey of a number of other master's level development studies programs - to highlight what is unique about these other programs, to indicate what they have and the IDS program does not, and to suggest critical aspects that we should add to our program to remain competitive and produce...
well trained practitioners. I have the report which lays out the recommendations; it has some very strong suggestions on elements to add. For those of you reading this newsletter, do you have one or two suggestions of things you would like to see in the program? What one element would you like to have had in your program? Your feedback and suggestions are most welcome and could help strengthen the curriculum.

Finally, I want to mention our expanding linkages with the Tropical Disease Institute of Biomedical Sciences Department and the Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine: http://www.oucom.ohiou.edu/tdi/. The program has been cooperating with TDI since 1998, starting when Professor William Romoser was Director of the Development Studies Program (now IDS). Since that time, we have had students working in Ecuador with the TDI summer program. Just this last year, we were able to create a named and dedicated Graduate Assistant position for the Healthy Living Initiative project of TDI. In addition, two students from IDS have been working as Teaching Assistants for HLI. This year, we are strongly promoting the summer program of HLI in Ecuador, and have many students preparing to go. Experience with this summer program greatly strengthens the practice element of IDS. HLI is a model of what would be ideal for other world regions. As we look to build linkages to other programs of the university, such as environmental studies, HLI is also our framework. Wouldn’t it be terrific if we have such linkages and summer programs with each of our five academic concentrations? That is a goal worth pursuing!

*Photos of IDS students, Fall Term 2013*
# New IDS Class of 2015 Cohort

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<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Home Country</th>
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<tr>
<td>Anesa Colakovic</td>
<td>Kosovo</td>
<td>Fulbright Scholar</td>
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<td>Anu Aryal</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
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<td>Ariana Bovell</td>
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<td>Hadiza Amadou</td>
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<td>Keikotlhae Koodibetse</td>
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<td>Michelle Acevedo</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
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<td>Nelson Patterson</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>IDS Graduate Assistant for Healthy Living Initiative</td>
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<td>Papa Ndiaye</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>GRS</td>
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<td>Sabena Thomas</td>
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<td>Office of Multicultural Access and Retention Graduate Assistant</td>
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<td>Sam Hudson</td>
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<td>Sana Mahumud</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Fulbright Scholar</td>
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<td>Sherica Hawthorne</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>GRS/elearning facilitator</td>
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<td>Steven Richardson</td>
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<td>Tamara Jimah</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
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<td>Tapiwa Misisha</td>
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<td>Toluwani Adeknule</td>
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Catching up with
IDS Alumni

Stephanie Jackson, Class of 1998

Stephanie Jackson, Assistant Director, Undergraduate Advising & Professional Development, in the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs at the Georgia Institute of Technology has received a Fulbright International Education Administrator Award (IEA) to the United Kingdom (UK). Jackson is among the initial cohort of twenty U.S. international education and senior-level university administrators that were awarded a grant to the UK. Fulbright Scholars for the IEA Program were evaluated through a peer review process organized through the Council for International Exchange of Scholars, nominated by the U.S.-UK Fulbright Commission, and then approved by the presidentially appointed, Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

The Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. The IEA program in the UK is designed to familiarize U.S. higher education administrators with the United Kingdom’s higher education systems, society and cultures through campus visits, cultural events, meetings with government officials and briefings. Interactive sessions of U.S. and U.K. administrators will be facilitated to share best practice in both directions across the Atlantic.

At the seminar, Jackson will continue to cultivate the international reputation of both the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs as well as the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts. "I am greatly enthusiastic about the knowledge and connections to be gained...and stand ready to work towards a framework that provides improved cultural support for our growing UK student populations and more mobility and opportunity for both U.S. and UK students to pursue endeavors in these nations."

Jackson’s selection for the IEA award allows her to leverage her role as advisor for the International Plan and also builds on the Georgia Tech Strategic Plan to graduate good global citizens. "A significant component of the strategic plan is the globalization of our education with emphasis on cultural competency. This Fulbright award allows me to enhance, influence and inform these strategic plan implementation steps as the Nunn School and Georgia Tech collaborate to promote global leadership."

Jackson manages the full range of student support services for undergraduates, as well as career development for all graduate students in the Nunn School and leads career initiatives for the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts. She is a Past President of the Georgia Tech Academic Advising Network (GTAAN) and has been recognized at the college, Institute, and state level for her exemplary performance. She has a Master’s of International Affairs degree in International Development from Ohio University and a Bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Howard University. She is an active liaison with the Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs and a member of the Georgia Association of International Educators and the National Academic Advising Association.
In April 2011, Ohio University began working with University of Calabar (UNICAL) and USAID-funded C-Change/Nigeria to strengthen UNICAL’s capacity for teaching social and behavior change communication (SBCC) curriculum. SBCC utilizes various types of communication strategies to effect positive and sustainable changes at all levels of society. The USAID-funded Communication for Change (C-Change) grant and Ohio University’s facilitation helped UNICAL achieve two important milestones: the establishment of an M.A. program in SBCC and a Graduate Diploma in Theater, Media, and Change Communication (GDTMS) to train future SBCC practitioners. In doing so, UNICAL, which is Nigeria’s southeastern Cross River State’s premier education institute, set a precedent for innovation, initiative, and institutionalization of best practices. Following in UNICAL’s footsteps, Nigeria’s Kogi State University and Calabar University of Technology also expressed their commitment towards establishing similar programs.

Through my work with UNICEF-Ohio University’s Learning Course on Communication for Development (C4D), I met Dr. Karen Greiner, Ohio University faculty and C-Change consultant, and figured out a way to unite my passions for theater and for development: Dr. Greiner asked me to shadow her on her next trip to Nigeria so that I could observe USAID’s C-Change in action and also meet with UNICAL faculty and students to see what Theater for Development (TfD) was all about. I then utilized all of fall semester 2013 to develop a research proposal and seek funding for my trip. I pitched my proposal to various entities including the Community Research Alliance, Ohio University’s CRSCA, IDS chair Dr. Bob Walter, and GSS. Fortunately, I received funding from all four sources and also obtained the Nigerian visa. Inspired and eager to explore TfD, I flew to Calabar in March 2013 and spent two weeks with UNICAL’s SBCC and GDTMS faculty and students to understand the “how,” “what,” “why,” and most importantly, the “so what” of the SBCC and GDTMS programs. Given my own theater background as well as my passion for international development, I was especially interested in exploring how the marriage between theater and development works in theory and in practice.

Upon my arrival, Nene Okon, a student in UNICAL’s M.A. in SBCC program, got in touch with me and we were able to set up a focused group discussion with all five students in the SBCC initiative. The students spoke in detail about the SBCC curriculum, their various social scientific research projects, and their grassroots field experiences pertaining to TfD, all the while referring to SBCC theories. I then spent time with the students on an individual basis and learned more about their projects. One of these meetings turned into a fortunate trip to watch and participate in Veronica Oko’s theater play rehearsal. It was exciting to see some TfD in action as the students danced, rehearsed their lines, and discussed important social issues. I was also able to have one-on-one meetings with UNICAL’s core SBCC and GDTMS faculty, including Dr. Chris Nwamuo, Dr. Esekong.
Andrew, Dr. Liwu Betiang, and Dr. Jonathan Mbachaga. Moreover, I met with Dr. Edet Essian, the Chair of UNICAL’s Theater and Media Studies Department. The faculty touched upon important issues pertaining to the sustainability and expansion of the two programs and pointed towards the department’s resource constraints. However, their experience, resourcefulness, and commitment to social change shone through as they spoke about their work. I also sat through Dr. Betiang’s TfD class and conducted participatory ethnographic observation, which gave me a firsthand experience of the learning environment. Dr. Betiang then shared with me ‘before and after SBCC’ course syllabi and I noticed a marked difference in the curriculum. Finally, Dr. Andrew provided me with a copy of his student’s thesis titled, TfD to Promote WASH in Calabar’s Schools, which revealed to me the impressive level of research and scholarship within the department.

Overall, my discussions with UNICAL faculty and students not only inspired me and increased my TfD knowledge but also resulted in valuable insights, which can be useful for any individual or community striving to improve their social, political, and economic conditions. Through these interactions, I saw a valuable lesson for Pakistan from little Calabar: the lack of electricity, classroom facilities, resources, and funding has not dampened UNICAL’s spirits and commitment to social change. As the UNICAL faculty have pointed out, with course objectives focused on equipping students with the skills necessary for successful careers in SBCC, by providing more trainings and tools for faculty, and by encouraging self-sufficiency, SBCC and GDTMS can not only deliver positive outcomes in Nigeria but also can surely be replicated and be successful in other parts of the world as well. The next steps in this research project are to develop a short ‘think piece’ for Mazi, The Communication for Social Change Consortium’s online report. Further down the line, this research will be developed into a paper and presented at communication conferences, such as the International Communication Association’s annual conference, and submitted to communication research journals, such as Communication for Development and Social Change.
This term, Dr. Julia Paxton is once again teaching her Economics of Poverty class, and a number of IDS students are enrolled. She teaches both an undergraduate and graduate version of the course, and both are unique in their approach. The class has a service learning component to it which has grown each of the eight years Dr. Paxton has taught the course at Ohio University. Each student is required to put in at least 20 hours of curricular based community service during the term as part of the course requirements. While the class itself is not new to Ohio University, Dr. Paxton is trying to get this and other courses offered here to have an “S” or “Service” designation. In fact, Dr. Paxton is the Arts and Sciences Representative at the Center for Campus and Community Engagement (CCCE). She and others are working to make service learning a more integral part of the Ohio University curriculum for undergraduates.

By creating courses with a service designation, students will be able to actively engage in the needs of the Athens community while pursuing a degree here. The CCCE is also working on creating a Community Service certificate for undergraduate students to encourage a culture of altruism at Ohio University. Because Dr. Paxton was born and raised in Athens, she says she understands the needs of the community and realizes that many students are unaware of such problems. She hopes to combine the two, oftentimes disconnected worlds of the Ohio University community and the Athens community by encouraging students to get involved in local nonprofit and charity organizations. As the poorest county in Ohio, there are a number of critical needs being unmet for many residents of Athens.

Graduate students in Dr. Paxton’s Economics of Poverty course have the choice of volunteering with three different organizations during the term. Students can help make breakfast for homeless residents at the Timothy House Homeless Shelter, a part of the local charity, Good Works. Students may also volunteer their time at Reuse Industries, a non-profit organization that collects donated items and either refurbishes or sells them to the community at low cost. Lastly, students can volunteer for the brand new College Bound Bobcat Club, an initiative at Athens Middle School that aims to introduce middle school students to the ins and outs of being a college student at Ohio University. As a part of the service component of the course, students also visited the Southeast Ohio Foodbank in Logan, and helped to pack over 1,500 boxes of food for needy senior citizens. The class also conducted a series of randomized control trials involving collecting food and money on campus to donate to the Athens Food Pantry. Students keep a service learning journal throughout the term to reflect on their experiences of volunteering in Athens. Dr. Paxton feels that while many of the international students enrolled have experienced or seen poverty in their home countries, they are oftentimes unaware of the poverty issues that can prevail in places like Appalachia as well.
Dr. Devika Chawla is Associate Professor in the School of Communication Studies, Ohio University. She completed her Ph.D. in Communication Studies from Purdue University in 2004 with emphases in narrative theories, socio-cultural anthropology, and family studies. A broad philosophical question guides her research program: How do human beings make, re-make, un-make themselves in and through the relationships that surround them and the resources—social, political, economic—that are available to them? Dr. Chawla’s scholarly work focuses upon communicative, performative, and narrative approaches to studying identity in developing world contexts, specifically the Indian subcontinent. Her areas of intellectual interest, and those in which she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses, include postcolonial and transnational studies, cultural and performance studies, critical ethnography, and autobiography. Her essays have been published in numerous communication and interdisciplinary periodicals and a number of edited volumes such as Women & Language, Cultural Studies <> Critical Methodologies, International Journal of Qualitative Methods, International and Intercultural Communication Annual, Qualitative Inquiry, Storytelling, Self, and Society, Semiotics, and the Handbook of Autoethnography among others. She is the author of two books (with Dr. Amardo Rodriguez, Syracuse University)—Intercultural Communication: An Ecological Approach (2010) and Liminal Traces: Storying, Performing, and Embodying Postcoloniality (2011).

Dr. Chawla’s most recent work is a cross-generational oral history project that engages the complex thematic of home, travel, and identity in the oral histories of Hindu and Sikh refugees in India’s 1947 Partition. Three years of fieldwork on this project has culminated into her forthcoming book, Home, Uprooted: Oral Histories of India’s Partition, which will be released by Fordham University Press in Spring 2014.
As I mentioned in the Spring 2013 newsletter, we are implementing a mentor program for IDS students. The 2014 class of the program has acted as mentors to the 2015 cohort. Because the two classes are very unequal in size, the linkages cannot be a one-on-one relationship and are not as ideal as one might like. They are more informal than is planned for the future. For the graduating 2014 class, I am now linking them to alumni who will assist the graduates with a range of advice - on job searches, on possible positions, on adjustment, on anything the graduate asks. While I anticipate it will take a few iterations to get it right, I believe this is good beginning. Currently, I have a list of alumni who have agreed to participate in the mentor program, but if you are not sure your name is on the list or if you want to participate and I have not contacted you, let me know: walter@ohio.edu. Not only should it make the transition from student to practitioner easier, but it will also enhance the ties of our alumni to the program.

From discussions with current students, with speakers in our development practitioners lecture series, and with professionals in the field, it is clear that we need to add two components to our program as soon as possible. These are a **grant writing** module and a **project management** element. Just what form these will take is not clear at present, but what is evident is that these are high priority. They may be short workshops; slightly longer, multiple meeting training; or partial semester courses. They would fit easily into the Methods distribution requirement of the program, and would provide graduates with much better skills. By the time of the newsletter for the spring of 2015, I hope to have a better idea of how we can add these and the form they will take. With any luck, we will have at least one of these in place.

Finally, next year is the 50th anniversary of the Center for International Studies. We have started the planning process for a celebration, and all programs in the Center will be having activities to commemorate the occasion. We have not decided how just how the IDS program will participate, but one idea would be to attempt a reunion of some sort. The anniversary event will probably be in November, in conjunction with International Education Week. By the time our Spring semester is done, I hope to have a decision of the IDS role and will discuss it in that newsletter. Stay tuned!