Dear Friends and Colleagues of the IEDP,

The 2014-2015 cohort is off to a great start! This year IEDP welcomed a very international group from eleven countries including: China, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, South Korea, USA, and Venezuela. We are now in our fourth week of classes and are beginning to dive into the complexities of International Educational Development.

Our cohort is taking a number of GSE courses and electives from other schools and programs, broadening our perspectives and supplying us with new skills.
While we have been spending much of our time studying, we have also taken time to get to know each other in less formal environments. Last weekend on September 20th, Dr. Wagner and his wife Mary Eno hosted the IEDP Annual Fall Event at their home with a delicious brunch.

In this first Newsletter of the academic year we would like to share with you some of our academic and social activities. Below you will find a welcome note from Dr. Dan Wagner, a special interview with former President of Bolivia Carlos Mesa, and pictures and stories of our activities both inside and outside the classroom.

On behalf of our cohort, we are thrilled to be part of GSE’s Centennial class and are looking forward to sharing our experiences of the year.

Best Regards,

Irene Greaves and Abby Wacker
Co-editors

Dr. Dan Wagner’s Welcome Note

I’m pleased to welcome our new students to IEDP at Penn GSE for the academic year 2014-15, and to this issue of the IEDP monthly newsletter. It is truly a pleasure to have each and every one of you with us this year (both newbies and old timers). You are a highly talented and diverse group, and you will add greatly to the life and spirit of our program, and to Penn more generally. So, we thank you in advance! Also, as you already know, we have an exciting year ahead, in many ways. Upcoming visiting

Twitter

Does telling students to respect each other do more harm than good? gu.com/p/4vkhd via @guardian
3 Strategies for getting #humanrights on the #development agenda: ow.ly/BuE9L via @openRights_oD
#NGOs “turn people into dependent victims and blunt the edges of political resistance.” – Arundhati Roy via @massalijn ow.ly/Bs5iX
Students in #Punjab #Pakistan will be able to access course material online bit.ly/1uSm79x via @etribune
2eLearnPunjab
With Schools Doubling as Shelters in Northern Iraq, Class Wait nyt.ms/1oG2rr8 via @nytimes

Social Media Updates

IEDP has been expanding our social media presence to keep you updated on what we’re doing.

- See what current students are up to via our Tumb
- Follow the program on Twitter @IEDP_PennGSE
- Subscribe to our daily paper with the latest development news stories
- Read our Tweets in story form via Storify
- Join our community via LinkedIn
- Like our brand new official Facebook page
- And keep checking our website!

Upcoming IEDP Lectures

Scott Paris, Vice President of Research
Educational Testing Service
Monday, October 13, 2014
speakers such as Wadi Haddad (World Bank) and Scott Paris (Educational Testing Service) and others will be here this Fall, along with an exciting roster in the Spring. Social and intellectual events are non-stop at Penn, as you have already discovered — as well as the many diverse courses you are taking. We are looking forward to getting to know you, and having you as part of the IEDP family.

Dan Wagner, UNESCO Chair in Learning and Literacy Professor of Education, and Director, International Literacy Institute & International Educational Development Program Graduate School of Education University of Pennsylvania 3700 Walnut Street Philadelphia, PA 19104-6216 USA

Rami Khouri, Director Issam Fares Institute, University of Beirut Thursday, November 20, 2014

Shirin Lutfi, Senior Specialist for Basic Education a Literacy Save the Children Thursday, February 12, 2015

Cristina Bicchieri, Sacha Jane Patterson Harvie Professor of Social Thought and Comparative Ethics Department of Philosophy, University of Pennsylvania Thursday, March 26, 2015

Alumni Interest: Molly Crofton

Molly Crofton graduated from IEDP in August of 2013, though she continued on her internship for a couple of months beyond that. Her internship was at UNICEF in South Africa, where she worked on several education projects including a 'virtual schools' platform making educational information and applications available on feature phones.

In March, Molly joined Mathematica Policy Research as a Senior Programmer Analyst. In that role, Molly performs data acquisition, validation and analysis tasks using SAS and Stata. So far she has primarily worked on US education and healthcare research projects, but she hopes to have an opportunity to work on some international projects as well.

Molly has been playing soccer since age five, and fondly remembers her time as captain of the Scrambled
Eggplants, the IEDP intramural soccer team. She says "our record may not have been so glamorous, but we sure had fun!" Her favorite times while in IEDP often involved the rest of her cohort, whether those times were spent on the soccer field, in GSE, or at board game nights.

The two courses that Molly took during IEDP that relate most directly to her work are Program Evaluation and Applied Research and Reporting, as they gave her a foundation in research methods as well as experience with programming in Stata. Beyond those most direct connections to her current work, Molly feels that her IEDP coursework and extracurricular experiences, developed her ability to understand and critique research, and also enhanced her understanding of the importance of context in education and development. She uses the skills acquired in IEDP regularly in her work at Mathematica.

Interview with Bolivia's Former President: Carlos Mesa

Carlos Mesa Gisbert served as Bolivia's Vice-president from 2002 to 2003 and as President from 2003 until his resignation in 2005. A well-known historian and journalist in his country, Mr. Mesa offers a very analytical and comprehensive view on democracy, economics, culture and history of not just Bolivia but the whole of Latin America. He came to the University of Pennsylvania to give a lecture on the Future of Latin America: Challenges and Possibilities for Regional Development on Friday, September 12th, and kindly agreed to be interviewed that morning prior to his presentation. It was a privilege to meet Mr. Mesa and I'm deeply thankful for his time.
Mr. Mesa, our Master Program is called International Educational Development. We have started our course by looking very closely at what exactly we mean when we talk about "development." What does development mean to you?

I think that is a fundamental question in Latin America today because we are heirs to a 'development concept' that in our region gained strength in the decade of the 50's and 60's. Latin American developmental logic linked to ECLA (Economic Commission for Latin America, in Spanish CEPAL) studies and projects of the alliance for progress, and linked to the need for industrialization and communications infrastructure, generated a vision of development that did not take into account the idea of sustainability. And that's an idea that is still strongly rooted in some leaders in Latin America, especially within governments that believe that industrialization, building roads and infrastructure in general is a priority over any other. We view our environmental logic of national parks and preservation of the environment as not something of our own countries but an international imposition that we believe limits our ability to oil exploration or mining. It is a complex subject indeed, I favor the concept of sustainable development and I'm inclined to the view that the preservation of the environment is not only an issue of developed countries, but also an issue of our countries and that if we don't understand it as such, we will pay a very high price. However, we need to understand that there are certain kinds of urgent requirements related to energy for example, where we have to achieve a reasonable marriage between sustainable development and exploration and exploitation of natural resources. This is a pending debate in Bolivia, Ecuador and in all of Latin America. My concept of development is based on the idea of integrality, and integrality cannot stop thinking about
sustainability and preserving the environment in a time when climate change is generating a brutal impact on the world.

Some of the topics we cover in our program include multilingual and multicultural education. Bolivia’s rich cultural diversity can be seen in the different ethnic groups that make up a large percentage of the population. How do you integrate aspects of their culture, languages and traditions in an inclusive education system?

One of the most important conceptual advances in Bolivia was to accept that multiculturalism and multilingualism were elements that enrich the nation. The historical notion of one culture, one nation, one religion and one language was understandable to consolidate the national idea, but it no longer hold true. The government of President Sánchez de Lozada in 1994 gave one of the most important leaps, long before the rise to power of President Morales, when an education reform bill that endorsed multicultural and multilingual education was passed. Establishing a bilingual education in a country like Bolivia where today 36 different cultures (nations) are recognized was extremely important. This multicultural and bilingual or intercultural education as it is called in Bolivia, marks the need to first recognize the other’s distinct culture; second, teaching children in their mother tongue and then gradually, and not violently, introduce them to Castilian (Spanish). Third, establish a link in which the cultural elements of the mestizo culture and the indigenous culture go hand in hand. This is indispensable not only in Bolivia. I think this idea of multiculturalism applies to any country, to USA, to Panama, to Spain or Belgium and the fact that it has already become a constitutional principle in Bolivia is an element to be taken into account. Bolivia changed its name from "Republic of Bolivia" to "Plurinational State of Bolivia" (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia in Spanish). Bolivia remains a republic and the constitution recognizes it as such, but the idea of being plurinational is very interesting.

What role did colonialism play in Latin American societies and how has it impacted (both positively and negatively) in the development of their countries?

This is a debate that is key for me, but I’m not entirely convinced that the concept of colonialism can define Latin America as a nation that suffered European colonialism judging by the result of what Latin America is today. That is, we suffered colonialism of course and colonialism generated a very large impact, yes. But colonialism became an intrinsic part of our vision of culture, in other words, after 300 years of European presence and 200 years of independence, can we say that Latin America is not in any way Western? Is it not
part of the West? I think there is a very significant part of its core values that are Western. Thus, colonialism was originally an external, exogenous factor, but today I think it is part of our identity and our culture. Of course that colonialism had terribly negative elements the remains of which, such as racism and discrimination, we are still paying today. But I think there are other aspects, such as the building of our thought structure, our political structure and our social forms that are positive. In other words, we must make a further discussion on the word colonialism in terms of what I just said.

To what extent did/does a neoliberal economic model affect the development of Latin American countries?

The neoliberal economic model applied orthodoxy and radically is a great mistake and I think that was one of the great problems of Latin America in the early 90s. It was not understood that it had to be applied with certain positive elements of neoliberalism but not in such a rigorous and dogmatic fashion as it was applied. That means I would be heterodox when it comes to the economic model. I think there are very important aspects of neoliberalism, especially what is called fiscal discipline and reasonable and responsible management of the macro-economy, but there are other ways in which one can be more flexible.

Can you think of a specific example of an educational development project or policy undertaken in Bolivia that was successful in creating positive impact for the people?

The most interesting aspect of the Bolivian education reform is ironically a combination of two reforms made by two people who are the political antipodes: President Sánchez de Lozada and President Morales. The concept of intercultural and bilingual education seems to me to be a fundamental contribution. The problem in Bolivia is that the implementation of these two reforms has been discontinued because the second reform judges the first reform to be contradicting it, when in fact they are complementary and yet that adjustment has not been made. This implies a recognition of multiculturalism and the recognition of the need to recover the value of these important cultures that constitute practically half of the population: Aymara, Quechua or Guarani (ethnic groups). That is complemented by something that has been happening in Latin America, the universalization of education and the virtual elimination of illiteracy is the biggest accomplishment in the last 30 years. The road ahead is called quality. The quality of education is dramatically poor in our countries and in Bolivia most notably. The state needs to provide a base of multicultural and bilingual quality education, and we
have to attack a key factor that is a fundamental change in the education of teachers. We must educate those who are educating.

To wrap things up, what is one piece of advice you would give us as we begin our studies in education and development with the goal of making the world a better place?

It's not an easy question. I think we should focus most of our efforts to propose an educational model for teachers to give them the ability to understand the XXI century and what they have to teach. We have to change the analogical chip to the digital chip in the minds of teachers in Latin America.

Note: This interview was conducted in Spanish

As the sun rises on Penn GSE's Centennial year we are celebrating the qualities that have distinguished the School from its founding in 1914. IEDP students joined the celebration. We feel honored to be part of the Centennial class