MDP Program Mission

Prepare a new generation of professionals...
...capable of making meaningful contributions to the complex and interdisciplinary processes of sustainable development throughout the world...
...who understand the multidimensional nature of development challenges and possess the analytical capacity and tools applicable to these challenges...
...and who become critical thinkers concerning development processes and their implications.
Origin of the UF MDP Program

- International Commission on Education for Sustainable Development Practice funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

- Desire to build on nearly 30 years of interdisciplinary collaboration in the pioneering Tropical Conservation & Development (TCD) Program

- UF was selected to receive one of the first MDP, MacArthur Foundation grants
The MDP and UF – Building on tradition, knowledge and experience

- Strong faculty linkages to Latin America and Africa and other parts of the world
- Strong faculty involvement and support across academic departments
- Center for Latin American Studies: 81 years
- Center for African Studies: 50 years
- Tropical Conservation and Development (TCD) Program: over 20 years
• Students are vibrant mix of early and mid-career professionals, international and US citizens
• 40+ core and affiliate faculty from 7+ schools and 20 departments, centers and research institutes
• Innovative, experiential, and non-traditional approaches to student learning
• Bottom-up and community-driven development approaches
*Students complement the MDP degree with a specialization in a thematic area of interest*
Interrelated Student Learning Outcomes

Knowledge
- Classroom activities and assignments
- Understanding of concepts and principles
- Critical thinking
- Communication of complex linkages across realms of knowledge, sectors and scales
- Commitment to lifelong learning

Skills
- Classroom activities and presentations
- Field practice research and application of participatory methodologies
- Writing
- Oral communication
- Analytical skills (i.e. in capstone report)
- Specialization focus for enhancing skills of interest

Professional Behavior
- Ethics and honesty
- Appropriate Interpersonal and intercultural relations
- Cultural sensitivity
- Listening to understand
- Respect for peers, colleagues, faculty and others
- Professional networks
Timeline Indicators for the MDP Program

1. Orientation
2. Meeting with Graduate Coordinator (within two weeks of the start of fall semester)
3. Appointment of supervisory committee chair (first half of first semester)
4. Appointment of additional members of the supervisory committee (end of first semester)
5. Study Plan (end of first semester)
6. Field practicum proposal and field practicum paperwork (mid-point of second semester)
7. Implementation of Field Project (minimum of 10 weeks during the summer months)
8. Poster session, final report, presentation & defense (3rd & early 4th semester)
9. Graduation! (fourth semester)
Field Practicum

• 10-12 weeks between first and second academic year
• Work with a host organization on a topic/theme of mutual interest, define terms of reference and deliverables
  – Identify topic/theme for the field practicum
  – Develop and agree on a coherent set of goals and intermediate objectives
  – Design and implement the strategies/activities to pursue such goals
• Dual purpose of the FP: provide service to a host organization and fulfill academic requirement of the degree
• See website for posters and final reports of field practicums
Field Practicum Locations – So far
Examples of field practicum projects

- Integration of environmental stewardship into health outreach
- Analysis of human health risks associated with the use of treated wastewater
- Measures to reduce human trafficking
- Participatory monitoring to reduce water contamination in a rural community
- Generation of baseline data and a needs assessment for the development of an outreach plan for a hospital
- Community-based conservation and development assessment to identify opportunities to enhance livelihoods in indigenous communities based on their priorities and interests
- Evaluation of sanitation behavior change in sustainable livelihood groups, with the aim of developing a monitoring and evaluation system
- Assessment of water, sanitation, and hygiene needs at schools and orphanages
- Evaluation of reforestation programming in regards to efficiency, impact and sustainability
First Cohort enrolled in 2010

3 Cohorts / 29 students have graduated with MDP degree, examples of employment:

- Water is Life International, Ethiopia
- Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania
- Fundación Runa, Peru
- Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Guatemala
- Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Indonesia
- Echoing Green, New York City
- Danish Refugee Council in Lebanon

Cohort 5 preparing for Field Practicum in summer 2015
Global MDP consortium

- 32 universities around the world offer the MDP; the number is growing
- Periodic global summits of MDP programs (5 to date)
Global MDP Consortium

• Since 2013, annual Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) - MDP conference in the Earth Institute, Columbia University (MDP Secretariat Headquarters)

• MDP governance structure:
  – Academic Steering Committee
  – Academic Advisory Council
  – MDP Student and Alumni Advisory Council (SAAC)
  – Global Advisory Council: renowned leaders

• See [http://mdpglobal.org/](http://mdpglobal.org/) for more information
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