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We’ve come to the end of another semester. Last week, we “sent off” a new, Fall Semester, graduating class.

We continue to be one of the largest interdisciplinary/multi-departmental undergraduate programs in the county. As of December 1, 2006 (the week before commencement), we had 1,073 students enrolled.

PLEASE KEEP E-MAILING YOUR COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS. And, please e-mail information (personal/professional updates) for inclusion in our “Alumni Notes” section. You can send brief announcements (e.g., received a degree, or accepted a new job position), or you can send a more detailed “bio” (limit of 2 paragraphs, please). Let us know what’s happening in “your part of the world!”

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IDS ALUMNI E-NEWSLETTER
Fall 2006

Jim Wallis, IDS/MDP Alum, Speaks on “God’s Politics”

Jim Wallis (class of ’70) returned to campus on Thursday, September 28, 2006 to speak to those assembled (several hundred) at People’s Church, 200 W. Grand River Avenue,

“Jim is a Christian leader for social change. He is a speaker, author, activist, and international commentator on ethics and public life. Jim speaks at more than 200 events a year and his columns appear in the New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, and other major newspapers. He offers regular commentary and analysis for radio and television and teaches a course at Harvard University on “Faith, Politics, and Society.” Jim lives in Washington, D.C. with his wife and their two sons.”* (*speaking engagement announcement)

Critical praise for Jim’s book has come from –

* Bill Moyers
* Bono, lead singer of U2
* Archbishop Desmond Tutu

and many others. Archbishop Tutu commented, “Jim Wallis is compelling, provocative, and inspirational, with faith that can move mountains and can certainly move people and communities.” (You can learn more about Jim and his work by going to the website: http://www.sojo.net)

Several IDS students, alumni, and staff were in attendance for Jim’s presentation and discussion. We were pleased to welcome him “back to campus!”

Fran Wilson, IDS/MDP Alum, Appointed President of the National Defense University

Lt. General Frances (Fran) Wilson (class of ’71) has been appointed president of the National Defense University (NDU), located in Washington, D.C. and in Norfolk, VA. She is the first Marine and the first woman to hold this position. She is also the highest ranking woman in the Marine Corps. Before becoming president, she served as Commandant of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, one of NDU’s four colleges. Over the years, the NDU has developed as a center for multinational and interagency education. At present, over 5,500 students are enrolled. After graduating from our undergraduate program, Fran earned four master’s degrees and a Doctor of Education degree, from the University of Southern California. (A more complete biographical statement on Fran is included in the Fall 2006 edition of the MSU Alumni Magazine, p. 13, or see the online version, www.msualum.com)

Congratulation, Fran!

IDS Students Continue to be “High Achievers”
In late Spring Semester 2006, three (3) IDS students were selected to receive College of Social Science Undergraduate Distinguished Scholarships. The college awarded eight (8) distinguished scholarships for the 2006-07 academic year. The IDS recipients are --

**Maria Carmona**, International Studies major  
**Mary Selig**, Environmental Policy major  
**Keriann Zolman**, Law and Society major

One of our IDS-Public Policy majors, **Thomas J. Knezek**, graduated with ‘high honor’ this semester (Fall 2006) and was selected to be the recipient of a Board of Trustees Award, to honor his extraordinary academic achievements. Thomas completed his course work with a grade point average of 4.00. His academic advisor, Dr. William Marx, informs us that Thomas has decided to stay on at MSU for another year to pursue a second degree, this time with a major in political science.

Congratulations, Thomas!

As of December 1, IDS had a total of sixty-five (65) students who were also enrolled in the MSU Honors College and a total of seventeen (17) students who were enrolled as Academic Scholars.

**Jeanette Abeles, IDS Academic Specialist/Academic Advisor, Retires**

Jeanette Abeles, M.A., one of our long-standing advisors in the IDS Program, retired at the beginning of Fall semester. She had worked in the program since the fall of 1990 – a stint of 16 years! Over those years, Jeanette met with hundreds of IDS students and provided in-depth advising and other important academic support services. During the 2005-06 academic year, Jeanette worked primarily as special projects coordinator, but prior to Fall 2005, she was involved 100% in advising. Many of you, your colleagues, and friends who were in the program in the past several years may have had Jeanette as your academic advisor.

During her years of advising, Jeanette also served as an Adjunct Curator for the MSU Museum, and, in Fall 2002, she served as co-chair of the Planning Committee for the Varian Fry Exhibit at the museum. Prior to beginning her work assignment in IDS, Jeanette served for twelve years as Executive Director of the Michigan Dance Association, where she created arts programs that provided aesthetic experiences for school children, developmentally challenged people of all ages, and the aged.

We, in IDS, were pleased to have Jeanette as a colleague. We were impressed with the quality of her work. We saw her as a highly skilled, knowledgeable, and strongly committed individual. During her years at MSU, she was instrumental in – (1) helping develop the IDS Evening Program, for students who were working and needed to take
late afternoon or evening classes to complete their programs of study, and (2) taking the initiative to develop the IDS-Human Aging interdisciplinary concentration.

Jeanette tells us that she plans “lots of travel” in the next few months and years.

We commend Jeanette for her outstanding work in the IDS Program, and we wish her the best in all her new endeavors! If you would like to pass along a congratulatory message, please send it via e-mail to Bruce Bigelow, IDS (bigelow@msu.edu). We’ll make sure it gets forwarded to Jeanette.

Congratulations and very best wishes to Jeanette!

**IDS Self Study**

Dean Marietta Baba has informed our director, Dr. Assefa Mehretu, that IDS will be asked to complete a self-study, which will be followed by an Internal/External Review of the program. The time line – (1) completion of the self-study by February 15, 2007, (2) completion of the report of the internal/external review by May 15, 2007. Dr. John Goddeeris, Associate Dean for Program Review and Planning, has met with our staff and the IDS Advisory Committee to outline basic expectations for the review.

**Informational Session – Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies**

On November 22, one of our alums, Kristin Janka Millar (class of ‘91), came to speak with our IDS advising staff about the current academic programs and activities of the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS), Michigan State University. We had an interesting discussion about the many opportunities available to IDS students to incorporate course content on Latin America and Caribbean into their programs of study. Kristin holds the position of coordinator of the Undergraduate Program for CLACS. She is currently a doctoral candidate in the College of Education.

Thanks Kristin. We enjoyed this opportunity to reconnect!

**Alumni Working on Campus**

In the Spring edition of the e-newsletter, we called attention to several IDS/MDP/Divisional Major alums who are working on campus. It’s hard to “track” individuals, so we knew we’d miss some/many. And, we did. Here are three more.

- **Melissa Del Rio** (class of ’99), is an Administrative Assistant II/Executive Staff Assistant, in the Graduate School.

- **Kristin Janka Millar** (class of ’91), mentioned above
• **Lou A. Sellers** (class of ‘98) is an Administrative Assistant in the Technology Transfer Office of the Division of Engineering Research.

**IDS History Cognate**

We reported in the Spring 2006 edition of the e-newsletter that the Department of History had developed and submitted a proposal for an IDS History Cognate. The proposal has now been approved by the University Curriculum Committee and by Academic Council. IDS students may select history (actually one of several topical or thematic areas within the discipline) as their disciplinary cognate, beginning in Spring Semester 2007. We’re very pleased to have History “in the IDS ranks!”

**“Alumni Notes”**

We will be sending out a fairly large section of “alumni class notes” (i.e., personal/professional updates from alumni) shortly after the first of the year. We’ve had contact with, or heard from, several alums lately, including Craig Dodge (class of ’85), who currently resides in Taipei, Taiwan. We’ll include updates on these, and other alums, in the upcoming “Alumni Notes” mailing.

**Please send an update so we can share the information with your classmates and colleagues.**

**Best wishes for the New Year!**

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A copy of the e-newsletter is posted to our IDS website. The address is –

[http://ids.socialscience.msu.edu/](http://ids.socialscience.msu.edu/)

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