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**HIS317/INS 317 Understanding the Northern Ireland Conflict**

**Spring 2025**

**Instructor's Information**

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Nigel Glenny      [n.glenny@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:n.glenny@ulster.ac.uk)

Phone/WhatsApp:    + 44 7094305157

Room MD 124, Ulster University, Derry~Londonderry Campus, BT48 7JL, UK

I am the Site Director for the *Conflict, Peace and Transition in Northern Ireland* program (delivered in partnership between Augsburg University CGEE and Ulster University's INCORE). Following a career in the formal and informal education sectors (high school history teacher, Local Government and NGO development officer) I was appointed to Ulster University as Lecturer in International Education and Development and Program Director (based at the UNESCO Centre, School of Education) in 2007. Since then, I have directed the *Conflict, Peace and Transition* program.

**What is this course about?**

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This 4-credit course is a fully integrated component of the *Conflict, Peace and Transition in Northern Ireland* semester program which examines a society's transition from violent conflict to a sustainable democracy, a transition that continues to be a fragile and difficult process.

This course is designed to engage students in a dynamic learning experience that will facilitate a critical understanding of the causes and impacts of the Northern Ireland conflict.

The course focuses on three main questions:

1. What are the historical roots of the Northern Ireland conflict?

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2. How is the Northern Ireland conflict remembered and communicated to the public?
  3. In what ways might historic events affect the process of building sustainable peace?

Northern Ireland's unique historic, social, civic, and political context is investigated and the key components that led to, and sustained, the conflict are examined in depth. An historical overview of the situation is examined tracing it to the modern day and the current social, civic, and political landscape.

### **Topics:**

- The historical roots of the Northern Ireland conflict (prehistory – partition – ‘the Troubles’).
- The role of religion in the Northern Ireland conflict.
- ‘Ethnic frontier’ / ‘contested society’ (colonization, settlement, belonging and identity).
- Historic, cultural and political identities (traditional ‘Protestant, Unionist, Loyalist (PUL) and Catholic, Nationalist, Republican (CNR) perspectives).
- Key historic events e.g. Plantation of Ulster, Siege of Derry, partition, civil rights movement, ‘Bloody Sunday’, Enniskillen bomb.
- The development of ‘political violence’ and ‘security responses’ (Loyalist, Republican and State combatants).
- The development of urban segregation and division.
- Communicating history (community museums and ‘dark tourism’).

### **What will I learn in this course / Course Objectives**

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You will:

- Build an understanding of key historical events relating to Ireland and Northern Ireland.

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- Apply knowledge of historical events to contemporary issues (e.g. partition and 'Brexit', border polls/reunification debates.)
  - Communicate an understanding of historical events and their impact on present-day Derry-Londonderry (prehistoric, early medieval, sixteenth and seventeenth century wars, and colonization /' plantation', industrialization, partition, Northern Ireland conflict and peace process).
  - Identify connections made between historic events and current day cultural expression, religious and political identities in Northern Ireland.
  - Recognize the value of multiple perspectives, and often conflicting/competing narratives on historical events relating to the Northern Ireland conflict and peace process.
  - Articulate an understanding of the development of key cultural/political identities and perspectives (e.g. Loyalist, Unionist, Nationalist, Republican).
  - Examine and communicate a critical understanding of the role of religion in the Northern Ireland conflict.

## **What will I do in this course?**

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You will participate in lectures, seminars, student-led discussions, visits to museums and historic sites, and meetings (on and off campus) with academic experts, community leaders and people impacted by the Northern Ireland conflict.

### **Course Requirements/Assignments:**

#### **A. Participation (25%)**

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Active, reflective, and sensitive participation in all group learning experiences is the primary focus of this course. This includes punctual attendance at, and active participation in, lectures, seminars, fieldtrips and meetings.

Evidence of preparation for meetings with guest speakers and fieldtrips is required. You will need to demonstrate engagement with assigned readings and other preparatory resources. Given the potentially sensitive nature of this course (for example, meetings with ‘victims’ / ‘survivors’ / people impacted by the conflict) the need to formulate thoughtful and informed questions, and offer appropriate comments, is particularly important. Taking notes during group learning experiences is necessary to contribute effectively to discussions and other coursework.

Individual/group responsibilities (regarding group learning processes and program logistics) will be assigned and evaluated throughout the course.

Students’ contribution to constructive and supportive group dynamics will be monitored and evaluated (see ‘Inclusive Living and Learning’). Given the nature of this course, the ability to demonstrate listening to others (within and outside the student group) is critically important.

## **B. Group Class Presentation ‘Was the Northern Ireland Conflict Religious?’ (5%)**

As part of a group, you will research, develop, and communicate a class presentation on a specific aspect of the relationship between religion and the Northern Ireland conflict.

Assessment will consider:

- Reference to assigned readings, fieldtrip experiences and other resource material.
- Talking points and presentation outline (e.g. PowerPoint presentation including notes)
- Level of engagement during presentation (e.g. style, responses to questions).

***Deadline: Wednesday 12 February***

## **C. Group Class Presentation ‘Historic Political Identity Perspectives’ (5%)**

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As part of a group, you will research, develop, and communicate a class presentation on a specific political identity perspective *Protestant, Unionist, Loyalist (PUL) or Catholic, Nationalist, Republican (CNR)*. Assessment will consider:

- Reference to assigned readings, fieldtrip experiences and other resource material.
- Ability (in response to questions) to make informed connections between ‘traditional’ / historical identity perspectives and contemporary political and social issues.

**Deadline: Monday 17 February**

#### **D. Field Experience Reflection Paper *Derry-Londonderry and/or Belfast (25%):***

Papers must be typewritten, double space, font size 12 in Times New Roman style with 1-inch margins. Detailed assignment instructions and guidance will be given in advance.

You will write a paper (8 pages / 2,000 words approximately) connecting personal experiences and reflections, from fieldtrips to Derry-Londonderry and/or Belfast, with your developing understanding of issues, concepts and theories examined in class e.g.

- Paramilitaries, prisoners and combatants.
- Collective memory and master narratives.
- Segregation and division.
- Commemoration and memorialization.
- ‘Dark tourism’.
- Community museums.

**Deadline: Friday 28 February**

#### **E. Historical Tour**

**Research notes / script (20%)    Walking Tour / Video (20%)**

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As part of a group, you will research (engage with a broad range of sources to reflect multiple perspectives), write and deliver/produce (either an in-person 1 ½ hour walking tour or a 10-minute video) a historical tour of Derry-Londonderry. Assessment will consider:

- Historic content (connections to landscape and chronology) e.g. origins – wars – conquest – settlement / ‘plantation’ – wars – siege – rebellion – partition – the ‘Troubles’.
- Ability to apply historical knowledge to contemporary issues.
- Narrative – recognition and inclusion of conflicting perspectives and bias, personal connections (‘outsider’ perspective).
- Communication e.g. humor, personal reflections, ‘outsider’ insights.
- Research notes / script with details of talking points, linked to specific locations, including references to academic and other source material (6 pages / 1,500 words approximately).

**Deadlines:**

- **Research notes: Friday 2 May**
- **Walking tours / video presentations: assigned times during Thursday 1 May and Friday 2 May.**

## Required readings

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All assigned readings will be given in electronic format.

- Arthur, P. (2007) Conflict, memory and reconciliation. *In: Elliot, M., ed. The long road to peace in Northern Ireland.* Liverpool University Press, 147-156.
- Barnes L. P. (2005) Was the Northern Ireland conflict religious? *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 20 (1), 55-69.
- Bell, J., Hansson, U. and McCaffery, N. (2010) *The Troubles aren't history yet: young people's understanding of the past.* Belfast: Community Relations Council.
- Cairns, E. and Darby, J. (1998) *The conflict in Northern Ireland: causes, consequences and*

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controls. *American Psychologist*, 53 (7), 754-760.

- Cochrane, F. (2015) The paradox of conflict tourism: The commodification of war or conflict transformation practice. *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, 22 (1), 51-69.
- Community Relations Council (2022) *Decade of centenaries*. Available at: <https://principlesforremembering.com/#home>
- Crooke, E. (2001) Confronting a troubled history: which past in Northern Ireland's museums? *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 7 (2), 119-136.
- Dowds, L. and Hayes, B. C. (2010) Vacant seats and empty pews. *ARK Research Update*, 65
- Grant, A. (2024) 'Everything was concrete': The everyday impacts of planning and urban redevelopment policy before and during the troubles. In: McAtackney, L. and Ó Catháin, M., ed. *The Routledge handbook of the Northern Ireland conflict and peace*. London: Routledge, 145-161.
- Manseragh, M. (1995). The background to the peace process. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, (6), 145-158.
- McCully, A., Weiglhofer, M. and Bates, J. (2021). 'But it wasn't like that': the impact of visits to community-based museums on young people's understanding of the commemorated past in a divided society. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 49 (4), 510–539.
- McDowell, S. (2008) Selling conflict Heritage through tourism in peacetime Northern Ireland: transforming conflict or exacerbating difference? *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 14 (5), 405-421.
- McGlinchey, M. (2024) Dissident Irish republicanism: keeping the flame alive. In: McAtackney, L. and Ó Catháin, M., ed. *The Routledge handbook of the Northern Ireland conflict and peace*. London: Routledge, 303-323.
- McGrattan, C. (2024) Reconciliation and whataboutery in dealing with the past in Northern Ireland. In: McAtackney, L. and Ó Catháin, M., ed. *The Routledge handbook of the Northern Ireland conflict and peace*. London: Routledge, 362-371.

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- McMaster, J. (2007) Ethical remembering: commemoration in a new context. Belfast: Irish School of Ecumenics.
  - Mitchell, C. (2008) Religious change and persistence. *In: Coulter, C and Murray, M., ed. Northern Ireland after the troubles a society in transition.* Manchester University Press, 135-155.
  - Ó Catháin, M. (2024) Overview of the troubles. *In: McAtackney, L. and Ó Catháin, M., ed. The Routledge handbook of the Northern Ireland conflict and peace.* London: Routledge, 20-28.
  - Prince, S. P. (2012) 5 October 1968 and the beginning of the troubles: flashpoints, riots and memory. *Irish Political Studies*, 27 (3), 394-410.
  - Shea, M. (2015). ““There were streets”: urban renewal and the early troubles in London/Derry, Northern Ireland”. Available at: <http://works.bepress.com/margo-shea/5/>
  - Whyte, J. (1990) Interpretations of the Northern Ireland conflict. Oxford University Press, 117-174.

## Recommended readings

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- Brown, K. (2013) Commemoration as symbolic reparation: new narratives or spaces of conflict? *Human Rights Review*, 14, 273-289.
- Campbell, S. (2024) ‘Fidel Castro in a mini-skirt’ or ‘St Joan of the barricades’? Versions of Bernadette Devlin McAliskey. *In: McAtackney, L. and Ó Catháin, M., eds. The Routledge handbook of the Northern Ireland conflict and peace.* London: Routledge, 215–227.
- Conway, B. (2003) Active remembering, selective forgetting, and collective identity: the case of Bloody Sunday. *Identity*, 3 (4), 305–323.
- Elliot, M. (2007) Religion and identity in Northern Ireland. *In: Elliot, M., ed. The long road to peace in Northern Ireland.* Liverpool University Press, 175-191.

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- Hanley, B. (2024) The cutting edge of the IRA. *In: McAtackney, L. and Ó Catháin, M., ed. The Routledge handbook of the Northern Ireland conflict and peace.* London: Routledge, 50–64.
  - Hancock, L.E. (2019) Narratives of commemoration: identity, memory, and conflict in Northern Ireland 1916–2016. *Peace and Change*, 44 (2), 244–265.
  - Hocking, B. (2014) Great transformations: "re-casting" Derry's diamond war memorial for the demands of a "shared" future. *Canadian journal of Irish studies*, 38 (1/2), 228–259.
  - Ironside, G. and James, K. (2024) Selling loyalist and republican memories: the prospects for dark (Troubles) tourism in Northern Ireland. *Cogent social sciences*, 10 (1), 1-18.
  - Johnston, J. (2018) Taking cover during Michael Stone's attack at Milltown. *In: Henderson, D. and Little, I., ed. Reporting the troubles.* Newtownards: Blackstaff Press, 110-112.
  - Jones, A. (2018) I still get flashbacks to 'the corporal's killings'. *In: Henderson, D. and Little, I., ed. Reporting the troubles.* Newtownards: Blackstaff Press, 117-119.
  - McDowell, S. (2008) Commemorating dead 'men': gendering the past and present in post-conflict Northern Ireland. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 15 (4), 335–354.
  - Mitchell, C. (2024) Northern Protestants' Irish ghost limb. *In: McAtackney, L. and Ó Catháin, M., ed. The Routledge handbook of the Northern Ireland conflict and peace.* London: Routledge, 20-28.
  - Murtagh, B., Boland, P. and Shirlow, P. (2017). Contested heritages and cultural tourism. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 23(6), 506–520.
  - Mullan, P. The evolution of heritage and memory in a divided society. *In: McAtackney, L. and Ó Catháin, M., ed. The Routledge handbook of the Northern Ireland conflict and peace.* London: Routledge, 487-499.
  - NISRA. (2022) *Main statistics for Northern Ireland statistical bulletin: religion.* Available at <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/system/files/statistics/census-2021-main-statistics-for-northern-ireland-phase-1-statistical-bulletin-religion.pdf>

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- Ó Catháin, M. (2024) The writing on the wall: the myths of Free Derry, 1986-1972. *In: McAtackney, L. and Ó Catháin, M., eds. The Routledge handbook of the Northern Ireland conflict and peace.* London: Routledge, 129–144.
  - Prince, S. P. (2013) Pushing luck too far: '68, Northern Ireland, and nonviolence. *In: Sherman, D.J., Ruud van Dijk, Alinder, J. and Aneesh, A. The long 1968: revisions and new perspectives.* Indiana University Press, 139-168.
  - Prince, S. P. (2018) Preface to the new edition. *In: Prince, S. P. and Bew, P. Northern Ireland's '68 : civil rights, global revolt and the origins of the troubles.* Dublin: Irish Academic Press, xiv-xvii.
  - Reinisch, D. (2019) Women's agency and political violence: Irish Republican women and the formation of the Provisional IRA, 1967-70. *Irish political studies*, 34 (3), 420–443.
  - Rowan, B. (2015) Unfinished peace: thoughts on Northern Ireland's unanswered past. Newtownards: Colourpoint Books, 115-125.
  - Ryan, S. (2007) Negative transformations. *In: Ryan, S. The transformation of violent intercommunal conflict.* Aldershot: Ashgate, 59-80.
  - Skinner, J. (2016) Walking the Falls: dark tourism and the significance of movement on the political tour of West Belfast. *Tourist Studies*, 16 (1), 23–39.
  - Weiglhofer, M., McCully, A. and Bates, J. (2023) Learning about conflict: the role of community museums in educating on difficult heritage in a divided society. *International Journal of Heritage Studies: IJHS*, 29 (5), 365–381.
  - Wiedenhoft Murphy, W. A. (2010) Touring the troubles in west Belfast: building peace or reproducing conflict? *Peace & Change*, 35 (4), 537-560.

## Explanation of Grades

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Augsburg University uses a letter grading system using the following definitions:

Grade	G.P.	Percentage	Description
A	4.00	93-100%	Excellent. Highest standard of excellence; goes above and beyond stated course requirements. Deep integration of discussions, lectures, readings and/or service learning in assignments.
A-	3.67	90-92%	
B+	3.33	88-89%	
B	3.00	83-87%	Good. Above basic course requirements. Some integration of class discussion, lecture, theory and/or service learning in assignments.
B-	2.67	80-82%	
C+	2.33	78-79%	
C	2.00	73-77%	Satisfactory. Basic standards and expectations for the course met; minimum integration of class discussion, lecture, theory and/or service learning in assignments. Course grades falling below 2.0 will not be accepted toward licensure into Augsburg licensure programs.
C-	1.67	70-72%	
D+	1.33	68-69%	
D	1.00	63-67%	Poor. Below basic standards and expectations.
D-	0.67	60-62%	
F	0.00	<60%	Failure
P	0.00		Pass*
LP	0.00		Low Pass*
N	0.00		No Pass

*\*The letter grade equivalent of a P grade is a C- or higher.*

*\*\*The letter grade equivalent of an LP grade is a D-, D, or D+.*

## **CGEE Grading Policy and Late Assignments**

You must submit assignments on time. If you need an extension, you must talk to us in advance to negotiate a new deadline. If you have not been given an extension in advance and you turn in a late assignment, you will be docked half a grade. If you are more than one week late, you will be docked a full grade. No assignments will be accepted more than two weeks after the original deadline except for under exceptional circumstances; a “0” will be given after that. Assignments due near the end of the semester will not be accepted after the last day of the semester.

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Percentage Points</b>
Participation		25%
Group Class Presentation: Religion and the Northern Ireland Conflict.	12 Feb.	5%
Group Class Presentation: Historic Political Identity Perspectives	17 Feb	5%
Field Experience Reflection Paper (Derry-Londonderry and/or Belfast)	28 Feb	25%
Historical Tour: Research notes	02 May	20%
Historical Tour: Walking Tour / video presentation	01 & 02 May	20%

## **Inclusivity Statement**

Augsburg University values the diversity of persons, perspectives, and convictions. Critical thinking, rigorous analysis, and open discussion across a full range of ideas lie at the heart of the

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University's mission as an institution of higher learning. Essential to the University in living out its mission of educating students to be "informed citizens, thoughtful stewards, critical thinkers, and responsible leaders" is that the foundation be one of diversity, inclusion, equity, and intercultural competency.

## **Agreements for Inclusive Living and Learning**

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Learning is a social process. Discussions are an important aspect of this course. In good discussions, differences in beliefs, opinions, and approaches are to be expected. Learning to disagree respectfully is a key academic, workplace, and life skill. During the orientation residential we will spend time exploring what building a learning community means to us. Below are examples of community agreement statements that we may find helpful:

- This environment is a space where we are willing to be uncomfortable to learn.
- We will criticize ideas, not people.
- We will back our opinions and arguments with facts and reasoning.
- We will practice active and deep listening.
- We will speak with fairness and sensitivity.
- We will encourage others to join conversations.
- We will give undivided attention to the person who has the floor.
- We can disagree with another person's point of view without putting that person down.
- We will speak our opinions using the first person and avoid using "you."
- We will remember that we differ in cultural background, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity or gender expression and will be careful about making insensitive or careless remarks.

## **Attendance**

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As in any in-person course, attendance and participation are necessary for mastery of the course material. In Northern Ireland, there are additional UK visa compliance requirements for attendance at class, field visits, etc. These requirements will be explained fully when you are in Northern Ireland.

Please let me know at the start of the semester about expected absences due to religious holidays.

### **Academic Honesty**

Good academic work must be based on honesty. All work submitted in this course should be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) should be properly acknowledged and documented. We will talk more about what this looks like specifically as we begin our first writing and inquiry assignments. Academic dishonesty can have serious consequences. You can review the full academic honesty standards and consequences at [Augsburg Academic Honesty Policy](#)<sup>1</sup> and talk to me if you have any questions.

### **Academic Support and Accommodations**

Your success in this class is important to me. We all need accommodations at times because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

**Academic Tutoring:** Your tuition provides you free access to academic support resources. You can find a list of tutoring resources at [Academic Advising](#)<sup>2</sup>. Most relevant for this course,

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<sup>1</sup> [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1558SfkiNIh8nOvrgqvnWnk3pXi-g19o\\_KCucEP4HLwY](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1558SfkiNIh8nOvrgqvnWnk3pXi-g19o_KCucEP4HLwY)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.augsburg.edu/advising/currentstudents/skills/>

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Augsburg's Writing Center provides online opportunities to get support and feedback on your written assignments. <https://sites.augsburg.edu/writingcenter/>.

**Disability Accommodations and Accessibility:** If you need disability-related accommodations to have equal access in this course, please contact the CLASS Office (Disability Resources) at [class@augsborg.edu](mailto:class@augsborg.edu) or schedule a meeting with CLASS at [www.augsburg.edu/class](http://www.augsburg.edu/class). Phone: + 1 612330-1053. If accommodations are required, the CLASS Office will notify me privately about your needs. Please note that you will not be required to disclose your disability, only your accommodations.

## Health and Wellness

As part of the University's support systems, you also have access to campus resources to maintain your safety, health, and well-being. We understand that as a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning. These stressful moments can impact academic performance or reduce your ability to engage. If you or someone you know are suffering from any challenges, you should reach out for support. You have access to free counseling services through the TELUS app. We can also refer you to local in-person counseling services. Please review the [online program manual](#) for more information about Health and Wellness while in Northern Ireland.

During your time in Northern Ireland, you can access a range of resources through Ulster University's [Student Wellbeing](#) services.

## Title IX and Sexual Misconduct

Augsburg University is committed to creating a safe learning environment for all students, including one that is free of [sexual misconduct](#). If you or someone you know has experienced sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking,

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you may contact Michael Grewe, Ph.D., LISW, Assistant Provost, Dean of Students & Title IX Coordinator, at [titleix@augsborg.edu](mailto:titleix@augsborg.edu) or 612-330-1499 to report an incident, seek support, and/or take action.

Please be aware that faculty members are required to disclose information about suspected or alleged sexual misconduct or other potential violations of the Augsburg University Sexual Misconduct Policy to the Title IX Coordinator. If the Title IX Coordinator receives information about an incident, they will reach out to offer information about resources, rights, and procedural options as a member of the campus community. If you or another student you know wishes to speak to a [confidential resource](#) who does not have this reporting responsibility, you may contact the Center for Wellness and Counseling at [cwc@augsborg.edu](mailto:cwc@augsborg.edu) or 612-330-1707; Campus Ministry at 612-330-1732; or the Aurora Center at [aurora@umn.edu](mailto:aurora@umn.edu) or 612-626-9111 (24/7).

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## Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Students

Augsburg students who are pregnant or are experiencing related conditions (including childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or lactation; related medical conditions; or recovery therefrom) may [request reasonable modifications](#). Students may contact the Title IX Coordinator at [titleix@augsborg.edu](mailto:titleix@augsborg.edu) or 612-330-1034 to learn about [specific actions the University can take](#) to prevent discrimination and ensure access to Augsburg's educational programs and activities.

Augsburg University also has a designated student parent navigator to serve as the first point of contact for parenting students needing assistance in meeting their family's basic needs. To learn more information, contact Noah Greenfield, Program Coordinator in the Dean of Students Office, at [deanofstudents@augsborg.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@augsborg.edu) or 612-330-1160.