Interdisciplinary Studies

INS 366 Community Participation & Social Change

Northern Ireland

Fall 2026

Instructor's Information

Nigel Glenny   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 UNCORE). 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 (with the program moving to INCORE in 2013), I have directed the *Conflict, Peace, and Transition* program.

What is this course about?

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.

The *Conflict, Peace and Transition in Northern Ireland Community Participation and Social Change Course* is designed to engage students in a dynamic learning experience that will

facilitate the development of important and transferable skills, the investigation of a community-based research topic of interest, and the acquisition of valuable insights into how different facets of society in Northern Ireland are working towards the development of peace and community development.

You are required to spend 168 hours minimum *onsite* at a Community-based project site/organization.

Community Participation and Social Change findings, and experiences, are reflected upon in weekly seminar sessions, and logs, which are designed to facilitate enhanced self-awareness and a critical understanding of the host site/organization and research project topic.

The Community Participation and Social Change Course option allows students who are highly self-motivated, and largely self-directed, to conduct research during the semester. The community-based research project will involve extensive independent reading and, where possible and appropriate, other experiential methods that meet the needs and responsibilities of host community-based organizations in Derry~Londonderry.

Each student will collaborate with the site director (and/or other assigned faculty) who will supervise the study and provide guidance. Students will meet with their advisor over the course of the semester and provide regular progress reports (logs). Students should be prepared to work independently and responsibly.

Responsibilities of the Faculty Advisor

1. Meet with Community Participation students, offer relevant support, and provide feedback on project proposals, and plans.
2. Make clear relevant ethical guidelines.

3. Read students' assignments, grade them, and provide feedback on the content of the assignments.

Responsibilities of the Student

1. Identify and read relevant academic literature and other resources to effectively support the community-based research project topic.

2. As per the needs and responsibilities of the host site / community-based organization, participate in, plan, organize, and facilitate relevant research activities, e.g., project-related meetings, reports, presentations, etc.

3. Exercise a high degree of autonomy to advance and meet research and project goals.

4. Follow deadlines established by the advisor and, if relevant, host site project supervisor/coworkers.

What will I learn in this course / Course Objectives

You will:

- Actively participate (168 hours minimum) in a project that is grounded in, and supportive of, a community-based organization's efforts to effect constructive social change.

- Identify and agree (in cooperation with host site supervisor and site director)
    - Project objectives
    - Research methods
    - Responsibilities and duties (tasks, projects, deadlines, outcomes).
    - Check-ins and reports/presentation

- Make connections between the project topic and contributions to the community-based organization's mission and objectives.

- Develop research and presentation skills.

- Design and carry out an effective research proposal and plan.

- Appreciate and follow ethical guidelines.

- Explore in depth a topic of personal and academic interest that is relevant to and supportive of local context / community-based organization.

- Record observations and insights from research, in regular log submissions.

Sample Topics:

- Public Art and Peacebuilding.

- Peace Journalism.

- Community Museums, Memory and Peacebuilding.

- Cultural Traditions and Expression.

- Options for Truth Recovery.

- Cross-community Contact Programs for Young People.

- The Role of Former Political Prisoners in Peacebuilding.

- Historical Memorialization and Commemoration.

- Impacts of Conflict and the Peace Process on Mental Health.

- 'Ethical Remembering'.

- Storytelling and Reconciliation.

- Racism and Sectarianism in Northern Ireland.

- Gender and the Conflict/Peace Process.

- Policing.

- Education and 'Shared Society' – Segregation, Integration and Sharing.

- 'Peace walls'

What will I do in this course?

You will design and produce a project that supports/relates to the work of a community-based organization focused on community development / community relations / peacebuilding.

Project learning experiences are examined and reflected upon during weekly seminar sessions. These seminars will take place both on and off campus and will involve meetings with guest speakers and representatives and leaders of local organizations.

Course Requirements/Assignments

A. Participation (25%)

To effectively learn, research, and contribute to the community-based organization to which you will be assigned, you have at least 168 hours of learning onsite at the organization (additional hours can be arranged to meet project objectives and support the host organization with approval in advance by the Site Director).

Active, reflective, and sensitive participation in all aspects of the community-based project is the primary focus of this course. This includes punctual attendance at, and active participation in, all activities identified in the community-based project plan, meetings with supervisors and timely submissions within agreed deadlines.

Evidence of preparation for project meetings is required. You will need to demonstrate critical engagement with readings and other preparatory resources.

Given the professional, and potentially sensitive nature, of producing the community-based project (for example, working with children, young people, vulnerable adults, 'victims' / 'survivors' / people impacted by the conflict supported by your host organization) the need to demonstrate self-awareness, and exercise strong interpersonal and intercultural skills, is particularly important. Throughout the community-based project, your ability to demonstrate creativity, initiative, personal responsibility, teamwork, research, communication, and relationship-building skills, will be evaluated and reflected upon.

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 (as part of responsibilities to the host organization and fulfillment of community-based project objectives) is critically important.

B. Community-based Project Reflection Logs (20%)

Timely submission of a quality weekly Community Participation Project Log is required.

Logs must be typewritten, double-spaced, font size 12 in Times New Roman style with 1-inch margins. Each log will include details of hours worked together with a focused critical reflection / progress report on aspects of the community project e.g. key findings from literature and implications for project development, reflections on challenges/solutions regarding logistical issues, research meetings etc.

Logs tend to be approximately 1 page / 300-400 words in length (varies according to theme/focus).

Deadlines:

1. ***Friday 02 October***
2. ***Friday 09 October***
3. ***Friday 16 October***
4. ***Friday 30 October***
5. ***Friday 13 November***
6. ***Friday 20 November***
7. ***Friday 27 November***

C. Research Project

Project Proposal (5%) Project Plan (5%) Project Paper (30%) Project Presentation (15%)

You will design, research (engage with a broad range of sources), write, and present a paper / project report on a topic of personal and academic interest that relates to 'post-conflict' social change in Northern Ireland and is relevant to the host community-based organization.

The Community Participation and Social Change Research Project is a semester-long undertaking with specific tasks to monitor its progress along the way.

1. **Identify issues of interest.** Present to the Site Director.

   Discuss with Site Director general/initial areas of interest (what, why) and consider possibilities/implications regarding connecting interests with the needs and vision of community-based organizations in Derry-Londonderry.

2. **Project proposal** (2-4 Pages / 500-1000 words approximately).

   Your proposal should be formulated under the following headings:

   - Issue under investigation - describe *what* you want to examine.

   - Rationale - describe *why* you think this is important and relevant. What is the history and understanding of this issue? What implications might your study have for social change activities, strategies, tactics, etc.? How might your study relate to and support the host community-based organization? What connections might be made with the USA?

   - Methodology - describe in as much detail as you can *how* you plan to approach the study. Describe proposed methods of investigation and consider all relevant ethical issues. *Because it is essential that your proposal be grounded in existing academic literature, you must clearly identify and draw upon relevant literature as part of your proposal.*

3. **Project plan** (2-4 Pages / 500-1000 words approximately).

   - Resources / materials required (including reference list) – potential challenges and plans to address.

   - Timescale and deadlines (including reading/data collection, analysis, writing of report and presentation of findings). Potential obstacles and plans to overcome. Details of additional support required.

4. **Progress meetings** with Site Director and host organization site supervisor (and colleagues where relevant).

5. Submission of **project paper** (20 pages / 5,000 words approximately) and **presentation** of findings (15-30 minutes).

   - You are encouraged to be creative in presenting your project findings utilizing photography, art etc.

   - Outline structure of the Community Participation and Social Change Report: (1)

Issue (2) Rationale (3) Methodology (4) Findings (5) Conclusions and Recommendations (5) Bibliography

Deadlines:

- *Project proposal: Wednesday 14 October*
- *Project plan: Wednesday 11 November*
- *Project paper and presentation: Wednesday 09 December*

Required readings

All assigned readings will be given in electronic format.

- Eyben, K., Morrow, D., Wilson, D. and Robinson, B. (2002) *The equity, diversity and interdependence framework: a framework for organisational learning and change.* Coleraine: Future Ways Programme, University of Ulster, 21-33.

- Fitzduff, M. (2002) A view from Northern Ireland. *In:* Lederach, J and Jenner, J., ed. *A handbook of international peacebuilding: into the eye of the storm.* San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 133-142.

- Gorman, D. (2008) Glow-worms. *In:* O'Hagan, L., ed. *Stories in conflict: towards understanding and healing*. Londonderry: Yes Publications.

- Illich, I (1968). To hell with good intentions.

- Kretzmann, J.P., and McKnight, J.L. (1993) *Building communities from the inside out: a path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets.* Evanston, IL: Institute for Policy Research, 1-11.

- Winge, K. (2006) You've got to come in right. *In:* Winge, K. *Never give up: vignettes from sub-saharan Africa in the age of AIDS*. Minneapolis, Syren Book Company, 20-30.

- Zemach-Bersin, T. (2008) American students abroad can't be "Global Citizens". *The Chronicle of higher education, 54*.

Explanation of Grades

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.

Assignments	Due Date	Percentage Points
Participation		25%
Independent Study Project Reflection Logs	2, 9, 16, 30 October 13, 20, 27 November	20%
Independent Study Project Proposal	14 October	5%
Independent Study Project Plan	11 November	5%
Independent Study Project Paper	09 December	30%
Independent Study Project Presentation	09 December	15%

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 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

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 residency, 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

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[1] 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

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[1] https://docs.google.com/document/d/1558SfkINlh8nOvrgqvnWNk3pXi-g19o_KCucEP4HLwY

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[2].   Most relevant for this course, 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@augsburg.edu or schedule a meeting with CLASS at www.augsburg.edu/class. Phone: + 1 612-330-1053.   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 EIIA International Insurance. 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.

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[2] https://www.augsburg.edu/advising/currentstudents/skills/

Title IX and Sex Discrimination

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, you may contact Michael Grewe, Ph.D., LISW, Assistant Provost & Title IX Coordinator, at titleix@augsburg.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@augsburg.edu or 612-330-1707; Campus Ministry at 612-330-1732; or the Aurora Center at aurora@umn.edu or 612-626-9111 (24/7).

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@augsburg.edu or 612-330-1499 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@augsburg.edu or 612-330-1160.