Course Description and Objectives

Considerations for how to transition from violence to peace, to “repair” communities, and “rebuild” trust have become the focus for entire communities, countries and regions. Recurrence of violent conflict has risen which indicates that peace agreements and settlements have been difficult to maintain or implement, leading to instability (Human Security Report, 2012) and signaling the need for closer attention to the post-conflict or post-violent environment. Often, people find themselves in situations where they are recovering from violence in contexts where their governments failed to protect them or where violence still persists. Likewise, the violence that characterizes prolonged conflict is situated within relations of power that often existed prior to the conflict, and involve marginalized populations with limited access to formal justice. These conditions make transitioning highly politicized and often dangerous.

This field-study course will examine the social worlds that emerge in the aftermath of violent conflict in Northern Ireland, paying special attention to issues of transitional justice (truth, justice, memory, reparations), education, narrative, religion, and identity. Together we will critically evaluate theories and practices of transitional justice and peacebuilding, including retributive justice, reparations, reconciliation, and education. We will consider the forms of social change and governance that have emerged out of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement that are being implemented in the region. In order to engage these theories and practices, we will visit with community members, activists, NGOs, educators, youth, regional state actors, police, and former paramilitary and learn how they are translating their peace treaty into transitional justice process and peacebuilding initiatives. We will pay particular attention to the meanings that are being made about violence, peace, and justice in the region.

Engaging ethically and responsibly in this post-conflict context requires participants to be self-reflective as we enter into complex spaces with histories of violence. We will be at the nexus of theory and practice, requiring a framework for considering the ethics and politics of conflict resolution intervention and ourselves in relation to the meanings we make from our experiences. Reflective practice, a concept developed by Schön (1983), provides a general framework for designing and understanding our participation in the practice of our field study. This course will expose students to this framework of reflective practice, at the level of theory, as well as at the level of experience.

Conflict resolution is frequently a process that involves emotional intensity and relational complexity. Because of this, it is critical that researchers and practitioners be skilled at integrating theory and experiential learning. Utilizing a uniquely challenging experience of fieldwork, students will have the opportunity to engage aspects of reflective practice as noted above through individual research projects. Before departing, students will design
a mini-research inquiry that will orient their participation in meetings. This provides students the opportunity to engage in individualized inquiry into the context while situating it in the broader frameworks of conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and transitional justice.

Learning Goals

This course is intended to provide students with both an intellectual understanding of reflexivity in research and practice manifest in their ability to critically question the current theory, and its relevance to peace and conflict studies, as well as their ability to write about the ethical issues associated to research and reflective practice. It is also intended to provide students with the experience of models of conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and transitional justice in action. To these ends, the learning goals for this course include:

- Knowledge of approaches to peacebuilding and transitional justice and their translation at the regional and community level in Northern Ireland.
- Understand the dominant narratives that we, as researchers and practitioners tell ourselves, in the course of analyzing and understanding conflicts and the practice of conflict resolution;
- Gain an understanding of how to engage in reflection as a process of meaning-making (storytelling), through interviews, meetings and group conversations;
- Integrate theory and practice using qualitative approaches to research and field study;
- Develop a complex understanding of the ethics of engaging in field studies and peace and conflict research.

Course Requirements

The course will consist of 1 pre-trip meeting and 14 nights in Northern Ireland. During our pre-trip meetings we will discuss the course expectations and begin our exploration of the conflict and post-conflict dynamics in Northern Ireland. Prior to and during this meeting will use articles, videos, and books to introduce ourselves to the impact of violence in communities as well as the ongoing peacebuilding initiatives at the community and state level. We will explore various approaches to peacebuilding and transitional justice and introduce the narrative lens as an analytic framework for conflict resolution.

A. Participation personally or virtually in two preparatory meetings prior to departure for Northern Ireland. (May 4th 9:30am-12:30pm)

B. Pre-departure reflection paper: This paper will be written and submitted a week prior to departing for Northern Ireland. 15% of Grade
C. Read all of **The Northern Ireland Conflict: A Beginner’s Guide** (Aaron Edwards & C. McGrattan. Oneworld, Oxford. 2010), and acquaint with the following two websites:

http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/index.html
https://sluggerotoole.com/region/northern-ireland/

D. Effective and successful engagement with others in Northern Ireland, both with other course participants and with all other groups, organizations, individuals that the class engages. This includes full participation in meetings as well as in nightly debrief sessions. **30% of Grade**

E. Reading all of the other required readings listed below before final papers are written.

F. Field-study journal: This journal will be where you take your notes and engage in daily reflections related to our meetings and discussion and a particular topic that you choose before we depart. This reflective writing may include personal thoughts and insights, critically address ethics of practices, or may be a place to raise questions for further discussion. It will also address the specific question that you would like to engage throughout the trip. These field notes will contribute to your final papers. **25% of Grade**

G. Final Analytic and Reflective Paper which evaluates the readings on the theory of engagement and reflective practice, peacebuilding and transitional justice in light of your own experience in Northern Ireland. This paper will include a discussion of ethics of research and practice that draws on conflict resolution, peacebuilding, or transitional justice. These papers do not need to provide comprehensive knowledge of all of the theories but should demonstrate a critical reflection of your experiences in relationship to the readings. You should incorporate reflections from your field-study journal. **30% of Grade**

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**University Policies**

**Cheating, Plagiarism and Fabrication:** Cheating (using unauthorized materials or giving unauthorized assistance during an examination or other academic exercise), Plagiarism (the use of someone else’s ideas without clear acknowledgement), and
Fabrication (the intentional falsification or invention of information) are serious academic offences that may result in a failing grade for the particular assignment, for the course, or in suspension or expulsion from the university. Just don’t do it.

The Honor Code: All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/.

Disabilities: If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard 322, www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices).

Religious Observances: Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. In this class, I ask that you contact me at least one week ahead of the date(s) that you will be absent so that we can discuss any assignments/class material that you will miss.

Classroom Behavior: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Discrimination and Harassment: The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the
campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://www.colorado.edu/odh.

COURSE READINGS

Books

Required:

Recommended:

Websites:

Peace Accords Matrix- Notre Dame (To see the N.I. Peace Accords broken down)
https://peaceaccords.nd.edu/

Conflict and Politics and History in Northern Ireland.
http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/index.html

Contemporary Politics
https://sluggerotoole.com/region/northern-ireland/

1st pre-departure meeting

Transitional Justice, Peacebuilding, and Narrative
What are major questions are you bringing as your curiosities?

Transitional Justice


Peacebuilding

Mac Ginty, Roger. Where is the local? Critical localism and peacebuilding, Third World
Narrative


Jessica Senehi. Constructive Storytelling: A Peace Process

Articles Related to Northern Ireland (Available on D2L):

*TO BE SCHEDULED ACCORDING TO ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS- APPROXIMATELY ONE READING PER DAY

Peace Process
Peace Accords Matrix- Notre Dame (To see the N.I. Peace Accords broken down) https://peaceaccords.nd.edu/


Transitional Justice


Reintegration
Brown, Kris and Corinna Hauswedell, 'Burying the Hatchet: The Decommissioning of Paramilitary Arms in Northern Ireland' Bonn International Center for Conversion (Bonn) Brief 22

Dealing with the Past- Truth Telling
http://www.review.upeace.org/index.cfm?opcion=0&ejemplar=13&entrada=72

Victimhood
**Gender**


**Religion**
