ALTERNATIVE BREAK
SPRING 2010

IRELAND/N. IRELAND: PEACE BUILDING IN A
POST-CONFLICT SOCIETY

TRIP DATES: MARCH 5-14, 2010
WELCOME TO ALTERNATIVE BREAKS!!!!

Congratulations on being selected to participate in an Alternative Break trip! You are about to embark on a journey of transformation, reflection, activism, and community involvement. As you know, the Alternative Break program is student-run, with the Community Service Center (CSC) and the Alternative Break Coordinator serving as resources for the student leaders of each trip. Please read this letter carefully for important information about

FORMS YOU MUST TURN IN TO CSC: ON WEBSITE: www.american.edu/altbreak under “Participant Applications & Forms”

- Medical/Emergency Contact form
- Copy of health insurance card
- Consent & Release Waiver Form
- Copy of passport (for international trips)
- Code of Conduct Signature form

PAYMENT DEADLINES:
- Payments are broken up in monthly installments
- Payments are due on 12/5, 1/15, and 2/5

ONLINE PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Log-on to my.american.edu, click on the Finances or Life@AU tab.
2. Under your personalized links, click on “Alternative Break E-payment.”
3. Choose your trip.
4. Enter your credit card information and click submit!
5. Payments are non-refundable.

PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS VIA CASH OR CHECK:
1. Obtain deposit slip from Community Service Center with the trip Account # to ensure that the payment is placed in the correct account.
2. Bring payment and Deposit Record to the payment windows in Student Accounts (before 4:30 PM in Asbury 300).
3. Bring the original payment receipt back to the Community Service Center (MGC 273). You must keep a copy of the receipt for yourself. **If you do not bring back the receipt we have no way of knowing if you paid!!!**
4. Put the receipt in your trip box in the CSC.
5. Payments are non-refundable.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- The pre-departure meetings are **MANDATORY**. You must attend in order to get to know other students on your trip, learn about your destination and talk about health/safety issues.

- You are responsible for making an appointment with your doctor to find out which immunizations you need.
☐ You are covered under AU’s international travel insurance (information from Alt Break website: http://www.american.edu/finance/rmehs/inttravel.cfm)

☐ Safety, US State Department, CDC immunizations, and other links are on the Alternative Break website. www.american.edu/altbreak

☐ Your leader is responsible for providing the trip itinerary and destination information. Please ask them any questions you have.

☐ Academic credits: You can either do an independent study with a professor of your choice or take SIS 386: Selected Topics in Global Social Justice. (Register through Alternative Break office.)

☐ Fundraising for your trip: If you solicit checks from individuals or businesses, they should be made out to “American University” and mailed to the AU Development Office. See the Alternative Break website for more information.

AU EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:
202-885-3636  Public Safety
2nd Marcy Campos, Community Service Center Director; work: 202-885-7378, cell: 301-996-6343, home: 301-270-6343
3rd Fanta Aw, Assistant Vice President, Campus Life; work: 202-885-3357 home: 301-562 1499, cell: 240-413-2277

ALCOHOL POLICY

Alternative Breaks are alcohol-free trips.
• No exceptions!
• Students who violate the alcohol policy are at risk of being sent home at their own expense.
• YOU are an unofficial ambassador of the AU community.
• Please carry yourself as such.
EXPECTATIONS & CODE OF CONDUCT:

The following is a list of minimum expectations; your individual trip groups will discuss and formulate additional participant expectations as necessary.

Code of Conduct:
1. Participate in all mandatory weekly pre-departure meetings.
2. Make payments and turn in all necessary forms on time.
3. Travel with the group at all times.
4. Abide by the alcohol and other drug free policy of Alternative Breaks.
5. Prepare individually for your trip by completing required readings.
6. Behave in a safe and responsible manner.
7. Respect the customs and local community.
8. Respect your trip leader, fellow participants & faculty/staff advisor.
9. Process the AB experience individually and with your group through reflection, conversation and other group activities.
10. Follow-up after trip with activism on social justice issues learned.

Program Reminders:
1. Turn in all necessary forms on time.
2. Participants who wish to receive course credit for participation will be required to complete additional criteria. SIS 386 or independent study credit is optional. See individual trip advisor for details.
3. Participants must become aware of relevant health and safety risks relevant to your destination. You are responsible for making an appointment with your doctor to find out which immunizations you need.
4. Make payments on time.
5. All payments made to Alternative Break are non-refundable.

I understand that failure to comply with any of these expectations may result in my inability to participate in the trip, dismissal from trip at my own expense, or may affect future Alternative Break participation.

Print Name: ____________________________________________ AU ID: __________

Signature: ____________________________________________ Date: __________
Hi Everyone!
We are so excited to start on this journey with you. We hope that this unique experience will change the way you see the world, and show you how you can promote positive change in the world. This is no ordinary spring break. It will challenge and exhaust you. But it will also be invigorating, and hopefully life-changing.

In this packet, you will find a history of the conflict, fundraising information and much more. If you feel anything is missing, or you would like to include something more, please let us know, and we will be happy to update the packet.

Throughout the process of preparing for this amazing trip, we want to encourage everyone to investigate the topics that you are most interested in. This will be an incredible learning experience, so please feel free to share articles, videos or anything else you find with the group.

Christine Gettings, our staff adviser, is a wonderful resource and overall ray of joy. Her positive energy shines through in her work in the Kay Spiritual Life Center, as well as her activism and love for social justice. She has been on Alternative Breaks in the past, so feel free to talk to her about all her amazing experiences, and also if you have questions or concerns.

Shoshanna Sumka is the Alternative Break Coordinator, she is super nice and very knowledgeable when it comes to all things Alt. Break. Please feel free to stop by her office or send her an email if you or your parents have an questions or concerns about the trip.

We cannot wait to get started and to meet all of you!

All the best,

Megan & Kristine

Additional Resources
Country- Specific Information:
• Northern Ireland:
  o http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index.htm
• Ireland:
• The UK:

Culture and Current Affairs:
• Northern Ireland homepage for the BBC: http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/
• Irish American Information Service: http://www.iais.org/
• Google Alerts: Northern Ireland

Northern Irish Government Resources:
• Information about the Northern Ireland Office:
  o http://www.nio.gov.uk/index/about-the-nio.htm
• Northern Ireland Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister:
  o http://www.ofmfdmni.gov.uk/index/equality/race.htm
• Northern Ireland Bureau (British Sub-Embassy located near Metro Center):
  o http://www.nibureau.com/index/about-ni.htm

History:
• PBS: http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2006/03/northern_irelan.html
• CAIN Web: http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/index.html

Documentaries & Movies:

Database of movies: http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/images/cinema/nimovies.htm
• The Wind That Shakes the Barley: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0460989/
• Michael Collins: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0117039/
• Cal: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0087019/
• Hunger: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0986233/
• Documentaries: Behind the Mask: Available at AU library Call Number: VHS 6336
• The Road to Bloody Sunday: Available at AU library call number VHS 6335
• A Leap of Faith: Available at AU library Call Number: VHS 4632
• The Endgame: Available at AU library Call Number: VHS 6982

Video: http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2006/03/northern_irelan.html
March Weather in Northern Ireland
Weather in Ireland and Northern Ireland during March can be very wet, blustery, and cold. The temperature will most likely stay around 45-55° Fahrenheit during the day, while dropping below freezing at night. There is frequent drizzle/light rain. It will most likely be mostly cloudy for the trip.

PACKING LIST

- PASSPORT!!
- A raincoat with a warm lining.
- A jacket and/or coat
- Jeans. Bring several pairs. Everybody wears them. Corduroy and khaki pants are also recommended. Beware! "Pants" means underwear in Ireland, so be sure to call them your "trousers" when talking to an Irish person.
- Comfortable walking shoes.
- Pajamas.
- Dress outfit. For Stormont visit
- Cotton t-shirts.
- Hat, scarf and gloves.
- Underwear and socks.
- Umbrella
- Toiletries
- Travel journal
- A towel
- Voltage converter for electrical appliances
- Alarm clock
- Medications
- Insurance cards

http://www.arcadia.edu/abroad/default.aspx?id=6067
Tentative Itinerary

March 5: Depart on overnight flight from Dulles International Airport

March 6: Arrive in Dublin around 12.30pm. Check-in at hostel and eat lunch. Depart for a walking or bus tour of Dublin, possibly focusing on the 1916 Easter Rising (dependent if students feel up to it). Eat dinner in downtown, and then return to the hostel for bed.

March 7: Depart hostel in the morning, and take the DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) to the town of Bray. From Bray we will take a rented van to the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, and arrive there around lunchtime. We will then settle in and eat lunch at the Centre before starting activities for the day. After lunch, the international volunteers will speak to the group and explain the history of the Centre and how they help facilitate peace building. After this seminar, we would like to walk around the area surrounding the Centre because it has great views and will help the students get acquainted with the Irish landscape. We will return to the Centre for dinner at 6pm and then have reflection time before we embark on the activities for the next day.

March 8: After breakfast, we will participate in several workshops and seminars possibly covering the areas of conflict resolution training, creating sustainable peace networks, and engaging in political dialogue. After the workshops, we will have lunch and then begin our community service project with the international volunteers. Dinner will be at 6pm, followed by a reflection period.

March 9: After breakfast, we will again participate in the workshops and seminars at the Centre. Lunch will be at 1pm and then we will continue to work on our service project. Dinner at 6pm, followed by a reflection period.

March 10: Depart early from the Centre by taking a rented van back to Bray. From Bray we will again take the DART back to Dublin, where we will then take a bus to Belfast. We should arrive in Belfast around 2pm and then we will check into our hostel. If the students feel up to it we will then take a Black Taxi tour of the murals and peace walls around the city. We will then eat dinner in downtown and return to the hostel where we will have reflection time before the next day’s activities.

March 11: We will have breakfast at the hostel and then travel to the Northern Ireland Parliament, where we will meet with members of Parliament belonging to opposite parities to get a full picture of the political situation. We then hope to meet with either the Ballybeen Improvement group, which tries to add to the murals to send a positive message, or Mairead Corrigan Maguire, founder of the Peace People. We will then depart on a bus to Derry, and then take a rented van to Kilcranny House Peace & Reconciliation Centre where we will arrive around dinnertime. After taking time to settle in, we will have dinner and then reflection time.

March 12: After breakfast we will participate in workshops and seminars pertaining to the social justice theme and the role of environmentalism in peace work. After lunch at 1pm we will start a service project working around the center, especially in their garden, which they use to teach students how to “cultivate peace.” Time permitting, we might try and take a short trip to Giant’s Causeway because it is a sight not to be missed while in Northern Ireland. We will have dinner at 6pm and then reflection time.

March 13: Depart Kilcranny House in a van for Derry City. In Derry we will take a walking tour of Derry with a former paramilitary member who will explain the significance of the city in the conflict, especially Bloody Sunday. We will also take a tour of the Free Derry Museum. We will then take an Ulster Bus from Derry City to Belfast around 4pm. After arriving in Belfast we will check-in to our hostel, eat dinner, and have reflection time.

March 14: Depart on morning flight back to the United States.
DESCRIPTION OF PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

The Glencree Centre for Peace & Reconciliation (www.glencree.ie) is located in the Wicklow Mountains, about 15 miles outside of Dublin City Centre. Glencree is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation that is devoted to peacebuilding and reconciliation in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Great Britain, and beyond. From the context of the protracted conflict experienced in and between these islands, Glencree works towards understanding complex relationships, as well as cultivating new ones, between all people from all parts of society. The programme work builds peace and fosters reconciliation by facilitating dialogues, creating peace education resources, organising school programmes, and much more.

The current programme structure and direction of Glencree were established in 1994. We perceive peacebuilding as a process which provides opportunities to understand the nature and meaning of conflicts and opportunities to resolve them without recourse to violence.

Kilcranny House (www.kilcrannyhouse.org) is set in 4 acres of land on the banks of the River Bann just 10 minutes drive from the centre of Coleraine and close to the Causeway Coast and Glens of Antrim.

At Kilcranny House we are committed to promoting positive peace & reconciliation, healing the divisions which exist between people and exploring non-violence as a way of life and a means of working for change in our society. Kilcranny is a place where people can grow in their relationships with each other through co-operative work, discussion and relaxation. It provides a safe place for groups and individuals to experiment in living with differences and challenging boundaries. We are committed to addressing the divisions which exist between people in Northern Ireland in a rural, residential setting. We also strive to live a lifestyle that cherishes and protects our environment. Through programmes of work, recreation and discussion we believe that many fears, prejudices and conflicts can be resolved. Kilcranny provides an atmosphere for the exchange of views and skills, in the understanding that everyone has something to offer.
REGISTRATION: Americans living or traveling in Ireland are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department’s travel registration web site. A passport is necessary, but a visa is not for trips under 3 months.

SAFETY AND SECURITY: Ireland remains largely free of terrorist incidents. Several Americans have reported incidents of verbal abuse, apparently in reaction to U.S. policy on the war on terrorism.

CRIME: Ireland has a low rate of violent crime. There have been a limited number of incidents in which foreigners and tourists have been victims of assault, including instances of violence toward those who appear to be members of racial minority groups. In addition, there have been several reported assaults in Dublin by small, unorganized gangs roaming the streets in the early morning hours after the pubs close. There is a high incidence of petty crime in major tourist areas – mostly theft, burglary and purse snatching.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: Most Irish banks will not accept U.S. $100 bills. ATMs are widely available, but some, particularly in rural areas, may not accept cards from U.S. banks.

MEDICAL INSURANCE: The Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and whether it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation.

EMBASSY LOCATION: The U.S. Embassy is located at 42 Elgin Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. The Embassy can be reached via phone at 353-1-668-8777, after hours number 353-1-668-9612, fax 353-1-668-8056.

http://www.state.gov/travel/

ENTRY/EXIT REQUIREMENTS: A valid passport is required for travelers outside of Northern Ireland, although a visa is not required for U.S. citizens for short visits

SAFETY AND SECURITY: The political situation in Northern Ireland has improved dramatically since the days of the “Troubles.” The potential remains, however, for sporadic incidents of street violence and/or sectarian confrontation, and such incidents took place in March 2009. American citizens traveling to Northern Ireland should therefore remain alert to their surroundings and should be aware that if they choose to visit potential flashpoints or attend parades, sporadic violence remains a possibility. Tensions may be heightened during the summer marching season (April to August), particularly during the month of July (around the July 12th public holiday). The equivalent of 911 in the United States – is 999 in the United Kingdom.

CRIME: The United Kingdom and Gibraltar benefit from generally low crime rates. The crime situation in the United Kingdom is similar to that in the United States: typical incidents include pick pocketing; muggings; “snatch and grab” thefts of mobile phones, watches and jewelry; and thefts of unattended bags, especially at airports and from cars parked at restaurants, hotels, and resorts. As a general rule, either walk the extra distance to use a surface crossing or wait until there are other adult pedestrians entering the tunnel.
Americans should take steps to ensure the safety of their U.S. passports. Visitors in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Gibraltar are not expected to produce identity documents for police authorities and thus may secure their passports in hotel safes or residences.

MEDICAL FACILITIES AND HEALTH INFORMATION: While medical services are widely available, free care under the National Health System is allowed only for UK residents and certain EU nationals. Tourists and short-term visitors will be charged for medical treatment in the United Kingdom. Charges may be significantly higher than those assessed in the United States.

REGISTRATION / EMBASSY LOCATION: Americans living or traveling in the United Kingdom are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department’s travel registration web site, and to obtain updated information on travel and security within the United Kingdom. The U.S. Consulate General in Belfast, Northern Ireland, is located at Danesfort House, 228 Stranmillis Road, Belfast BT9 5GR; telephone: in country 028-9038-6100, from the United States 011-44-28-9038-6100. Fax: in country 028-9068-1301, from the United States 011-44-28-9068-1301.

http://www.state.gov/travel/
8 Session Pre-Departure Syllabus
(Pre-Departure meetings are mandatory)

Session 1
- **Introduction and Orientation**
  Introduce trip participants to one another with ice breakers (intro. questions, icebreaking games depending on venue), distribute trip materials, talk about fundraising.

Session 2
- **Overview of Irish history/ The Troubles** so participants understand the roots of the conflict as well as the continuing struggle (use Kristine’s presentation). Possible showing of *Michael Collins*. Start fundraising brainstorm.

Session 3
- **Catholic views of the conflict**
  What began the conflict? Why did Catholics feel persecuted? What was their role in the conflict? What is the present situation of Catholics in Northern Ireland? Discussion of traditional Irish music and its role in Catholic culture. Show *The Wind That Shakes the Barley*

Session 4
- **Protestant views of the conflict**
  Why did/do Protestants feel threatened in Northern Ireland? What was their role in the conflict? What is the present situation of Protestants in Northern Ireland? What are both communities doing to maintain the peace? Discussion of the Irish language and what it means to both communities. Fundraising discussion as well as addressing any questions at the half-way mark.

Session 5
- **Conflict in the Republic**
  Discussion of conflicts in the republic (focus on minorities, immigrants, and the Traveler community) as well as the “new conflicts” facing Irish youth. How does this differ from conflict in the North and how is it the same? Teambuilding activity: Beautiful Green Island

Session 6
- **Peace and the Environment**
  What role does the environment play in peace processes. Discussion of the language of “peacebuilding” and environmental peace programs, such as Kilcranny House or Glencree’s Sustainable Peace Network.

Session 7
- **Methods of Conflict Resolution**
  Discussion/Demonstration of conflict styles and the process of conflict transformation. Discussion of how to work effectively in a group (Teambuilding activity). Possible guest speaker on resolving conflict: Maybe Colman McCarthy?

Session 8
- **Traveling Abroad**
  Final questions about travel plans. Are there any further questions about the island of Ireland. Participants expectations of the trip as well as what is expected of participants. Review of itinerary. Discussion of appropriate behavior and culture differences/offensive stereotypes. Final concerns and logistics.
Model Fundraising Letter from the Colombia Alt Break:

Dear ___,

I want to give you the opportunity to share in an adventure I am undertaking in conjunction with my studies in at American University in Washington, DC.

In our increasingly globalized economy, decisions made by our government and the practices of American corporations often have unintended consequences for people in other countries, especially those in the developing world. As a person of faith and conscience, I see a great need for giving a voice to our brothers and sisters in Latin America who are surviving amidst impoverishment and injustice. Furthermore, as I plan my career in working for human rights and international development, I am trying to increase my hemispheric awareness and build my travel resume. Accordingly, a wonderful experience has arisen and I need your help. This is an opportunity for you to become part of the struggle for a more peaceful and just world.

On January 1, an American University delegation of American University Students is going to Colombia. The point of this trip is to see first-hand the effects of both U.S. and Colombian policies regarding multinational corporations and the pending Free Trade Agreement. Colombia has the second largest group of displaced people after the Darfur region of Sudan, and receives one of the largest amounts of military aid from the US. Our goal is to establish a network for the advancement of human rights in that country. Witness for Peace is a politically independent, nonpartisan grassroots organization committed to nonviolence. Since 1983, they have worked to support peace, justice and sustainable economies in Latin America and the Caribbean. This trip will be no vacation. For ten days, we will live and learn with Colombian people who have witnessed and been victims of brutal violations of human rights in their own homes.

The cost of this trip is $2,200 for basic accommodations, ground transportation and airfare. As a college student, this amount is more than I can afford on my own. Accordingly, I am asking for contributions from my family and friends to make this opportunity a reality. Any amount you can afford would be greatly appreciated! You can send a tax deductible contribution to our trip by sending a check to American University Office of University Relations, 4400 Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, DC 20016 and writing “Colombia Alternative Break trip” in the notes portion of the check, sending a donation this way will contribute to my group’s cost as a whole. To donate to my individual costs, please write a check in my name and send it to ____________.

I will follow up my trip with a written report of my activities and findings that I will share with my donors and anyone else who is interested.

Thank you in advance for any help you can give. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at (phone number) or by email at (email). You can also view information about the trip directly from my school's website: www.american.edu/altbreak.

Sincerely,

[you]