

Wanda Wigfall-Williams, PhD

BIO

Dr. Wigfall-Williams teaches at American University's School of International Service. Her focus is on cross-cultural and intercultural communication and peace and conflict management and mitigation. Prior to coming to American University, she taught at several institutions, including: the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University, Columbia College, University of Ulster in Derry, and Queens University in Belfast also in Northern Ireland.

Dr. Wanda Wigfall-Williams has negotiated with terrorists, facilitated dialogues and focus groups with paramilitary groups, and worked to develop anti-human trafficking campaigns in Eastern Europe and Asia. Her teaching, research and practice are informed by her desire to give voice to the issues that threaten human rights.

As the first American named a Thomas Phillip O'Neill, Jr. (Tip O'Neill Peace Fellow), Dr. Wigfall-Williams conducted extensive field research examining identity negotiation strategies within the context of mixed-tradition marriages in Northern Ireland, a sectarian society divided according to religious affiliation. Her expertise in program planning, implementation and evaluation for public sector entities such as the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institute on Drug Abuse as well as numerous private sector clients. Dr. Wigfall-Williams' work involves issues related to identity, ethnicity, race, gender equity and religious freedom, all of which are universal human rights.

Dr. Wigfall-Williams is currently engaged in research examining the impact of transnational crime on national security and determining the efficacy of program delivery services to reintegrate trafficked children into society. Trafficking in humans, while horrid, is rarely the only illegal activity the criminals are involved in. Rather, it is one component of a variety of illicit behaviors such as illegal drug trafficking, forced organ harvesting, pharmaceutical testing and ultimately, death. Professor Wigfall-Williams is working collaboratively with public and private partners to identify sites and sources of national security threats, mitigate and prevent whenever possible the gender-based exploitation of youth, and to evaluate the effectiveness of current service delivery strategies.