WHAT IS THE COTHRAN CENTER?

• The Cothran Center encourages students to reflect upon what brings meaning and purpose to their lives and offers programs and resources to support that reflection.

• We initiate opportunities for thoughtful and open dialogue as we explore these 3 essential life questions:
  • Who am I – most authentically?
  • What do I believe – most deeply?
  • What does the world need – from me?
WHAT IS FOCUS?

• FOCUS is a travel program that occurs over spring break. In years past, groups have traveled to Cuba, Mexico, and New York City. Since 2014, we have traveled to Northern Ireland.

• This program is designed for sophomores at Furman.

• The “focus” is on exploration of meaning and purpose. While visiting Northern Ireland, students hear stories from those involved in justice and reconciliation efforts in the area, visit cities and communities, and participate in personal and group sessions and discussions.

NORTHERN IRELAND

THE CONTEXT
WHY NORTHERN IRELAND?

• The topic of historic conflict in Northern Ireland and ongoing peace, understanding, and reconciliation efforts provide a great point of study for our program.

• We have a connection and partnership with The Corrmeela Community in Ballycastle, a center that emerged from the work of peace and reconciliation efforts in Northern Ireland.

ABOUT NORTHERN IRELAND

• Population of almost 2 million
• Part of the United Kingdom (U.K.)
• Shares the island with the Republic of Ireland. It was partitioned from Ireland in 1921.

• History of Conflict in Northern Ireland:
  • It is divided into two communities -
    o Protestants (Unionists/Loyalists) : want to remain loyal to the UK
    o Catholics (Nationalists/Republicans) : want a united Ireland
  • There is intertwined conflict amongst these communities

• The Good Friday Agreement (1998) brought greater freedom and hope for the area regarding relationships between the sides, but the conflict is far from over.
THE CORRYMEELA COMMUNITY

http://www.backpack-newzealand.com/images/ireland-map.gif
MISSION OF THE COMMUNITY

Corrymeela’s mission is to “Transform Division through Human Encounter”

In our increasingly divided world, we support thousands of people from different backgrounds to live well together.

A VIDEO INTRODUCTION

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7rKlzuC8OU
WHAT WILL WE DO IN NORTHERN IRELAND?

- **Participate** in sessions on topics such as team building, identity, conflict resolution, artistic expression, etc.
- **Learn** about the work of The Corrymeela Community
- **Listen** to stories from those involved in peace and reconciliation efforts in Northern Ireland
- Set aside time to **reflect**, both individually and in community
- **Share** in community through *optional* “worship” experiences and opportunities to engage with others at mealtimes
- **Join** in guided visits to cities such as Belfast and Derry/LondonDerry
- **Visit** cultural and tourist sites, such as Giant’s Causeway, *Game of Thrones* sites, etc.

WE WILL NOT . . .

- Spend time as volunteers, doing hands-on work, with organizations/charities
- Be on a “mission trip”
- Be on vacation, with tons of free-time
- Spend time attached to our digital devices (i.e., cell phones, laptops, tablets)
- Receive academic credit for the program
- Consider group activities and day travel optional (we participate in the entire program)
FOCUS PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- Mandatory Orientation Sessions (December-March)
  - Get to know one another
  - History and Topics for Program Preparation
  - Vocational Reflection Guidance
  - Logistics for Travel
- Travel Program (March-Spring Break)
  - In Northern Ireland (UK)
- Debriefing Sessions
  - Group Reflection & Conversation
  - Preparation for Furman Engaged
- Furman Engaged Presentation
  - Friday, April 12th

PHOTOS FROM FOCUS
A LOOK AT THE ADVENTURE
APPLICATION PROCESS

HOW DO YOU APPLY?

https://www.furman.edu/cothran-center-vocational-reflection/student-programs/focus/
APPLICATION PROCESS

• Completed application, including personal statement, video, or artistic piece, signature page, AND recommendation forms, must be submitted by **Friday, October 20th at 5:00 pm**.

• Interviews will take place between **October 30th - November 10th**.

• Notification of participation in the program on or before **Tuesday, November 21st**.

• Notify the Center of your participation by **Monday, November 27th**.

• Required orientation and debriefing sessions for participants will be (almost) every other Monday in December 2023-March 2024 (+Furman Engaged in April).

QUESTIONS?

ASK QUESTIONS NOW...OR CONTACT US LATER!