Community-Engaged Theatre: Ireland

July 12-July 31, 2009
Summer Study Abroad Program
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS PROFESSIONS
PROGRAM IN EDUCATIONAL THEATRE
SUMMER 2009

Community-Engaged Theatre in Ireland
Youth Theatre in Education
E17.2075/2979
6 points
July 12th – July 31st 2009

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INTRODUCTION AND GREETINGS!

The Program in Educational Theatre is pleased you have made the journey to Ireland this summer. Since 1973, well over 2000 American and international students have participated in educational theatre’s study abroad curriculum. Some of you will have traveled to Dublin from your three weeks of study in England. Others will be joining the Ireland program directly from the United States or other parts of the world. Wherever you have come from, we are delighted you have arrived and know that you are eager for a stimulating learning experience working with Ireland’s leading drama and theatre practitioners.

This summer you will be participating in a unique collaboration between the NYU Program in Educational Theatre, the Samuel Beckett Center at Trinity College Dublin, and a variety of community sites in and around Dublin and Belfast. The spotlight is on the applied theatre, what some might call outreach or community-engaged theatre. The term “applied theatre” is not widely used in Ireland, but it suits this curriculum’s exploration of innovative forms of outreach, access, and participation in the dramatic arts. Over the next three weeks, you will engage with unique modules of praxis that aim to educate and transform. These modules include classical text and new writing, theatre in education, community theatre, storytelling/myth and multidisciplinary art. You will explore how animateurs, what we might call teaching artists in America, position themselves around these modules. Key focus questions include: What constitutes an innovative module of praxis in applied theatre and community-engaged theatre? What skills do animateurs, teaching artists, need to develop as they implement these forms? What issues are raised for artists and audience members as they encounter an applied or community-engaged theatre experience? When we use the term praxis we are referring to a particular approach to learning, where participants reflect on and in action in order to transform the world: Action, Reflection, Transformation (ART!)

The course of study that we’ve created for this summer was borne out of the great successes that we encountered over the past five summers in Dublin and Belfast. The relationships forged with institutions and individuals have allowed us to build upon past experiences while also generating new and innovative collaborations for this summer’s focus on drama and theatre work within communities. You will encounter various approaches to theatre making and educational drama that will help to answer the course focus questions through experiences with Ireland’s finest drama practitioners and theatre artists. Skills to be explored will include facilitation, devising, playwriting/adaptation, critical analysis, movement, and performance, along with approaches to using dramatic activities to create context for theatre work. Experiences will include lectures and demonstrations, attendance at plays and performances, visits to cultural sites in and around Dublin.
and Belfast where applied theatre work takes place, and the creation of original theatre works to be presented in the Samuel Beckett Centre.

Within this whirlwind of activity, our overall purpose must be to examine the practices of our Irish colleagues with an eye toward how these techniques and approaches may inform work within our own contexts. Wherever we’re from and however we work, the potential for these kinds of projects exists all around us. Our goal then must be to identify ways to empower our communities to give voice to all citizens through applied theatre and community-engaged theatre experiences. And we’re here to learn how to do just that.

I am grateful to this year’s staff of artist educators for their guidance and commitment to generating a unique international experience for all of you. It is an intense experience, but a transformative one; one which has students often saying that their international studies were a highlight of their time at New York University. I am excited that you have taken the plunge, booked the plane flight, and embarked on what will be an unforgettable journey in your education. Here’s to a wonderful experience for all!

With best wishes,

David Montgomery, PhD
Director, 2009 NYU Ireland Study Abroad Program
Visiting Assistant Professor in the Program in Educational Theatre
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
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Course Objectives

• To identify individual goals and questions about applied theatre and community-engaged theatre in an Irish context and in a U.S. context.

• To develop an Educational Resource Project (ERP) for *Translations* by Brian Friel.

• To create an original performance project that will be presented in a workshop setting in the Samuel Beckett Centre Theatre.

• To hone facilitation skills that can be used when working in school and community settings.

• To gain a greater understanding of applied theatre and community-engaged theatre projects in urban and rural settings in Ireland through lectures, field trips, discussions, performances, and interactive workshops.

• To generate written documents that chronicle personal growth, moments of learning, shifts in praxis, and connections between applied theatre and community-engaged theatre in Ireland and the United States. Written projects will include self-assessments, a conference proposal abstract, and a grant narrative for an original project.

Required Texts
Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States by Jan Cohen-Cruz
Applied Drama by Helen Nicholson
Playing the Game by Christine Poulter
Theatre for Community, Conflict & Dialogue by Michael Rohd
Applied Theatre: Creating Transformative Encounters in the Community by Philip Taylor
Translations by Brian Friel
One additional play of your choice by Brian Friel

All of the above texts are available at the NYU Main Bookstore, 18 Washington Place in Manhattan.

Course Work and Assessment

Participants will be responsible for the following:

- Attending and participating in all class meetings, field trips, performances, and tutor meetings. Students should be prepared for the schedule to change and for additional meetings to be called at the discretion of the teaching staff.
- Completing all readings and assignments for the course.
- Completing an initial self-assessment and a final self-assessment.
- Working in small groups to create an Educational Resource Project and an original performance project in a workshop setting.
- Maintaining a reflective academic journal to track individual learning.
- Maintaining an open mind, a positive attitude, a professional mindset, and a collaborative spirit throughout the course.

Because this is an intensive, hands-on experience, attendance, promptness, and participation are mandatory. Grades can be lowered because of absence, tardiness, and lack of preparation and participation. Lateness and leaving early will not be tolerated.

Participants will be placed into tutor groups of a varying number of students. Tutors will meet with their students, either individually or in groups, throughout the experience, and tutors will also read and evaluate group projects, written work, and self-assessments.

Assessment

Each participant will receive two grades for this experience, as you are receiving credit for two courses. The breakdown will be as follows:

Grade for E17.2075:
- Educational Resource Project (30%)
- Two Journal Entries (20%)
- Final Self-Assessment (50%)

Grade for E17.2979
- Performance Project (30%)
- Grant Narrative (20%)
• Final Self-Assessment (50%)

The Educational Resource Project, Two Journal Entries, and Grant Narrative will be assessed using rubrics, and the Performance Project will be assessed using a combination of a rubric and a self-assessment technique. Each student will also be required to complete a final self-assessment that will serve as 50% of each grade.

Rubrics of assessment will be provided for each project once we are in Ireland. Sections of those rubrics may be student-generated as well. The self-assessment process will reflect your own perception of your learning in the courses. In order to measure this learning, you will complete two self-assessments. The first assessment will involve composing a personal history and identifying your individual goals and questions for the course. In the final assessment you will evaluate your work in the course, report on your progress in reaching your goals and answering your questions, and assign yourself a university-sanctioned grade with appropriate justification. Please be sure to specifically reflect on the assignments for E17.2075 (the Educational Resource Project and Journal Entries) and E17.2979 (the Performance Project and Grant Narrative) in your final assessment. You'll note that the final assessment is due on July 29th, the day after you finish the Performance Projects and the same day you submit the Grant Narrative. Thus, you won’t be able to reflect on the completion of these two projects. However, you can and should reflect on the process of writing the grant narrative and devising your performance project. The grade that you assign yourself should reflect your participation, commitment, collaboration, and your mastery and understanding of the concepts of applied theatre and community-engaged theatre. You will receive this grade as long as you provide evidence to support WHY you deserve the grade in your final self-assessment. If your evidence does not support the grade that you have assigned yourself, the tutors will adjust the grade accordingly based on their own observations of your work.

Please note that learning does not only mean doing. Coming to class, participating in discussions, and completing assignments do not constitute learning. These all represent opportunities for learning to take place, but there’s no guarantee. As you consider your work in this experience, please make sure that you consider the depth of your learning through the following lenses: Awareness, Connections, and Ownership. What are your own personal examples of new awareness, connections and ownership? How has your knowledge and understanding shifted as a result of your work in this experience? How have you changed as an artist and as an educator? What new questions have emerged because of this experience? What evidence can you provide that supports your assertions about your learning? What are the sources of evidence that you can use in your self-assessment to capture the learning experience? “A” work is not simply coming to all classes, turning in assignments on time, and completing all the requirements.

You will find the steps for the initial self-assessment and final self-assessment at the end of this course outline. Please complete the initial assessment and have a copy prepared to hand to your tutor at your first tutor meeting on Monday, July 13. Final self-assessments and journals will be due to tutors on Wed. July 29 at 5:00pm. Both assessments will be typed and double-spaced.

Journaling

Each participant will keep a journal throughout the three weeks in Ireland. This will serve as a way to track your learning throughout the course, and should assist you in the creation of your final self-assessment. We suggest that you create a journal response for each day of our work. These
responses may be written or visual and should address all elements of the course including readings, workshops, lectures, performances, fieldtrips, and seminars. This journal is not a “Dear Diary” account of your days in Ireland, but rather it is an academic, reflective document where you have space to make connections between your own practices and the practices that you are observing and experiencing, as well as a place to interrogate the models that you are experiencing.

While the initial and final self-assessments are part of the journal that will be read by tutors, students will also choose two journal entries to submit to tutors for assessment. These entries should be analytical reflections on two of the workshops or projects that you have participated in. It will be due on Sunday, July 26th, so students can choose to unpack in writing any experience that transpired before that time. Students should submit the entries that they feel best analyze, and most deeply interrogate, a workshop, performance, seminar or project that they have experienced.

The overall journal should present a “picture” of what the student has learned as an artist and educator through this experience. A well-organized and well-presented journal will help students to be more effective in providing evidence for your final grade and could be a great resource for you in the future. Journals may be handwritten, but they should be legible. While the student will submit the entry they feel best interrogates an experience on July 26th, tutors may request to see a student’s entire journal at some point during the course as a way to see how they are making connections.

Criteria for Assessment
- Workshops, topics, and other learning experiences are interrogated with depth.
- Connections between the student’s own practices and the practices that they are experiencing are identified and discussed.
- Appropriate use of resources to support ideas is demonstrated
- A document that will have a useful application is presented
- Coherent and logical responses to class topics are articulated and the presentation of ideas are clear and effective
- Delivered on time
- Delivered free of grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors

Educational Resource Project

This project will involve the creation of materials/workshops related to Translations by Brian Friel. You should have read this play and one other play by Friel before you arrive in Ireland.

Using a model that will be introduced by our Irish colleagues, participants will work in small groups to create curriculum materials for Translations. Materials will include lesson plans for pre-performance or post-performance workshop experiences for a specific audience or community of the group’s choosing. Projects should follow the prescribed model. Pre- and post-performance workshops should be modeled for a one-hour experience with a specific audience or community.

On July 18, groups will share the models that they have created. Each group will present 15 minutes of one pre- or post-performance workshop, followed by a 15-minute facilitated discussion about the presentation. Students will be assessed on the group presentation and on the lesson plans themselves.
Criteria for assessment:
• Well-organized and thoughtful outlines for lesson plans
• Project created for the chosen audience
• Evidence of research is present
• Pre- or post-performance workshops support an arc or trajectory that includes the performance experience
• Presentation of materials is clear and effective
• Project demonstrates strong collaboration amongst the group members

Grant Narrative

Participants will work individually to create a grant narrative for a proposed applied theatre / community-engaged theatre project in the United States that is based on a model encountered on the Ireland Study Abroad program. The project must include collaboration with a school, community group, or social service organization. You will function as the lead artist for the project. The 1000-word narrative must include two sections: “Background and Significance” and “Program Description.” The grant is for $5000, but you are not required to include a budget as part of this assignment. More details about the granting organization and the specifics of the call for proposals will be provided in Ireland.

Grant narratives must be typed and turned in to tutors for assessment on Wednesday, July 29 at 5:00pm.

Criteria for assessment:
• Proposed project is suitable for funding from the granting organization
• Background and significance of the project is clearly articulated and well-supported by secondary source materials
• Program description includes detailed methodology
• Timeline for the project is realistic
• Collaboration between lead artist and partner organization is logical and realistic
• Represents a significant contribution to the field
• Evidence of connections between Irish and U.S. contexts
• Delivered free of grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors and within the word limit

Performance Project

Participants will work in groups to create short performance pieces using various techniques introduced by theatre artists teaching on the course. Projects will be conceived and workshopped during the program under the guidance of these artists. The experience will culminate in a showing of the work to peers and a few invited guests.

The projects will take a variety of forms, as dictated by the areas of expertise of the participating theatre artists. Participants will have some input as to what project they will work on, however, the final decision about placement lies with the tutors.

Choose one of the following project options:
(A) Devising and Collective Playwriting
Introduces participants to methods and practice that encourage community groups to devise and script their own self-made dramas. Participants will play, improvise, move, brainstorm and eventually write a collective play. Avoiding issue-based approaches, the methods used encourage participants to imagine, dream, and create magical theatre that is nonetheless topical and relevant to their communities’ experience. Part master class, part hands-on Do-It-Yourself theatre-making, this project allows students to discover the creative writer and artist in all of us.

(B) Community-Engaged Theatre at Trinity College
Using the TCD campus as the principal site, participants will explore the resonance of ‘Place’ both as a subject and also a site for performance. You will subdivide into smaller groupings and will select a focus area of key interest. What would you like your audience to see/encounter here? How can that encounter with place also be an encounter with you and where you are coming from? You will work collaboratively in devising and performing a site-specific piece, which will form part of an overall promenade performance to be performed on sites throughout TCD.

(C) Personal Narrative and Collaborative Creation
Participants will explore techniques for creating theatre based upon the lived experiences of the group. After choosing a theme, participants will begin by exploring the nature of memory and memories through writing and storytelling exercises. Participants will then use devising techniques to theatricalize individual stories in a manner that has both an aesthetic power and a wider relevance. Devising processes will include the use of objects, rhythm, sounds, words, movement and space. Participants will explore the ideas of the whole group in order to understand how best to use these processes in working with communities. Participants will also explore how to honor individual experiences and artistic contributions within a collaborative process. The devised theatre will be more "theme and variations" than a linear narrative. This will allow for a range of theatrical approaches to the material and create an opportunity to expose the interweaving of personal and collective histories. Participants will also try to create an avenue for the audience to have some manner of direct entry into the piece.

Projects will be presented in and around the Beckett Theatre on July 28.

Criteria for assessment:
• Clear documentation of the process
• Project makes a clear connection to the concept of applied theatre/community-engaged theatre
• Effective participatory work in the project, both as an individual and within a group
• Workshop showing of project shows clear choices and a potential for further development
• Demonstrates good evaluation of the project and strong reflective praxis

*** Please not that additional information for the above assignments will be provided once we are in Ireland.

Performances and Field Trips
We will be visiting several community sites in and around Dublin and Belfast, attending theatre performances, and interacting with cultural/historical sites during our three weeks in Ireland. Participants are required to attend and participate in these experiences, as they are vital to developing an understanding of the Irish cultural context. Failure to attend any of these required experiences will result in a lowering of the participant’s final grades for the course.

Academic Honesty
You are responsible for knowing the University’s issued standards of academic honesty outlined in the student handbook. While the nature of this course demands that you discuss ideas and opinions with fellow participants, your writing and other individual work must be something that you do on your own. If any of this is unclear, please make it a point to speak with your tutor immediately. The standard penalty for academic dishonesty consists of an automatic “F” for the course and notification of NYU authorities.

Do You Have Any Particular Needs?
Please let us know if there is anything we should be aware of regarding you and a particular need or characteristic, such as a medical condition, a sensory or hidden disability, etc. that may influence our interactions, your participation, or your personal well-being. We want to make the course as inclusive as possible, so we’d appreciate your communication to keep us informed about you. This disclosure is optional or, if you wish, only for selected individuals.

Open Door Policy
It is our intention to create a safe environment and a comfortable learning community for everyone in the class. If at any time you feel unsafe or uncomfortable, please feel free to address these issues with the tutors on the course. We would suggest finding an appropriate time to speak with your tutor or one of the program directors outside of the day-to-day working hours.
Initial Self-Assessment  
Ireland Study Abroad Program  
Summer 2009

The initial self-assessment should be completed prior to arriving in Dublin. You will turn in this document to your tutor on Monday, July 13 at your first tutor meeting. The self-assessment should be typed and double-spaced.

Please respond to the following and include headings where appropriate:

Biography and Intentions  
Please provide a brief biographical statement. Include a description of your experience as an artist and an educator. Why have you chosen to participate in the study abroad program in Ireland? What other countries have you visited and/or studied in besides the US? Why did you choose NYU and the Program in Educational Theatre?

Definitions and Positions  
What is your working definition of applied theatre? Community-engaged theatre? Describe your artistry and the philosophy underpinning it. List at least three goals and three questions that you would like to explore over the next three weeks. Identify the particular challenges of collaborating in a community.

Final Self-Assessment  
Ireland Study Abroad Program  
Summer 2009

In your final self-assessment for the Ireland study abroad program, we ask that you discuss your learning based on the initial goals and questions you posed at the beginning of this three-week experience. You must assign a university-sanctioned grade for the experience, and this grade will count towards 50% of each of the two grades that you will receive for the course. Self-assessments should be typed, double-spaced, and approximately 1500 words. Please note that “B+/B” is not a sanctioned grade, and NYU does not assign A+.

Please consider the following:

What have you accomplished as a learner? You began the course by setting goals for your own explorations of the course material, and by posing questions that you wanted to answer by the conclusion of the intensive. We would like to know where you are on your journey with these goals and questions, and also how you got there. What methods have you used to find answers and reach goals? What specific moments in the experience made you stop and think “A-ha!”? What have you learned about applied theatre and community-engaged theatre in Ireland, and how does that relate to your understanding of the forms in the United States? What areas do you still need to work on as an artist/educator? What is your evidence of learning? How has your awareness shifted, what new connections have you made, and how do you now own the processes and techniques that the course
In essence, what have you learned and how have you learned it? Why do you deserve the grade that you have assigned yourself? What is your criterion for that grade?

The assessment should cover your work throughout the entire experience and address the following areas:

- Applied theatre and community-engaged theatre as forms
- Educational resource projects
- Devising original work
- Your written projects
- Your collaboration with other colleagues
- Your experiences as an artist/educator working outside of your own community and/or comfort zone

Final self-assessments will be turned in to your tutor on **Wednesday, July 29 at 5:00pm.** Tutors will review these self-assessments. If the evidence provided in the self-assessment does not match the grade assigned, the tutor will modify the grade according to her/his own observations of the student’s work throughout the three weeks.
Students will be housed on the campus of Trinity College in Dublin for the three weeks of the program. Housing begins on the evening of July 12th and ends on the morning of July 31st. Flats include a functional kitchenette that is equipped with pots and pans and basic utensils. Each flat will receive one access card to be shared among flat mates that will allow students to use a campus computing site. Flats do not have internet access. An excursion along the eastern coast of Ireland up to Belfast includes housing at Queen’s University. Please bring a small overnight bag that you can take on this trip.

Daily class meetings will be held in the Samuel Beckett Centre on the campus of Trinity College unless otherwise announced.

David Montgomery will oversee the Ireland course. Students will be placed into tutorial groups that will meet throughout the experience. Montgomery will be joined by Irish practitioners Joanna Parkes, Jonathan Harden and Jennifer MacDonald to supervise students in tutor groups. Students will also have inputs from guest artists from throughout the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Tutors and guest artists will work from the assumption that students will have read the following texts:

- *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States* by Jan Cohen-Cruz
- *Applied Drama* by Helen Nicholson
- *Playing the Game* by Christine Poulter
- *Theatre for Community, Conflict & Dialogue* by Michael Rohd
- *Applied Theatre: Creating Transformative Encounters in the Community* by Philip Taylor
- *Translations* by Brian Friel
- One additional play of your choice by Brian Friel

*Playing the Game* and *Theatre for Community, Conflict & Dialogue* are resource texts that will help provide ideas for projects that require dramatic activities.

Students will complete two projects. The first project will require students to work in groups to create and present educational resource materials for *Translations* by Brian Friel. In the second project students will again work in groups under the guidance of an artist-practitioner to create an original performance piece that will be shared with the study abroad community and invited guests.

Please note that this schedule is tentative and subject to additions and changes.
## WEEK ONE

### Sunday, July 12:

- NYU students arrive throughout the day
- 2:00 – 6:00 pm Tutor Staff Meeting
- Kick off Reception at Trinity College (TCD) –
- 7:00 – 9:00 pm Foyer of the Samuel Beckett Center

### Monday, July 13:

- Setting the context, reviewing the course itinerary, projects, assessments, and expectations. Questions, comments, concerns.
- 10:00 – 11:00 am Who we are and where do we come from?
- 11:00 – 12:30 pm Lunch on your own
- 12:30 – 1:30 pm Tutor Group Meeting #1
- 3:00 – 5:00 pm Walking tour of Dublin
- 5:00 – 6:00 pm Travel to Dinner

### Tuesday, July 14:

- 9:30 – Noon What do we mean by community-engaged theatre and applied theatre?
- Noon – 1:00 pm Lunch
- 1:00 – 5:00 pm Introduction to Educational Resource Project (ERP)
- 6:00 – 7:30 pm Dinner on your own.

### Wednesday, July 15:

- Workshop with Upstate Theatre Company led by Declan Gorman, Artistic Director
- 9:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch
- 1:00 – 2:00 pm Continue with Upstate Theatre Company

### Thursday, July 16:

- Workshop with Chrissie Poulter
- 9:30 – 1:00 pm Lunch
- 1:00 – 2:00 pm Workshop (cont’d) with Chrissie Poulter
- 4:00 – 6:00 pm Work with ERP groups
- 6:00pm – Evening free for dinner to continue work on ERPs

### Friday, July 17:

- Workshop with Team Educational Theatre Company
- 10:00 – 1:30 pm Led by Nora Stillman, Education Director and NYU Alum
- 1:30 – 2:30 pm Lunch
2:30 – 4:30 pm  Students work on ERP presentation
4:30 – 6:30 pm  Student Tutorial #2
6:30 pm  Students finalize ERP presentations

**Saturday, July 18:**
9:00 – 11:00 am  Working in groups on ERP
11:00 – 11:30 am  Set up for ERP presentations
11:30 – 12:30 pm  Lunch
12:30 – 4:00 pm  ERP projects due/ Group Presentations
## Week Two

### Sunday, July 19:
- Day off

### Monday, July 20:
- 9:00 – 1:00 pm: Dalkey Castle and Heritage Centre
- 1:00 – 3:00 pm: Lunch and return to Dublin on your own
- 3:00 – 6:00 pm: Working begins on original creation projects
- 8:00 pm: See *Present Laughter*, The Gate Theatre

### Tuesday, July 21:
- 9:30 – 1:00 pm: Work on original creation projects
- 1:00 – 2:00 pm: Lunch
- 2:00 – 5:30 pm: Work continues on original creation projects
- 5:30 – 6:30 pm: Field trip orientation
- 6:30 – 7:30 pm: Dinner on your own
- 8 pm: See *The Ugly Mouth*, The New Theatre

### Wednesday, July 22:
- 9:30 am: Depart from Dublin
- Arrive at Queen’s University
- Program in Belfast – TBA

### Thursday, July 23:
- 10:00 am – Noon: Tour Belfast with Jonathan Harden, Queen’s University
- Noon – 1:00 pm: Lunch at Queen’s University
- 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm: Workshop with Jonathan Harden
- Evening: Free

### Friday, July 24:
- 9:00 am – 5:00 pm: Tentative prison work at Maghaberry prison
- 5:00 – 7:00 pm: Dinner
- 7:00 pm: Return to Dublin

### Saturday, July 25:
- Day off
Sunday, July 26:

9:00 – Noon  Work on Original Projects
Noon – 2:00 pm  Student Tutorial #3 – Journals
2:00 – 9:00 pm  Work on original projects

Monday, July 27:

9:00am – 6:30 pm  Work on Original Projects
7:30pm  See The Rivals at the Abbey Theatre

Tuesday, July 28:

9:00 – 4:00 pm  Final rehearsals of projects
6:30 pm  Share Original Work
8:30 pm  Reception

Wednesday, July 29:

10:00 – 1:00 pm  Debrief Original Works
1:00 – 2:00 pm  Lunch
2:00 – 5:00 pm  Free time to finish self-assessments and projects
5:00 pm  Final assessments and Grant Narrative handed to tutors
Evening  Free

Thursday, July 30:

9:30 – 12:30 pm  Tutor Staff Meeting (assessment)
1:00 – 3:00 pm  Student Tutorial #4 over lunch
3:00 – 4:30 pm  Final Activity and Celebration
6:00 pm  Program completed

Friday, July 31:

Morning  Students check out of Trinity College Housing