

# **Carleton University International Study Trip to Nepal: Empowering Women and Fostering Social Justice**

**Winter 2025 – Prep Course (1/2 credit)**

**May 2025 – Nepal Trip (1/2 credit)**

**Dr. Deborah Connors, Department of Sociology and Anthropology**

**An incredible opportunity for personal and academic growth –  
the International Study Trip to Nepal in collaboration with The Women’s  
Foundation of Nepal (WFN).**

This four-week journey promises a unique blend of cultural immersion,  
hands-on projects, and deep engagement with the mission of WFN.

## **Why Nepal and the Women’s Foundation?**

Nepal, a country rich in history and culture, serves as the perfect backdrop for this transformative experience. The Women’s Foundation Nepal (WFN) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that was founded by a group of dedicated Nepali women about 25 years ago. The mission of the Women’s Foundation is to work toward a violence-free society by helping women and children in Nepal who are victims of violence, abuse, and poverty. The organization has a powerful social analysis to support its work, seeing social justice emerging from integrated social supports and economic independence. The Foundation has made remarkable strides in addressing these pressing social issues through a range of initiatives, including rescue missions, legal aid, educational and training programs, scholarships, and various awareness campaigns. They provide training and micro-credits for women in rural areas, legal assistance for women and children, and work in many other ways to empower women and children to shape their future. The Women’s Foundation runs a shelter, a kindergarten, a school, and a fair-trade cooperative in the Kathmandu area(<https://www.womenepal.org/> ). Women’s activism in Nepal is inclusive of men and gender non-binary people; all students will be welcome to participate in the trip.



## **Preparation**

Students going on this trip will enroll in the course SOCI 4170: Community Engaged Sociology in Winter 2025. During this course, students will plan their projects, finalize the trip itinerary, and collaborate with the organization. Additionally, students may organize educational events at Carleton to raise awareness about the issues and social justice initiatives undertaken by WFN.

## **Projects and Activities in Nepal**

The projects to be undertaken in Nepal could include the creation of videos to promote the activities of the WFN, a book project in collaboration with Nepali students telling stories of women's lives in Nepal, or fundraising on social media, among other possibilities. Reflection and other academic work to integrate their learning will be required.

### **Trip Itinerary: Four weeks**

The proposed trip is planned for four weeks. We will be staying at the Women's Foundation Nepal facilities in Kathmandu for the majority of the time in Nepal. The proposed four-week itinerary is presented below:

#### ***The first several days:***

During the first few days, students will have time to adjust to the time change, and absorb the culture, social, economic context of the city. Cultural sights visits will also be incorporated.

#### ***Days 4 to 10:***

Students will be given education sessions about the work of the organization and the social conditions in Nepal as well as having the opportunity to travel and share in the work of the organization. They will have several lectures at Kathmandu University focused on the interests of the students. Students will also work on the projects they designed in the Winter prep course.

#### ***Days 11 to 18:***

We are proposing that days 11 to 18 can be spent in smaller groups in a rural area about a 10-hour drive from Kathmandu where students can stay at a retreat centre run by one of the founders of the WFN.

#### ***Days 19 to 26:***

We will return to the Women's Foundation for days 19 to 26 to continue our project work with the organization.

#### ***Final two Days:***

The final two days will be spent integrating what we have learned and preparing to leave.



### **Educational and Personal Growth Opportunities**

By the end of the trip, students will have developed a profound understanding of women's positions and leadership in Nepal, gained skills in cross-cultural collaboration, and learned to contribute effectively to a team. They will have the ability to design and conduct social action projects, communicate persuasively with diverse audiences, and utilize reflection for personal growth, academic learning, teamwork, and social advocacy.

This trip is not just a study abroad opportunity; it is a chance to make a real impact, broaden your horizons, and be part of positive change. We encourage you to embrace this unique adventure and be a part of the global community working towards a violence-free society.

**Contact Deborah Connors at: [deborahconnors@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:deborahconnors@cunet.carleton.ca) for more information. There will be an information meeting on March 27, 2024, from 5:00 to 6:30pm in Loeb A700.**