

Course Syllabus

PHED 4606 – INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE, Winter 2026

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Placement Officer: Jennifer Buell, jenniferb@nipissingu.ca
Office: AC201-A, Centre for Physical and Health Education.
Office Hours: 8:30AM to 4:30PM, Mon-Fri, Meetings available by appointment
Phone: 705-474-3450 ext. 4896. Voicemails will be forwarded to email
Meetings: By appointment: In Person or via Microsoft Teams or Zoom
Website: <http://clp.nipissingu.ca>

Land Acknowledgement:

Nipissing University sits on the traditional territory of Nipissing First Nation, the traditional territory of the Anishinabek, and within lands protected by the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850. We are grateful to be able to live and learn on these lands with all our relations.

Course Description

With approval of the International Initiatives Office, students participate in an international experience appropriate to Physical and Health Education. The experience shall involve significant cultural immersion, such as study abroad, an internship, or service-learning project. Specific course requirements will be outlined in the course syllabus, e.g., a research paper, field notes, reflective paper or journal. This course is graded as SATISFACTORY or FAIL

For further details regarding this course and/or your program please refer to the academic calendar: <https://academiccalendar.nipissingu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx>

Prerequisite: PHED 1037 and Permission of the Director of the School of Physical and Health Education
Antirequisite: PHED 4106
Location: Refer to WebAdvisor
Hours: A minimum of 50 hours of self-directed experiential learning
Credit: 3

PHED 4606 Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will:

- Demonstrate an enhanced understanding and appreciation for different cultures, attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives.
- Gain understanding of the interconnectedness of individuals, societies, and countries.
- Deepen their understanding of the physical, cultural, economic, and political characteristics of the host country or society.
- Learn of the physical activity, sport, and recreation preferences and patterns of individuals living in the host country:
- Understand the impact of their personal experience and culture on their perception of the world.
- Develop technical communication and administration skills relevant to the field of physical and health education.
- Expand leadership skills and develop personal leadership style.
- Recognize the psycho-social implications of physical and health education to a community's health and wellness.
- Further develop professional competencies such as leadership, written/verbal communication skills, organization, and critical thinking skills.

Resources

There is no required textbook for this course. PHED 4606 is a self initiated experiential learning program offered through the School of Physical and Health Education. Please thoroughly read through all resources made available electronically via the Community Leadership Program (CLP) website: <http://clp.nipissingu.ca>.

Important updates/communications will be shared using Nipissing University email accounts only (student123@my.nipissingu.ca) and it is the responsibility of the student to check their accounts regularly and communicate any concerns with your Placement Officer immediately.

Course Approach

PHED 4606 International Experience is a self-designed experiential learning course, which provides students with an opportunity to self-initiate a unique project while studying abroad. The course will allow students to immerse themselves in a personally significant role, project, or investigation. The proposed project shall include a substantial attempt to provide students with opportunities for cultural engagement made possible through their international experience.

PHED 4606 International Experience provides experiential learning opportunities for BPHE students seeking to further guide and support their academic and career goals. Students registered in PHED 4606 are granted the opportunity to seek out their own opportunities and submit these requests for approval. Both virtual and face-to-face projects in communities connected to the students' international studies will be considered.

Guidelines on Generative AI

The use of Generative AI may be used in this course as a support tool. Platforms such as ChatGPT can help students develop a preliminary framework for their proposed projects when thoughtful, well-constructed prompts are used. Because experiential learning requires a high level of self-direction, the open-ended nature of these projects can sometimes feel overwhelming. AI can assist students in narrowing their focus, mapping out realistic timelines, and identifying meaningful opportunities that may be difficult to conceptualize prior to arriving in a new cultural environment.

Generative AI may also be used to build foundational understanding of the sector or context students plan to explore. For example, a student might ask: "How do education, training, and registration requirements for physiotherapists differ between Canada and my host country?" All information gathered through AI must be verified for accuracy and should only serve as a starting point for preliminary research. AI should not be used to automate or eliminate a student's duty to learn about the content area they are studying.

Reflection is an inherently personal process that must be rooted in the student's own observations, insights, and lived experiences. AI must not be used to write any part of the reflective assignments themselves.

Attendance Expectation

PHED 4606 runs in the fall, winter and spring/summer terms. Students are expected to be available to complete their approved project within the semester in which they have registered. It is acknowledged that the semester abroad may not align perfectly with Nipissing University semesters. Students with concerns about the timeline of their projects falling outside the semester should get in touch with their Placement Officer. Attendance expectations include virtual meetings with the Physical and Health Education Placement Officer or Director of the School of Physical and Health Education.

Course Evaluation

The following section lays out the graded components within this course

"Satisfactory": All requirements have been met and successfully submitted.

Assignments reflect a solid understanding and development of the competencies and skills achieved in this course.

"Fail": Missing or incomplete information. Absent during mandatory meetings without

approval. Lacking knowledge and/or understanding of the competencies and skills presented in this course. Failure to meet mandatory deadlines.

Students must obtain a **minimum of 75%** overall to obtain a SATISFACTORY grade. Brief details regarding the breakdown of course evaluation is found in the chart below. A detailed description of each component follows.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE	CONSOLIDATION
Experiential Learning Project Proposal Including two required meetings with PHED Placement Officer– 25%	Debrief Presentation – 25%
Completion of the proposed experiential learning project, including attending any mandatory meetings set up by the coordinator throughout the program – 25%	International Experience Reflective Paper – 25%
Total Marks – 50%	Total Marks – 50%

International Experiential Learning Project Proposal (25%)

Due: Fall term: Monday, September 25th, 2025

Winter term: Monday, February 2nd, 2026 - OR on a pre-established date, negotiated between student and placement officer.

This course provides students with an opportunity to explore an aspect of the PHED curriculum in further depth while immersed in a novel environment. Students are encouraged to think actively about their proposal well in advance of their departure for international studies. It is understood that students may need to spend some time immersed within their international experience before narrowing down the focus of their proposal. As such, the deadline for proposals is set two weeks following the term start date. If this date does not allow sufficient time for a student to pick an area of relevance for their proposal, an alternative date may be negotiated.

In preparation for their proposal, students are advised to research the location they will be living in. This may include key aspects of the culture as it relates to physical and health education. Other areas of interest could involve the town, people, and/or sport or activities that are valued within the region. Student may also wish to investigate sport structure, healthcare structure, or an area linked to the BPHE curriculum that they feel interested in learning more about. Any topic of relevance may be selected, however a clear connection between Physical and Health Education curriculum and the project focus must be emphasized.

Students are advised to initiate and arrange a minimum of two meetings with the PHED Placement Officer during the project approval process. The first meeting will focus on proposal guidelines and course expectations in PHED 4606. Following the initial meeting, the Placement Officer is available to act as a resource to students as they construct their proposal.

Guidelines for International Experiential Learning Project Proposal

The proposal is a 2500 word, double-spaced document that will describe:

1. The student's vision for their project; identified areas of interest, focus or analysis
2. The project format, e.g., it may take the form of a research paper, field notes, reflective paper, journal or other
3. Anticipated or identified regional resources, correspondence reports and connections established
4. PHED program curriculum linkages
5. Anticipated project deliverables

Students are required to provide a project proposal to the PHED Placement Office by email by the dates listed above OR on a pre-established date negotiated between student and placement officer. A copy of the proposal should be sent by email to:

Dr. Dean Hay, directorsphe@nipissingu.ca
Ms. Jennifer Buell – jenniferb@nipissingu.ca

The Placement Officer will then invite the student to a follow up meeting, which shall include a discussion of the various elements of their proposal. Students should be prepared to answer questions about their proposal and identify key deliverables. Students may be asked to resubmit their proposal to capture any changes discussed.

The student must ensure the proposed international experiential learning project meets the following guidelines:

- The project must adhere to recommended regional health and safety measures as outlined by the applicable public health;
- The project proposal identifies links to the student's unique academic and career goals;
- The scope of the role and associated responsibilities are appropriate for the level of study;
- Individuals or collaborators involved in the project are identified as suitable advisors, available to support student in the successful completion of the project;
- The proposed project does not involve remuneration;
- The student has not already completed a placement with the proposed agency or group affiliated with the proposed project unless there is clear evidence the

opportunity will be a new/different experience and will allow the student to gain additional competencies;

Student initiated experiential learning projects are subject to an approval process through the School of PHE. Students must not proceed with their project until their proposal has been reviewed by the Placement Officer. Students will receive notification via email that their proposal has met program guidelines, and they have approval to move forward.

Experiential Learning Project (25%)

Minimum of 50 hours of experiential learning is mandatory for successful completion of this course. Students will be expected to work toward the project deliverables noted and approved within the accepted proposal. It is recognized that the nature of experiential learning involves flexibility. The final project may deviate from the initial proposal. A change in direction is acceptable however any major changes should be discussed with the Placement Officer in advance.

Work associated with the project will be conducted in the field. Students should document time spent researching in advance of their proposal, identifying, and developing contacts, meeting, interviewing, participating, documenting field observations, writing, and meeting with the Placement Officer. All hours dedicated to the experiential learning project must be accounted for using the timesheet logbook provided by the Placement Officer. The timesheet is available for download on the Community Leadership Placement website.

Consolidation (50%)

The following documents must be submitted electronically to jenniferb@nipissingu.ca within two weeks of completing the experiential learning project and no later than the last date of the term.

Debrief Presentation (25%)

The debrief presentation is to be scheduled at conclusion of the international experience in consultation with PHED Placement Officer. Students will prepare a 20-30 minute oral presentation. The presentation may be supplemented by visual aids (powerpoint, keynote, video, etc). The presentation will highlight key aspects of the student's experiential learning project and should include analyses within the context of the international experience. The presentation audience will vary depending on the timeframe during which the project takes place. Students should be prepared to deliver the presentation in person, or virtually, to a wide range of possible audience members, including peers, community members, program staff, the Director of the School of PHE, or other invited guests.

International Experience Reflective Paper (25%)

- This reflective paper will allow students to react, discuss, and explore your feelings, knowledge and community issues/ideas.
- This is not a diary and students should show an application of knowledge and growth based on their experience.
- Writing prompts to consider:
 - What did you do, and how was your international experience augmented by your project?
 - Your reaction to what you did – did you use your time effectively, note any positive improvements, troubles, areas of development
 - How is your international experience relevant to your academic and professional goals?
 - Reflect on the disruption in your knowledge of the world around you. What have you learned about community or social issues that was made possible by your project experience?
 - Has something inspired you to make or suggest change, if so, how will you achieve this?
 - Did you have any assumptions or stereotypes leading to your international experience?
 - What has been challenging? Easy? Unpredicted? Surprising?
 - What have you learned about yourself?
 - What professional competencies did you use, develop, and/or improve on? (Communication skills, conflict resolution, team work, time management, prioritizing etc.)
 - Any other comments you may have – be honest and write freely.
- Reflections must be a minimum of five pages, with regular spacing and fonts no larger than 12pts.
- The reflective paper is due the final day of the term

Professionalism

The Bachelor of Physical & Health Education Program is a professional preparation program. Upon graduation you will possess skills, attitudes, and knowledge to become a leader in the field, assisting others to live healthy, active lives. It is expected that you will behave in a professional manner in all that you do while at Nipissing University. You are ambassadors and positive role models on and off campus. Make every effort to represent Nipissing University, the BPHE program, and most importantly, yourselves, in a way that demonstrates your readiness to become a professional. This includes the way you choose to represent yourselves in social media. Be cognizant of the fact that whether your proper name is used or not, people and employers may have access to seeing the way you are represented on social media that you believe to be 'private'.

Professionalism means:

- Written and verbal communications with peers, professors and staff are positive and respectful.
- Being responsible for your actions and academic work.
- Being respectful of your professional network of contacts and avoiding the use of electronic communications/tools unrelated to your course or work.
- Respecting and being open to the views and opinions of others.
- Actively being engaged in all activities, assignments and responsibilities outlined by PHED 4606.

Course Policies and other Important Notices

1. Policy for Recording of Lectures/Materials

Students with disabilities have permission to audio record and, based on the terms defined in fair dealing use the material "for purposes of private study, research, criticism [or] review" (CIPO, 2011). However, the information contained in the audio-recorded lecture is still protected under federal and international copyright legislation and, therefore, may not be published or quoted without the lecturer's explicit consent and without properly identifying and crediting the lecturer. For further details please see: https://www.nipissingu.ca/sites/default/files/2024-09/Recording_Course_Content_Policy_May_2024.pdf

2. Evaluation and Grading System

For undergraduate courses, please refer to:

<https://academiccalendar.nipissingu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=12&chapterid=817&topicgroupid=4019>

For graduate courses, please refer to:

<https://academiccalendar.nipissingu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=12&chapterid=822>

3. Academic Integrity

The University takes a most serious view of offences against academic honesty such as plagiarism, cheating, impersonation and the presentation of altered or falsified documents. Penalties for dealing with such offences will be strictly enforced. For further details refer to:

<https://academiccalendar.nipissingu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=12&chapterid=817&topicgroupid=4023>

4. Student Appeals and Petitions

For information on Appeals and Petitions please refer:

<https://academiccalendar.nipissingu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=12&chapterid=817&topicgroupid=4022>

5. Student Rights and Responsibilities

Nipissing University is dedicated to cultivating a campus community where students thrive academically, socially, and personally. For further details please see:

<https://www.nipissingu.ca/departments/student-development-and-services/student-rights-responsibilities>

6. Student Development & Services (SDS)

Supports for every learner are available to help ensure your success at Nipissing University. For full details please refer to:

<https://www.nipissingu.ca/departments/student-development-and-services>

7. The Harris Learning Library

To access the online portal please refer to: <https://www.nipissingu.ca/library>.

QUESTIONS?

Connect with Jennifer Buell directly, jenniferb@nipissingu.ca