

## ADDRESSING UN SDG 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES: A collaboration between Cork migrant women and UCC Masters in Applied Psychology Students creating pathways for integration.



### This module:

- enables migrant women to come together with students to explore and address their experiences of marginalisation and social isolation.
- empowers collaborative development of new skills for migrant women and students.
- facilitates and supports women to identify pathways to integrate into Irish society and contribute to its richness.

## QUICK FACTS

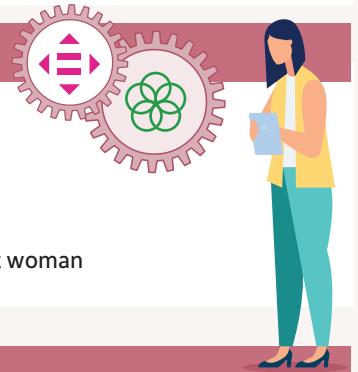
**Lecturer:** Dr Angela Veale

**Dept./School:** Masters in Applied Psychology, School of Applied Psychology, University College Cork

**Module Title:** Critical Community Psychology

**Community Partner:** Cork Migrant Centre

**Purpose of Partnership:** To exchange perspectives and skills between graduate students and migrant woman



## CONTEXT

Migrant women, in particular asylum-seeker migrant women living in direct provision, experience marginalisation, loneliness, boredom and social isolation, with negative impacts to their mental health. Opportunities to meet with local communities is valued and can be important for legal processes that require evidence of social integration. Similarly, psychology students also

need to broaden their contact with diverse cultures. Much psychological research is based on samples from WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich, and Democratic) societies that lack ethnic diversity. It is important that psychology graduate students are culturally informed and gain insight into a range of human experience and worldviews.



## DETAILS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING PROJECT

A partnership was formed in 2018, between the Cork Migrant Centre and UCC's School of Applied Psychology. Cork Migrant Centre was established, in part, for migrant women to create pathways for their own integration into life in Ireland. The collaboration had the initial goal of helping to address the social isolation experienced by migrant women, many of whom live in direct provision settings. The psychology students undertake significant preparation before engaging with Cork Migrant Centre. In class, the students learn about the ethics of working with ethnic minority groups and are encouraged to question their unique judgements and perspectives of the world. This preparatory and ongoing work serves them well for the various interactive, community-based sessions. Each year, the focus of the collaboration is different, owing to the growing confidence and agency of the migrant women as they develop their group activities to build on the learnings of previous years. In the partnership's second year, there was a focus on healing through craft-making. Some participants learned sewing skills and contemplated developing a cooperative – an option that would give them much needed flexibility to earn money. Additionally, Cork Printmakers held

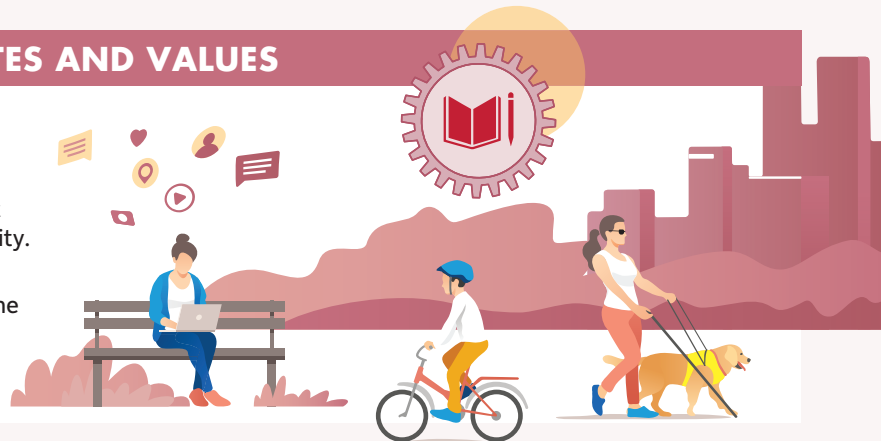
workshops where the women explored hidden dimensions of their identity through art. Students and women reflected on the therapeutic potential of the arts as a means of easing some of the more acute stressors in their lives. The art produced served as a powerful talking point, with students gaining a unique insight into the challenges these women experience. When COVID-19 hit, the women directed their sewing skills to making and selling masks and had the opportunity to put their idea of a cooperative into practice. The partnership with Applied Psychology, by virtue of creating a dedicated, trustworthy space for open discussion and reflection played an important role in facilitating the women to reflect on their identities and to imagine new possibilities for themselves, such as the formation of the cooperative.



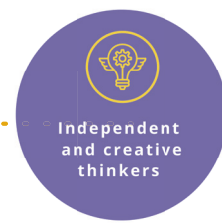
## DEVELOPING GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES AND VALUES

At UCC, we empower students to be creators, evaluators and communicators of knowledge, independent and creative thinkers, digitally fluent, socially responsible, effective global citizens who challenge inequality and act with respect, ambition, compassion, resilience and integrity.

In this Community Engaged Learning initiative, students discovered their biases and prejudices and learnt about the intersectionality of being a migrant, a mother, and other emergent identities e.g. artist. Their awareness of social inequalities was heightened.



## GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES AND VALUES ACQUIRED THROUGH THIS PROJECT



## ABOUT

Campus Engage is working to bring higher education teaching staff, students, and communities together to address societal challenges through the curriculum. The Campus Engage Steering Committee and the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning are grateful to Dr Ruth Hally, Civic Engagement Programme Coordinator, UCC who led this project. This case study was written by Dr Hally, with

Dr Angela Veale, UCC; and was informed by the UCC Graduate Attributes Programme framework, funded by the Higher Education Authority and the Tomar Trust.

For more information go to: [www.campusengage.ie](http://www.campusengage.ie)