



FACULTY-LED
STUDY ABROAD

KIIS Japan 2 Week Program, Summer 2021

PS 460 Topics: Politics of Japan

Instructor: Dr. Steve Hess

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Instructor's office hours: on site and by appointment at stevehess.youcanbook.me

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description: This course introduces the political institutions and processes that have come to define contemporary Japan. We will explore Japan's political history, political economy, domestic and foreign policies, as well as party and electoral politics. We will also examine why Japanese politics have been dominated by a single party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since the mid-20th century and why Japan experienced an "economic miracle" in the postwar period but has struggled with economic stagnation and demographic decline in recent decades.

2. Overall KIIS Program Student Learning Outcomes:

KIIS Study Abroad Mission Statement:

KIIS provides high-quality education abroad programs for students from all diverse backgrounds that promote deep international learning, are integrated into the curriculum, and encourage critical and creative thinking. Our goal is to help students understand the wider world and develop personal and professional skills for lifelong enrichment. We strive to go beyond generalizations and cultural stereotypes to help foster a nuanced appreciation of the world in which we live.

Students participating on KIIS study abroad programs aim to:

- 1) Understand contemporary issues of their host country/countries (i.e. KIIS program location).
- 2) Develop skills to interact comfortably in a global setting.
- 3) Understand other cultures.

Prior to your KIIS study abroad program, and again at the conclusion of your program, KIIS will ask each student to a) answer a few multiple-choice questions, and b) write a short reflective essay (two paragraphs in length) related to the elements detailed above. There is no right or wrong answer, and your responses will not affect your grade in any way. The purpose of the exercise is to help KIIS measure the effectiveness of its study abroad programs.

3. Course Objectives and Specific Learning Outcomes:

During this course, students will:

- Enhance their skills in research, critical thinking, technical writing, and public speaking

- Improve their understanding of political and economic development of Japan as well as the institutions and processes that have come to define contemporary Japanese politics.
- Improve their ability to engage in respectful, professional and constructive deliberation with stakeholders holding divergent perspectives and interests.
- Develop a sociological “eye” that explains how social, economic, political and cultural structures influence group and development, discussing how one’s notion of the self may be socially constructed, how social structures may create and reproduce social inequality, and how social inequality and power relationships between groups may influence development, particularly how class, gender and race create separate avenues for development in a range of national contexts.

4. Major Topics covered in the Course:

- The Meiji Restoration and pre-war Japanese politics
- Japan’s postwar occupation
- Postwar political development in Japan
- The Japanese presidency, parliament (the Diet), the bureaucracy, local government, and non-state actors
- Foreign policy, security policy, industrial policy, environmental policy, social welfare policy, and human rights policy

5. Fulfillment of General Education Requirement:

- Area 3A: non-Western cultural traditions requirement
- Area 4: Upper-level liberal arts requirement

6. Required Readings and Materials:

- Ian Neary, *The State and Politics In Japan, 2nd Edition* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2019). ISBN: 978-1-509-53585-9

7. Graded Assignments:

- Two in-class exams (essay format): 25% each
 - Exams will be delivered in an open book, timed essay format. On the day of each exam, students will respond to two essay questions related to content previously covered in class. Essay questions should not simply summarize content provided in class lectures, readings or presentations. Rather, essay questions are graded based on their application of content, originality and synthesis of class material.
- Policy paper: 25%
 - Students will compose a short three-page essay focused on one of five policy issues discussed in class: foreign/security policy, industrial policy, environmental policy, social welfare policy or human rights policy.
 - In the essay, students should introduce Japan’s contemporary approach to each of these policy areas, compare and contrast this approach with that of the United States, and make policy recommendations for one or both of these two countries.
- Oral presentation and field notes: 25%
 - During the course, students will take field notes, describing their experiences and reflections at various sites, and collect physical and digital artifacts connected to their journey.

- At the end of the course, students will organize this material and give a brief 5-10 minute presentation that will describe how their experience in the course informed their understanding of Japanese political life.

8. Attendance Policy:

KIIS program participants are expected to be punctual to and in attendance at all classes, presentations, meetings and required excursions, and to remain with the program for the full academic period. Unexcused absences from classes and/or mandatory meetings will result in a lowering of the student's final grade, as will excessive tardiness. Multiple unexcused absences could result in expulsion from the program. Any absence from an academic class session must be excused for medical reasons.

9. Disability Accommodation:

KIIS will make every reasonable effort to provide accommodations for program participants with special needs or disabilities, but we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Be aware that many foreign countries do not have comprehensive legislation comparable to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As a result, businesses and other establishments operating in foreign countries may not be able to provide accommodations.

If you have a disability accommodation need, we recommend you contact your KIIS Campus Representative, <https://www.kiis.org/about-kiis/contact-us/campus-representatives/> early in your program selection process so that s/he has time to discuss any specific needs, including which KIIS programs may be best suited. You also are welcome to contact KIIS Assistant Director, Maria Canning, maria.canning@wku.edu, to discuss your disability accommodation needs (e.g. housing, transportation, excursions, class schedule, etc.).

Immediately after acceptance, notify KIIS Assistant Director, Maria Canning, or KIIS Admissions and Enrollment Specialist, Haley McTaggart, haley.mctaggart@wku.edu, if you have a special need or disability that might require any form of accommodation abroad. Failure to notify KIIS may prevent you from participating on your KIIS program.

If you require any accommodations abroad, you must provide KIIS Assistant Director, Maria Canning, or KIIS Admissions and Enrollment Specialist, Haley McTaggart, an accommodation letter from your home campus' disability accommodation office that lists the accommodations you are eligible to receive. Please do not request accommodations directly from your KIIS Program Director or other KIIS Faculty; the KIIS Office will notify your KIIS Program Director and/or Faculty after we have received your above accommodation letter.

In some cases, you may need to make arrangements for a caregiver to join you on your KIIS program, should your physician, campus disability accommodation office, or KIIS make such a recommendation or require it.

10. Title IX / Discrimination & Harassment:

Recent attention to gender discrimination and sexual harassment at colleges and universities reminds us of the importance of adhering to standards of ethical and professional behavior. KIIS Study Abroad is committed to supporting and encouraging safe and equitable educational environments for our students, faculty, and program directors. Students, faculty, and program directors are required to be civil and treat each other with dignity and respect. As such, harassment and/or discrimination of any kind will not be permitted or tolerated.

Sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual/dating/domestic violence) and sex discrimination are violations of KIIS policies. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to a) KIIS Assistant Director Maria Canning (+1-859-200-1000) or KIIS Executive Director, John Dizgun (+1-270-227-2288), b) WKU's Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson (270-745-5398 / andrea.anderson@wku.edu) or WKU's Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe (270-745-5429 / michael.crowe@wku.edu) or Joshua Hayes (270-745-5121 / joshua.hayes@wku.edu). Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a KIIS program director and/or faculty member, KIIS program directors and faculty are considered "Responsible Employees" of Western Kentucky University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator.

If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's Counseling and Testing Center, <https://www.wku.edu/heretohelp/> at 270-745-3159.

For more information on KIIS Title IX, see <https://www.kiis.org/students/health-safety/title-ix-clery/>; additional Title IX resources can be found here <https://www.wku.edu/eoo/brochure2019update.pdf>.

Everyone should be able to participate on a KIIS program, attend a KIIS event, or work in a KIIS environment (e.g. KIIS office) without fear of sexual harassment or discrimination of any kind. Be respectful of each other.