



KIIS Italy Program, Summer 2023

PSY 355: Cross-Cultural Psychology

Professor: Dr. Christia Spears Brown

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Instructor's office hours: on site and by appointment

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description:

This course will explore cultural and social psychological research on the shifting meanings of culture and ethnicity in the context of Italy and the US. In this course, we will discuss what culture really means, how it shifts over time, how it is appropriated and adapted in a new country, and what that means to the original society. For a grade, this course has a primary writing assignment, a series of journal entries, and a multimedia project based on the readings and excursions.

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:

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Describe the basic tenets of cultural psychology
2. Explain how culture shapes individuals, groups, and intergroup behavior
3. Apply a cultural lens to the shifting meaning of ethnicity

4. Major Topics covered in the Course:

Week 1: Introduction to cultural psychology

Week 2: Acculturation, adaptation, and intercultural strategies

Week 3: Cultural stereotypes and generalizations

Week 4: The cultural context of race/ethnicity

5. Required Readings and Materials:

I will email you pdfs of the required articles before the start of the course. All reading can be done electronically.

6. Graded Assignments:

1. Reading/Class Participation

You are responsible for reading the assigned materials closely and thoughtfully *before* each class. It is everyone's responsibility to come to class prepared. Because your attendance and participation is so important for this class to work well, we will have occasional reading checks if needed.

2. Digital and Written Journal

We will have weekly excursions as part of this course. Because this is a psychology course, we will focus on research methods used by psychologists. Depending on the excursion, we will be analyzing people, media, art, or culture. We will use observational methods and content analysis, which means you will be expected to take pictures and notes about your observations. For the pictures, we will be using a class Instagram account. The account is **kiisculture23** (password is **italy2023**). For each excursion, you will need to take and post 5 pictures. Each picture must include a descriptive caption and your initials. The captions should help us understand what the picture is, why you took it, and how it relates to the goal of the excursion. There are 4 excursions (so 4 excursions X 5 pictures each). This account is private. You are welcome to share your own pics to your own Instagram account if you want. If others are included in the picture, you must get consent to post. These need to be uploaded by midnight of the excursion. You should also take notes in a journal that you can use when you write your reaction paper. Be prepared to discuss the pictures in class.

3. Weekly Reaction Papers

Each week, you should submit a one-page reaction paper about your experiences that week (a total of 4). The paper should incorporate the discussion from class, information from the reading, and your reactions to the excursions. These should be uploaded by Sunday afternoon.

4. Final Paper/Presentation

At the end of the course, a final paper will be due. The paper should be 7 to 10 pages in length and in APA format (12 point Times New Roman, double-spaced). The specific topic and thesis is up to you, but should address *how culture and society informs gendered experiences*. You must (a) include at least 5 outside sources (but 2 may be from the course readings and (b) incorporate the data from your journal.

Reading/Participation: 50 points

Digital Journal: 100 points (4 excursions X 5 pictures = 20 pictures; 20 pictures X 5 points each)

Reaction Papers: 200 points (50 points per reaction paper)

Final Paper: 300 points

Total: 650 points

Grading Scale: 100% - 90% = A, 89% - 80% = B, 79% - 70% = C, 69% - 60% = D

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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, Ena Demir (270-745-6867 / ena.demir@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/eeo/titleixbrochure2020.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.