

KIIS COSTA RICA Program, Summer 2023



SPAN 370 SPANISH CONVERSATION (3 cr.)

Instructor: Prof. Elena Picech

Email: epicechreisinger@murraystate.edu

Instructor's office hours: on site and by appointment

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description:

Intensive practice in speaking and writing in Spanish based on specific readings and assignments, and the student's interaction with native speakers in the international setting.

Taught fully in Spanish.

Prerequisites: Two years of college Spanish, SPA 202 or equivalent, or faculty approval.

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:

This Spanish Conversation and Composition class is designed to increase fluency, refine grammatical proficiency, and improve communicative skills in all its forms, presentational, interpretative and interpersonal (including narrating and describing with a variety of verb tenses and complex structures). In addition to master the language, students will have the opportunity to increase their cultural awareness.

Students will:

- engage in active Spanish conversations with classmates, guests, and traveling companions
- gain confidence to initiate and maintain a Spanish conversation with native Spanish speakers
- sharpen their public speaking skills
- practice analytical and creative writing
- write, record, highlight, reflect, and recreate their daily experiences through drawings, dialogues and skits that will wrap up the day and will create unforgettable memories
- review the basic structures of the Spanish grammar as well as identify and practice advance Spanish grammar in context

4. Major Topics covered in the Course

Through a course packet, specifically tailored to this particular course, class lectures and discussions, and on-site discoveries, students will be guided to take full advantage of a unique language opportunity.

Moreover, the Costa Rican landscape, culture, anecdotes and people will offer students the opportunity to immerse themselves in a vivid learning experience. Field trips and daily life experiences will supplement and enhance our in-class learning. Students will seek to meet local people and to learn first-hand about Costa Rica's life.

We will learn about current life in Costa Rica, its people and its natural resources. We will work on vocabulary acquisition, grammar skills, and language fluency through various tasks, including personal and creative writing and a variety of oral assessments, such as interviewing with local people and doing presentations for the class.

5. Required BEFORE departing

Acquire the Readings and Materials:

- 1) **KIIS Costa Rica Course Pack** (available for purchase during Orientation day.)
- 2) **A spiral notebook**
- 3) **A couple of pens of different colors, pencils and eraser**
- 4) **Small diary or notepad** for journaling and taking notes while out and about
- 5) English-Spanish Dictionary OR access to www.wordreference.com / www.Spanishdict.com / www.rae.es
- 6) Students may be required to pay the cost of certain cultural events and museums as well local transportation in the city. A tentative cost will be provided during orientation

Complete Prep activities

- 7) Research the assigned topic (Topics TBC by faculty during orientation or before via email)
- 8) Familiarize yourself with Costa Rica's culture and current events
- 9) Review vocabulary pertaining to nature, fauna and flora, food, pastimes

6. Graded Assignments:

- 5% Before departure (written research assignment to be turn in upon departure)
- 5% *Bienvenida* (oral individual introductions and mini presentations)
- 30 % Participation, Preparation and Oral engagement in class and when out and about
- 30% Daily Written and Oral Graded Assignments and Quizzes
- 20% Individual (in-situ) and Group Presentations (in-class)

10% Final Individual Written Project (insightful and creative paper)
There will be no make-up opportunities and late assignments will not be accepted.

Quizzes may be given at the instructor's discretion over key points (they may or may not be announced)

The following grading scale will be used in this course:
A: 90 – 100; B: 89 – 80 ;C: 79 – 70; D: 69 – 60; F: Below 60

Students are expected to abide by the university's guidelines regarding academic integrity. "Students who commit any act of academic dishonesty may receive from the instructor a failing grade in that portion of the coursework in which the act is detected or a failing grade in the course without possibility of withdrawal".

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.