



Costa Rica Summer 2023

EDU 400-2 Topics: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Family

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Instructor's office hours: on site and by appointment

Syllabus subject to change

Course Description

This course focuses on the similarities and differences of family structures, and interactions in different cultures from around the world. The impact of economies, governments, and religions on and the family will be discussed. Kinship systems and patterns of marital residence; differences in childrearing patterns; and variations in gender roles and power distribution will also be explored. Students will be required to read and discuss course reading material, reflect on personal experiences, observe and interview members of families. Written journals, papers and quizzes will be used to evaluate the students' learning.

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.

Course Objectives

The objectives of the course are to examine:

1. the basic roles of families, and recognize differences and similarities across cultures.
2. how families influence and are influenced by economy, government, and religion.
3. cultural differences in sex roles, sexuality, and mate selection.

4. cultural variations in distribution of power within the family, especially regarding women.
5. the universality of the concept of marriage/committed partnership.
6. variations in family forms, kinship systems and patterns of marital residence.
7. cultural differences in child rearing patterns.
8. cultural variations in functions of the family, including economic roles.
9. variations in divorce and remarriage patterns.
10. families from specific regions and historical periods.

Text

Leeder, E. (2020) *The Family in Global Perspective: A Gendered Journey*. San Diego, CA: Cognella

Some additional readings may be assigned. I'll let you know what they are and how to find them.

Course Activities

1. *Journaling*: The KIIS Costa Rica experience provides you with several opportunities to think about families from different perspectives. a) The text and class discussions should stimulate students to think about families and family related issues in challenging ways. As you reflect upon the readings and discussions, you should write initial thoughts and feelings about topics in your journal. This will then provide a record of how your opinions and ideas change or solidify over the course of time. b) Being exposed to families in a different culture will also give you the opportunity to compare how daily tasks are performed and differ from your own experience. The differences, similarities and outcomes should be observed and recorded in your journal. c) Being separated from your family for one month, and living with other individuals in a family like situation should cause you to reflect on your own personal feelings about family living.

Journals will be turned in periodically and journal entries should be used in your assignment papers.

2. *Assigned readings/class engagement*: Reading the assigned chapters in the text and other assigned readings **PRIOR** to discussions will help you understand the material discussed and allow you to ask questions to clarify difficult concepts. Information found in the chapters will be used to guide class discussions and activities.
3. *Quizzes*: Two or three quizzes based on the reading material will be given during the course.
4. *Reflective essays*. The material presented in your text and class discussions along with the new experience of living in Costa Rica should give you ample reason to reflect on your beliefs about family life and relationships. You will need to write two papers, using information from the text, class discussions and journals, that demonstrate an understanding of cultural differences in family living and your growing appreciation for the complexity of families around the world.

Grading Criteria

Journals	15%
Assigned reading/In-class engagement	20%

Quizzes	25%
Reflective essays	40%

Grading Scale: 100% - 93% = A, 92% - 90 =A-, 89% - 87% =B+, 86% - 83% =B, 82% - 80 =B-,
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79% -77% =C+, 76% -73% =C, 72% -70% =C-, 69% - 67% = D+, 66% - 63% =D

Course Policies

Course policies address issues that influence the learning climate, develop responsible behaviors, and help manage the work associated with this course. While they are not requirements or assignments, failure to understand and adhere to these policies will negatively affect your grade.

1. *Disposition:* Class is not over when you are no longer in the proximity of the instructor. You are expected to be considerate and helpful to all study abroad companions, host families, guests, guides and strangers. You are expected to be responsible for your behavior and material, in short be a good citizen, guest, student and friend.
2. *Academic Honesty & Plagiarism:* Academic dishonesty of any kind is unacceptable. At a minimum, a grade of 0 will be earned on a compromised assignment. Plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty will be reported to the program director and KIIS administrators.
3. *Attendance:* 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.
4. *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.

5. Title IX / Discrimination and 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/eo/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.