Course Description: This course examines aspects of contemporary Japanese culture. These aspects of Japanese culture will be examined through the country’s respective arts, literature, philosophy, and media to provide an insight into Japan. Using the course textbook and supplementary sources, this course will examine aspects of culture, such as school culture, family culture, religious culture, and technological culture among others. This course will also help students to see the importance of historical and cultural contexts that formulate a modern country.

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.

Course Objectives and Specific Learning Outcomes: Through critical reading and interpretation of the various Japanese texts, students will gain insights into the Japanese language, literature, and culture. Students will gain a deeper appreciation and
understanding of a culture different from their own. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to think critically, as well as improving analytical skills that can be used to critically evaluate aspects of culture.

**Fulfillment of General Education Requirement:** (If applicable, i.e. if you feel that your KIIS course will fulfill/satisfy a Gen. Ed. requirement at your institution— more likely a possibility if you are teaching a non-Topics course— please list briefly the way your KIIS course will fulfill the Gen. Ed. requirements. If this section is not applicable to your course, you may delete this section (#5) from your syllabus.)

**Required Readings and Materials:**
PDFs of short stories provided by instructor

**Graded Assignments:**
Students will submit assignments by the start of class. Students will be graded on a 100 point scale and evaluated through the following assignments and grading scale:

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

1. **First Impressions (10% of grade):** Write a 300 word reflection of your initial impression of Japan so far. Has it met your expectations? What are you looking forward to? This reflection needs to be free of errors and written in complete sentences. It will be graded based on quality, clarity, and thoughtfulness.

2. **Real Life Reflections (30% of grade):** Students will write three short reflections that focus on observations from their actual experiences in Japan that connect to specific elements or topics of discussion in the textbook. In these reflections, students should include a brief compare/contrast these experiences and the textbook to either one of the short stories provided or choose an approved form of media while in Japan, such as a television show, music, etc. For instance, they should consider social class, the role of gender in the culture, how historical and cultural contexts have shaped Japan as they observe it, and synthesize how these elements inform their understanding of Japanese culture. The reflections should be at least 400 words, use cited quotes from the textbook, 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, and may use any citation method (MLA, Chicago Style, APA, etc.) so long as it is consistent.

3. **Host Family and Personal Excursions Journal (20% of grade):** Students will get a full immersion into Japanese culture by staying with a host family. Students are encouraged to keep a journal, and outline, or general notes during the first three weeks of the program (6/6-6/25). The journal should be used to write a short essay of 500 words on the student’s experiences in Japan in addition to their understanding of Japanese culture as well. Students should also make connections to the readings from their textbook and lectures. This assignment should be 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, and may use any citation method (MLA, Chicago Style, APA, etc.) so long as it is consistent. This assignment will be graded based on thoughtfulness, clarity, quality, properly cited evidence, and ability to follow instructions.
4. Experiences Abroad Presentation (15% of grade): Students will provide a short presentation about their experiences during the program. These experiences can be what they found at each site visit, things they came across during personal excursions, and so on. Presentations should be 5-7 minutes in length, make connections to the textbook with properly cited connections. These presentations should have visuals and or students may do something creative, such as creating a manga about their time in Japan or showing a short video that they have made. A PDF, Word doc, or physical copy of the presentation should be turned in to be graded. These presentations will be graded on quality, thoughtfulness, ability to follow instructions, and clarity.

5. Critical Essay (25% of grade): For their final assignment, students will write a critical essay that utilizes their experiences in Japan, An Introduction to Japanese Society, and an aspect of Japanese culture that interests them — whether this was something discussed in class or something you discovered during the program. Aside from an introduction, a specific topic/thesis, and conclusion, this essay should address the following: A) what the student has learned from Japan through firsthand experience, B) the roles of gender and age in Japanese society, C) how historical and cultural events have shaped Japan and its image as it pertains to the topic/thesis, and D) a brief but critical comparison between Japanese culture and American culture. Essay should be 4-5 pages, 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, and may use any citation method (MLA, Chicago Style, APA, etc.) so long as it is consistent.

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.

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/](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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

**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.