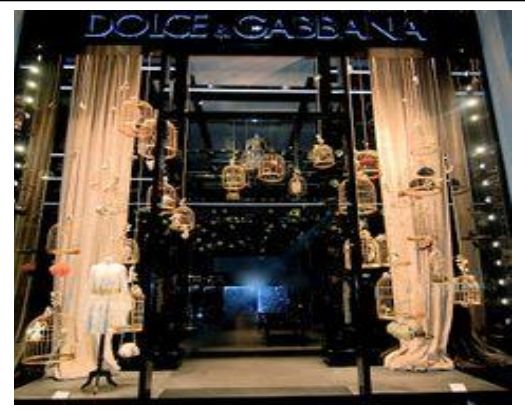


Professor: Dr. RayeCarol Cavender
Email: rayecarol.cavender@uky.edu
Instructor's Office Hours: Schedule via email



Syllabus Subject to Change

1. Course Description

This course provides students with knowledge of the strategic purpose of retail atmospherics and an understanding of how visual merchandising serves as an effective sales strategy through appeals to consumers' affiliations, emotions and intellects. The site location (i.e., Italy) for this course provides a unique opportunity for experiential learning due to its recognition as a global fashion center, and further, it offers an environment in which students can become first-hand observers of the retail atmospherics employed by Italy's small businesses and larger companies, representing a variety of product categories and market levels. Students will put their learning to practice through the completion of assignments geared toward critical analysis of the visual merchandising strategies (e.g., signage, packaging, store atmospherics, etc.) of business with operations in the local area. Upon course completion, students will demonstrate an ability to be critical observers of creative merchandising concepts, an essential skill for future marketers, designers, production planners, visual merchandisers, and managers within fashion and related industries.

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

Upon completion of the course, learners will be able to:

- Utilize effective strategies for developing creative concepts.
- Explain the strategic purpose of retail atmospherics.
- Understand how visual merchandising serves as an effective sales strategy by appealing to consumers' affiliations, emotions and intellects.
- Compare and contrast the visual merchandising strategies of local Italian retailers representing diverse sizes and product categories.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of retailers' visual merchandising strategies (e.g., signage, packaging, store atmospherics, etc.) in conveying the brand image to consumers.

4. Major Topics Covered in Course

The course utilizes the Place-as-Text approach to study our course topic, Visual Merchandising and Promotion. This approach will allow students to take an active role in the direction of their learning. The program location (i.e., Italy) provides students with the opportunity to explore, interpret, analyze, and reflect on course concepts within the context of a surrounding environment that is perfectly suited to support the achievement of course objectives. As such, many class meetings will take place around the program location and outside of a physical classroom.

The Place-as-Text approach to experiential learning fosters students' abilities to work effectively in small groups. Students' own opinions and perspectives, having been shaped by their personal backgrounds and experiences, will make meaningful contributions to class discussions and learning.

The goal of the Place-as-Text approach is for students to overcome the disorientation of being in a new environment while assuming responsibility for their own learning. The process will increase students' confidence with active learning, build self-awareness, and allow for further development of leadership and communication abilities.

5. Required Readings and Materials

a) Dropbox (Required)

- Prior to departing for Italy, students should create a free Dropbox account and download the free mobile app. The Dropbox mobile app will be useful to students for uploading pictures from excursions to Dropbox for inclusion in Course Workbook and Presentation assignments.

b) Course content may include (but is not limited to) readings, PowerPoint slides, and video links. Prior to departure, the instructor will also post to Dropbox a list of websites that will be useful to students when developing assignments and a list of apps that students should consider downloading that will be useful for assignment development and/or class communication (e.g., GroupMe) while abroad.

- All course materials will be uploaded to Dropbox. Students will be invited to join the course Dropbox prior to departing for Italy and will be asked to download the content to laptops or a jump drive so that all materials can be accessed in Italy with or without an internet connection.

- Each student will also have a Dropbox folder on the course Dropbox page and will submit all course assignments in the folder.
- c) The following is a list of excursions that students will participate in as part of the course requirements. A list of additional excursions that students may pursue individually or in small groups will be provided. Student that pursue an additional suggested excursion on a free day may substitute a presentation to the class about the experience for one Course Workbook assignment. Details will be provided upon arrival in Italy.
- Florence Leather School
 - Designer Stores in Florence and Rome
 - Family-Owned Retail Stores in Florence/Rome
 - Florence Leather Market
 - The Mall Luxury Outlet
 - La Rinascente Department Store
 - Salvatore Ferragamo Museum
 - Gucci Garden (Museum, Boutique, Restaurant)
 - Fendi Headquarters and Fendi Private Suites in Rome
 - Museum of Costume and Fashion, Pitti Palace, Florence
 - Museo Roberto Capucci, Villa Bardini, Florence
 - Luisa Via Roma, Florence
 - Prato Textile Museum



6. Graded Assignments

- a) Place-as-Text Exercises. For each of the two PAT exercises, students will be grouped into small teams of three to four people and will venture into the city to study a particular site utilizing the Place-as-Text approach. This approach involves the following four steps: a) mapping the site, b) observing individuals, conditions, activities, etc., c) listening attentively and interacting with people as appropriate, and d) reflecting on the situation in light of prior knowledge and newly gathered information. Teams will present their findings in an informed and well-organized oral report of 15-20 minutes. Presentations will be followed by a group discussion with the instructor and the other team(s) and a time for individual reflection. More specific directions for this activity will be provided upon arrival in Italy.
- b) Course Workbook. Students will write a series of short responses to questions posed in the Workbook. Each response will be supported by photos that visually represent the observations being made. Near the end of the program's second week, students will upload their Workbooks and supporting images to Dropbox. The instructor will then provide feedback and recommendations for further development. At the end of the program, students will upload their completed Workbooks to Dropbox for grading. The Workbook should be uploaded to Dropbox by Friday June 21 (four days after the program has officially ended). Late submissions will be penalized 5 points for each day the Workbook is overdue.
- c) Final Presentation. Students will draw from the collection of observations, reflections, and images in their Course Workbooks to develop a presentation that will be shared with the group during the last class meeting. Students should present on a topic that represents their most meaningful learning experience in the course related to Visual Merchandising and Promotion, reflecting on how their own seeing and understanding of the topic has evolved since arriving in Italy. Students will also highlight new insights related to their topic areas and note any shifts in perspective they've experienced since the beginning of the semester, including the impetus for the shifts. Presentations should be primarily visual, illustrating students' reflective comments to the class on

their selected topics. The Final Presentation should be uploaded to Dropbox along with the Course Workbook

- d) Class Participation. Students will be evaluated throughout the semester on their preparedness for class and active participation in group discussions and excursions. Prior to departing for Italy, course readings and videos will be made available on Dropbox. Students should download these materials and are strongly encouraged to review them before the trip as there will be little time for course preparation once abroad. Attendance at all class meetings is mandatory and students should have completed the readings and/or preparation activities assigned by the instructor prior to the start of the associated class session. This will allow us to maximize our time together and will facilitate more meaningful on-site learning experiences and class discussions.

7. Grading Criteria

- Place-as-Text Exercises: 20% of final grade
- Course Workbook: 50% of final grade
- Class Participation: 20% of final grade
- Final Presentation: 10% of final grade

Workbooks and Place-as-Text reports will be graded on the following criteria: (1) clarity of writing and presentation, including organization, spelling and grammar, sentence and paragraph structure, (2) insight and originality of analyses, (3) accuracy and thoroughness with respect to facts, theoretical perspectives, and responsible use of visual and literary sources.

Workbooks will be collected early in the term, evaluated by the course instructor, and returned with recommendations for improvement and revision. Feedback from the instructor will also be provided for both of the Place-as-Text reports. However, assignments will only be graded after they have been uploaded to Dropbox at the end of the semester (i.e., no later than June 21).

8. Grade Scale

All assignments will be graded on a 100-point scale and converted to letter grades as follows: A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; E = 0-59.

9. 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.

10. Special Accommodations

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.

11. 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/eoo/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.