



FACULTY-LED
STUDY ABROAD

KIIS Greece Program, Winter 2024

ENG 339: Women in Literature in a Global Context

Instructor: Dr. Mary P Sheridan

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Instructor's office hours: on site and by appointment

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description

Recent popularity in the retelling of Greek myths highlights how fresh takes on these ancient stories have much to teach us about the current moment. Whether critically acclaimed books like *Home Fire* or *The New York Times* best seller *Circe*, these reworkings ask us to consider who can be a story teller? What stories are occluded? How have answers to these questions endured or altered across time and place? We will explore these questions by analyzing how contemporary literary reworkings can inform our experience in Greece, where cultural stories are chiseled in architecture, hung in galleries, and adorn the everyday, from coffee shops to street names. By the end of the course, you'll be attuned to the stories and story tellers various cultures privilege, and the consequences of that privileging.

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 that Fulfill General Education Requirements

Learning Outcomes for Arts & Humanities General Education Requirement: Arts and Humanities are concerned with the understanding of art, music, theatre, literature, philosophy, and religious thought. Students who satisfy this requirement will demonstrate that they are able to do all of the following:

Critically evaluate and synthesize texts and other forms of expression in the arts and humanities using primary and/or secondary materials.
Demonstrate an understanding of the reciprocal relationship between (1) social and cultural factors in their historical context and (2) intellectual inquiry and creative expression within the arts and/or the humanities.
Represent and critically respond to multiple points of view on cultural issues in different historical, social, and/or cultural contexts.
Communicate effectively in speech and writing, paying particular attention to the use of evidence in interpretive arguments, through citation appropriate to the discipline.

Learning Outcomes for Global Diversity General Education Requirement: Diversity refers to the difference that differences make. All courses in Diversity will examine the ways in which components of identity and social and material stratification affect positively or negatively life experiences, opportunities, and sense of belonging in national or global contexts. Courses in Global Diversity will broaden students' understanding of how the experiences and opportunities of individuals and/or groups in non-U.S. societies are shaped by the various historical, cultural and social structures and processes of stratification locally or globally. Students who satisfy this requirement will demonstrate that they are able to do all of the following:

Identify how historical, social, and cultural structures and processes shape understandings of social stratification in non-U.S. societies.
Demonstrate understanding of how these structures and processes affect the life experiences and opportunities of individuals and/or groups in non-U.S. societies.
Identify, interpret, and evaluate evidence from different social locations and from multiple points of view.

4. Major Topics covered in the Course

Drawing from Rebecca Solnit's investigation into who can tell what story, we'll analyze how canonical stories resonate today as they travel across time and place. For example, what lessons does *Antigone* have for a Pakistani family living in London after 9/11? When an American author shifts the Greek demi-god Circe from a supporting player in *The Odyssey* to the narrator of her own story, what do we learn about past and present world views? In what ways do social media act as a contemporary Greek chorus, piling on scorn and/or creating counterstories to the narratives societies tell? Across these questions, we'll focus on whose stories endure and whose stories are punished or ignored. To pursue this project, we will read contemporary theory and canonical retellings; we'll also examine how stories are materialized in the world around us as we attend to the stories found in Greek monuments/architecture, museums, cafes, and social media.

5. Required Readings and Materials

This course requires two books which you must bring, and several online readings, which will be placed in our course shell.

- Kamila Shamsie, *Home Fire*
- Madeline Miller, *Circe*
- Articles likely include: selections from Rebecca Solnit's, *Whose Story Is This?*; selections from the Mellon Foundation's *The Monuments Project*; Toomey, "Humanitarians of Tinder"

6. Graded Assignments

Before arrive (15%): I encourage you to read the two novels before you arrive in Greece. To guide those readings, I'll provide short descriptions of what I'd like you to attend to, and assign two short (1 page single-spaced) responses for each novel.

In country participation (25%): Key to study abroad experiences is hands-on learning with each other about your time in this place. Consequently, you will lead part of one class session and you will apply the class readings to in-country activities via frequent responses, many of which are digitally mediated.

Final (60%): Project: Proposal + Project + Reflection: For the final, you will create a digital project that forwards stories based in some way on canonical Greek themes but targeted for a contemporary audience of your choosing.

Work will be graded on this scale:

90 – 100 A

80 – 89 B

70 – 79 C

60 – 69 D

Below 60 E (F)

This course will be graded on this basis, without regard to other scales (i.e., plus-and-minus) which may apply at your college or university. Note KUIS/WKU does not award +/- grades, only full letter grades.)

7. Attendance Policy

KUIS 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

KUIS 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 KUIS

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 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 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 Investigator, Michael Crowe (270-745-5429 / michael.crowe@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/titleix/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.