

# KIIS Netherlands Summer 2024

**HON 300 Topics: Global Cultural Intelligence (3 credits)**  
**May 28 – June 12, 2024**



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*Syllabus subject to change*



## Course Description

We live in a global and multicultural environment where we communicate and interact with friends, colleagues, and strangers of cultures other than ours. To live, learn and work effectively, it is necessary to recognize and appreciate differences, even if one does not readily agree with them. This course aims to enhance the cultural awareness and intercultural skills you need to relate constructively with people at home and across the world. In this iteration of the course, we will pay particular attention to artistic and cultural expression in Dutch society. Sources of artistic and cultural expression include (but are not limited to) artwork, architecture, museums, media, urban planning and sustainability, transportation networks, immigration, community/neighborhood sites, music, markets, food and fashion. Our aim is a deeper dive into intercultural understanding by using these and other sources of cultural expression to explore/discuss values, customs, beliefs, traditions, and innovations in the Netherlands (and beyond). We do so in part by actively exploring Rotterdam and Amsterdam and their (less urban) surroundings, often in small student groups. Open to Honors and non-Honors students with a 3.2 GPA or higher.

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.

### **Academic Model**

We employ a "Place as Text" teaching methodology, which inserts students into social environments and fosters close observation of the local culture. We make use of five basic learning strategies: mapping, observing, listening, discussing, and reflecting. A central goal is for students to take an active role in the direction of their learning by:

- self-selecting topics (from among a selection provided by the instructor at the pre-departure KIIS student orientation) of particular interest to them
- dedicating themselves to become "student-experts" in their chosen field
- participating in small group excursions that (safely) place them in culturally uncomfortable situations
- regularly synthesizing readings and on-site observations
- in pairs, leading a seminar-style final oral presentation

Throughout the program, students develop a deeper understanding of Dutch society and the European Union, past and present. In the process, they also learn to work effectively in small groups, improve their oral presentation and analytical skills, and develop a heightened sense of confidence and leadership.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Identify and discuss themes central to Dutch history and culture, including an appreciation of the complexity and variety of contemporary society in the Netherlands.

- Develop an understanding of strengths and shortcomings of the European Union.
- Develop a historical perspective for understanding connections of past and present.
- Be more mindful of attitudes, perspectives, and beliefs different than your own.
- Articulate the role of artistic expressions in the development of cultural identity.
- Develop capacity for critical thinking, work effectively in small groups, and improve writing & speaking skills.

### Program Calendar Snapshot

During this two-week study abroad, we reside in Rotterdam for one week and Amsterdam for the other. While based in Rotterdam, academic excursions include Futureland (the Port of Rotterdam), Delfshaven (both the historic area and the predominantly immigrant neighborhood nearby), a selection of smaller towns on the outskirts of Rotterdam (in small groups, students visit one of those listed on the program calendar below), The Hague, Brussels and Erasmus University. In Amsterdam, we visit the Anne Frank House, select art museums (such as the Stedelijk and Van Gogh), a diverse cross-section of Amsterdam neighborhoods and markets, and the traditional and beautiful Waterland region north of the city. Throughout, we employ a “Place as Text” learning model, which inserts students into various social environments and fosters close observation of local culture. The program culminates with student final oral presentations to the group. See the KIIS Netherlands 2024 [program calendar](#).

### Assignments

Students begin their academic preparation for this study abroad program at the pre-departure KIIS student orientation on April 13, 2024 (in Bowling Green, KY). First, the professor familiarizes students with the Place as Text model (described above). Second, we discuss notions students hold about the Netherlands and begin to develop a (“deeper”) understanding of Dutch (and European) history, culture and society. Third, in groups of two, students self-select one of the course themes shared by the instructor at the above orientation, which ultimately serve as the basis for their culminating seminar-style oral presentation.

#### A. Pre-Departure Writing Assignment & Program Participation – 10%

In May, students are provided one short pre-departure assignment intended to help familiarize them with the Netherlands and to begin grappling with course themes and learning objectives. The pre-departure assignment should be emailed to the professor by Noon on May 27.

#### B. WhatsApp Written Reflections (on-site) – 15%

Over the course of our study abroad, students will respond to a WhatsApp prompt(s) or question(s), which the professor will share, for example, immediately before students enter a museum or head on a small-group Place as Text excursion. Student reflections will vary in length from one sentence to a couple of paragraphs and will serve as the basis for our class discussions, and help prepare student for their final oral presentation project.

### C. Photo Essay – 15%

Create a photo essay of 10-15 of your own on-site photographs centering around the theme of “Artistic and Cultural Expression in Dutch Society.” The topic or theme obviously is quite broad, providing you with both the opportunity, and challenge, to focus on an angle or thread of your choosing. Keep in mind a photo essay is a series of photographs selected to tell a story. Photo essays may contain text, but generally allow the photographs, or rather the subjects depicted in the photographs, to tell the story. In crafting your photo essay, be sure to consider the curation, selection, sequencing, and juxtaposition of the photographs, while always keeping in mind the need to provide your ‘reader’ a clear sense of your narrative or ‘story’. Images may include captions, if desired, but are not required.

### D. Short Essay (on-site) – 15%

In a two-page reflective essay, students respond to a question that combines class reading and on-site observations and reflections. This assignment further prepares students for their end-of-program Final Oral Presentation. The question will be provided on-site.

### E. Final Oral Presentation (on-site at program’s end) – 30%

In groups of two, students craft and lead a 30-minute oral presentation for the class/group (to be held at program’s end in our Amsterdam hostel). The oral presentation combines preliminary investigations you make before program departure, course readings, on-site observations and reflections, and elements from class discussions. A few days before your oral presentation, you and your partner will meet with the instructor to discuss your preparations, including a) your central argument, b) how you intend to organize your presentation, c) the readings you have incorporated, and d) the ideas and questions you have formulated to help generate class discussion. This is your opportunity to synthesize and share key course themes (from readings, excursions, class discussion, etc.) tied to your self-selected topic. Students should not plan to rely on PowerPoint, Prezi or the like, but are permitted to do so, if they prefer.

### F. Final Reflection (program’s end) – 15%

At program’s end, students will answer one final question that asks them to reflect on their intellectual and cultural experience in the Netherlands. The question will be introspective in nature.

## Grading Procedures

90 – 100 A

80 – 89 B

70 – 79 C

60 – 69 D

Below 60 F

## Readings

1. Edward T. Hall, *Beyond Culture* (date intentionally omitted), Introduction.
2. Ana Taranath, *Beyond Guilt Trips: Mindful Travel in an Unequal World* (2019), Chapter 2.
3. Joana Meroz and Javier Gimeno-Martinez, “Introduction: Beyond Dutch Design: Material Culture in the Netherlands in an Age of Globalization, Migration and Multiculturalism” (2016).
4. One reading of your choosing (newspaper, magazine, blog, academic article, etc.). Please let me know of your selection.

## **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.

## **Academic Honesty Policy**

Cheating, plagiarism (submitting another person's material as one's own), or doing work for another person which will receive academic credit are all impermissible. This includes the use of unauthorized books, notebooks, or other sources in order to secure or give help during an examination, the unauthorized copying of examinations, assignments, reports, term papers, or the presentation of unacknowledged material as if it were the student's own work. Disciplinary action may be taken beyond the academic discipline administered by the faculty member who teaches the course in which the cheating took place.

## **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](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 Office Manager, 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 Office Manager, 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](mailto:ena.demir@wku.edu)) or WKU's Title IX Investigator, Michael Crowe (270-745-5429 / [michael.crowe@wku.edu](mailto: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/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.