



FACULTY-LED
STUDY ABROAD

KIIS Amsterdam-Barcelona Program, Summer 2025

ART 491 Topics: Art, Popular Culture and the Internet

Instructor: Emily Elizabeth Goodman, PhD

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Instructor's office hours: By appointment using Google Calendar

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description:

In recent years, the internet has become more central to our life than ever, and it has continued to shape and reshape how we engage with our visual culture, including art and popular culture. Our interconnected platforms bring images from around the world into our classrooms, homes, and the palm of our hands. The rapid growth of digital technology and new tools for the dissemination of these images and information have unquestionably changed our relationship to culture. In this class, we will examine how our contemporary capabilities to reproduce and share artworks and popular culture around the globe instantaneously inform what we understand the role of these works to be. We will consider how digital media shapes the nature of cultural texts as well as our interpretation of them. As such, we will explore questions including, but not limited to: what is art culture? What is pop culture? What is internet culture? And how are these three forms of culture related? How do digital media and the rhetorics within them shape our conversations about art and popular culture today? How do artists engage with the internet? How do art institutions use the internet? What does it mean to produce online content about art? How does the internet change the meaning of a work of art or popular culture? What is the difference between digital works and physical works and how has that changed over the last 30 years?

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:

This class is designed to foster critical thinking about the relationship between art and the internet. In this course, we will develop skills in visual and critical literacy, as well as practice producing digital content for an online audience. By the end of this course, we will be able to:

- identify key issues regarding the relationship between art and the internet, as well as the major debates that scholars of this topic grapple with today
- analyze a variety of different online media including text, video, podcasts, digital artworks, and virtual exhibitions
- produce different forms of discourse—including but not limited to podcasts, videos, and written works—about art and address the needs of various audiences

4. Major Topics covered in the Course:

- Internet culture and history
- Contemporary art
- Pop culture theory/history

5. Fulfillment of General Education Requirement:

Area IV- Upper Level General Education

6. Required Readings and Materials:

No required text; all materials will be shared via LMS

7. Graded Assignments:

Students will be graded according to the following breakdown of assignments:

In-class Participation:	25%
Pre-class discussions:	15%
3 Multimodal/digital projects:	60% total (15%, 20%, 25% each)

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 KIS/WKU does not award +/- grades, only full letter grades.)

8. Attendance Policy:

KIS 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.

9. 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 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.

10. 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.