



## KIIS Amsterdam Barcelona Program, Summer 2025

### ART 494 Topics: Art and Art History of Barcelona & Amsterdam

**Instructor:** Prof. Eileen McKiernan González

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**Instructor's office hours:** on site and by appointment

*Syllabus subject to change*

#### Course Description:

The cities of Amsterdam and Barcelona are major European cosmopolitan centers with complex histories and artistic endeavors. These cities have distinct histories shaped by their regions and geo-political histories. They are also cities known for their art and architecture and contemporary art scenes. We will explore how those histories are revealed in their art and self fashioning through their architecture and museums, and their civic and religious spaces. Both cities were powerful maritime capitals and this power is visible in how and what they preserve and how they have been marked by 20th century wars. The exuberance of these cities artistic fabric will shape the class. Amsterdam and Barcelona are our classroom. We will be venturing into the city to see the chosen remnants of the past, the scars of war, the architecture of power, the developments of scale, and their museum exhibitions.

#### 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:

In this class, students will:

- explore how art and architecture functions within cultural and historical contexts
- learn how to relate artistic form to function and meaning
- explain the major technical processes of art
- develop the ability to describe what you see in art historical terms
- practice critically looking at, discussing, and writing about works of art and architecture

- demonstrate an understanding of how these societies have evolved in diverse ways over time and space
- understand artistic sources and place them into their social, political, and intellectual contexts
- advance their visual literacy and vocabulary and use these skills in written and oral formats

**Major Topics covered in the Course:** The course looks at art and architecture from a social history perspective. We will consider religion, politics, culture, and environment and how it impacts the arts in Amsterdam and Barcelona:

- Art and architectural history of Amsterdam and Barcelona
- History and political events that shape the cities
- Urban development, planned and unplanned
- Curatorial trends in museums and public spaces
- Memory and remembrance

**Required Readings and Materials:**

The course will use online sites such as Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, Getty Foundation, Smarthistory, and Khan Academies, as well as articles from JSTOR and online sources created by the cities of Amsterdam and Barcelona.

**Graded Assignments:**

Written Assignments/Quizzes	25%
Site Analysis Assignments	25%
Exhibition/Monument proposal	30%
Excursion Reflections	20%

**Written Assignments:**

Writing assignments and quizzes will include text analysis based on class readings

**Site Analysis:**

Visual analysis assignments will focus upon exhibitions and monuments visited in class and program excursions.

**Excursion Reflections:**

Excursions designed for the full KIIS Amsterdam and Barcelona program include site visits, guest speakers, and performances and may include additional readings. Assignments will highlight aspects of these common excursions and reflections on the new/varied perspectives shared.

**Exhibition/Monument proposal:**

A proposal that will identify a museum for the exhibition or a site for a monument, present a vision for its execution, write promotional material, accompanying text, and include a model of the layout.

**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/> 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.

#### **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](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/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.