

KIIS Netherlands, Summer 2026

IDFM 426: Fashion Design Market Trends



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Instructor's Office Hours: Schedule via email



Syllabus Subject to Change

1. Course Description

This course provides a survey of trend forecasting for fashion and related industries. Through lectures, discussions, and experiential activities, students will become acquainted with the guiding frameworks that are employed to understand and predict fashion change and will examine the integral role that social, cultural, and contextual indicators play in the forecasting process. Equipped with this knowledge, students will put their learning to practice through the completion of assignments that will require the identification, analysis, and interpretation, of existing and emerging fashion trends. The site location (i.e., the Netherlands) for this course provides a unique opportunity for experiential learning due to its recognition as a global fashion center and further, offers an environment in which students can become first-hand observers of the artistic, historical, and cultural influences that shape the development of fashion trends. Upon course completion, students will demonstrate a heightened awareness of the many factors that inspire design trends and influence fashion change.

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:

- Understand the terminology, principles, and concepts related to trend identification and communication.
- Identify and define macro and micro trends in the fashion and related industries using techniques such as cross-cultural analysis and ethnographic research.
- Explore social, cultural, and environmental indicators and interpret their role in trend formation.
- Analyze, edit and interpret observations and research findings to develop and communicate trends.
- Demonstrate an ability to convey trends using oral, written, and visual communication.

4. Major Topics Covered in Course

The course utilizes the Place-as-Text approach to study our course topic, Fashion Design Market Trends. This approach will allow students to take an active role in the direction of their learning. The program location (i.e., the Netherlands) 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. Readings and Supplemental Materials

Supplemental course content will assist students in completing their assignments and will be shared via email. These materials may include (but are not limited to) readings, PowerPoint slides, and video links related to each assignment topic. The instructor will also provide a list of apps that students should consider downloading that will be useful for assignment development (e.g., *Coolers* color palette generator app).

6. Graded Assignments

- WhatsApp Activities (40% of final grade)
 - During the pre-departure orientation meeting, students will be asked to enroll in the course WhatsApp group.
 - The course features several short-form assignments, which are visual, creative, and reflective in nature. Directions for each activity will be distributed via email one week prior to the assignment's deadline. Activities should be submitted by the start of class on their due date.

- Prior to each activity deadline, students will post their activities to the class WhatsApp for everyone to view. Students will discuss their assignments during class while the group views the posts on the app. These activities underscore both the objective and subjective competencies one draws on in the process of identifying and assessing fashion design and market trends. Group sharing and discussion will highlight students' varied approaches to observing and documenting each activity's topic.
- Place-as-Text Excursions (30% of final grade)
 - Students will complete two place-as-text (PAT) excursions. For each, students will be grouped into small teams of two to three 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) along with time for individual reflection. Specific directions and a list of possible excursions for this activity will be provided upon arrival in the Netherlands.
- Final Trend Presentation (15% of final grade)
 - Students will draw from the collection of observations, reflections, and images in their WhatsApp activities to develop a trend 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 Fashion Design Market Trends, reflecting on how their own seeing and understanding of the topic has evolved since arriving in the Netherlands. 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. Final Trend Presentations should be primarily visual, illustrating students' reflective comments to the class on their selected topics. The presentation should be uploaded to WhatsApp.
- Class Participation (15% of final grade)
 - Students will be evaluated throughout the semester on their preparedness for class and active participation in group discussions and excursions. Attendance at all class meetings is mandatory and students should have completed the readings/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 and Grade Scale

- WhatsApp Activities: 40% of final grade
- Place-as-Text Excursions: 30% of final grade
- Final Trend Presentation: 15% of final grade
- Class Participation: 15% of final grade

Assignments will be graded on the following criteria: (1) quality of visuals, (2) clarity of writing (e.g., organization, spelling, grammar, sentence structure), (3) quality of oral presentation and ability to convey key findings from your assignment to the class, (4) insight and originality of analyses, and (5) accuracy and thoroughness with respect to facts, theoretical perspectives, and responsible use of visual and literary sources.

Work will be graded on the following scale:

90 – 100 A

80 – 89 B

70 – 79 C

60 – 69 D

Below 60 E (F)

Please note: This course will be graded using the scale above and without regard to other scales (i.e., plus-and-minus) which may apply at your college or university. KIIS/WKU does not award +/- grades, only full letter grades.

8. Generative AI Policy

Generative AI is permitted/encouraged in some ways, with proper attribution, but prohibited in other ways.

Students are allowed, encouraged, and even required to use Generative AI in some ways but are prohibited from using it in other ways. Keep in mind that any content produced by generative AI can “hallucinate” (produce false information), so students are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of any AI-generated content. Examples of citing AI are available at: <https://libguides.wku.edu/stylewrite/ai>

Students are permitted and encouraged to use generative AI in the following ways:

- Brainstorming: You may use generative AI to stimulate creativity, generate ideas, or brainstorm topics for papers, presentations, and discussions. The generated content must serve as a steppingstone, not a final product.
- Citation Assistance: AI tools can be used to manage, format, and organize citations and references, promoting adherence to academic writing standards and specific style guides required for individual assignments.
- Grammar and Style Checking: AI-powered writing enhancement tools may be used to help with spelling, grammar, syntax, and stylistic errors.
- Concept Understanding: Generative AI can be used to explain or simulate concepts taught in class, aiding in a deeper understanding.
- Research Assistance: AI can be used to conduct initial research, compile data, and summarize articles, books, or papers. It should not replace traditional research methods but rather enhance them.

You may not use generative AI in coursework in the following ways:

- Plagiarism: Using AI-generated content as your original work without attribution. This includes essays, papers, presentations, and exam answers.
- Data Manipulation: Using AI tools to alter data or create misleading information.
- Misrepresentation of Skills: Using generative AI to complete tasks that are meant to assess your knowledge and skills.
- Confidentiality Breach: Using AI tools that might violate KIIS/university policies or laws related to data privacy and confidentiality.

Metacognitive Reflection.

- In addition to a proper citation, the student should include the following statement with any assignment where generative AI is used for assistance.

- “I used generative AI [INSERT NAME OF PLATFORM] for assistance in the following ways on this assignment: [INSERT WAYS USED, such as brainstorming, citation assistance, grammar and style checking, concept understanding, and research assistance, etc.]”

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 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 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/eeo/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.