



FACULTY-LED  
STUDY ABROAD

## KIIS Japan-Korea Pop Program, Summer 2026

### ***IDST 350 Study Abroad: Japan and Korea: Food and Pop Cultures***

**Instructor:** Sangwook Kang, PhD, CHE

**Email:** Sangwook.Kang@EKU.EDU

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

*Syllabus subject to change*

**1. Course Description:** Food offers a unique lens through which to explore and understand diverse cultures. With the rising global influence of K-pop and K-dramas, this course provides students with a cross-cultural examination of how personal identities and social groups are shaped through food. By experiencing and analyzing cuisines from various countries, students will explore the meanings and cultural significance of food across different societies. These hands-on experiences will spark meaningful discussions, encouraging students to connect their own experiences to broader global and cultural issues. The course also examines the religious, historical, regional, and economic influences that shape world cuisines, deepening students' understanding of cultural history and diversity. As part of the curriculum, students will take part in excursions to Korea and Japan to directly engage with different cultures and food systems. All instruction will be conducted in English.

### **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 in 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 course will focus on oral, written, and visual communication as its primary learning outcomes. It will also incorporate elements of multicultural and international perspectives, aesthetic and artistic appreciation, social, ethical, and historical analysis, and information literacy.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Describe and analyze food and food culture across populations.
2. Explain the impact of the forces of politics, socioeconomics, and conflict on traditional food systems and community sustainability.
3. Examine global food equity and justice policies.
4. Develop strategies to protect and promote health through the food system.
5. Explain and compare disparities in food security around the world.
6. Apply knowledge of food culture to demonstrate effective intercultural communication.
7. Differentiate methods of food selection, preparation, and storage within a cultural context.
8. Describe the general health and nutrition status of global populations.
9. Interpret a recipe and be familiar with basic culinary terminology and techniques.

**4. Major Topics covered in the Course:** Food Culture (food ingredients, food preparation methods, and dining etiquette), Food Selections, and Food Systems

**5. Fulfillment of General Education Requirement:** (If applicable, i.e. if you feel that your KIIS course will fulfill/satisfy a Gen. Ed. requirement at your institution— more likely a possibility if you are teaching a non-Topics course— please list briefly the way your KIIS course will fulfill the Gen. Ed. requirements. If this section is not applicable to your course, you may delete this section (#5) from your syllabus.)

**6. Required Readings and Materials:**

Guptill, A., Copelton, D., & Lucal, B. (2023). *Food and Society, 3rd eds.* Cambridge: Polity Press.  
Zhen, W. (2019). *Food Studies: A Hands-On Guide.* Bloomsbury.

**7. Graded Assignments:**

| Grading Scheme                 |                      | Scores | Percent |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------|---------|
| Cross-cultural Knowledge Check | 2 checks x 5 points  | 10     | 5%      |
| Reflective Essay               |                      | 10     | 5%      |
| Reflective Writing on Video    | 6 videos x 10 points | 60     | 30%     |
| Discussion                     | 4 dicussions x 10    | 40     | 20%     |
| Case Study                     |                      | 10     | 5%      |
| Final Reflection on Learning   |                      | 20     | 10%     |
| Taking Photos of Cultural Food |                      | 20     | 10%     |
| Scavenger Hunt                 | 2 activities x 15    | 30     | 15%     |
| Total                          |                      | 200    | 100%    |

**Class Attendance and Punctuality**

- Attendance at all class meetings is mandatory; absences are not tolerated.
- Missing a class will result in loss of in-class activity points.
- Punctuality is crucial for excursions and outside activities. Tardiness will lead to point deductions.

**Cross-Cultural Knowledge Check**

- Administered on the first class day in both Korea and Japan.
- A Google link for access will be shared during class.

**Video Reflections**

- Individual reflections required on major class topics.
- Complete using the provided Google link and follow all posted guidelines.

**In-Class Discussions or Reflective Essay on Course Topic**

- Active participation required.
- Collaborate with group members and respond to discussion questions during class via Google Drive.
- Instructions will be provided by the instructor.

**Final Reflective Essay**

- Individual assignment (minimum 200 words).
- Reflect on course learning and future trends in U.S. foodservice, incorporating sustainability, automation, and cultural acculturation.
- The submission link will be shared by the instructor.

**Taking Photos of Cultural Food**

- Group project: take photos with your group and food throughout the program using a provided camera.
- The instructor will develop and share the photos via Google Drive after the program.

## 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. 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 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 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](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.

**CLASS SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)**

| Day   | Date | Class Location                         | Class Time          | Classes and Activities Schedule  | Course Hours         |                     |
|-------|------|--|---------------------|--|----------------------|---------------------|
|       |      |  |                     |  | Lecture              | Excursion           |
|       |      |  |                     |  | 100% of actual hours | 50% of actual hours |
| Day 1 | 6/7  | USA-KOREA                              |                     | Travel (THE UNITED STATES to SOUTH KOREA)  |                      |                     |
| Day 2 | 6/8  | SEOUL                                  |                     | Arrive in SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA   |                      |                     |
| Day 3 | 6/9  | SEOUL (KONKUK UNIV)                    | 10:15 am - 12:30 pm | <b>Class 1: Food Culture and Foodways</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of the course</li> <li>• Suggested Reading: <i>18 Rules of Dining Etiquette from Around the World</i></li> <li>• Cross-cultural Knowledge Check (Korea)</li> <li>• Reflective Essay on Today's Topic: <i>Food Culture and Foodways</i></li> <li>• Reflective Writing on Course Video:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Video: <i>Cooking Communities: Cultural Importance of Food</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> | 2.25                 |                     |
|       |      |  |                     | Excursion: <i>Gyeongbokgung and Bukchon Hanok Village (1:30 pm)</i>  |                      | 1.25                |
| Day 4 | 6/10 | SEOUL (KONKUK UNIV)<br>Travel to DAEGU | 9:00 am - 12:00 pm  | <b>Class 2: The Roots of Taste- Heritage and Tradition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested Reading: <i>Kimchi profile</i></li> <li>• Reflective Writing on Course Video:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Video: <i>Soul Food with Ed Lee</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | 3                    |                     |
|       |      |  |                     | Learning Activity: <i>Scavenger Hunt (Daegu)-6 pm</i>  |                      | 1.25                |
| Day 5 | 6/11 | DEAGU (KNU)                            | 9:00 am - 12:00 pm  | <b>Class 3: Food Systems and Cultural Identification by Food</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion, Presentation, and Learning Activity:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Cultural Identity through Food</i> (Research, Discussion, and Presentation)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | 3                    |                     |
|       |      |  |                     | Learning Activity: <i>Semun Market 1 pm (Scavenger Hunt)</i>   |                      | 1.25                |
| Day 6 | 6/12 | DEAGU (KNU)                            | 9:00 am - 12:00 pm  | <b>Class 4: The Movement of Food</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested Reading: <i>Immigrants' Food in the United States</i></li> <li>• Let's Play Jeopardy! 😊</li> <li>• Reflective Writing on Course Video:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Video: <i>Food is Not Only Culture, it's Diplomacy</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | 3                    |                     |
|       |      |  |                     | Excursion: <i>Gyeongju</i>   |                      | 1.25                |
| Day 7 | 6/13 | DEAGU (KNU)                            | 9:00 am - 11:00 am  | <b>Class 5: Cultural Acculturation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflective Writing on Course Video:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Video: <i>The Stories Behind Our Food</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | 2                    |                     |
|       |      |  |                     | Class Outing: <i>Daegu Yangnyeongsi Museum of Oriental Medicine (2 pm)</i>   |                      | 1                   |
| Day 8 | 6/14 | Travel to SEOUL                        |                     | Learning Activity: Gwangjang Market, Seoul City Wall Museum, Dongdeamun Design Plaza   |                      | 1                   |
| Day 9 | 6/15 | Travel to JAPAN                        |                     | Travel to JAPAN: KAL 741 (10:35 am)  |                      |                     |

|   |      |                         |                       |  |      |     |
|---|------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|------|-----|
| Day 10                                  | 6/16 | NAGOYA<br>(CHUKYO UNIV) | 1:00 pm-<br>4:45 pm   | Excursion: <i>Toyota Commemorative Museum of Industry and Technology</i>   |      | 1   |
|   |      |                         |                       | <b>Class 6: Food Processing and Logistics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross-cultural Knowledge Check (Japan)</li> <li>• Suggested Reading: <i>Garlic Giant- Christopher Ranch</i></li> <li>• Reflective Writing on Course Video: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Video: <i>International Trade</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | 3.75 |     |
|   |      |                         |                       | Learning Activity: <i>Meet with Chukyo students (4:45 pm-TBD)</i>  |      |     |
| Day 11                                  | 6/17 | NAGOYA<br>(CHUKYO UNIV) | 9:00 am -<br>12:00 pm | <b>Class 7: Understanding Food Safety Through a Cultural Lens</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested Reading: <i>Food Safety Across Cultures</i></li> <li>• Suggested Reading: <i>Food Safety in Sushi Restaurants</i></li> <li>• Case Study: <i>Foodborne Illness Outbreak</i></li> <li>• In-class Discussion: <i>Konbini Cultural Adaptation and Acculturation</i></li> </ul>  | 3    |     |
|   |      |                         |                       | Excursion: <i>Nagoya Castle</i>  |      | 1   |
| Day 12                                  | 6/18 | Free Day in<br>KYOTO    |                       | Free Day in KYOTO  |      |     |
|   |      |                         |                       | Evening: Karaoke in KYOTO  |      |     |
| Day 13                                  | 6/19 | NAGOYA<br>(CHUKYO UNIV) | 9:00 am -<br>12:00 pm | <b>Class 8: Food Justice and Cultural Food Sovereignty</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested Video: <i>The Five Phases of Food Security</i></li> <li>• Suggested Reading: <i>Overcoming Food Apartheid</i></li> <li>• Suggested Reading: <i>Food Security and Nutrition Assistance</i></li> <li>• Suggested Reading: <i>Sustainable Food Production</i></li> <li>• Reflective Writing on Course Video: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Video: <i>The Dark Side of Chocolate</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> | 3    |     |
|   |      |                         |                       | Excursion: <i>Osu Kannon (TBD)</i>   |      | 0.5 |
| Day 14                                  | 6/20 | OSAKA<br>(KYOIKU UNIV)  | 1:00 pm -<br>4:00 pm  | <b>Class 9: The Evolution of Food</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested Reading: <i>Food Waste- Harvard School of Public Health</i></li> <li>• In-class Discussion: <i>Food Waste and Innovations</i></li> </ul>  | 3    |     |
|   |      |                         |                       | Learning Activity: <i>Activity with Osaka Kyoiku University students) (TBD)</i>  |      |     |
| Day 15                                  | 6/21 | OSAKA<br>(KYOIKU UNIV)  | 9:00 am -<br>11:00 am | <b>Class 10: Food as Culture- Presentation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested Reading: <i>10 Emerging Food Industry Trends in 2025</i></li> <li>• In-class Discussion: <i>Forecasting Trends in the Food Industry</i></li> <li>• Final Reflection on Learning</li> </ul>   | 2    |     |
|   |      |                         |                       | Farewell Dinner  |      |     |
| Day 16                                  | 6/22 | Travel to<br>the USA    |                       | Travel (Osaka Itami International Airport) to the USA  |      |     |
| Total Required Hours: <b>37.5 Hours</b> |      |                         |                       |  | 28   | 9.5 |