



FACULTY-LED  
STUDY ABROAD

## KIIS SPAIN II Program, Summer 2026

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### SPAN 470: Advanced Oral Spanish

**Instructor:** Prof. Stephen Hessel

**Email:** [swhessel@bsu.edu](mailto:swhessel@bsu.edu)

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

*Syllabus subject to change*

### 1. Course Description:

The main goal of this advanced conversation course is to develop a greater oral fluency and cultural understanding. The course will emphasize 1) vocabulary building, 2) intensive review of problematic areas of Spanish grammar for native speakers of English, and 3) meaningful communicative tasks in the community on a variety of cultural, social, economic, and political topics. Students will examine the usage of certain vocabulary and several grammatical concepts (e.g., the subjunctive), and they will engage in reading of authentic texts and speaking activities that include discussions, interviewing the host family members, and exploring the local community. Students will also keep journals on cultural encounters and share their reflections. The course is taught entirely in Spanish.

### 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:

After completing this course, students should be able to communicate more appropriately in Spanish in diverse social contexts:

- Engage in conversations and generate writings that provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange and support opinions;
- Understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of cultural topics;
- Present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience;
- Handle a wider range of vocabulary and demonstrate their appropriate use of idiomatic structures.

#### 4. Major Topics covered in the Course:

- A variety of cultural topics relevant to study abroad context in Spain.
- A series of grammatical concepts appropriate for the advanced level Spanish.

#### 5. Required Readings and Materials:

- Course materials to be posted.
- Notebook for writing.

#### 6. Graded Assignments:

Students will demonstrate the above learning outcomes through oral interviews, presentations, quizzes, regular reading and writing assignments, and class participation. Grades will be based on the quality and quantity of oral and written production. The final grade will be based on the following:

Class participation and preparation	20%	90-100	A
Oral presentations/Creative oral projects	20%	80-89	B
Quizzes (vocabulary & grammar)	20%	70-79	C
Reflection journals ( <i>diarios</i> )	20%	60-69	D
Final oral interview	20%	≤ 59	F

\*Note KUIS/does not award +/- grades, only full letter grades.

\*BSU grades will be Credit/No Credit (without letter grades).

- Class Participation and Preparation. Preparedness for each class, willingness to use Spanish in class at all times, and oral practice outside class will determine your learning outcomes for the course. The class is intimately linked to the experience of living abroad, and you are expected to take advantage of the abundant opportunities for conversation. Make an intentional effort to get to know your host family, and reciprocate the hospitality extended to you by making the home stay experience pleasant and interesting for your host family as well. **Make a self-pledge to speak only Spanish and make a pact with your roommate to do the same with them.** Your weekly participation grade be based on: 1) **evidence of intentional practice of Spanish outside the class;** 2) completion of all the assignments before each class (e.g., obtaining answers to survey questions for locals, learning vocabulary, refining grammar concepts covered, thoughtful reading of the assigned texts and any written homework, and so forth); 3) attendance and punctuality; 4) active class participation and use of Spanish at all times; and 5) respect for *el profesor, los compañeros*, and others you meet through the program. Students will submit a provisional grade at the end of each week that the professor will either accept or modify so it better fits with his assessment of a student's participation.
- Oral Presentations/Creative Oral Projects. You will make 4 short presentations to the class. Each presentation will be graded based on: 1) sufficient & interesting content in Spanish,

2) quality of Spanish – variety of vocabulary and grammar, and 3) speed and pronunciation.

- Journal Entries. You will hand in several journal entries (200-300 words). These written activities will describe and evaluate the details of your weekly experience. The purpose of the journals is to assist us in sharing discoveries, reflections, needs, and plans. They will help you better connect your immersion experience with the learning objectives of the course. You will be evaluated on completeness, depth of reflection, and quality of writing in Spanish. Students will write their journal entries by hand and submit both the physical copy and a typed Word document version of the entries created by using any application with OCR (Optical Character Recognition) such as OneNote, Evernote, Notability, etc. After converting the handwritten text to typed text, it is advisable to ensure the conversion function correctly by reviewing the Word document text before submission. Journal entries without a handwritten submission will not be graded.
- Quizzes. These brief *pruebas* (10 mins.) will be given at the beginning of the class. They are based on materials covered during previous classes and your assignments (lecturas, vocabulario, gramática...etc.).
- Entrevista final. You and a classmate will prepare and carry on a 20-minute conversation that will consist of three parts: 1) giving and requesting information and opinion on a variety of cultural topics explored during the program; 2) role playing with your partner; and 3) follow-up conversation with the instructor.

## 7. 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.
- 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.
- With Instructor Approval: AI-powered writing enhancement tools may be used to help with spelling, grammar, syntax, and stylistic errors when permitted by the instructor.

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

- Plagiarism: Using AI-generated content as your original work. 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, concept understanding, and research assistance, etc.]."

### **8. 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.

### **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](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.

**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.