ART 496 Topics: Digital Photography and Video in Italy

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Instructor's office hours: on site and by appointment

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description:

Digital Photography and Video in Italy underscores the necessity of retaining the human element and intention in digital art creation, particularly as new AI technologies increasingly remove the human element from the process. In this course, students learn that hands-on experience cannot be substituted through the use of web searches or generative AI art queries.

Through the exploration of Florence and Rome, students will engage with digital photography, videography, pre-visualization, and concept development techniques. Being on location allows students to connect their observations with their captured materials, enriching their concepts and plans for future digital works, enhancing their artistic meaning through the beauty of on-site observation.

By gathering materials on location, the relationship between the artist and their digital works will deepen, providing the artist with a more fulfilling journey. This course allows students to take ownership of their images and video selections, share the stories behind them, and understand how materials gathered can be utilized in future projects for game development, visual effects, video compositing, and video art and beyond.

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:

Course Objectives

• To equip students with the skills to gather and present digital textures, photographs, and video works gathered on location in Italy.

• To foster a personal connection to artistic projects through on location texture gathering, photography, videography, and location scouting.

• To develop pre-visualization methods, including sketching ideas for future use of gathered materials.

• To enhance students compositional choices for photography and video, emphasizing narrative, context, and artistic intention.

• To engage in collaborative review sessions, allowing students to gain insights and constructive feedback on their work.

Learning Outcomes

• Students will gain an understanding of capturing unique textures, photographs, and video content on location.

• Gain understanding of technical aspects of photography and video, involving composition, lighting, rule of thirds, camera shots, camera movement, and angles.

- Students will expand their awareness of the relationship between observed materials and their artistic applications.

- Students will apply pre-visualization techniques for plans to integrate gathered materials into future projects.

- Students will demonstrate effective compositional choices in their photography and video work.

- Students will participate actively in peer review sessions, showcasing their insights and artistic processes.

- Create projects in the form of photography, sketching, and video art.

4. Major Topics covered in the Course:

- Digital photography
- Gathering textures
- Conceptualizing for game design, animation, video art, film
- Ideation sketching
- Videography / Cinematic framing
- Video Art creation
- Location scouting
- Understanding how photos and videos are used to create assets for digital mediums
- Editing on location
- Compositing history / Understanding use of textures in gaming, visual FX, video art

6. Required Readings and Materials:
Reading materials, powerpoint slides, and video references will be supplied to students before departure using Microsoft Teams. Students are expected to bring a phone that can take photographs and video. It is recommended that each student secures enough space on their phones before departure. Bringing along a DSLR is encouraged, but it is not mandatory for success in this course. General art materials for sketching concepts are listed below. It is not expected for students to have a background in drawing to take this course. The course will include video editing fundamentals, created using the phone.

Art materials
- Sketchbook (no larger than 14"x11")
- Assorted pens / micron or similar
- Drawing Pencils / Color Pencils / Pencil sharpener
- Stylus for drawing on phone (optional)

Camera equipment and Technology
- Iphone or Android camera
- DSLR (optional)
- Small travel size Tripod (optional)
- Phone mount for tripod (optional)
- Sound Device (optional)
- Adobe Premiere (mobile version) / Free App for Android or iPhone
- Adobe Photoshop / Free app for Android or iPhone

- Headphones
- Laptop (optional)
- The instructor will bring additional tools such as a sound recorder and tripod.

Cloud Services / Microsoft One Drive
- Microsoft outlook will be used for e-mail communication
- Teams will be used for text communication and assignment uploads
- Microsoft One Drive will be used for organizing materials and saving on the cloud
- It is recommended after the trip that students copy their files from their phones and One Drive to an external drive. Methods for locale file storage will be discussed during lectures.

7. Graded Assignments:

20 % Assignment 1 - Texture Gathering & Essay
20 % Assignment 2 - Photography Practice
20 % Assignment 3 - Pre-visualization / Concepts / Sketches
20 % Assignment 4 - Video Art Project
10 % Assignment 5 - Final Presentation on Works Created
10 % Attendance / Active Participation

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 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.
- **Generative A.I. art creation.** Using generative A.I. art defeats the purpose of spending time understanding the gathered material. **This course uses a fully restrictive policy on the use of generative A.I. art creation tools.**

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, 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.

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/.

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.