



FACULTY-LED
STUDY ABROAD

KIIS Japan-Korea Pop Program, Summer 2026

IDST 350 Study Abroad: Food and Pop Cultures in Japan & Korea

Instructor: Sangwook Kang, PhD, CHE

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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 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: 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:

Class Participation and Discussion	(10 x 5 pts)	50	25.0%
Daegu Scavenger Hunt		15	7.5%
In-class writing/ quizzes	(5 x 5 pts)	25	12.5%
Class Excursion Reflection 1		15	7.5%
Class Excursion Reflection 2		15	7.5%
Cultural Cookbook Part 1	(7 x 5 pts)	20	10.0%
Cultural Cookbook Part 2	(7 x 10 pts)	30	15.0%
EXAM (in-class, Online)		30	15.0%
Total		200	100.0%

A	B	C	D	F
200-180 pts	179-160	159-140	139-120	< 120

Class Attendance and Participation:

- Students are expected to attend all class meetings. KIIS does not tolerate absences from class meetings.
- Tardiness will prevent you from taking quizzes or completing writing assignments that are typically given at the beginning of each class. Two (2) tardy arrivals or early dismissals will count as one absence. Any tardiness exceeding 10 minutes will fall into this category.
- Class participation: This grade is based on the student's ability to use the readings in rich discussion and engage in the activity. The handout for the participation grading procedure and rubric will be shared via Google Drive prior to the classes.

Cross-cultural Knowledge Check:

- On the first day of class in both Korea and Japan, students will take a cross-cultural knowledge check. Reading materials will be shared via Google Drive prior to the classes.

In-class Writing/ Quizzes:

- Students are required to answer unannounced quizzes during class. Additionally, in-class writing assignments will be given randomly to summarize the day's learning. There are no make-up opportunities for these activities.

Reflections:

- Students are required to complete reflections based on the major topics of the course. These online assignments should be completed individually, addressing the questions related to the major topics. The reflection assignments will be posted on Google Drive before the classes start. Follow the word limit directions. Each student's reflection should be at least 200 words. Late submissions will not be accepted. These are formative assignments.

Activity and Video Assignments:

- In relation to outside class activities and assigned videos, students are required to complete the associated activity and video assignments to achieve the course's learning objectives. As these are web-based assignments, students can use their smartphone, tablet, or laptop to complete them during field trip activities. These are formative assignments.

Final Assignment- Cultural Cookbook Assignment:

- This summative capstone project encourages students to explore and understand different cultures through the lens of food. It involves identifying cultural differences in cuisine and promoting the benefits of selected cultural foods to students' families back home. During the study abroad period, *students will choose a cultural food, gather information on ingredients, cooking techniques, and nutritional values, and then complete the Cultural Cookbook Assignment.* Due to its comprehensive nature, it should be approached systematically over the study period.

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, 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.

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) 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/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.

Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

Day	Date	Class Activities and Assignments	Course Hours	
			Lecture (100%)	Excursion (50%)
Day 1	6/7 (Sun)	Travel (U.S. – Korea); Arrive in Daegu, South Korea		
Day 2 Daegu	6/8 (Mon)	9:00-10:00- Orientation 10:15-12:30 Class 1: Food Culture and Identity (Orientation, dining etiquette, cultural differences, what differs?) 1:30 pm: Daegu Scavenger Hunt	2.25	1
Day 3 Daegu	6/9 (Tues)	9:00-12:00 Class 2: Food Fermentation and Preservation: A Historical Perspective (Find and taste different foods) 1:00 pm: Seomun Market	3	1
Day 4 Deagu	6/10 (Wed)	9:00-12:00 Class 3: Food is medicine (Western vs. Eastern perspectives) Class Excursion: Deagu Yangyeongsi Oriental Museum (Food Medicine)	3	1
Day 5	6/11 (Thurs)	NO CLASS 12:30: Gwangjang Market, Seoul City Wall Museum, Dongdaemun Design Plaza		1
Day 6	6/12 (Fri)	9:00-11:00 Class 4: Food and Music (Finding local food) 12:00 pm: Jogaesa Temple, Biwon Palace	2	1
Day 7	6/13 (Sat)	9:00-11:00 Class 5: Food Processing and Logistics/ Local Food, Food Systems, and Food Patterns (activity- Culcutral Cookbook Part 1- about your cultural food) 11:00-12:00: Japan Orientation Movie?	2	1.5
Day 8 Kyoto	6/14 (Sun)	NO CLASS 6:30 Karaoke		
Day 9 Nagoya	6/15 (Mon)	FREE Morning Class Excursion: Kyoto Arachiyama Chopstick Making Workshop		1
Day 10 Nagoya	6/16 (Tues)	9:30 am: Toyota Commemorative Meseum of Industry and Technology 1:00-4:00 pm Class 6: Food Technology- Trends & Innovations (What is the future expectations in food? Foodservice industries?)	3	1
Day 11	6/17 (Wed)	9:00-11:30 am: Nagoya Castle 1:00-4:00 pm Class 7: How did people ensure food safety in the past?	3	1.25
Day 12	6/18 (Thurs)	11:30-1:30 pm: Osu Kannon and Individual Class Excursions 3:30-5:00 pm Class 8: Food Environment / Food Consumption and Food Waste	1.5	1.25

		5:00-6:30 pm: Meet wit Chucky students		
Day 13	6/19 (Fri)	1:00-2:30 pm: Meet with Osaka Kyoiku University Students 2:30-4:30 pm Class 9 : Review the course with in-class activities (jeopardy and exam) 5:00 pm: Farewell Dinner	2	0.75
Day 14	6/20 (Sat)	9:00-11:00 am Class 10 : Wrap-up: Asian Cuisine and Cultural Differences Presentation: (Culutral Cookbook Part 2- about the food you experienced → Link Cultral cookbook 1 and 2 with food and music—how is the music related to? How the cultural food is related with international food) 12:00 pm: Shinsekai	2	2
Day 15	6/21 (Sun)	Check out and Flight to the U.S.		
		Total Hours: 37.5	23.75	13.75