



FACULTY-LED
STUDY ABROAD

KIIS Taiwan Program, Summer 2027

CHIN 208: Chinese Calligraphy / ARC 401 Topics: Chinese Calligraphy - History, Technique, and Aesthetics

Instructor: Prof. Qian Gao

Email: qgao@transy.edu

Instructor's office hours: on site and by appointment

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description:

Chinese calligraphy, the art of writing, is an essential aspect of Chinese culture, encompassing the Chinese language, history, philosophy, and aesthetics. In this course, students will learn the origins of the Chinese writing system, the structure of Chinese characters, the fundamentals of brush techniques, and the history of various calligraphy styles. Through discussions and extensive hands-on practice, this course will examine the philosophical traditions, literary expressions, and cultural significance of Chinese calligraphy. No prior knowledge of Chinese is required. This class is taught in English and has no prerequisites.

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 this course, students will develop a general understanding of the history and evolution of Chinese calligraphy and an appreciation for the beauty and sophistication of its major styles, as well as the literary expression in some of the most prominent works. Students will be able to identify different Chinese calligraphic scripts and styles and demonstrate confidence in applying basic techniques and skills in selected calligraphic forms.

4. Major Topics covered in the Course: (Please refer to our teaching schedule.)

5. Fulfillment of General Education Requirement:

This course usually fulfills GE Non-Western Cultural Tradition, Foreign Language requirements. It can also serve as a required or elective course for the Chinese, Asian Studies, or International Affairs Major, or Minor.

6. Required Readings and Materials:

TEXTBOOK:

Required: 1) *Chinese Writing and Calligraphy* by Wendan Li. (University of Hawai'i Press, 2009)

This book is available in our bookstore and also as a free PDF [here](#).

2) All other reading materials will be posted on the course's Google Classroom site.

BASIC MATERIALS FOR PRACTICE

You are required to purchase a calligraphy practice set. (I did some research and found one I can recommend from Amazon, but you can feel free to get a similar set or similar practice paper from anywhere.) This set includes all basic practice materials you will need such as Chinese brushes, ink and practice sheets. Rice paper is ideal to practice on, but you can also use newspaper or construction paper instead, especially for preliminary practice stages. (Newspaper can also be used as backing paper). Please remember to bring your calligraphy set and rice paper or newspaper to class on practice days.

(Below are just recommendations for you to consider. Our class will visit local calligraphy stores together before our practice starts.)

[Here](#) is the link to the "Buat 12-piece set" on Amazon.

[Here](#) is the link to the best-priced (I can find) rice paper on Amazon (200 sheets).

You can find rice paper from local arts and crafts stores as well.

To keep your practice table clean, place at least three sheets of newspaper under your practice sheet. You may also use a thicker piece of fabric as the backing. You should also avoid getting ink onto your clothing and the classroom floor. After each practice session, it is recommended that you rinse your brush before storing it, and please ensure that the washing room remains clean.

7. Graded Assignments:

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.

Course Format: This course combines lectures with visual materials, PowerPoint presentations, discussions on selected readings, calligraphy demonstrations, and ample hands-on practice with brush and ink. Final grade will be based upon the following:

- Two quizzes (25%).
- Midterm project (15%)
- 10 practice assignments (40%)
- Final project (20%)

Assignments: In addition to in-class “Studio Practice,” students are expected to spend extra hours outside of class to complete their calligraphy assignments. Each specific assignment will be specified after each class. Late submission without a legitimate reason will be subject to a 1-point grade deduction.

Quizzes: There will be two quizzes, both will be multiple-choice questions based on the readings.

Midterm project: Create a calligraphic piece of a character of your own choice, to be showcased to the KIIS group.

Final Project: (Create a calligraphy final showcase by writing your own short poetry with your choice of calligraphic style.)

Part 1—Write a poem;

Part 2—As a final showcase, create a calligraphy composition for your poem (for yourself or as a gift for someone else).

Part 3—Document key steps you have gone through in writing, designing and making this piece. (With photos or videos, as part of the final presentation)

Part 4—PPt or Video Presentation showcasing your final project that explains the emotions behind your poetry, the reasons why you choose your style of calligraphy for your poetry, and what you have learned the most through this process.

No make-up quizzes or tests will be given unless a student has a legitimate reason accompanied by appropriate documentation.

Class attendance is required. For each unexcused absence, half a grade point will be deducted from your overall grade. 6 unexcused absences will result in an automatic failing grade for this course.

All students are expected to participate in class discussions. In preparing for class, you should review your class notes, annotate the readings, and take notes so that you will be able to draw on key elements

of the readings in our conversations. To ensure that everyone is on the same page, I may give in-class short “reading quizzes” from time to time. These will be unannounced.

There is no final portfolio required in this course, but I recommend keeping all of your tests and papers together so that you can track what you have accomplished throughout this semester.

NOTE: This class may welcome visitors (i.e., prospective students, guest speakers, etc.) during the semester. Students will be notified in advance of guest attendance.

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 KUIS/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, 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.