



FACULTY-LED
STUDY ABROAD

KIIS Prague Program, Summer 2027

CRIM 489: Comparative Policing: the United States and Europe

Prague, Czech Republic | 3 credit hours

Instructor: Dr. Kyle Maksuta

Email: kyle.maksuta@wku.edu

Instructor's office hours: on site and by appointment

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description

This three-week study abroad course in Prague examines contemporary policing in the United States and the Czech Republic. Students explore how history, law, political regimes, organizational structure, and culture shape policing practices from communist-era state security to post-1989 democratic reforms and current public safety challenges. Topics include police organization, training and recruitment, use of force, protest and public order policing, minority and migrant communities, surveillance and CCTV, and accountability mechanisms. Through seminars, structured observation, site visits, and discussions with practitioners or local experts when available, students will compare Czech and U.S. models and evaluate what each system might learn from the other.

The course treats Prague as a field-based classroom. Students will connect readings and class discussions to public squares, transit systems, museums, courts, police institutions, civic spaces, and neighborhoods. Because study abroad learning is partly shaped by access, weather, public events, and host-site availability, specific excursions may change; equivalent learning activities will be substituted when needed.

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 answer a few multiple-choice questions and write a short reflective essay related to the elements 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

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- ☐ Explain the historical and legal foundations of U.S., and Czech policing systems.
- ☐ Compare organizational structures, training models, and accountability mechanisms across decentralized and centralized policing systems.
- ☐ Analyze how democracy, authoritarianism, communism, post-communist transition, and public trust shape policing philosophy and practice.
- ☐ Use structured field observations to evaluate police visibility, surveillance, public order strategies, and community safety in Prague.
- ☐ Connect comparative policing concepts to contemporary issues involving minority and migrant communities, protest, public order, and legitimacy.
- ☐ Produce an applied policy memo that identifies feasible lessons the U.S. and Czech systems might draw from one another.

4. Major Topics Covered in the Course

- ☐ Comparative policing as a method: what can and cannot be transferred across national contexts.
- ☐ U.S. policing, federalism, local autonomy, fragmentation, and examples.
- ☐ Czech policing, centralized national policing, municipal police, and post-1989 reforms.

- ☐ Authoritarian policing, secret police, surveillance, and historical memory in Central Europe.
- ☐ Police training, recruitment, discretion, public order, protest management, and use of force.
- ☐ Police accountability, courts, ombudsman institutions, human rights frameworks, and NGOs.
- ☐ Community safety, urban design, CCTV, tourism, nightlife districts, and public space.
- ☐ Roma communities, migrants, refugees, hate crime, and the policing of social difference.

Tentative Three-Week Course Structure

Week	Focus	Place-Based Learning	Major Work Due
1	Foundations: how history and law shape policing.	Comparative systems mapping; Communist Prague/state security walking lecture; Museum of Communism or related historical site; introductory community safety observations.	Field notes begin; Reflection 1.
2	Practices: training, public order, surveillance, accountability.	Municipal Police of Prague, Police Museum, Police Academy, court, NGO, or operations-center visit when available; guided CCTV/public order observation.	Site Visit Memo; Community Safety Walk plan.
3	Contemporary issues and policy transfer.	Neighborhood safety walk; minority/migrant community and rights-focused discussion; Prague nightlife or tourist-district observation; final debriefs.	Community Safety Walk Report; final policy memo and short presentation.

The course will meet the KIIS expectation of at least 37.5 academic contact hours for a 3-credit course through class sessions, structured excursions, guided observation, debriefing sessions, and student presentations.

5. Required Readings and Materials

There is no required textbook. Required readings will be distributed electronically before departure through Blackboard, the KIIS course packet, or another approved course platform. Readings will include short academic articles, policy documents, legal summaries, practitioner materials, and local-context pieces on Czech history, policing, public order, surveillance, minority communities, and democratic transition.

Students should bring or have access to:

- ☐ A notebook or field journal for observations during excursions and debriefings.
- ☐ A laptop or tablet for writing assignments; reliable daily Internet access should not be assumed.
- ☐ A phone or camera for non-identifying public-space observation photos when permitted.
- ☐ Comfortable walking shoes and weather-appropriate clothing for site-based learning.

Students should download readings and assignment instructions before departure. If Internet access is limited abroad, the instructor may accept handwritten field notes, in-class written work, or oral presentation alternatives when appropriate.

6. Graded Assignments

Assignments are designed for an intensive study abroad setting. Rather than a long traditional research paper, the course emphasizes shorter, frequent writing; careful observation; seminar-style debriefing; and applied comparison between the Czech Republic and the broader United States.

- ☐ Active Participation, Preparedness, and Field Engagement: punctual attendance, prepared discussion, respectful participation during excursions, and engaged group work.
- ☐ Field Notes and Reflective Journal: short daily or near-daily field notes connecting observations to course concepts.
- ☐ Site Visit Analytic Memos: brief memos that analyze selected site visits, practitioner discussions, or structured observations.
- ☐ Community Safety Walk Report: a field-based assessment of a Prague neighborhood or district focusing on police visibility, surveillance, environmental design, public interactions, and comparison to a U.S. setting.
- ☐ Final Comparative Policy Transfer Memo and Presentation: a concise applied memo and short presentation identifying practical lessons each system might learn from the other.

Assignment Category	Percent of Final Grade
Active Participation, Preparedness, and Field Engagement	20%
Field Notes and Reflective Journal	20%
Site Visit Analytic Memos	20%
Community Safety Walk Report	20%
Final Comparative Policy Transfer Memo and Presentation	20%

Grading Scale

Work will be graded on this scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	Below 60%

This course will be graded on this basis, without regard to plus/minus scales that may apply at a student's home institution. KIIS/WKU does not award +/- grades, only full letter grades.

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 or 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.

Course-specific clarification: AI may not replace your own field observations, site-visit notes, or original analysis. When an assignment asks what you observed in Prague, the evidence must come from your own observation and course experience.

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.]."

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.

Because this course uses Prague as a field classroom, required excursions, walking lectures, site visits, debriefs, and structured observations are academic class sessions. Students must arrive on time, remain with the group unless released, follow all KIIS and instructor safety instructions, and communicate immediately if illness or emergency affects participation.

9. Academic Integrity, Late Work, and Field Conduct

Any student who engages in academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or facilitating academic dishonesty, may receive a failing grade on the assignment or in the course and may be reported through the relevant university conduct process. Please familiarize yourself with WKU's Undergraduate Academic Regulations and your home institution's academic honesty policies.

Late or missed assignments will be reduced by 10% for each day they are late unless the student communicates promptly and provides a legitimate excuse. In an intensive study abroad course, short

assignments build quickly toward later work, so students should contact the instructor as soon as a problem arises.

Field observations must be respectful, nonintrusive, and lawful. Students may not interfere with police, court personnel, community members, or public officials. Do not photograph or record people in sensitive situations, and do not conduct interviews unless the instructor has approved the activity and any required consent procedures.

Email should be sent from the student's university email account whenever possible. Include the course number or course title in the subject line. I will do my best to respond within 48 hours, but on-site travel schedules and Internet access may affect response times.

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.