



FACULTY-LED
STUDY ABROAD

KIIS Slavic Europe: Poland Program, Summer 2027

CRIM 489 Study Abroad: International Terrorism & Violent Extremism

Instructor: Wayne Taylor, Ed.D.

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Instructor's office hours: on site and by appointment

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description: This course examines international terrorism and violent extremism through historical, political, social, and cultural perspectives using Poland and Central Europe as a living classroom. Students will explore the evolution of terrorism and extremist movements, the conditions that contribute to radicalization, and the responses employed by governments, international organizations, and civil society to prevent and counter violent extremism. The course will examine state-sponsored violence, nationalist and ideological extremism, religiously motivated terrorism, transnational terrorist organizations, and emerging threats in the digital age. Students will explore how extremist narratives develop, spread, and evolve across different contexts while considering the ethical, legal, and security implications of counterterrorism policies and practices.

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 successful completion of this course, students will be able to:	How students will practice each outcome:	How student achievement of each outcome will be assessed:
Explain major theories, concepts, and historical developments associated with terrorism and violent extremism in international contexts.	Readings, Class Discussions, Site Visits, Guest Speakers, Place as Text Activities	Pre-Departure Reflections, Daily Reflection Journals, Discussion Participation
Analyze the political, social, cultural, economic, and ideological factors that contribute to radicalization and violent extremism.	Readings, Class Discussions, Museum Visits, Historical Site Analysis, Individual Research	Current Event Reflections, Site Reflection Papers, Discussion Participation
Examine how historical memory, identity, and collective trauma influence contemporary narratives of terrorism, extremism, and political violence.	Place as Text Activities, Memorial Visits, Guided Observations, Reflective Dialogue	Place as Text Portfolio, Reflection Journals, Final Integrative Reflection
Evaluate governmental, international, and societal responses to terrorism and violent extremism, including prevention and counterterrorism strategies.	Readings, Guest Speakers, Policy Discussions, Excursions, Comparative Analysis Activities	Current Event Reflections, Comparative Analysis Assignment, Class Discussions
Apply concepts from terrorism and violent extremism studies to assess contemporary and emerging security challenges in Europe, the United States, and the international community.	Current Event Analysis, Individual Research, Class Discussions, Place as Text Activities	Place as Text Portfolio, Final Reflective Essay, Final Presentation

4. Major Topics covered in the Course:

- Foundations of Terrorism and Violent Extremism
- Radicalization and Recruitment Processes
- Nationalism, Identity, and Political Violence
- State Terror, Occupation, and Political Repression
- Holocaust Memory and Contemporary Extremism
- Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)
- Online Radicalization, Propaganda, and Influence Operations
- Contemporary and Emerging Terrorism Threats in Global Security

5. Required Readings and Materials:

Rees, L. (2017). *The Holocaust: A new history*. Hachette Books.
<https://www.hachettebookgroup.com/titles/laurence-rees/the-holocaust/9781541730076/?lens=publicaffairs>. Hard copies, eBook, and audio versions can be purchased through various sources.

Additional readings will be provided in electronic format (e.g., PDF) through the class website. The syllabus will also be posted to the class website.

6. Graded Assignments:

Pre-Class Reflection (50 Points): To prepare for the study abroad experience, students will complete assigned readings addressing terrorism, violent extremism, radicalization, collective memory, and historical trauma. Students will submit a three-page handwritten reflection. The first page will summarize key concepts related to terrorism and violent extremism. The second page will discuss the role of historical memory and identity in shaping contemporary security challenges. The third page will identify questions the student has regarding terrorism, extremism, Poland, and the sites that will be visited during the program. Students may only use assigned course readings and materials for this assignment. The assignment will be submitted during the first class session.

Participation & Professional Engagement (100 points): Students will be graded on their active engagement and professional behavior during class sessions, excursions, guest speaker events, museum visits, and Place as Text activities. Students are expected to contribute thoughtfully to discussions, demonstrate respect at memorial and historical sites, and actively participate in guided observations and reflection activities. Because experiential learning is central to the course, attendance at all scheduled activities is required. Any unexcused absence may result in a reduction of the final course grade consistent with study abroad program policies.

Place as Text Reflection Portfolio (100 points; 25 points each): Students will complete four structured Place as Text reflections during the program. Reflections will be associated with major course locations such as Auschwitz-Birkenau, the POLIN Museum, the Warsaw Uprising Museum, and Schindler's Factory (or other designated sites). Each reflection will consist of a two-page handwritten analysis addressing observations made at the site, connections to course concepts, lessons regarding terrorism and violent extremism, and implications for contemporary security challenges. Students will be encouraged to critically examine how place, memory, identity, and history function as texts that communicate meaning.

Contemporary Security and Extremism Reflections (50 points; 25 points each): Students will monitor Polish, European, and international news sources throughout the program. During each week of the course, students will submit a one-page handwritten reflection summarizing current events related to terrorism, violent extremism, security, nationalism, disinformation, or emerging threats. Students will connect contemporary events to course concepts and experiences gained through site visits and discussions. A list of news sources consulted will be included with each submission.

Integrative Analysis Project (100 points): Students will develop a six-page handwritten paper examining a contemporary terrorism or violent extremism challenge through the lens of lessons learned during the Poland study abroad experience. Students may focus on topics such as radicalization, nationalism, online extremism, Holocaust memory, counterterrorism policy, prevention strategies, or emerging security threats. The project must integrate course

readings, class discussions, site visits, guest speakers, and Place as Text experiences to support analysis and recommendations.

Digital Storytelling Project (50 points): Students will use mobile devices to document their learning experiences throughout the program and develop a digital story that captures the relationship between place, memory, terrorism, violent extremism, and contemporary security challenges. Students will incorporate observations from course sites, photographs, short video clips, and personal reflections. The project will conclude with a 4–6 minute presentation during the final class session addressing what was learned, how perspectives changed throughout the program, and how lessons from Poland can be applied to contemporary security issues.

Total Course Points:

Pre-Class Reflection: 50 Points

Participation: 100 Points

Place as Text Reflection Portfolio: 100 Points

Contemporary Security and Extremism Reflections: 50 Points

Integrative Analysis Project: 100 Points

Digital Storytelling Project: 50 Points

Total Points: 450

Grading Scale:

A 427 – 475 Points

B 380 – 426 Points

C 332 – 379 Points

D 285 – 331 Points

E (F) 0 – 284 Points

Grades will only be rounded up to the next higher grade if the percentage equates to 88.5%, 78.5%, 68.5%, or 58.5%. No exceptions to this policy will be made. Additionally, extra credit will not be offered during the course.

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.
- **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.

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.

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/>.

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.