



FACULTY-LED
STUDY ABROAD

KIIS Prague Program, Summer 2027

ENG 290 Topics: Get Inspired: Creative Writing in Prague

*The course will fulfill requirements for Eng-306 at ECU

Instructor: Prof. Bill Mullen

Email: Bill.mullen@ecu.edu

Instructor's office hours: TBA

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description: Introduction to fundamentals of short story, poetry, sudden fiction, and personal essay writing. Critiquing and workshoping student work.

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: Students will learn the basic techniques for creative writing in multiple genres. Students will write and workshop within the genre(s) of their choice (short story, poetry collection, sudden fiction collection, creative non-fiction, or travel writing).

4. Major Topics covered in the Course:

We will cover fundamentals of the short story, poem, sudden fiction, and creative non-fiction. We will read, analyze, and discuss literature written in these genres. We will workshop student creative writing.

5. Fulfillment of General Education Requirement: N/A

6. Required Readings and Materials:

1. *Creative Writing: Four Genres in Brief* by David Starkley (4th Edition)
2. *On Writing* by Stephen King
3. *Prague, I see a city...* by Daniela Hodrova
4. *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* by Milan Kundera

*Other readings will be provided by professor electronically

Materials: Laptop computer with MS Word or Google Docs

**Please read texts prior to July 4.

7. Graded Assignments:

Intro Materials **05%**

Journal **25%**

Work 1 & 2 **30%**

Workshop **15%**

Active Participation **25%**

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 KIS/WKU does not award +/- grades, only full letter grades.)

Explanation of Graded Assignments:

Intro Materials: Students will introduce themselves in a paragraph (interests, why Prague, kind of creative writing they enjoy, favorite reads, etc.), complete a brief syllabus quiz, and submit one creative piece of their choice (to the professor only) before the class begins. This will be emailed to the professor.

Journal: Students will keep a hand-written daily journal of their experience in Prague, inspiration and creative ideas about writing, how they feel they are growing as a writer, personal experiences, etc. While there is not a length requirement for each day's entry, each should be thorough, detailed, and address the above elements. Feel free to expand and write about other elements that you would like to include. Journals will not be shared with anyone in the class except the professor.

Works 1 & 2: Each Work will be a completed creative piece (short story, 5 pages of poetry, 5 pages of sudden fiction, or a personal essay/creative non-fiction piece).

*Short Stories should be between 1250-2000 words

*Poems should each begin on a new page (regardless the length)

*Sudden Fiction should each begin on a new page and be between 50-500 words

*Personal Essay/CNF pieces should be between 1250-2000 words

Workshop: Students will read, critique, and discuss classmates' work (respectfully). All feedback should be constructive and respectful. Inappropriate feedback (derogatory,

disrespectful, mean, and similar in nature) is prohibited. Should a student give inappropriate feedback, disciplinary action will be taken.

Rules for Workshop and Comments:

1. All comments and constructive criticism should be focused on the creative work (not the author). So, you might write "Based on the main character's background, it doesn't seem like they would do _____ after receiving a lower grade than expected." Rather than, "The author messed up with this character. There's no way they would act this way after getting a low grade."

2. We are all writers here, and we are here to help each other be stronger/better writers. All peer reviews and workshop comments should be respectful, helpful, and constructive. When discussing areas for improvement or weaknesses in creative pieces, please write them in a neutral tone.

Do write: When Jamie mentions film genres, it might work more effectively if she used the term "Horror" rather than "Scary" because "Horror" is the official term for the genre.

Do not write (obvious example): Jamie is a poorly written character. Only an idiot would say "Scary" in place of "Horror" when referring to the genre.

Do write: The plot of the story was confusing regarding Elara's backstory. I do not understand why she is going to Blackwood House. This confusion could be cleared up by starting a little bit earlier (it could serve as the inciting incident if you do so).

Do not write (less obvious example): The plot is full of holes. I have no idea why Elara is even going to the house in the first place. This leaves me not caring about her at all.

*In this case, the "not" example is not exactly mean or calling the peer an inappropriate name, but it is heavier with frustration and emotion that could lead your peer to feel something negative rather than constructive. We're not here to tear each other down. We're here to learn and to help each other be better.

3. When your work is being workshopped, you should not speak until the workshop is complete. At that time, you may comment and ask peers questions or clarifications.

*Other details will be given in class.

Active Participation: Participation includes (but is not limited to) class attendance, contributing meaningful dialogue to class discussion, paying attention and taking notes, and attending and participating in class excursions and activities. This also covers our discussions over the craft books and literature.

Generative AI: Students may not use any form of Generative Artificial Intelligence in the course. All creative works and workshop feedback should be created by and written by the student independently and with no assistance or use of any form of AI. Use of AI in our course is considered academic dishonesty and will cause your grade on the assignment to fall to a zero score.

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.

Schedule (Subject to Change)

July 4-5: Fly to Prague. Arrive at lodging. Walk through the neighborhood. Early Dinner

July 6: Orientation. Walk through historic city center. Lunch & Dinner

July 7: Prague Castle. Class Day 1

July 8-10: Class Days 2-4

***Discuss the literature & fundamentals of creative writing**

July 11: Excursion: Southern Bohemia Budvar (Lunch & Dinner)

July 12: Excursion: Cesky Krumlov (free day)

July 13: Excursion: Klokoty and Tabor (Lunch)

July 14-17: Class Days 5-8

***Workshop 1 & part of Workshop 2**

July 18-20: Free Days

July 21-22: Class Days 9-10

***Finish Workshop 2 & Journals**

July 23: Finals. Farewell Dinner

July 24: Packing. Free Day

July 25: Departure from Prague to USA

***The schedule only highlights major elements of each day. There will be other activities or class details in each class (like discussing literature, writing, or experiences).**

***Things I am going to try and get scheduled or make as options:**

1. Day trip to Kutna Hora and the Ossuary

2. On most class days, I hope to have us visit at least 1 unique place (may depend on weather). For example:

The Museum of Alchemists and Magicians

Speculum Alchemiae (hidden alchemist's lair)

Strahov Monastery

Vysehrad

Golden Lane (and Kafka House)

Several artistic places around the city

