



FACULTY-LED
STUDY ABROAD

KIIS Netherlands Program, Summer 2027

PH 456 Topics: Global Health, Physical Activity and the Built Environment

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Instructor's office hours: on site and by appointment

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description:

Students examine health through an ecological lens, considering individual, social, organizational, environmental, and policy influences on behavior. Using the Netherlands as a living laboratory, students explore how walkability, bike-friendly infrastructure, public transit, public space, access to nature, cultural norms, and policy interact to support active living. Through walking, biking, and park field trips, walk audits, structured observations, and a Photovoice project, students investigate whether physical activity and the social and built environment are accessible to all individuals, including children, families, adults, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. The course also connects active living to sustainable cities and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Designed for students from any discipline.

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:

1. Apply the socioecological model (SEM) to explain how individual, social, organizational, environmental, and policy factors interact to influence physical activity.
2. Identify and give examples of the four domains of physical activity (leisure/recreation, active transportation, occupational, and household activity) in everyday Dutch life, and distinguish lifestyle (incidental) activity from structured exercise.
3. Describe the nine societal sectors that influence physical activity (e.g., health care, education, business, transportation/land use) and recognize them in the field.
4. Use the Netherlands as a living laboratory to analyze how infrastructure, public space, nature, cultural norms, and policy support active living.
5. Conduct an AARP Walk Audit or other walkability or cycle audit and interpret the findings for walkability and accessibility.
6. Observe and assess diversity, equity, and inclusion in public space, evaluating whether active living is accessible to children, families, adults, older adults, and people with disabilities.
7. Connect physical activity, public space, and nature to environmental sustainability and sustainable city design, referencing relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals.
8. Compare cultural norms, infrastructure, and policy around active living in the Netherlands and the United States.
9. Collect personal, social, and environmental data through experiential, place-based learning and synthesize it into a Photovoice project that applies at least three SEM levels and two PA domains.

4. Major Topics covered in the Course:

1. Global health and the social determinants of health
2. The socioecological model (SEM) of health behavior
3. The four domains of physical activity: leisure/recreation, active transportation, occupational, and household
4. Lifestyle (incidental) activity versus structured exercise
5. The built environment, walkability, and bike-friendly design
6. Active transportation and integration with public transit (the 'mobility chain')
7. Public space, parks, and access to nature (green and 'blue' space)
8. Sustainable cities and active living, with links to global health goals (incl. the UN SDGs)
9. The nine societal sectors that influence physical activity (Physical Activity Alliance / National Physical Activity Plan)
10. Walk or cycle audits using the AARP Walk Audit Toolkit or other audits
11. Cultural norms around everyday activity in the Netherlands
12. Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in public space
13. Observation methods and collecting personal, social, and environmental data
14. Photovoice as a method for documenting the social and built environment
15. Comparative analysis: Rotterdam, The Hague, Amsterdam, and the United States

5. Fulfillment of General Education Requirement:

This course is designed for students from any discipline (e.g., Education, Exercise Physiology, Public Health, Communications, Sustainability, Biology, Pre-Med, Nursing, Allied Health Majors, Social Work, Psychology, Urban Planning and Public Policy, Business, etc.).

For University of Louisville students, this interdisciplinary course may count under a variety of disciplines, including, but not limited to:

- HSS 408: Physical Activity and Public Health
- HSS 598: Independent Study
- PHPB 431: Contemporary Issues in Public Health 1
- PHPB 491: Senior Capstone 1
- PHPB 491: Senior Capstone 2
- URBS 445 Independent Study in Sustainability
- URBS 490: Special Topics

6. Required Readings and Materials:

There is no required textbook. Readings are short and posted to the course site; our goal is to discuss two to four readings or short videos per week so that class time and free time are spent exploring the cities as from the context of the day's topics. Selected foundational sources may include (but not limited to):

1. King, K. M. & Gonzalez, G. (2018). Physical activity and ecological models. *ACSM's Health & Fitness Journal*, 22(4), 29–32.
2. King, K. M., Gerbine, S. K., Hall, A. R., Simpson, L., & Cavan, S. A. (2025). Community-based strategies to increase children's active transportation to school: Safe Routes to School. *ACSM's Health & Fitness Journal*, 29(4), 57–63.
3. Alamilia, R. A., Keith, N. R., Hasson, R., Bopp, M., & King, K. M. (2026). Exercise professionals advocating for physical activity: A call to action. *ACSM's Health & Fitness Journal (Clinical Applications)*, July/August 2026.
4. Sallis, J. F., et al. (2006). An ecological approach to creating active living communities. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 27, 297–322. (model + figures)
 - Or Find update and youtube or video
5. King, K. M. & Barnes, B. (2022). Walking prescription: Understanding social determinants of health. *ACSM's Health & Fitness Journal*, 26(4), 47–52.
6. Pucher, J. & Buehler, R. (2008). Making cycling irresistible: Lessons from the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany. *Transport Reviews*, 28(4).
 - Or Buehler & Pucher, *Cycling for Sustainable Cities* (MIT Press, 2021). Either Introduction, "Cycling to Sustainability" or Chapter 3, "Cycling and Health."
 - Or Not Just Bikes YouTube channel "I am not a 'Cyclist' (and most Dutch people aren't either)" video https://youtu.be/vMed1qceJ_Q?si=ddfHj3FiORMveMmY
7. King, K. M., et al. (2019). Strategies for partnering with health care settings to increase physical activity promotion. *ACSM's Health & Fitness Journal*, 23(4), 40–43.
8. AARP Walk Audit Toolkit
 - aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/aarp-walk-audit-tool-kit.html
 - Or other technical/scientific/community-engaged audit options
9. Physical Activity Alliance, National Physical Activity Plan (societal sectors)
 - paamovewithus.org/national-physical-activity-plan/
10. WHO Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018–2030
 - selected summary sections

11. United Nations, The 17 Sustainable Development Goals
 - un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/ (focus on SDG 3, 11, 13).
12. Urban green spaces and health. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2016.
 - chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://iris.who.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/74006ead-650d-4fca-815a-f1ff53c1eea1/content
13. Stalls, J. (2022). *WALK: Slow down, wake up, and connect at 1-3 miles per hour*. North Atlantic Books.
14. Wang, C. & Burris, M. (1997). Photovoice: a brief, plain-language summary of the method (provided handout).
15. Additional readings, short videos and handouts.

Materials to bring:

- Smartphone or camera for photos, observation tallies, and the Photovoice project.
- Notebook/field journal and pen.
- Comfortable walking shoes and weather-appropriate, layered clothing.
- Reusable water bottle and a small daypack for daily field trips.

7. Graded Assignments:

100 points total.

1. Participation and Engagement (15 points)
 - a. active involvement in field trips, group rides, walks, and discussions
2. Reflective Journal (20 points)
 - a. guided weekly reflections plus a final synthesis reflection
3. AARP Walk Audit or other audit (15 points)
 - a. completed audit worksheets with a short written analysis
4. Observation and Data Collection Assignments (20 points)
 - a. field observations capturing personal, social, and environmental data across the PA domains and across populations
5. Photovoice Final Project (30 points)
 - a. photo-and-caption project with presentation

Photovoice Final Project (30 points)

Working from photos you take across all three cities, create a Photovoice project that identifies the social and built environment and physical activity. Your project must:

1. Pair selected photographs with written captions with short descriptions that tell a clear story.
2. Apply at least THREE levels of the socioecological model (e.g., individual, interpersonal, organizational, community/environment, policy).
3. Address at least TWO of the four domains of physical activity (leisure/recreation, active transportation, occupational, household).
4. Consider diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, who the environment serves well, and who it leaves out.
5. Consider connections to public space, nature, or sustainable city design (you may note a related UN Sustainable Development Goal).
6. Present and share presentation (15 minutes) with guided peer discussion (15 minutes).

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

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.