



FACULTY-LED
STUDY ABROAD

KIIS Argentina Program, Summer 2027

SOCL 489-1 Study Abroad: Introduction to Latin America

Instructor: Ana Liberato, PhD

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Instructor's office hours: on site and by appointment

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description: This course offers a broad survey of Latin America's history, cultures, and social and political transformations while also inviting students to examine how these larger processes shape culture in specific countries. The course introduces major themes such as colonial legacies, independence, economic development, alongside key questions about cultural identity, authoritarianism, social movements, and social change. Using Buenos Aires as a point of reference, students will explore the complexities of Latin American societies through readings, guided excursions, field observations, comparative analysis, and short reflective assignments. Students will connect academic concepts with lived experience and develop stronger observational skills, intercultural competence, and historical understanding.

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:

1. Identify Latin America as both a specific and diverse cultural region
2. Develop a familiarity with specific historical, political, cultural, and social issues of the Latin American region
3. Interpret the relationship between history and social change by observing how cultural, economic and political landscapes reflect Argentinean society and broader regional processes.
4. Analyze how migration, protest, economics, and cultural identity influence social life and everyday experience in Latin America, using Buenos Aires as a case study.

4. Major Topics covered in the Course: geography, history, politics, economics, and social change

5. Fulfillment of General Education Requirement: This course fulfills the global dynamics requirement. Courses satisfying this requirement will focus attention on the student's civic role and place in the world and the dynamic interaction between locale (place and people) and global processes (international and transnational).

6. Required Readings:

Smith, Peter H., James N. Green, and Thomas E. Skidmore. 2018. Modern Latin America. Ninth Edition, Oxford University Press. Ebook

7. Graded Assignments:

Grades for the course will be calculated based on your work on the following items:

a. Participation (20%). Consistent engagement and active participation in all learning activities are essential. You are expected to complete all assignments on time, engage with course material, attend every class and fully participate in excursions. KHS requires that any unexcused absence results in a grade reduction. Your course letter grade will be deducted one full letter grade for any unexcused absence. Students with two or more unexcused absences may be expelled from the program. You will have a failing participation grade (12 points or lower, if you do not complete all assignments and miss excursions and classes.

b. Independent Research/Final Presentation (40%) - General Instructions:

Choose a country and a specific element closely associated with it. This could include a musical form, agricultural crop, tradition, custom, or rite to a historical artifact, literary work, cuisine, business, historical figure or event, economic or political topic, or notable place (e.g. Argentina and tango or Eva Perón; Brazil and the Amazon rainforest; Dominican Republic and tourism or bachata, merengue, dembow). After selecting the country and defining your focus, decide what type of product you want to create and then make the artifact related to your topic.

Possible formats include:

- A short video, flyer, or infographic
- An artistic project (e.g., painting, photo, sculpture, photography, dance, music composition, choreography, or song)

- A cultural event or activity
- A short story (fictional or based on true events)
- A short documentary film

You will need to conduct some research on your chosen topic using academic sources, books, articles, reports, and/or credible websites. Take detailed notes and ensure you have a well-rounded understanding of your topic. For instance, investigate the origins, development, and significance of your subject matter and place it in the historical context of the related country. Examine the subject's cultural importance, economic role, and global connections and impacts if applicable (e.g., trade policies, labor movements, or environmental issues) and how it reflects broader themes, such as colonial legacies, migration patterns, cultural identity, contemporary society and culture, globalization, or any suitable theme.

***Written Component:**

Your project also includes a written part. Submit a 400-word summary, focusing on the key findings and points from your research: Make sure to provide a bibliography of sources used, using APA or Chicago citation format. Written component must be 12-point Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1 -inch margins). Feel free to use visual aids (maps, images, graphs, etc.) to enhance understanding.

*** Create a visual Presentation:** Develop a visual and oral presentation, summarizing your findings and presenting your artifact/product to the class.

c. Class Essays (40%) – For each class period, students will write short reflective essays (minimum 300 words) in which they integrate course lectures, readings, class activities, and additional research with their personal perspectives and perspectives in Argentina.

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 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.]."

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.

12. Tentative Class Schedule:

DATE	TOPICS	READINGS
Week 1	Introduction to Latin America	Smith and Green Chapter 1
Week 2	Colonial Latin America	Smith and Green Chapter 2
Week 3	Argentina: Progress, Stalemate, Discord	Smith and Green Chapter 9
Week 4	The Andes: Soldiers, Oligarchs, and Indians	Smith and Green Chapter 6
Week 5	Chile: Repression and Democracy	Smith and Green Chapter 10
Week 6	Brazil: The Awakening Giant	Smith and Green Chapter 11

Week 7	Venezuela: The Perils of Prosperity	Smith and Green Chapter 8
Week 8	Strategies for Economic Development	Smith and Green Chapter 12
Week 9	Dynamics of Political Transformation	Smith and Green Chapter 13
Week 10	Culture and Society	Smith and Green Chapter 14
Week 11	Latin America and Global Politics (1800s-1990s)	Smith and Green Chapter 15
Week 12	Latin America and Global Politics (2000 to present)	Smith and Green Chapter 16
Class presentations		