



# Expanding U.S. Study Abroad to Turkey: A Guide for Institutions

Report prepared by:  
Patricia Chow and Kimberly Cho  
Institute of International Education

August 2011



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## Institute of International Education (IIE)

An independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded in 1919, IIE is among the world's largest and most experienced international education and training organizations. Its research publications and membership services provide information to thousands of international educators globally.

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

The steady growth of U.S. study abroad in the past couple of decades has been accompanied by an increasing interest on the part of American students to study in what might be considered as “nontraditional destinations.” Because the majority of U.S. students have gravitated toward Western Europe in the past, countries in Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East have been viewed as nontraditional destinations. Emerging interest in these study destinations is due to a combination of reasons, including the growing need to learn about cultures that are critical to U.S. strategic interests, as well as acquiring languages that provide a competitive advantage in an increasingly global workplace. As more and more U.S. students have sought study opportunities in nontraditional destinations, their home institutions too have begun to expand study abroad programs to these countries while also enhancing other forms of partnerships such as joint and dual degree programs and faculty exchanges.

In light of the growing interest among U.S. students and institutions in study abroad to nontraditional destinations, the Institute of International Education (IIE), with the support of the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), launched an initiative to expand the capacity of key nontraditional destinations to host a larger number of U.S. study abroad students. The study was carried out beginning in 2008 in India, Brazil, Turkey and selected other countries, in partnership with EducationUSA, the Forum on Education Abroad and the American Association of Community Colleges.

The key goals of the project were to:

- Assess the current capacity of these countries to host expanded numbers of U.S. study abroad students and to assess the scope for future expansion of study abroad in each target country;
- Collaborate with project partners and EducationUSA advisers to strengthen advisers’ capacity to serve as a key liaison between local institutions in the host country and U.S. institutions interested in expanding their study abroad programs in the country; and
- Disseminate the information to institutions interested in expanding their study abroad offerings in the destination countries.

This report, focusing on Turkey, is the second in a series of user-friendly guides for U.S. institutions interested in expanding their study abroad offerings in nontraditional destinations. The first report focused on India and is available for download at [www.iie.org/studyabroadcapacity](http://www.iie.org/studyabroadcapacity).

This report begins with an overview of the Turkish higher education sector, with a particular focus on the current state of U.S. study abroad to Turkey. The second portion of the report focuses on existing study abroad programs available to U.S. students, and the challenges to expanding U.S. study abroad to Turkey. The report ends with recommendations for expanding U.S. study abroad to Turkey and developing institutional partnerships with higher education institutions in Turkey.

Turkey is an ideal location for U.S. students to experience unique learning opportunities in and out of the classroom. A number of Turkish universities offer courses in English. These institutions also have the experience of hosting international students from Westernized countries, thanks in large part to the success of the Bologna Process, of which Turkey is a signatory country. Both a European and Middle Eastern country, Turkey offers a wide range of coursework in fields such as history, politics, economics, sociology, cultural studies, religious studies, geography, geology, architecture, art history and the fine arts, and many others, to accommodate a wide range of prospective U.S. study abroad students.

Key findings and recommendations include:

- Many Turkish institutions have strengthened their infrastructure for hosting international students due to the Bologna Process, and the majority of institutions, even in rural areas, have international offices or representatives. Exchange students from the U.S. can take advantage of these programs and services.
- While existing exchange programs in Turkey are clustered at a small number of private and well established public universities, many opportunities for expansion are available, given the large number of newly established universities across Turkey. These will need to be pursued if the number of U.S. students studying in Turkey is to be significantly expanded.
- Building institutional partnerships with Turkish institutions requires a long-term perspective incorporating intensive research and multiple trips abroad to meet potential partners, evaluate infrastructure and ensure that local compliance requirements are met and educate U.S. administrators about the country. This is a time-consuming but necessary process.
- Expanding study abroad course offerings into more career-specific areas, such as business and management or economics, will have the potential to attract future professionals who may not otherwise be attracted to studying in Turkey. In addition, opportunities for practical experiences, such as field visits, independent research and internships, are an important part of the study abroad experience and are also ways to draw potential students from a wide range of majors.
- The majority of existing study abroad programs in Turkey do not have a Turkish language requirement prior to enrollment. Intensive “survival Turkish” is often offered during pre-departure orientation.
- When developing new study abroad programs in nontraditional destinations, it is important to keep in mind the reciprocal nature of cultural exchange. U.S. students should have the opportunity to give back to the communities they are studying in, and should also have the opportunity to engage in guided discussion about cultural differences and the unequal power distribution between the developed and developing worlds. Sending institutions may also want to explore faculty and student exchanges with Turkish host campuses.
- Attention should be paid to health, safety and security at all stages of the program, starting with program development. It is important to establish clear policies and procedures, and to make sure that students are made aware of them during orientation, and that faculty and staff are properly trained and given periodic refresher courses.
- As more U.S. students study abroad in destinations that are unfamiliar to the average U.S. citizen, systematic cross-cultural training prior to departure can alleviate many concerns for students, faculty and administrators.

#### **TURKEY: Quick Facts**

Official name: Republic of Turkey

Population: 78,785,548

Area: 783,562 sq. km. (slightly larger than Texas)

Capital: Ankara

Major cities: Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Bursa, Adana

Government: Republican parliamentary democracy, with 7 regions and 81 provinces

Neighboring countries: Armenia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Georgia, Greece, Iran, Iraq, Syria

Common languages: Turkish (official), Kurdish

Major religions: Islam (97%); Christianity (2%); Judaism (1%)

Monetary unit: Turkish lira (TRY)

Major industries: Agriculture, automotive products, construction, electronics, textiles, tourism

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## II. HIGHER EDUCATION IN TURKEY

Turkey lies at the geographic and cultural crossroads between Europe, the Middle East and Asia, and has played a central role in exchange between different nations from antiquity to the present. Turkey is also the 17th most populous country in the world, with a population of over 78 million. While the majority of the population is of Turkish ethnicity, 18 percent is Kurdish, most of whom live in Turkey's southeastern provinces. Nearly all of Turkey's citizens are Muslim, but since the nation's foundation as a democratic republic in 1923, Turkey has had no official state religion. Secularism is written into its constitution and is reflected in its public education system.

The country is very culturally diverse, blending Turkic, Anatolian, Greco-Roman, Islamic and modern European cultures and traditions. Turkey's diversity is most apparent in its major cities, including Istanbul, which have deep-rooted traditions and ancient relics as well as all the elements of a modern, cosmopolitan society. Home to over 13 million people, Istanbul (formerly known as Constantinople) was the historic capital of the Byzantine Empire, and is now the financial and cultural center of modern Turkey. The city also hosts many international students at its internationally recognized universities.

Turkey continues to be a crucial player in political relations between Europe and the Middle East, and its bid to become a full member of the European Union is indicative of its growing global prominence. With its ancient cultural heritage and legacy as a land of great geopolitical significance, Turkey is a fascinating country whose present and future are as valuable to study as its past.

The Turkish education system falls under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education. After the formation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, the Ministry initiated a framework of policies upon which the Turkish education system is based today. As in many nations, there are significant disparities in education quality between private and public institutions; based on these differences, the Ministry of Education has posed reforms with some success.

Education is a major issue for the Turkish government, which has recently pursued initiatives to increase education quality and opportunity through establishing new higher education institutions, increasing global student mobility and implementing systemic reforms. Turkey's policies on educational assessment and placement have been criticized for being excessively test-driven, leaving behind students who lacked the resources and access necessary to receive high marks on the National University Entrance Examinations (ÖSS). The Ministry of National Education is currently considering reforms to make its national curriculum less focused on memorization and rote learning for standardized tests and instead working more on language skills and critical writing proficiency.

In 2008, 1.64 million Turkish students graduated from secondary education institutions, and 350,000 students achieved the minimum required score on the National University Entrance Examination (ÖSS) to enter a four-year university. Of these, 200,000 students were accepted into four-year universities and 85,000 were accepted into two-year institutions. Many others pursued their higher education abroad.

### Higher Education in Turkey

- There are 820 higher education institutions in Turkey, including 94 public universities and 45 private universities.
- Higher education institutions are governed by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK).
- Over 15 universities have been established in the last 5 years to increase educational access in rural and remote areas.
- The Bologna Process and ERASMUS have increased Turkish student mobility in Europe and have helped to globalize standards and quality assurances.

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There are currently 820 higher education institutions in Turkey, including 94 public universities and 45 private/foundation universities. Most universities are located in the three major cities of Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. Currently, there are approximately 2.5 million undergraduate and 140,000 graduate students studying at Turkish universities. Turkey currently has the largest number of young people in its history, with 20 million Turks between the ages of 10 and 24. As the young population reaches adulthood, demand and competition for higher education will increase.

The Council of Higher Education (YÖK), established in 1981, is an autonomous corporate public body responsible for the planning, governance and supervision of higher education in accordance with the Turkish Constitution and the Higher Education Law. Under YÖK, higher education institutions are classified into four major categories: Universities, Institutes of High Technology, Private/Foundation Post-Secondary Vocational/Technical Schools and other higher education institutions such as police and military academies. Public and private universities are typically very large systems of units that include undergraduate and research schools, graduate schools, postsecondary certification programs, fine arts conservatories and vocational schools.

Vocational and postsecondary schools award an associate's degree for two-year study programs, while undergraduate and research schools offer a bachelor's degree for four years of study, with additional years for professional areas such as dentistry, veterinary medicine, pharmacy and medicine (considered the equivalent of a master's degree in Turkey). Graduate students complete two-year programs leading to an MA or MS degree, and/or an additional four-year program leading to a doctorate degree.

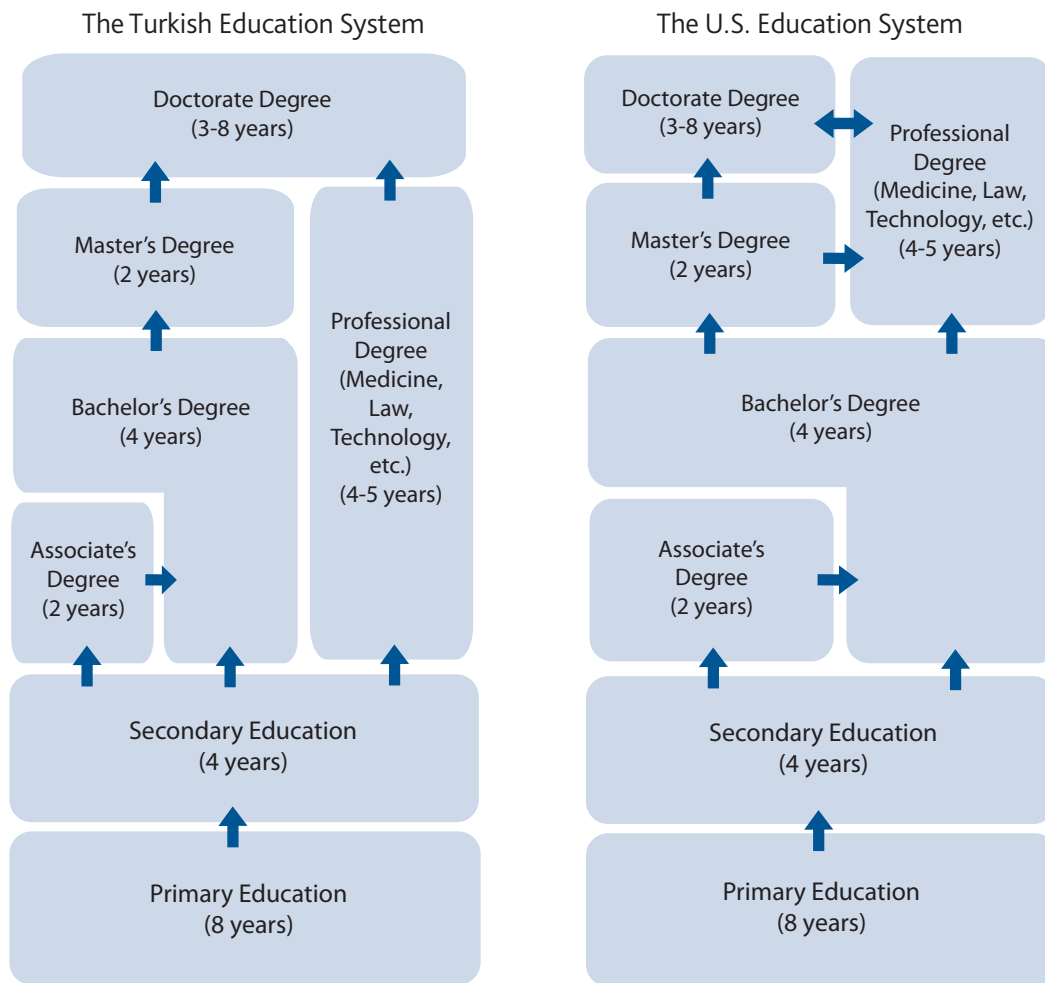
Unlike the U.S. higher education system, where students do not begin a professional degree until they have completed their undergraduate degree, in the Turkish system, professional fields such as dentistry, law, medicine and architecture begin at the start of the undergraduate experience. Acquiring a professional degree in medicine typically takes six years; dentistry and veterinary medicine take five years; a bachelor's degree takes four years; and associate's degrees and certificate programs take two years. Figure 1 compares the Turkish education system with the U.S. system.

English is the most prominent foreign language in Turkish education institutions. Secondary and some primary school students are exposed to several hours of English instruction a week throughout their schooling, and private schools may begin English lessons as early as kindergarten. Though foreign language classes are required at most universities, proficiency remains low and developing high English proficiency is a major strategy to secure a place in a competitive school or university. Some well-established public and private Turkish universities (i.e., Bilkent, Bosphorus and Middle Eastern Technical University) are English-medium universities that follow the U.S. university model.

The Ministry of Education recently announced a new five-year campaign to expand English language education for children across the country, including the hiring of 40,000 foreign English teachers for extracurricular English activities, summer camps, weekend courses and conversation classes for both students and teachers. The estimated cost will be TL 1.5 billion (US\$990 million). The government has also begun preparations for dozens of multimedia centers to open in schools for distance English learning. One thousand English teachers will be hired from the U.S. for distance learning in the first phase of this project, focusing primarily on conversation skills rather than grammar and vocabulary. To expand opportunities for English language study in Turkey's rural areas, the Fulbright-YÖK English Teaching Assistantship (ETA) program, funded and administered jointly by the U.S. Government, the Turkish Fulbright Commission and Turkey's Higher Education Council (YÖK), has increased the number of ETA placements from 10 to 50 in the past year.



**Figure 1: The Turkish and U.S. Education Systems Compared**



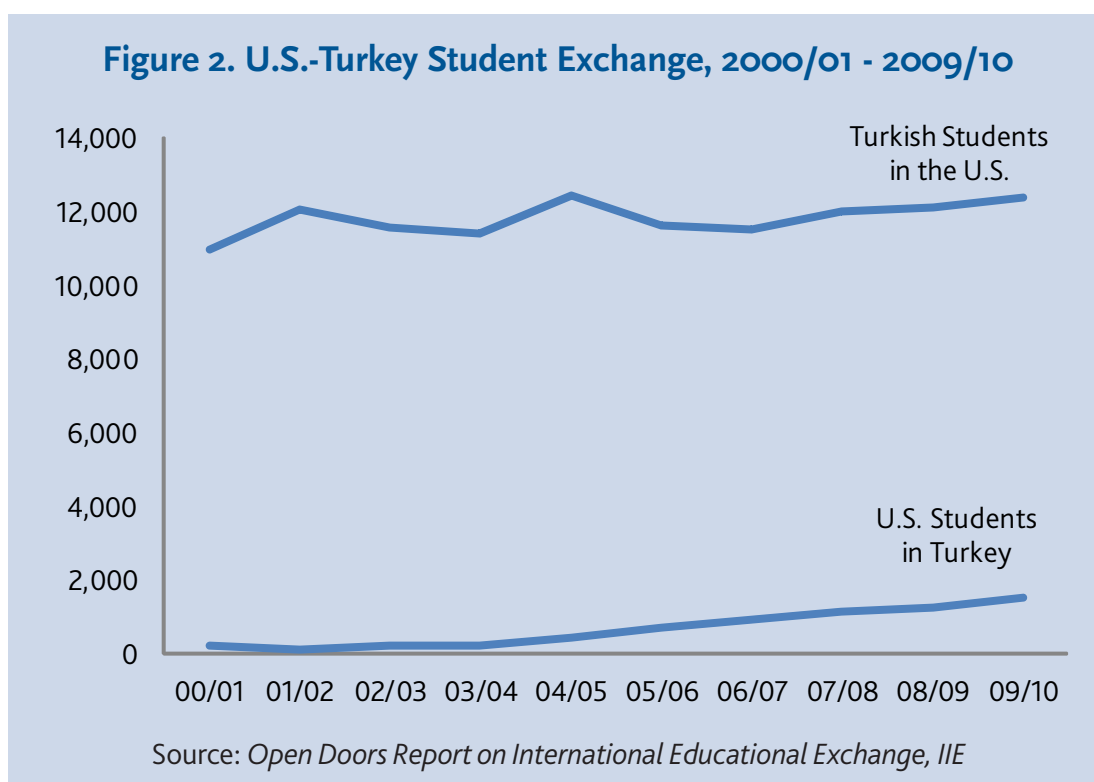
Educational exchange and study abroad have also been central to improving Turkish higher education. Since signing the Bologna Accords, Turkish universities have participated in the Erasmus program, which aims to increase student and faculty mobility within European Union and EU candidate states. Currently around 8,500 Turkish students spend a portion of their studies at participating universities throughout Europe. The program has also pushed Turkish universities to offer courses in other languages, usually English, to accommodate incoming students. Under the Bologna Process, Turkey has also been undertaking initiatives to align to the Bologna Qualification Frameworks and Quality Assurances, as well as European Higher Education Area (EHEA) standards. The Bologna Process has made a significant impact on Turkish higher education and Turkish student and faculty mobility, as more and more universities have pursued greater measures of standardization, international accreditation and institutional partnerships for dual diplomas and joint degrees.

At the same time, universities located in eastern Turkey, in the Black Sea region, have signed articulation agreements with higher education institutions in Russia and the other countries in the Caucasus.

Open universities are also becoming more popular in Turkey, especially among working individuals, those with family commitments and those living in rural regions with limited access to brick-and-mortar facilities.

### III. HIGHER EDUCATION EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE U.S. AND TURKEY

According to the *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange* published by the Institute of International Education, during the 2009/10 academic year (the most recent year for which data is available), 1,522 U.S. students studied abroad for academic credit in Turkey, an eight percent increase over the previous year's total, and a 21 percent increase over the previous year's total. Despite this growth, the total number of Americans studying in Turkey is still only a fraction of the number of students from Turkey studying in the U.S., as indicated in figure 2. In 2009/10, there were 12,397 Turkish students in the U.S., the most of any European country and the tenth leading place of origin of international students in the U.S.

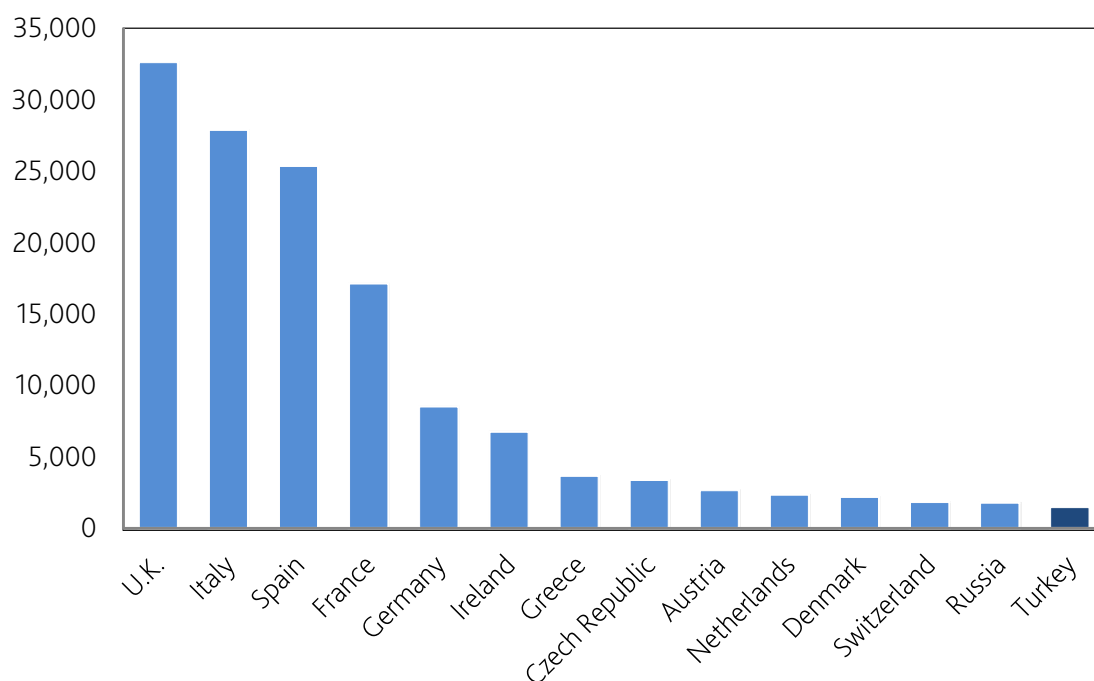


It is also important to note that the majority of Turkish students studying in the U.S. are pursuing full degrees (about half of Turkish students in the U.S. are enrolled in graduate degree programs and one-third are pursuing undergraduate degrees). The majority of U.S. students study in Turkey for much shorter periods of time, usually for a semester or less during their junior or senior year.

While Europe is the top regional destination for U.S. study abroad, hosting over half of all U.S. study abroad students, Turkey is not among the top ten destinations in Europe. Unlike the top European host countries, Turkey has fewer higher education institutions that use English as a medium of instruction, and far fewer U.S. students study Turkish as compared with Spanish, French, German or Italian. In addition, Turkey is still in the process of aligning with European qualification frameworks as a result of the Bologna process. Alignment of qualifications and quality assurances with those of U.S. higher education institutions will be crucial to expanding study abroad opportunities for U.S. students. This process will take some time to come into full effect at more Turkish universities.

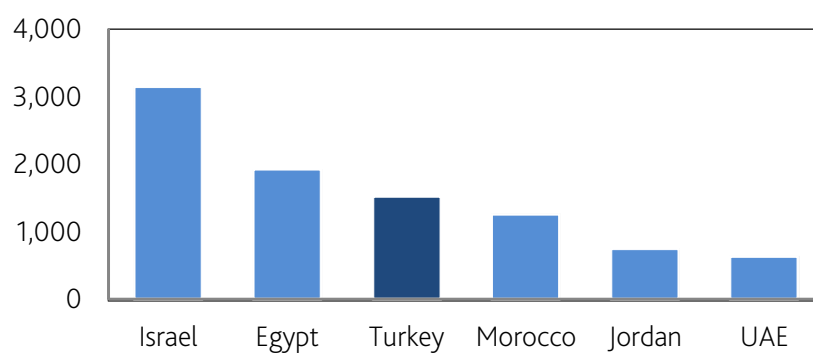
In spite of the relatively low number of U.S. students studying abroad in Turkey compared to the top destination countries, there is reason to be optimistic about future growth in student mobility between the U.S. and Turkey. The number of U.S. students going to Turkey is likely to increase as more U.S. institutions form partnerships with Turkish higher education institutions, creating short-term programs that are specialized and affordable for U.S. students. Also, as Turkish institutions increase their prominence on the world stage and adopt international quality assurances, more U.S. students may take advantage of short-, mid-, and long-term study opportunities at these institutions.

**Figure 3. U.S. Study Abroad to Turkey, Compared to Top Destinations in Europe, 2009/10**



Source: *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange, IIE*

**Figure 4. U.S. Study Abroad to Turkey, Compared to Top Destinations in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region, 2009/10**



Source: *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange, IIE*

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## IV. IIE'S STUDY ABROAD CAPACITY PROJECT

Due to its importance as the crossroads between Europe, the Middle East and Asia, Turkey was chosen as the second pilot country (after India) for a new initiative launched by IIE with the support of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). This new study abroad capacity project aims to increase the capacity of institutions and study abroad programs in nontraditional destinations to host more U.S. students and has the following primary objectives:

- Assess the current capacity of target countries to host expanded numbers of U.S. study abroad students;
- Assess the scope for expansion of U.S. study abroad in each target country;
- Collaborate with partners to strengthen EducationUSA advisers' capacity to serve as key liaisons between local host country institutions and U.S. institutions interested in expanding their study abroad programs in the country;
- Disseminate the information widely to institutions interested in expanding their study abroad offerings in the target countries.

### *EducationUSA*

EducationUSA is a global network of over 400 advising centers around the world supported by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State (ECA). ECA fosters mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries by promoting personal, professional and institutional ties between private citizens and organizations in the U.S. and abroad.

EducationUSA centers actively promote U.S. higher education around the world by offering accurate, unbiased, comprehensive, objective and timely information about educational institutions in the United States, and guidance to qualified individuals on how best to access those opportunities.

The project was carried out in Turkey from December 2010 through summer 2011, in partnership with U.S. Department of State-funded EducationUSA advisers in Turkey, the Forum on Education Abroad and the American Association Community Colleges. Each partner brought unique expertise to the project. EducationUSA advisers are well positioned to conduct extensive outreach within Turkish higher education and to serve as key resources and liaisons for U.S. study abroad students and U.S. higher education institutions wishing to build closer ties with higher education institutions in Turkey. EducationUSA advisers have traditionally focused on advising students coming to the U.S.; thus, the training of advisers to assist U.S. study abroad students and programs was also an important aspect of the project.<sup>1</sup>

On the U.S. side, IIE worked closely with the Forum on Education Abroad, which represents the field of education abroad in the U.S., to train advisers and survey U.S. institutions. The Forum is recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission as the Standards Development Organization (SDO) for the field of education abroad and the Forum's *Standards of Good Practice* are the recognized means by which the quality of education abroad programs may be judged.<sup>2</sup>

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) also participated in the project, representing the perspective of two-year colleges in the training for advisers and distribution of information to institutions. The Office of International Programs and Services at AACC assists two-year institutions interested in building partnerships with two-year institutions overseas.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For more information about EducationUSA, please see <http://www.educationusa.state.gov/>

<sup>2</sup> For more information on the Forum Standards, please see <http://www.forumea.org/standards.cfm>

<sup>3</sup> For more information about AACC, please see <http://aacc.nche.edu/Resources/aaccprograms/international/Pages/default.aspx>

## Methodology

The working **definition of “study abroad capacity”** used in this study includes three critical components. The first, and most obvious, component is the actual number of students. Increasing the total number of U.S. students studying abroad in nontraditional destinations is the overall goal of the project. However, as numbers increase, the quality of academic programs also needs to be maintained or enhanced. This is the second component of our definition of capacity. The third component relates to the ability of local programs in country to provide the necessary infrastructure to support increased numbers of students, especially with regard to student health and safety.

The **multipronged approach** used in this study addresses all three components of capacity mentioned above, with a special focus on the second component, maintaining quality, which is closely related to the third component: infrastructure. Key project strategies and activities included the following:

- **Capacity-building workshop in Ankara:** In order to disseminate the Forum Standards in Turkey, IIE and the Forum on Education Abroad conducted a U.S. Study Abroad Capacity Building Workshop in Ankara in December 2010. EducationUSA advisers from across Turkey, and representatives of the Turkish Fulbright Commission were present.
- **Survey of U.S. study abroad in Turkey:** Following the Capacity Building Workshop, a survey of U.S. study abroad programs in Turkey was conducted by IIE and the Forum on Education Abroad. Programs surveyed included members of the Forum on Education Abroad; programs listed in the IIE Passport study abroad guide; and programs subscribed to the SECUSS-L listserv. Program types included those run by large universities, small colleges, consortia and third party providers.
- **Forum Standards Guided Assessments:** Select higher education institutions and study abroad programs in Turkey were offered the opportunity to participate in a detailed training led by the Forum on the Forum Standards in order to assess their program offerings.

## The Forum on Education Abroad *Standards of Good Practice* ———

The [Forum on Education Abroad](#) is recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission as the Standards Development Organization (SDO) for the field of education abroad.

The Forum on Education Abroad's [Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad](#) and its Quality Improvement Program (QUIP) are the only existing systematic resources for assessing and improving education abroad capacity and quality. In order for institutions to expand education abroad capacity, they must first assess their mission and goals for education abroad, and assess the status of their current programming against an objective measure. The Forum developed and tested the *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad* over the past several years, an effort that has involved hundreds of international education professionals from around the world as well as experts in standards development.<sup>5</sup>

## American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) ———

AACC represents almost 1,200 U.S. two-year, associate degree-granting institutions and more than 12 million students, as well as a growing number of international institutions.

AACC supports and promotes its member colleges through policy initiatives, innovative programs, research and information and strategic outreach to business and industry and the national news media.

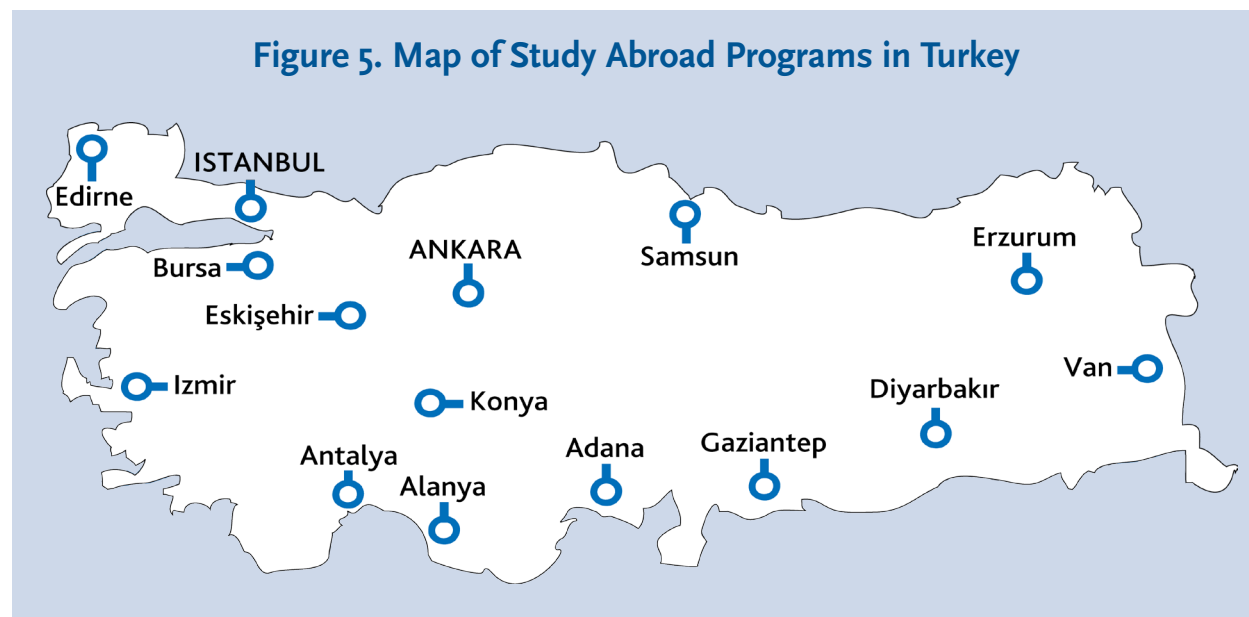
AACC's Office of International Programs and Services assists community colleges in promoting global awareness, responsibility, intercultural understanding and engagement among students, faculty, staff, and decision makers. The Office also raises the recognition of the community college role in global education among key constituencies, nationally and internationally.

## V. EXISTING STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS AND POTENTIAL FOR EXPANSION

The majority of existing study abroad programs in Turkey are based in Istanbul, with some programs in the capital city of Ankara and only a few programs outside these two cities (see fig. 5 for a map of program locations in Turkey). In addition, some programs take place in various locations around Turkey and in conjunction with programs in neighboring countries, particularly Greece. A comprehensive list of U.S. study abroad programs in Turkey can be found in the IIE Passport directory.<sup>4</sup>

The exchange program model with partner institutions is a popular program type in Turkey. This program type takes place primarily over an academic semester or year, with some institutions also offering summer add-on options. While study abroad offerings in nontraditional destinations can often be dominated by island programs with a required set of courses and activities taught and managed by the home institution, the prevalence of exchange programs in Turkey offers a wider range of options for potential students, and also demonstrates that Turkey's higher education institutions have sufficient infrastructure to support U.S. students. U.S. institutions that have exchange agreements with Turkish universities include Kansas State University, with Boğaziçi (Bosphorus) University; Michigan State University, with Anadolu, Bilkent and Boğaziçi (Bosphorus) Universities; Oklahoma State University, with Middle East Technical University; State University of New York-SUNY, with multiple Turkish partner institutions; University of Miami, with Koç University; and the University of South Florida, with Middle East Technical University.

There are also a number of specialized short-term programs available. One is an eight-week teaching placement at Yeditepe University in Istanbul, sponsored by Indiana University, which is a part of a larger Overseas Project providing cultural immersion programs in various host countries. This program places student teachers in Turkish schools for full-time teaching experiences with Turkish students, teachers and school leaders. Another short-term program, sponsored by Georgetown University, offers specialized custom short-term experiences, in addition to summer and semester programs, through the Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies in Alanya, on the southern coast of Turkey. Previous courses have included a two-week archaeological study tour of Turkey, as well as international workshops, seminars and retreats.



<sup>4</sup> <http://www.iiepassport.org>

Most programs, both exchange programs and faculty-led short-term programs, have local university partners in Turkey. The most common are Bilkent University, Boğaziçi (Bosphorus) University, Koç University, Middle East Technical University (METU) and Yeditepe University. These institutions are among the top ranked universities in Turkey, are English-medium universities and offer facilities and dormitories for the U.S. and other international students participating in their degree and non-degree programs. All of the universities partner with multiple U.S.-based study abroad programs and higher education institutions.

Many existing programs are relatively new, having been launched within the last five years, with some beginning as recently as 2010. A few U.S. universities (Michigan State and University of South Florida) have launched several programs within the last two years. While the newer programs tend to be exchange programs, programs with a longer history (prior to 2000) are more traditional, faculty-led programs.

In line with overall U.S. study abroad trends, summer programs in Turkey tend to have higher enrollments than programs running during the semester, with exchange programs generally enrolling only a handful of students during the academic year. Regardless of the time of year, programs in Turkey rarely enroll more than 25 students in a given term. New programs and partnerships will need to be developed if the number of U.S. students studying in Turkey is to be significantly expanded.

Existing study abroad programs in Turkey rarely have a Turkish language requirement, and most do not require students to take language courses while in Turkey. Several exchange programs do offer Turkish language courses, as well as other languages such as Arabic, Kurdish and Azerbaijani. Most short-term and summer programs also offer an optional "survival" Turkish language course prior to departure or during orientation.

Programs encourage interaction with Turks by having U.S. students live on-campus and take classes with Turkish students. Most Turkish host institutions now have international offices or departments to support and enhance the academic and social integration of international students on-campus, as this is a required part of the Bologna Process.

### *The State University of New York (SUNY) in Turkey*

The SUNY Turkey Dual Diploma Program is a 2007 *IIE Heiskell Award* winner in the International Exchange Partnerships category.

Graduates are awarded two diplomas, one from SUNY and one from their institution in Turkey, after successfully completing the academic requirements of both institutions.

The dual diploma program benefits both Turkey and the United States. The SUNY and Turkish campuses gain more international exposure and benefit from the faculty exchanges that are built into the programs.

For more information on SUNY programs in Turkey and partner institutions in Turkey, see: <http://www.suny.edu/InternationalPrograms/Turk1.cfm>.

SUNY Office in Turkey:

Ben Balkaya, Program Director in Turkey  
Katie Lansford, Associate Program Director  
Arjantin Caddesi – Halici Sokak No: 4/4  
Gaziosmanpasa, Ankara, Turkey 06700  
<http://www.suny.edu.tr>

### *IIE's Andrew Heiskell Awards*

The Institute of International Education (IIE) created the *Heiskell Awards* in 2001 to promote and honor the most outstanding initiatives being conducted in international higher education by IIE Network member universities and colleges.

IIE's *Heiskell Awards* showcase the most innovative and successful models for internationalization of campuses, study abroad and international partnership programs in practice today, with a particular focus on initiatives that remove institutional barriers and broaden the base of participation in international teaching and learning on campus. For more information about IIE Network or the Andrew Heiskell Awards, please visit <http://www.iie.org/internationalization>.



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## Plans for Expansion

Roughly half of the programs participating in the study currently accept students from more than one U.S. institutions. However, very few programs reported active recruitment at U.S. community colleges. This is a sector of U.S. higher education that is often underrepresented when it comes to study abroad, particularly in nontraditional destinations.

The majority of programs participating in the study also do not have immediate plans for expansion in Turkey. Some programs indicated that there is interest from faculty and students in developing larger, longer or new, programs, but that such plans are not feasible either due to lack of resources or because the institution is focusing on other programs and/or locations for the time being. One long-standing program noted that while their program is always trying to increase enrollment, housing and classroom space is too limited to make significant expansions beyond the 20 student maximum. Moreover, its programs are designed as small-group experiences with a high level of faculty-student interaction.

Regardless of program type, introducing and expanding sources for scholarships and grants, as well as informing study abroad offices and potential students of the numerous available funding options, can contribute to increasing application numbers.

Students may not be fully aware of the many scholarships available to them, such as the [Benjamin A. Gilman Education Program](#), funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and administered by IIE. The Gilman Scholarship Program offers awards of up to \$8,000 for U.S. citizen undergraduate students of limited financial means to pursue academic studies abroad.<sup>5</sup> During the 2010/11 academic year, 45 U.S. students received Gilman scholarships for study in Turkey; 82 students have studied in Turkey on Gilman awards over the past three years. IIE also administers the [David L. Boren Scholarships and Fellowships](#), funded by the National Security Education Program (NSEP), which focus on geographic areas, languages and fields of study deemed critical to U.S. national security.<sup>6</sup> Eight U.S. students received Boren Awards for study in Turkey in 2010/11.

Lastly, in spite of the challenges of balancing budgets in institutions large and small, continued investment in study abroad by universities, colleges, consortia and third party providers remains crucial in order to make studying abroad in Turkey an economically realistic option for U.S. students.

### *Gilman Scholarship Program* —

The [Gilman Scholarship Program](#) offers awards for undergraduate study abroad funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. It provides awards for U.S. undergraduate students who are receiving Federal Pell Grant funding at a two-year or four-year college or university to participate in study abroad programs worldwide.

The Gilman Scholarship Program is open to U.S. citizen undergraduate students who are planning to study abroad. The program aims to diversify the kinds of students who study abroad and the countries and regions where they go by supporting undergraduates who might otherwise not participate due to financial constraints.

### *Boren Scholarships and Fellowships*

[Boren Scholarships and Fellowships](#) are funded by the National Security Education Program (NSEP), which focuses on geographic areas, languages, and fields of study deemed critical to U.S. national security.

Boren Scholarships provide up to \$20,000 to U.S. undergraduate students, while Boren Fellowships provide up to \$30,000 to U.S. graduate students. Applicants identify how their study abroad programs or overseas projects, as well as their future academic and career goals, will contribute to U.S. national security, broadly defined.

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<sup>5</sup> For more information about the Gilman Scholarship Program, please see <http://www.iie.org/gilman>

<sup>6</sup> For more information about the Boren Program, please see <http://www.iie.org/nsep>



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## VII. CHALLENGES TO EXPANDING U.S. STUDY ABROAD IN TURKEY

The primary challenges to expanding U.S. study in Turkey are finding funding opportunities for students, expanding the breadth of study abroad locations in Turkey and building interest in Turkey among U.S. students and faculty members.

Among the institutions and programs surveyed for this project, one of the most frequent suggestions for increasing U.S. study abroad numbers to Turkey was finding ways to make study abroad more affordable. Many U.S. higher education students rely on scholarships and institutional financial aid to defray the cost of university tuition, and are either unable to afford studying abroad, or are unaware of financing options. One solution for this problem is for programs to allocate more scholarship and grant funding for study abroad in Turkey. However, for institutions facing budget cuts and limited resources, it may not be feasible to increase internal funding for study in Turkey. As a result, it is critical for study abroad administrators to be aware of external funding opportunities such as the Gilman Scholarship Program and the Boren Awards, as well as Fulbright opportunities for graduating seniors, graduate students and faculty.

The challenge of funding also affects the type of student who studies abroad. Currently, only a small proportion of U.S. study abroad students comes from racial or ethnic minorities, or attends community colleges. Providing and advertising scholarships for minority, low-income and community college students is crucial for increasing the number of these students studying in Turkey. Programs such as the U.S. State Department-sponsored Community College Initiative Program, which places Turkish and other international students in U.S. community colleges, may be able to assist in building awareness and interest in Turkey on campus and in recruiting potential study abroad students.

The majority of U.S. study abroad programs are located in Istanbul, with some located in the capital city of Ankara and a handful in other large cities in Turkey. To avoid oversaturation at a small number of partner universities in Istanbul, the location of program sites needs to be diversified. Turkey's Higher Education Council (YÖK) has supported the establishment of more than 15 new universities across the country in the past five years. Many of these newly established universities are currently suffering from growing pains such as lack of organization and excessive bureaucracy; however, it is hoped that these issues will be resolved as the universities become more established. While a number of the more established public universities are competitive and internationally recognized, private higher education institutions often provide better resources and networks.

Some of the newer programs noted that their programs are currently undersubscribed, particularly in comparison to the number of students that their Turkish partners are sending to their institutions, in spite of on-campus efforts such as information meetings and promotional events. One such program suggested that greater administrative and faculty support in student recruitment, in addition to increased promotional resources, would be helpful to increase student interest in Turkey.

Some programs also noted that intense academic requirements and expectations may be deterring students who are interested in a less structured environment for their study abroad experience. While the current high standards attract high-performing, committed students, programs may have difficulty filling all available places. Campus-based initiatives to raise awareness about Turkey, in addition to Turkish studies-related scholarships may help encourage students to consider study abroad to Turkey instead of in other destinations. Finding ways of sending U.S. faculty members to Turkey, through Fulbright and other funded programs, should be a priority for campuses seeking to build linkages with Turkish partners.

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## VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Both in the U.S. and abroad, international exchange has become an essential strategy for improving the quality of academic programs and increasing global recognition. While existing exchange programs in Turkey are clustered at a small number of elite Turkish institutions, many opportunities for expansion are available, given the large number of newly established universities in Turkey. These will need to be pursued if the number of U.S. students studying in Turkey is to be significantly expanded. A list of concrete recommendations follows below.

- **Incorporate study abroad into the overall internationalization strategy:** Creating a new program in Turkey should be carefully analyzed in terms of its strategic importance within the overall structure of an institution's internationalization plan. If Turkey is not of strategic importance in the overall internationalization strategy, study abroad administrators will need to explain why they have chosen to focus on Turkey, especially if resources are scarce. Its geopolitical importance, as well as the high number of Turkish students seeking U.S. training, are two compelling reasons. Leverage all existing connections with Turkey: Take the time to ferret out all existing linkages your institution has with Turkey. Faculty, research scholars, international students and alumni from Turkey and alumni of previous study abroad programs in Turkey can all assist in building interest in study abroad to Turkey on campus and virtually.
- **Join a consortium:** Smaller institutions and institutions new to sending students to Turkey may not have the resources to develop and sustain entire programs on their own. A useful solution to this problem is to join a consortium or to leverage existing partnerships with U.S. universities that have programs and linkages in Turkey. This model also strengthens the existing program's ability to weather times of economic difficulty.
- **Long-term perspective:** Building and strengthening partnerships in Turkey requires a long-term perspective incorporating intensive research and multiple trips to Turkey to meet potential partners, educate U.S. administrators about the country and ensure that local compliance requirements are met. Face-to-face communication is very important in Turkish culture, as is persistence. Turkish partners may not be immediately responsive to inquiries, and it is therefore imperative to continue to follow-up on activities that have been initiated. This can be a time-consuming process, but it is nevertheless necessary.
- **Reciprocity:** When developing new study abroad programs in nontraditional destinations, it is important to keep in mind the reciprocal nature of cultural exchange. U.S. students should be given the opportunity to give back to the communities they are studying in, and should also have the opportunity to engage in guided discussion about cultural differences and the unequal power distribution between the developed world and the developing world. Turkish students and faculty should also be included in the exchange process.
- **Importance of "local education":** Unique learning experiences naturally result from living and studying in a new country and culture. These experiences can relate to socializing and taking classes with Turkish peers, participating in community service projects, going on local excursions, or listening to notable guest speakers to discuss politics, economics, history and the arts from a local point of view. These types of activities are an important part of study abroad experiences.

- **Creative programming:** Expanding study abroad programming into more career-specific areas, such as business and management or economics, will have the potential to attract future professionals who may not otherwise be attracted to studying in Turkey. Studying abroad in a diverse country such as Turkey can help build global workforce skills such as tolerance, empathy, open-mindedness and the ability to understand different perspectives.
- **Gradually phase-in courses and programs on Turkey:** Many U.S. institutions may not have many faculty members with expertise on Turkey. This is not necessarily a barrier to developing a successful study abroad program in Turkey. The key is to start small, and build interest gradually. For example, a faculty member interested in issues elsewhere in the Mediterranean or the Middle East might lead a course that incorporates a short study tour to Turkey. This can be a first step toward the eventual goal of developing a semester-long program with a full course load.
- **Adequate pre-departure orientation in cultural differences:** As interest in study abroad in nontraditional destinations grows, more U.S. students will come into contact with cultures that are very different from their own. It is important for these students to be prepared prior to going abroad in order to fully capitalize from the experience. To that end, pre-departure orientations are a necessary and important part of any study abroad program.
- **Health and safety:** Make sure that program staff, both at home in the U.S. and on the ground in Turkey, are familiar with local health and safety regulations, and have been properly trained in the program's emergency protocols, including who to contact if a student, faculty or staff member is caught in an emergency situation. The health and safety of women should also be specifically addressed. Attention should be paid to health, safety and security at all stages of the program, beginning with program development. It is important to establish clear policies and procedures, and to make sure that students are made aware of them during orientation. Faculty and staff also need to be properly trained and given periodic refresher courses.
- **Seek advice from others:** The following pages list some of the more experienced study abroad programs in Turkey, as well as IIE resources that can be of help.

### Selected Turkish Universities with Exchange Programs for U.S. Students

#### Anadolu University (Anadolu Üniversitesi)

Location: Eskişehir  
Founded: 1982 (Public)  
[www.anadolu.edu.tr/en/](http://www.anadolu.edu.tr/en/)

#### Bilkent University (Bilkent Üniversitesi)

Location: Ankara  
Founded: 1984 (Private)  
[www.bilkent.edu.tr/index.html](http://www.bilkent.edu.tr/index.html)

#### Bosphorus University (Boğaziçi Üniversitesi)

Location: Istanbul  
Founded: 1863 (Public)  
First U.S.-style university founded outside the U.S.  
[www.boun.edu.tr/en-US/Content/Default.aspx](http://www.boun.edu.tr/en-US/Content/Default.aspx)

#### Koç University (Koç Üniversitesi)

Location: Istanbul  
Founded: 1993 (Private)  
[www.ku.edu.tr/en](http://www.ku.edu.tr/en)

#### Middle Eastern Technical University (METU) (Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi - ODTÜ)

Location: Ankara  
Founded: 1956 (Public)  
[www.metu.edu.tr/](http://www.metu.edu.tr/)

#### Yeditepe University (Yeditepe Üniversitesi)

Location: Istanbul  
Founded: 1996 (Private)  
[www.yeditepe.edu.tr/?&language\\_id=2](http://www.yeditepe.edu.tr/?&language_id=2)

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## APPENDIX: SELECTED U.S. STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS IN TURKEY

For a more complete list of existing study abroad programs in Turkey, see [www.IIEPassport.org](http://www.IIEPassport.org)

### [Duke in Istanbul - studyabroad.duke.edu/home/Programs/Semester/Duke\\_in\\_Istanbul](http://studyabroad.duke.edu/home/Programs/Semester/Duke_in_Istanbul)

Duke in Istanbul is a spring-only semester program of advanced undergraduate course work, featuring a core philosophy course on the cognitive science of religion and morality with the context of Istanbul, introductory exposure to Turkish language, coursework available in virtually any discipline at Boğaziçi (Bosphorus) University, and cultural activities and excursions focused on exposing students to Turkey, past and present.

### [Georgetown University in Turkey - mcgheecenter.georgetown.edu](http://mcgheecenter.georgetown.edu)

The McGhee Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies is designed to give students, faculty and staff a living and learning community environment. Language study is required, and students live and learn with the visiting faculty by sharing meals, living space and travelling together. The curriculum at the McGhee Center emphasizes the encounters between East and West, past and present that define this complex and beautiful landscape, offering an opportunity to experience firsthand the rich tapestry of civilizations and cultures in the eastern Mediterranean.

### [Indiana University Cultural Immersion Projects - education.indiana.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=4210](http://education.indiana.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=4210)

The Cultural Immersion Projects include Overseas Project placements in Turkey. Participation in the Cultural Projects affords the following benefits: 1) Develop a broader understanding of our nation and world by living and teaching in a culturally different setting – seeking to gain perspective through the eyes of others; 2) Gain intercultural teaching and community involvement experiences, which offer realistic, in-depth exposure to other ways of life and schooling; 3) Experience professional and personal growth through increased self-confidence and self-esteem, greater adaptability, and acquisition of new and different teaching methods, ideas, and philosophies.

### [Kansas State University Exchange with Boğaziçi \(Bosphorus\) University - www.k-state.edu/studyabroad](http://www.k-state.edu/studyabroad)

The Study Abroad Office at Kansas State University coordinates education abroad opportunities, prepares students for valuable international experiences, supports faculty and staff in developing education abroad efforts, and maintains partnerships in the campus community and abroad to ensure high quality programs.

### [Michigan State University - studyabroad.isp.msu.edu](http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu)

*Construction Management in Asia:* The program links contemporary construction methods with a perspective on ancient engineering. Most time will be spent in Turkey (Istanbul, Izmir and Cappadocia), with a week of site visits and presentations in South Korea.

*Democratization and Economic Transition in Turkey:* This program offers formal coursework and lectures at universities and institutes in Turkey. Key themes will be the political and economic aspects of designing policies to address the region's social and environmental problems, and Turkey's political and economic role as a nation on the border between Europe and Asia. Lecturers will be drawn from Koç University in Istanbul.

*Environmental Science and Policy in the Eastern Mediterranean Basin:* Students participating in this program will examine the environmental resources, cultures, scientific methods and governmental systems of a society, and the means through which individual societies have interwoven these factors.

*Michigan State University Reciprocal Exchange with Anadolu, Bilkent and Boğaziçi (Bosphorus) Universities:* MSU students will be fully immersed in Turkish culture by taking regular university classes alongside Turkish students and living with Turkish students in university residence halls. Students will be exposed to a highly rigorous and competitive higher education system that has risen to meet the challenges of Turkey's modern democracy.

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### [Oklahoma State University Reciprocal Exchange with METU - www.okstate.edu/ieo.aspx?page=516](http://www.okstate.edu/ieo.aspx?page=516)

This program provides a meaningful international experience in the context of reciprocal exchange. Students complete coursework applicable to their degree program and gain a better understanding and appreciation of Turkish culture.

### [The State University of New York \(SUNY\) - www.suny.edu/internationalprograms](http://www.suny.edu/internationalprograms)

Exchange programs with Ataturk University (SUNY Cobleskill), Boğaziçi (Bosphorus) University (SUNY Binghamton), Hacettepe University (SUNY Geneseo), Istanbul Bilgi University (SUNY Oswego) and Izmir University of Economics (SUNY Fredonia).

### [University of California San Diego Global Seminar: World History in Turkey - pao.ucsd.edu/pao/gs](http://pao.ucsd.edu/pao/gs)

The goal of the program is to provide students with a rigorous academic experience that fully incorporates the site location and integrates it into the curriculum. The Global Seminar program is accessible to a wide range of students, including students from diverse backgrounds, first generation college students, transfer students and STEM majors among others.

### [University of Colorado Boulder Global Seminar: Urban Design Studio - studyabroad.colorado.edu/](http://studyabroad.colorado.edu/)

This course addresses the following objectives: 1) History and theory: Understanding historical evolution of cities as reflected in morphological, architectural, cultural and social transformations. 2) Culture and Diversity: Understanding issues regarding co-existence and spatial accommodation of multi-cultural, social, political and economically diverse population. 3) Urban Design: Shaping the public realm in response to problems and opportunities using principles and techniques of allied design disciplines. 4) Civic Engagement: Interacting and responding to the needs of local groups by providing meaningful input. These objectives will be achieved in an urban design studio held in Istanbul.

### [University of Miami Exchange with Koç University - www.miami.edu/index.php/study\\_abroad](http://www.miami.edu/index.php/study_abroad)

The program gives students the opportunity to acquire an international perspective in their academic career through studying abroad on a University of Miami sponsored program at a partner university in Turkey.

### [University of Florida - www.ces.ufl.edu/study\\_abroad/program\\_istanbul.shtml](http://www.ces.ufl.edu/study_abroad/program_istanbul.shtml)

*Comparative Politics in Turkey:* This interdisciplinary comparative politics course focuses on Turkey, highlighting Istanbul. Students will be introduced to the complex history, politics and culture of Turkey and its largest city, Istanbul. Students will participate in several class meetings prior to departure, in order to include much of the academic material in their course, as well as some basic Turkish language and culture sessions.

*Cross-Cultural Industrial/Organizational Psychology in Ankara:* The course will examine industrial/organizational psychology from a cross-cultural perspective with an emphasis on a comparison of the U.S. and Turkey. Subject areas to be covered include recruitment, selection, training, performance appraisal, motivation, leadership, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, counterproductive work behavior and occupational health and safety. Students will be introduced to Turkish culture through a Turkish language and culture course at Middle East Technical University and visits to universities in Izmir and Istanbul, with faculty contacts to discuss the structure of Turkish universities as well as current issues/research in psychology. There will also be opportunities to arrange visits to companies in Turkey to meet with HR professionals.

### [University of South Florida Exchange with METU - business.usf.edu/programs/international/flyers/MiddleEastTechnicalUniversity.pdf](http://business.usf.edu/programs/international/flyers/MiddleEastTechnicalUniversity.pdf)

The purpose of the exchange program is to promote international friendship and world peace by stimulating and supporting intercultural activities and projects between students from the United States and Turkey.

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## IIE RESOURCES FOR U.S. STUDY ABROAD

### IIE-ADMINISTERED SCHOLARSHIPS FOR U.S. STUDY ABROAD

#### Funded by the U.S. Department of State:

Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program  
Fulbright U.S. Student Program

[www.iie.org/gilman](http://www.iie.org/gilman)  
[www.fulbrightonline.org](http://www.fulbrightonline.org)

#### Funded by the National Security Education Program:

David L. Boren Scholarships and Fellowships  
The Language Flagship Fellowships

[www.borenawards.org](http://www.borenawards.org)  
[www.thelanguageflagship.org](http://www.thelanguageflagship.org)

#### Funded by private sponsors:

Freeman Awards for Study in Asia  
Global Engineering Education Exchange  
Whitaker International Fellows and Scholars Program

[www.iie.org/Freeman-ASIA](http://www.iie.org/Freeman-ASIA)  
[www.globale3.org](http://www.globale3.org)  
[www.whitakerawards.org](http://www.whitakerawards.org)

**IIEPASSPORT: PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDY ABROAD:** [www.IIEPassport.org](http://www.IIEPassport.org)

**STUDY ABROAD FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS:** [www.StudyAbroadFunding.org](http://www.StudyAbroadFunding.org)

**CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN HIGHER EDUCATION:** [www.iie.org/cip](http://www.iie.org/cip)

The IIE Center for International Partnerships in Higher Education assists colleges and universities in developing and sustaining institutional partnerships with their counterparts around the world. Major initiatives of the Center include the International Academic Partnerships Program (IAPP), and the IIE Global Partnership Service (GPS).

**OPEN DOORS REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE:** [www.iie.org/opendoors](http://www.iie.org/opendoors)

The Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange, supported by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, provides an annual, comprehensive statistical analysis of academic mobility between the U.S. and other nations, with over 60 years of trend data.

**IIE STUDY ABROAD WHITE PAPER SERIES:** [www.iie.org/StudyAbroadCapacity](http://www.iie.org/StudyAbroadCapacity)

- Issue 1: Current Trends in U.S. Study Abroad and the Impact of Strategic Diversity Initiatives (May 2007)
- Issue 2: Exploring Host Country Capacity for Increasing U.S. Study Abroad (May 2008)
- Issue 3: Expanding Education Abroad at Community Colleges (September 2008)
- Issue 4: Expanding U.S. Study Abroad in the Arab World: Challenges & Opportunities (February 2009)
- Issue 5: Promoting Study Abroad in Science and Technology Fields (March 2009)
- Issue 6: Expanding Study Abroad Capacity at U.S. Colleges and Universities (May 2009)
- Issue 7: U.S. Study Abroad in Thailand: Host Country Perspectives and Guidelines for Partners (August 2010)
- Issue 8: Expanding U.S. Study Abroad to India: A Guide for Institutions (July 2011)
- Issue 9: Expanding U.S. Study Abroad to Turkey: A Guide for Institutions (August 2011)

**IIE/AIFS GLOBAL EDUCATION RESEARCH REPORTS:** [www.iie.org/gerr](http://www.iie.org/gerr)

- Report One: U.S.-China Educational Exchange: Perspectives on a Growing Partnership (2008)
- Report Two: Higher Education on the Move: New Developments in Global Mobility (2009)
- Report Three: International India: A Turning Point in Educational Exchange with the U.S. (2010)
- Report Four: Innovation through Education: Building the Knowledge Economy in the Middle East (2010)
- Report Five: Who Goes Where and Why? An Overview and Analysis of Global Educational Mobility (2011)

**OTHER IIE PUBLICATIONS:** [www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Publications-and-Reports.aspx](http://www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Publications-and-Reports.aspx)

*Student Mobility and the Internationalization of Higher Education: National Policies and Strategies from Six World Regions*  
*Joint and Double-Degree Programs: An Emerging Model for Transatlantic Exchange*







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