

International Study - Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey, Fall 2008-Spring 2009

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ONSITE ORIENTATION

- a. The International Program of Exchanges on campus is very helpful with accommodations. There is also a student run club that deals with accommodating international and exchange students. I am unsure what the name of the student club is, but it can be easily searched for online on the Bosphorus University website.
- b. Our program had an orientation sometime during the week before the first week of classes. The orientation helped me adapt, because I got the chance to meet other exchange students as well as Boğaziçi students who were more than happy to help with any questions or concerns.

A brief presentation was given familiarizing the exchange students with the campus, the neighborhood, and transportation. They did a wonderful job explaining different commuting options (bus, subway which is referred to as "metro", ferries, etcetera). The orientation was a great introduction to the beautiful city and its friendly people.

After the presentation, the orientation leaders took us to dinner at a lovely restaurant near campus that had the most breathtaking view of the Bosphorus! Following dinner, they ended the orientation with a fun trip to one of Istanbul's iconic neighborhoods, Beşiktaş. We drank tea, listened to live music, played backgammon, and enjoyed getting to know one another. Everyone was very excited to start the new semester in Istanbul.

2. ACADEMICS

- a.
 - Classroom structure – depending on your classes, you will either be in North Campus, South Campus, or both. My department was Molecular Biology and Genetics, which is located on the University's North Campus. North Campus is similar to the University of Washington. I took an elective course that met in South Campus, which is considered to be the "main" campus where the entrance gate is located. The buildings found in South Campus are older and the architecture is beautiful. This campus has such gorgeous views of the Rumeli Fortress and the Bosphorus.

- Instruction – similar to UW. For my science courses, the professor taught from the main textbook that was assigned for the course. Lectures were mostly given through powerpoint, and the lab sessions were comparable to the labs at UW.
 - Teacher/student relations – every teacher was always available for help.
 - Grading/exams – exams were graded fairly and they also gave students the opportunity to meet with them if they felt they were graded unfairly.
 - Administration – the administration does a pretty good job. They have an advisor available for each department who you are supposed to meet with upon arrival. Like UW, it is your own responsibility to figure out which classes you need to take to fulfill your requirements at home. They will not tell you what to do so you are very much on your own.
 - Library, computer, and classroom facilities – the school library is located on North Campus and the computer facility on South Campus.
- b. The quality and content of instruction was great! The material presented was challenging, but not at all overwhelming. I was very pleased with the overall quality of instruction.
- c. If you are placed in the Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics, I would highly recommend Dr. Stefan Fuss as a professor. I took both Introductory Biology and Physiology from Professor Fuss. Both classes were a lot of fun, and I learned a lot. Professor Fuss is approachable and very passionate about science.
- d. I took Biology 104 (second half of Intro Bio) and Physiology, which fulfilled requirements in my General Biology major. Other courses counted towards electives.

3. HOUSING

- a. At first the dormitory for international and exchange students, the “Superdorm”, seems like it is the only option. However, a lot of exchange students were able to find apartments near campus. The school does not offer housing in apartments, which is why you would need to do this on your own.
- b. I chose the Superdorm my first semester, because it seemed to be the only logical option at the time, and was also close proximity to the school. I then left the Superdorm my second semester at Boğaziçi, and stayed with an aunt who lived in the same neighborhood.
- c. The Superdorm is a good option. It has a cafeteria, grocery, and even a barbershop/salon. The people who work there are extremely helpful and friendly. My only critique would be that the bedroom space is minimal and may make you feel cramped. The common room is quite large with a kitchenette. However, if you like to study in your bedroom, I would not recommend the Superdorm.

I knew a lot of people that left the Superdorm to live in apartments near campus. I am not sure whom they went through to find these apartments, but I'd imagine students they may have met out and about on campus or in class probably gave them information regarding off-campus housing. It would be a good question to ask an orientation leader for anyone that is interested.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE

As mentioned earlier Boğaziçi University has two main campuses, South Campus and North Campus. South Campus is more reflective of the arts (history, language, etc.) and North Campus is where math and science is taught. It is very easy to walk from both campuses and if you're in a hurry they even have shuttles that will take you very quickly from one campus to the other.

The University is located in a very nice neighborhood in Istanbul. It is located in Etiler, which is a little more refined and less populated in comparison to other neighborhoods in Istanbul. Neighborhoods nearby are Bebek and Rumeli Hisari, which have a very quaint marina atmosphere with fancy boutiques and cafés that line the Bosphorus.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY

I did not have any health or safety concerns while abroad. I had a minor emergency that required stitches, but was taken care of right away by the infirmary staff located on South Campus. There is campus security, which creates a safe environment on campus.

I did not have any issues with theft, but I did hear about instances where someone would find their personal belongings missing after returning to their study area. These instances I would hear about usually occurred in the library. I would give the same precautions the UW library gives, which is to be responsible and aware of your personal belongings at all times.

Neighborhoods surrounding the University campus are all safe. It is similar to a University town. A fun neighborhood located in the heart of Istanbul that many students frequent is Taksim, and is a place I would recommend traveling to with a friend or in a group. Theft is more common in this neighborhood, because it is a major tourist attraction.

People usually go to Taksim for its social environment. This neighborhood exudes so much life, which makes it a popular destination for students studying abroad. There are University shuttles that run in the evenings on the weekends, which is incredibly convenient for anyone interested in going to Taksim. They only run until a certain hour, so it would be wise to check when the last bus leaves Taksim to return back to South Campus.

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS

- a. There are so many different ways to meet members of the university community. The best way to meet people is by joining one of the many student clubs offered by the University. I joined one of their largest clubs, which was their salsa club. Through the salsa club I met a few of the dancers, and with my dance background I was able to join their performing team that put on show during their Spring Festival. Joining the performing troupe was one of the most memorable and rewarding experiences from my time abroad, because it was with the group where I found my closest friends.
- b. I personally didn't experience any challenges or cultural differences while at Bosphorus University. The University atmosphere was similar to the University of Washington in the sense that it was fairly liberal. Outside of the University bubble is where one might find cultural differences. The only thing that comes to mind is dressing appropriately when visiting any of the mosques in the Old City and to be respectful of the culture.

7. FINANCIAL

- a. It is easy to transfer money from your bank in the US to the University's account in Turkey. The University will give you their bank account number for the transfer. For personal expenses, opening up a temporary bank account in a local bank is also suggested if you choose to carry cash instead of using a credit card.
- b. I stayed in the Superdorm my first semester, which was the dormitory that housed international students. It was around \$3500 and included housing and also food. During my second semester at Bosphorus University I stayed with a relative who lived walking distance from the school so I did not spend as much on food or transportation the second half of my exchange. Transportation with your student pass is much more affordable and will save you a lot of money if you plan to commute by bus, metro, ferry, etcetera.
- c. No unexpected expenses incurred while I was abroad.

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION

IPE administered my exchange and the process was smooth and effective. They did a great job preparing us for our program abroad, and attended to any requests and answered all questions. I really enjoyed the information session that was scheduled for all of the students that would study abroad. It was really nice meeting everyone in advance so faces would become familiar while abroad.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE

This program is suited for anyone who is extremely diligent and hardworking. Anyone that is up for a challenge and is ready to experience the magnificent beauty Istanbul has to offer. Interest in the Near East is not required. It is one of the most unique places in the world where old tradition meets new and east meets west.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE

My experience as an exchange student in Istanbul lived up to everything I expected and more. I had heard quite a bit about Bosphorus University before attending, and it definitely lived up to its reputation of being one the best public universities in Turkey. The main campus is located in a great neighborhood and the campuses are conveniently close to one another. The professors are all very good and do not treat exchange students differently than the Boğaziçi students. The students are all very friendly and the friendships you will make will last you a lifetime.

The city, culture, and its people are so warm, colorful, and joyful. The city is magical and this you will understand when you live there during your time abroad. Each day was truly an adventure and the memories I have from my time abroad I will cherish forever. Amongst all the chaos, drama, and noise, you will find Istanbul to be a city that is mysterious, beautiful, filled with happiness, love, and unconditional hospitality.



Breathtaking view of the Bosphorus taken from Boğaziçi University's South Campus, Istanbul, Turkey

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Direct Exchange to Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey Fall 2008

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1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

There are plenty of hostels (pansiyons) in the city, including in Taksim.

The Superdorm is great for meeting people, but overpriced and poorly managed. I stayed there and had fun and no real problems, but others did have issues with the dorm manager, and the security guards even stole from someone's room. I would try Craigslist Turkey for apartments before committing to the dorm. Beşiktaş (30 minutes by bus and close to Taksim), Levent (15 minutes by bus), Bebek (5 minutes by taxi or 20 minutes walking), Rumelihisarı (by campus), and Etiler (by campus) are good neighborhoods to live in and access the university. Don't live anywhere south of the Golden Horn.

b. If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt?

There is an orientation that is an introduction to the city and school. Registration, like anything bureaucratic in Turkey, is a hassle, but doable. There are lots of other foreign students, just follow their lead. Also, Turkish students are eager to help.

2. ACADEMICS:

a. Please evaluate the instruction you received abroad. Compare the following to the University of

Washington's system:

-classroom structure- Much less discussion in most classes- mostly just the instructor talking.

-instruction- Similar in most ways except that there isn't much flexibility of thought. You want to write what the professor has said and wants to hear.

-teacher/student relations- Instructors are willing to provide extra help and office hours to students.

-grading/exams- It's difficult to know exactly what the professors want sometimes but it was mostly reasonable.

-administration- A totally inefficient hassle, but everyone figures it out.

-library, computer, and classroom facilities- Very nice library with study areas and a café nearby, nice facilities. I would strongly recommend bringing a laptop, but there are some computers available.

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

The professors were clearly knowledgeable and good at teaching, but student expectations were vague. However, I felt like I learned a comparable amount to what I would have learned in UW classes.

c. Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?

International Law- Irene Banias

d. How did your study abroad coursework relate to your UW education?

I was able to take Political Science classes that mostly transferred over directly.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

The Superdorm is great for meeting people, but overpriced and poorly managed. I stayed there and had fun and no real problems, but others did have issues with the dorm manager, and the security guards even stole from someone's room.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

The Superdorm, out of convenience.

c. What would you recommend?

I would try Craigslist Turkey for apartments before committing to the dorm.

Besiktas (30 minutes by bus and close to Taksim), Levant (15 minutes by bus), Bebek (5 minutes by taxi or 20 minutes walking), Rumelihisarustu (by campus), and Etiler (by campus) are good neighborhoods to live in and access the university. Don't live anywhere south of the Golden Horn.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

Etiler is a rich, safe, friendly neighborhood. There is close access to grocery stores, fruit stands, and all kinds of restaurants. Down the road is the historic Rumeli Hisari fortress. The campus overlooks the Bosphorus and provides an amazing view and a great place to sit with friends outside with a late night doner kabab and a couple of

eres beers. There is a university shuttle that goes to Taksim and runs well past 1 AM if you like to go out. Cabs are inexpensive when shared.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Please describe any health or safety concerns (e.g., quality of medical facilities, unsafe districts, theft, etc.) associated with your study abroad experience.

There is a campus clinic that will likely send you to a hospital if you have any serious problems. There is a very low level of crime or even homelessness in the city. I felt safe walking anywhere at any time, but would recommend walking with someone obviously. Lock your laptop in your dorm room and don't leave cash or your passports out in the open, even if the door is locked.

If you're male and a man approaches you in a crowded area like Taksim and offers to buy you drinks or offer you some sort of "Turkish hospitality," don't accept! It's a scam that resulted in two of my friends losing over \$200 and was tried on me as well. As long as you're out in the crowded areas with groups, you're safe, so don't let them take you into any bars or other businesses.

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS:

a. How did you integrate into the culture and meet members of the community?

I played basketball at the gym that's next to the Superdorm and was even able to meet a basketball team captain. I also joined the salsa dancing club. Two friends and I went with a political student group to Ankara as well. It's also pretty easy to meet people through classes.

b. Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them.

There is a degree of anti-Armenian racism that has to do with war, but it's far worse than in any European country.

On busses and in public places, don't talk loud or be overly bombastic. You can expect to get weird looks or even be told to be quiet (I saw this happen to a Nigerian girl on a bus).

Most of the girls I knew were able to dress and act exactly like at home and feel comfortable. This applies to the more liberal cities of Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, etc. In the tourist areas. If you are a woman and travel to other cities or more conservative areas in Istanbul, or the more conservative areas in general, you might have trouble. When we traveled to central Turkey, the hotels wouldn't even let our female traveling companions stay in the same room as the men.

7. FINANCIAL:

a. What is the best way to access/transfer money from the U.S.?

withdraw large amounts of cash from the ATM because usually it's a per-transaction fee. Most ATM's will work. Also, keep in mind currency exchange rate fluctuations.

b. How much spending money do you recommend per month? Please include rent, food, transportation, etc.

if you eat in restaurants, expect to pay at least 30 lira/day for food. Trips on the bus or tram are under 2 lira. A cab from Taksim to Euler is about 15 lira. For rent, refer to the Superdorm rate list or look at some Craigslist ads.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

If you chose to get a student visa (some people get tourist visas and exit and reenter the country, which is technically illegal), expect to pay \$20 for the visa at the border, then \$80 for a residence permit.

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program/exchange, were there any complications?

N/A

If so, how did you address them?

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION:

a. If the IIE/EA administered your program/exchange, please comment on the effectiveness of the office's services. What service could be improved?

compiling some sort of list of courses that will transfer directly to UW courses for credit.

b. If the IIE/EA did not administer your program, please evaluate the program's administration, both in the

U.S. and abroad.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

Please describe the type of student for whom this program is best suited.

99% of the exchange students I was with had a great time. The few who didn't weren't as willing to leave their comfort zone and try new things as the others, and this made them homesick. If you are OK with being away from home and with the fact that you won't be able to see your family, you will have an incredible time.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

my expectations academically were not quite met, but personally they were far surpassed by my experience. It was my best semester of college and probably some of the best months of my life, and I highly recommend it.

JUL 10 2007

Seattle, WA 98105

International Program/ Exchange Evaluation Report
Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey

1.

a. Upon arrival I stayed in a pretty gross but really cheap hostel in Taksim. Instead I would recommend staying in a hostel in Sultanahmet. Better yet, if staying in the Superdorm, students should coordinate their arrival with the move-in date.

b. The orientation covered transportation, and in general oriented us within the city and the university. It however was not very helpful in terms of class registration. However, students made their emails available for questions, which was very helpful.

2.

a. The classroom structure was similar. The style of instruction was different that at UW. All my classes were entirely lecture based with essentially no student participation. Teachers were generally helpful. A couple of my teachers were not completely fluent in English, and it was clear that I made them a little uncomfortable. While the school is almost completely taught in English, the degree to which classes are taught in English varies. In three of my classes discussion was in almost entirely in Turkish. Also, professors often forgot I was there and would naturally shift to Turkish instruction, so I was forced to awkwardly remind them of my presence several times.

Grades were on a letter system only, starting with A/A then A/B and so on. Grades were curved to a C/C, unlike the UW business school where grades are curved to the business school average of a 3.2. Cheating was rampant in several of my classes. My midterm and final in my macroeconomics class was a joke, as at least half the class came early to write the answers on their desks. The administration was often difficult to work with, as besides the international student office, no one really spoke English. It was fine as other students could translate, but it made simple errands much more complicated. Finally, the facilities were on par with those at UW.

b. The instruction I received was mostly good. My macro professor was awesome, my history professor was good as well, despite how blatantly unwelcome she made the foreign students feel. Again, several professors half lectured in Turkish, but besides that the quality of instruction was probably on par with UW.

c. I would not recommend taking upper level economics classes, as the math requirement at Bogazici is much higher than at UW. I was expected to a great deal more calculus than I have ever learned.

d. My coursework related well to my UW education, although it was difficult to find finance classes.

3.

- a. The housing options were to either live in the private dorm, Superdorm, or to find your own housing in the city.
 - b. I chose the Superdorm as it was the easiest option and it was difficult to find housing close to campus. Almost all of the American students stayed there, which was comfortable. However, I am confident that my Turkish would have been much better had I taken the extra time to find an apartment.
 - c. I would recommend trying to find alternative housing to the Superdorm. Most options were a lot cheaper, and because most exchange students stayed in the Superdorm, my Turkish didn't improve as much as I had hoped.
4. The campus was beautiful! It was located about 30 from the center of Istanbul, in between the two nicest neighborhoods. The campus was fairly big and spread out, but there were shuttles in between the different campuses (North Campus, South Campus, Hisar Campus) so it was fine.
5. I had no real health or safety concerns. The first couple of weeks a lot of the Americans did have some bowel type issues probably as a result of the food or water, but it cleared up quickly.
6. I had no real health or safety concerns. Theft was an issue. Every Turkish friend of mine told me to be very careful with my bag, particularly on the tram and in touristy areas. Also Turkish men can be rather aggressive, which at times got a little scary. However, I never had an incident that made me feel truly unsafe.
- 7.
- a. I mostly used my debit card, withdrawing cash from atm machines.
 - b. I would recommend about \$700/ month. This is less than what some people spent, but my roommates and I cooked a lot so most of our meals were cheap.
 - c. I ended up having to change my plane ticket which was an unexpected expense.
 - d. I used financial aid to fund part of my exchange. There was a complication, as my tuition was being waived by the government, however this did not apply to my study abroad program. I found this out a couple months before I left so I was able to work more to cover most of the extra costs, but it was frustrating as no one had mentioned it to me.
- 8.
- a. The office's services were effective enough. The orientation was disappointing as a Turkey orientation was not available after the general study abroad orientation session.
9. This program is best suited for students with some previous Turkish, at least one quarter. It is also suitable for students who will work hard when they study abroad, as they definitely expect a lot from students and the student body is very competitive.
10. I expected less of a need to understand Turkish in class, and I expected my classes to be easier. As far as my personal expectations are concerned, they were greatly exceeded. I made so many Turkish friends and learned so much about Islam and Turkish culture.

Istanbul, Turkey: Bogazici University
2004-2005 Academic Year
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MAY 30 2006

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ ON-SITE ORIENTATION

I strongly recommend staying in the Superdorm. I stayed there, and it made adjusting much, much easier. There are some drawbacks: the heater rages all year long, and can be noisy, you may be stuck with other foreign exchange students instead of Turkish students- but that depends on your preference. I knew some people who stayed in apartments, and travel time to school and back, coupled with high rents and other basic problems were vastly heightened by the stress they were experiencing adjusting to Turkey.

But the orientation offered is a joke. They take you around campus and tell you the names of all the buildings on only one part of campus. For me, it was useless- I didn't remember anything they said. The key is simply to keep in touch with the international programs office if you need help. The office is understaffed, but people there are very kind and helpful.

2. ACADEMICS

The instruction was . . . uh . . . er . . . interesting. I know a lot of different exchange students had different experiences, so maybe my opinion isn't representative. However, I found most of the professors to range from ambivalent to hostile in terms of wanting to help students. The teaching style there is very different from the United States. It is a lot of memorization, and repetition, and on the whole, not very interesting. However, classmates are fabulous there! Students all help each other and band together, often against the teacher :) I did have one fabulous class there, in fact, the best class of my university career, which is now over: it was in the literature department, taught by Professor Antikaoglu. She is absolutely fabulous. If you get a chance, take her class. The Turkish language classes, especially the beginning ones, are great too, and a lot of fun. I strongly suggest that you take them!

Grading there is also really skewed . . . at UW, there is a positive curve in a lot of cases, at Bogazici, it seems as if professors are trying to make you fail a lot of the time. Watch out! :) Facilities in the classrooms are much like here. But, there is one formal computer lab in south campus, and some informal ones in a few of the other buildings. Most of the computers are old and slow, but they work! And they're free to use.

3. HOUSING

As I noted before, as an exchange student, you are allowed only to stay in Superdorm, out of all the dorms. If you don't want to stay there, you can find an apartment, but you will definitely need roommates, if not to share the rent, then to help you around.

I stayed in Superdorm, and roomed with two Turkish girls. It was a great experience as a whole. Superdorm is no panacea, but it's a good option, even though it's a little pricy. The other dorms are not even worth looking at; they stuff students in those rooms like sardines. I heard a lot of horror stories . . . Superdorm is great- they're generally made up of three singles or two single rooms, there is a kitchenette with a sink and a small fridge. But finding cheap appliances (like a hot plate) to fill up the kitchen is no problem, and everyone has them. I strongly suggest staying there.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE

The campus is beautiful!!!!!!! As you walk down to the main campus, you get a breathtaking view of the Bosphorous, and can watch the boats go by all day, and have a perfect view of both of the suspension bridges that connect Asia to Europe. Also, there is a fantastic castle (yes, a real castle) right below campus. Campus is set in a forested area, and there are lots of stray cats and dogs that will always pester you for food. They're pretty cute though.

The surrounding area is rather interesting. Just behind the main entrance to the university is a colorful neighborhood that is notably poorer than the surrounding areas, but there's lots of chickens and interesting looking homes, so it's nice. All the other surrounding areas (Etiler, Bebek, Ucaksavar) are among some of the most high-class shishi neighborhoods of Istanbul. But nevertheless, access to supermarkets, shopping, and all those things are really near and accessible. Also interesting are the gypsies that sell flowers at the main entrance to the school and reside behind Superdorm.

5. SAFETY

Istanbul is very safe. I was never pick pocketed, but my father was, when he visited, so you really need to watch for that. I also worked in some of the poorest neighborhoods when I was there, but felt safe all the time.

In terms of health; don't drink the water. Nobody does there. However, you will have access to it, so you might be sick for the first month or so, but you'll get used to it. Otherwise, there really aren't any other health concerns. OH! But always carry your own tissues because there is rarely any toilet paper in the bathrooms on campus, or in most public areas. You will learn that real quickly.

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS

I felt that I was able to integrate really easily into the culture. Turks, especially your classmates, are extremely friendly, and willing to help out, and very social!! I met most of my friends through school, and I also had the fortune to live with two Turkish girls, so they helped me acclimate really fast.

The only cultural challenges I really faced were learning how to deal with Istanbulis attitudes towards foreigners. There are a lot of tourists there, so you are always automatically assumed to be a tourist, and often, people will be really rude to you. Learn Turkish! That is my best advice- the minute I could get my arms around the language (I didn't speak before I went), I earned a lot more respect from everyone.

7. FINANCIAL

Don't transfer money. Just withdraw large amounts from the ATMs and keep it at home (to cut down on non-bank ATM withdrawal charges). I think you can easily get on 200 Lira per month, if you shop smart, and bargain bargain bargain! (Outside of rent and tuition of course). Public transportation is good (three types: buses, tramway, metro) and expanding. Make sure you get a government issued Akbil to ride the buses- students pay about 60 cents per ride with the Akbil. There were no unexpected expenses for me, and I didn't hear of anyone experiencing that either.

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION

The IPE office did administer my exchange, and it was fine. I have no complaints; I had a lot of confusion in terms of clearing up credits, and deciding which classes to choose while I was in Turkey, but a few emails to advisors cleared that up.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE

If you are looking for an exchange in a completely non-western, exotic setting, this will satisfy you 75 percent. That's what I was looking for, but was shocked at how westernized Istanbul is, at least, at first site. Also, you must be willing to be adventurous, and at times very aggressive to live in Istanbul. It's a huge confusing city, and can be very rough at times. It's very fast-paced, dirty, complex, and crazy most of the time. If that sounds like a lot to handle, I don't suggest it to you. But, on the whole, I think, if you have the patience for dealing with a lot of bureaucracy, and keep an open mind, the experience is really fabulous.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Go!!!! I loved it. I had gone with a lot of set expectations, but I think that most of them were not necessarily fulfilled- but I came away with many other unexpected fruits, so it made it extremely worthwhile.

In terms of academics, I was really disappointed. I had heard that the school was fabulous, and, with the exception of a few classes, I did not feel that way at all. But it really depends on the department you are in (I studied in Political Science). But to be honest, that didn't really matter to me at all; the experience of living and surviving in Istanbul was so exciting and fascinating that I was intellectually stimulated by life itself and hence didn't need school.

IP&E PROGRAM EVALUATION OUTLINE:

SEP 10 2015

-Please list your name, program location, term/year of participation, and your current and permanent phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses at the top of your report.

SEP 10 2015

Name:

Program Location: Bogazici University in Istanbul, Turkey

Year of Participation: 2014-5 Academic Year

E-mail:

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

Avoid campus housing (i.e. "Superdorm"), as it's overpriced and far less comfortable than the apartments which can be found in the Rumelihisari area, where the university is located. Rooms are between \$200-300 a month, and leasing tenants can be found on Craigslist (search for Rumelihisari, Hisarustu, Hisar, or other variations) or on a Facebook group dedicated to this purpose. All tenants charge small premiums, do not believe yourself to be exploited. One can arrange temporary housing with Airbnb.com while searching for a permanent residence.

b. If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt?

The orientation was brief. It introduced some key details about life in Istanbul and on campus, how the school operated, and brief cultural tips. By orientation many of us had already been in the city for a couple of weeks.

2. ACADEMICS:

a. Please evaluate the instruction you received abroad. Compare the following to the University of Washington's system:

- classroom structure: Classes were typically the same size. A typical course had a two-hour and one-hour lecture per week. Language courses were more intensive.

- instruction: Always in English, all instructors are fluent. Many students are not, and sometimes speak Turkish to convey their thoughts. Lectures are typically straightforward, with less emphasis on visuals and other media.

- teacher/student relations: Slightly more formal than at UW. Personal interaction possible at office hours. Few instructors are on a first-name basis, particularly outside of language courses.

- grading/exams: Significantly more difficult than UW, particularly in Turkish history courses. Bogazici uses a European, not American standard and there is no grade inflation. It is normal for half the class to fail an exam. Many can do well, but it requires much work.

- administration: Many do not speak English. Often less helpful than one would like. Not terribly efficient as well. There are departmental advisors, but availability is an issue.

- library, computer, and classroom facilities: Library is generally crowded, like Odegaard, as are computer labs. Classrooms are much like at UW.

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

Instruction is typically quite good, and they cover content quite comprehensively. The exams fairly reflect course content.

c. Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?

Turkish language, naturally. Ceyda Arslan-Kechriotis and Niko Kontovas are excellent instructors. I also recommend Sevtap Demirci's courses in modern Turkish history, and the Turkish history courses taught by Devin Terziolgu, Meltem Toksoz and Noemi Levy-Aksu, though these are very challenging.

d. How did your study abroad coursework relate to your UW education?

(OVER)

As a NELC and History major focusing on Turkish and Ottoman studies, I chose courses that would give me additional experience in the field.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

The university offered campus housing, and there were many students and others in the city who sublet apartments to foreign students.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

I chose to sublet, as this option was superior to the dorms in every aspect.

c. What would you recommend?

Oh, the dorms, of course. If more students stopped letting Alma Mater and Pater do everything for them we'd put a lot of poor cleaning ladies and receptionists out of work.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

The main campus is divided into three areas, most students will attend classes in the North and South campuses, which are divided by the community itself, a somewhat lively area full of apartment blocks and small businesses catering to the students. It looks impoverished, but is quite safe. There is Metro access.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Please describe any health or safety concerns (e.g., quality of medical facilities, unsafe districts, theft, etc.) associated with your study abroad experience.

Smoking is everywhere outdoors. There are unsafe areas in Istanbul, but these are far from campus, in the city center. This is notable, as many do go to Taksim and surrounding areas for the nightlife. Theft is rare. Women should note, especially if they are clearly foreign-looking, that they will be subject to occasional harassment by amorous Turkish men, though their overtures, if unwanted, are usually deflected with a polite rejection. However, sexual assault and abduction is not unheard of.

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS:

a. How did you integrate into the culture and meet members of the community?
(e.g., clubs, sports, extracurricular activities, pubs, etc.)

I am conversant in Turkish, and talked to people when I could. Like in America, you can easily get acquainted with others over beer and cigarettes.

b. Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them.
(e.g., gender issues, social etiquette, stereotypes, etc.)

Istanbul is pretty westernized, what differences do exist are often hard to perceive, much less describe, and when one does encounter such differences, it's easy to follow the natives' example.

7. FINANCIAL:

a. What is the best way to access/transfer money from the U.S.?

ATM's are plentiful. It would be foolish to bring a significant amount of cash with you.

b. How much spending money do you recommend per month? Please include rent, food, transportation, etc.

It is completely possible to live comfortably with \$500 a month (Around 1300-1500 TL) for all expenses.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

While traveling, either in the city or out, I incurred many transportation-related expenses I did not expect. I can think of few other examples.

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program/exchange, were there any complications?
If so, how did you address them?

I had no complications.

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION:

- a. If the IP&E administered your program/exchange, please comment on the effectiveness of the office's services. What service could be improved?

I encountered a significant amount of difficulty arranging my residence permit because of new regulations made by the Turkish government IP&E was unprepared for. I would advise closer communication with the necessary Turkish authorities.

- b. If the IP&E did not administer your program, please evaluate the program's administration, both in the U.S. and abroad.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

Please describe the type of student for whom this program is best suited.

A serious, talented student who is capable of maintaining his or her current GPA even under raised standards. I would suggest a student who is actually interested in Turkey and can speak the language with at least limited proficiency. Sadly, this was not a profile the matched most American students I met while at Bogazici.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

While my expectations were perfectly met in regards to Turkish history, my hopes to further my study of Turkish language were not fully realized, as the advanced level courses were split into two groups, one which was too difficult for me, and the other which had to be canceled. However, I managed to see much more of the country than I imagined was possible.