

TURKEY

Summer, Short-Term, and Academic Year



2012-2013 Program Guide



LINKS TO CONTENT

Your UCEAP Network

- Local UCEAP Support 1
- UCEAP Online 2
- Study Centers Abroad 2

Academic Information

- University Information 4
- Program Descriptions 4
- Summer - Boğaziçi University 4
- Immersion - Turkey Universities 5
 - Bilkent University 5
 - Boğaziçi University 5
 - Koç University 6
 - Middle East Technical University (METU) 6
- Course Information 7
 - Course Availability 7
 - Language of Instruction 7
 - Language Study Requirements 8
 - Registration 8
 - Early Exams 9
 - Internships and Field Study 9
 - Grades 9
- Academic Culture 10

Cultural Awareness

- Educate Yourself 11
- Getting Settled 13
- Social Conduct 13
 - Turkish Culture 13
 - Relationships 14
 - Avoiding Harassment 14
 - Head Scarves 14
- Improve Your Language Skills 15

Arrival & Orientation

- Travel Documents 16
 - Visa Requirements 16
 - Residence Permit (Bilkent, Boğaziçi, Koç and METU Immersion Programs) 16
 - Photos 16
- Packing Tips 17
 - Climate 17
 - Clothing 18
 - Computers and Appliances 18
 - Gifts 18
 - Insurance 18
- Travel to Turkey 19
 - Financial Aid Students 19
 - Arrival 20
 - Early Arrival 20

- Orientation 21

Local Transportation

- Travel around Turkey 22
- Return Travel 22

Financial Information

- Understanding Your Finances 23
- MyEAP Student Account 23
- UCEAP Student Budget 23
- Handling Money Abroad 24

Communications Abroad

- Mail 25
- Phone 25
- Computer Access & Use 26

Housing & Meals

- Boğaziçi Housing 27
- Bilkent Housing 27
- Koç Housing 28
- METU Housing 28
- Off-campus Housing 29
- Meals 29
 - Vegetarians and Vegans 30

Extracurricular Activities

- Get Involved 31

Health

- Insurance 32
- Pre-existing Health Conditions 32
- Prescription Medication 32
- Preventing Illness 32
- On-Site Health Care 33
- Accessibility 33

Safety

- Your Role in Minimizing Risks 34
- Street Crime 34
- Campus Safety 35
- Terrorism 35
- Civil Unrest 35
- Traffic and Transportation 35
- Travel Advisories & Smart Traveler Registration 36
- Natural Disasters 36
- Fire Safety 37
- Emergency Contacts 37
 - What Is an Emergency? 37
 - In an Emergency 37

The University of California, in accordance with applicable Federal and State law and University policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy,* disability, age, medical condition (cancer-related), ancestry, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran. The University also prohibits sexual harassment. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities. Inquiries regarding the University's student-related nondiscrimination policies may be directed to the campus Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action office.

*Pregnancy includes pregnancy, childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth.



▶ Scan to get this guide on your Smartphone.

YOUR UCEAP NETWORK

Local UCEAP Support

Campus EAP Office

The Campus EAP Office coordinates recruitment, student selection, orientations, and academic advising; and serves as your primary contact during the application process.

UCEAP Systemwide Office

The UCEAP Systemwide Office establishes and operates programs and coordinates UCEAP administration for all UC campuses from its headquarters in Goleta, California. You will work closely with the following Systemwide Office staff:

Program Advisors provide academic and operational program information to you and your campus as well as administrative support for all aspects of your participation.

Operations Specialists manage the logistics of the program. They coordinate document requirements, visa application instructions, health and safety precautions, acceptance and placement by host institutions, arrival and on-site orientation, and housing arrangements.

Academic Specialists advise on academic policies, review courses taken abroad for UC credit, and document your registration, grades, petitions and academic records.

Student Finance Accountants assist primarily with UCEAP statements, program fee collection, and financial aid disbursements (in conjunction with your campus Financial Aid Office).

Contact Information

Operations Specialist

Michelle Bobro

Phone: (805) 893-3246; E-mail: mbobro@eap.ucop.edu

Academic Specialist

Lisa Read

Phone: (805) 893-2810; E-mail: lread@eap.ucop.edu

Program Advisor

Liam Brenner

Phone: (805) 893-3246; E-mail: lbrenner@eap.ucop.edu

Student Finance Accountant

Whitney Coats

Phone: (805) 893-2648; E-mail: studentfinance@eap.ucop.edu

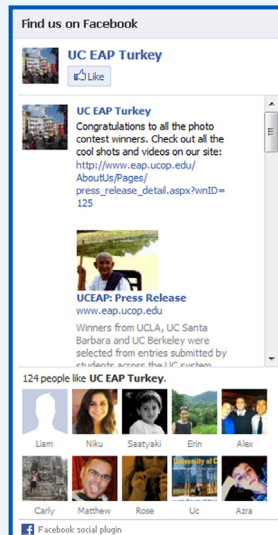
UCEAP Systemwide Office

6950 Hollister Avenue, Suite 200

Goleta, CA 93117-5823

Phone: (805) 893-4762; Fax: (805) 893-2583

- **Join the Conversation!**
Meet fellow UCEAP participants and alumni on Facebook.



UCEAP Online

Bookmark your **Participants** program page. This resource lists requirements and policies you need to know before you go abroad, including your Predeparture Checklist, *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*, Program Calendar, UCEAP Student Budgets, and payment instructions.

Connect with us! Join our Facebook network via the **UCEAP Turkey page**.

Study Centers Abroad

UCEAP programs in Turkey are overseen on-site by faculty Liaison Officers at each university. Staff advise students on academic matters, assist with housing, and provide information on cultural events.

Boğaziçi University

Office of International Relations
Bebek 34342 Istanbul, Turkey

Phone: (011-90-212) 359-7421/7078 (Summer Program)

Phone: (011-90-212) (Term/Year Program)

Fax: (011-90-212) 265-3248 (All Programs)

Mr. Taner Bilgic, UCEAP Liaison Officer

E-mail: taner@boun.edu.tr

Mr. Kaan Emirhan, Foreign Student Advisor, (Summer Program)

E-mail: summer@boun.edu.tr

Ms. Ece Gunay, Assistant International Relations Coordinator
(Term/Year Program)

E-mail: ece.gunay@boun.edu.tr

Ms. Jana Stolarikova, Incoming Exchange Students
(Term/Year Program)

E-mail: jana.stolarikova@boun.edu.tr

Bilkent University

Exchange Programs, Bilkent University
Registrar's Building
Bilkent University
06533 Ankara, Turkey

Phone: (011-90-312) 266-4128 (or 4132 or 2435)

Professor Erol Arkun, UCEAP Liaison Officer

E-mail: arkun@bilkent.edu.tr

Ms. Aysegül Basol, Institutional Coordinator of Exchange Programs

E-mail: abasol@bilkent.edu.tr

Ms. Ceren Genç, Assistant Coordinator

E-mail: cereng@bilkent.edu.tr

Koç University

International Programs Office
Students' Center Building
Rumeli Feneri Yolu, Sariyar 34450
Istanbul, Turkey

Dr. Bilgen Bilgin, UCEAP Liaison Officer

Ms. Ayse Inan, Director
E-mail: ayinan@ku.edu.tr

Ms. Burcu Albayrak, Exchange Programs Coordinator
E-mail: balbayrak@ku.edu.tr

Middle East Technical University

Study Abroad Office
Rektörlük Room 504
Middle East Technical University
06531 Ankara, Turkey

Phone: (011-90-312) 210-4112 (or 2298)

E-mail: intlstud@metu.edu.tr

Dr. Aysegul Daloglu, UCEAP Liaison Officer

E-mail: daloglu@metu.edu.tr

Ms. Pinar Dede Isikman, Coordinator, Study Abroad Office (SAO)

E-mail: dede@metu.edu.tr

Ms. Esra Akgul, Assistant Coordinator

E-mail: esrak@metu.edu.tr

Phone Number Codes

U.S. international code 011

(dial this to call from the U.S.)

Turkey country code 90

Ankara city code 312

Istanbul city code 212

Approximate time difference:

Add 10 hours

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“ My professor advises political leaders in the European Union and around the world, so having a class with her was a huge opportunity.

”

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Please see the [Academic Information](#) chapter of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad* for critical academic information and policies, including unit requirements, taking less than the program requirements, the MyEAP Study List registration process, changing courses, petitions, and grades. While abroad, direct all academic questions to the faculty Liaison Officers and/or international office staff, with one exception: direct any questions regarding satisfying home department degree or major requirements through UCEAP coursework to your home UC department or college advisor.

University Information

Visit the [Our Programs](#) page on the UCEAP website to learn more about your host university.

Program Descriptions

UCEAP programs in Turkey provide rich opportunities for students in many fields, including archaeology, art and architectural history, Near Eastern studies, religious and Islamic studies, political science, and international relations. Instruction is (with a few exceptions) offered in English, although Turkish is usually the language of social and informal conversations.

Programs offered:

- Summer - Boğaziçi University (Istanbul)
- Immersion (Fall/Spring/Year) - Bilkent University (Ankara)
- Immersion (Fall/Spring/Year) - Boğaziçi University (Istanbul)
- Immersion (Fall/Spring/Year) - Koç University (Istanbul)
- Immersion (Fall/Spring/Year) - Middle East Technical University (Ankara)

Summer - Boğaziçi University

In this intensive seven-week program, you'll choose three classes from a wide range of courses in the social and natural sciences, history, language, engineering, education, and the arts. A course in History of the Turkish Republic is offered for international students. The program allows you to pursue personal academic interests while discovering and interacting with Turkish culture, society, and history.

Intensive Turkish language classes are also offered during the summer. These include Elementary and Intermediate Turkish for Foreigners I and Advanced Reading in Turkish for Foreigners I. Language study is not a program requirement, but you are encouraged to take Turkish language courses. Although English is the language of instruction, most social interaction is in Turkish.

A full listing of summer courses is available on the [Boğaziçi Summer Term](#) website.

You are required to take a full-time course of study while abroad and enroll in a total of 13.5 UC quarter units. No more than one of your three courses may be taken on a pass/no pass basis.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

Researching at the host university's library provided access to many Middle Eastern and Arabic texts not readily available at UC.

”

Immersion - Turkey Universities

Bilkent University

You have access to all fields of instruction. Of particular note are offerings in the Department of Archaeology and History of Art. This department offers opportunities to study the archaeology of Anatolia, the Ancient Near East, and the Mediterranean, as well as the history of art from the Byzantine period to the 20th century.

The curriculum includes practical and classroom work. You will have access to museums and archaeological sites as well as opportunities to participate in excavations at central Anatolian and classical sites. Access to local archives and original documents provides a unique experience in Near Eastern or Ottoman history and related majors. Individual faculties may arrange summer internships.

Students in international relations and political science will find many courses relating to current political and security issues in the Middle East, the Balkans, and Central Asian republics. Courses in Turkish are available for international staff and students. A course in Turkish culture and literature is available for students who have an intermediate knowledge of Turkish.

Bilkent also offers strong academic opportunities in the Faculty of Engineering, specifically in the departments of Computer Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, and Industrial Engineering. Areas of focus include artificial intelligence, database management, graphics, parallel processing, computer networking, software engineering, materials science and engineering, and thermodynamics.

Bilkent has excellent library and computing facilities. All students receive computer system accounts that allow for Internet access and e-mail. Many computer laboratories are open 24 hours a day. There is also Internet access from student dorms. You will have full access to student clubs and athletic facilities.

Boğaziçi University

You have access to all fields of instruction in a wide variety of disciplines in the arts and sciences, education, engineering, and social sciences. Natural and applied sciences and engineering and technology programs are particularly strong. The Faculty of Arts and Sciences includes chemistry, physics, molecular biology and genetics, while the Faculty of Engineering includes chemical, civil, computer, electrical and electronic, industrial, and mechanical engineering.

The Faculty of Arts and Sciences also includes history, mathematics, philosophy, psychology, and sociology. Their department of Western Languages and Literatures includes a wide range of courses in English and American literature, drama, and poetry, as well as creative writing and linguistics. The Turkish Language and Literature Department offers Turkish language courses for exchange students. Grammar courses are taught at the elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels. Reading courses are offered for intermediate and advanced level students. Additional faculties are the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences (economics, management, and political science and international relations), the Faculty of Education, the School of Applied Disciplines, and the School of Foreign Languages.

Boğaziçi has excellent library and computing facilities. All students have access to computers in the library and in computer labs around campus. There is also Internet access from student dorms. You will have full access to student clubs and athletic facilities.

Koç University

You have access to all fields of instruction. Koç offers excellent opportunities to study the archaeology of Anatolia, the Ancient Near East, and the Mediterranean, and art from the Early Christian and Byzantine period to the 20th century through courses offered in the Department of Archaeology and History of Art. Practical work complements lectures, and students have the opportunity to participate in excavations. Another highlight is the range of courses relating to current political and security issues in the Middle East, the Balkans, and the Central Asian Republics, particularly appropriate for students in international relations and political science.

Koç's liberal arts model—requiring its own students to complete a comprehensive core liberal arts program alongside their major discipline—results in a wide variety of additional courses available. Other strong departments at Koç include business/economics, comparative literature, media studies, and engineering. A course in Turkish culture and literature is available for students with an intermediate knowledge of Turkish.

Koç has excellent library facilities, featuring wireless connectivity for laptop users. All students receive My.KU accounts that allow for easy file access and integration into campus life. There is also wireless Internet access from student dorms. You will have full access to student clubs and athletic facilities.

Middle East Technical University (METU)

You will have access to all fields of instruction. Of particular note at METU are academic opportunities in the departments of Architecture and Regional and City Planning (including landscape design), which offer excellent courses examining Ankara's history, cultural differences in the use of space, and the geological factors involved in the use of space.

METU also offers strong academic opportunities in the faculties of Engineering and Science. Among these are the departments of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics; and Aeronautical, Chemical, Civil, Computer, Electrical, Environmental, Food, Geological, Industrial, Mechanical, Metallurgical and Materials, Mining, and Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering.

Courses in Islamic thought and its implications for politics, education, and women's studies are available in the departments of Philosophy, Sociology, and Political Science. Students in international relations and political science will find numerous courses relating to current political and security issues in the Middle East, the Balkans, and the Central Asian Republics. METU also offers a two-semester course in beginning Turkish and a one-semester course titled Contemporary Turkey: Politics and Policies, which covers socio-political aspects of Turkey for visiting students.

The interdisciplinary, graduate-level archaeometry program conducts education and research activities in the application of scientific methods to archaeological research. This program allows students to participate in restoration and conservation projects. METU has specialists in the history of Islamic, Greek, Roman, and Byzantine art and architecture, and an archaeological museum housing material discovered on its own grounds. An excavation in the early 1960s revealed evidence of continual habitation of the area since the 6th century BCE.

METU has excellent library and computing facilities. You will have access to computers and e-mail, both in your department and in public computer rooms located on campus. Computer rooms are also located in some of the dormitories.

Course Information

While studying in Turkey during the academic year, you are required to take a full-time course of study and enroll in a minimum of five courses for a total of 22.5 UC quarter units each term. Units are converted by multiplying the Turkish semester units by 1.5.

Course Availability

Although you have a great deal of flexibility in planning your courses, keep in mind that Turkish students generally follow a more rigid degree structure. In many majors, Turkish students may not be allowed to take any electives until their junior year. Even then, students are often required to choose most electives from within their own major and may only be allowed to choose one elective per semester from a closely related field. While these regulations do not apply to you, they will impact course availability; courses that are required for the Turkish student majors are far more likely to be offered each year. Elective offerings are much more variable; only a small percentage of the total elective options listed in the catalog may be offered in any given semester and some may be offered infrequently, if at all. Take this into account when planning your course options and identify multiple backup courses in the event that your first choices are not offered.

To determine which courses are required (and most likely to be offered each year) and which are elective (offered more variably), consult your host university's current online catalogs.

Language of Instruction

The language of instruction in each university is English, with very few exceptions. Music classes (which are Western, classical music, not ethnic or folk music) may be taught only in Turkish. The other typical exception is foreign language classes, which are often taught in Turkish. (Often they cannot be taught in English, since Turkish students, the majority in the class, would then have to learn a new language in a foreign language. If you plan to study a foreign language at your host university and are concerned about the language of instruction, communicate directly with the faculty Liaison Officers and/or international office staff for details about the language classes you hope to attend. Keep in mind, however, that faculty members change, new classes are added, other classes are dropped, and there is no way to maintain an updated list class-by-class.

It is highly recommended that you introduce yourself to the instructor as an exchange student at the beginning of the class to ensure he or she is aware that non-Turkish students are in the class.

Other than the above exceptions, if a class is being taught in Turkish, you may ask the faculty Liaison Officers and/or international office to request instruction in English on your behalf. All universities publicize that their instruction is in English, so do not hesitate to request this accommodation if necessary. See the [Academic Culture](#) section for more discussion on this topic.

Language Study Requirements

All immersion students must attend a mandatory host university orientation, which includes basic Turkish. Generally, the orientations for fall semester and academic year students include more Turkish instruction than that for spring semester students.

All immersion students (except those who demonstrate fluency in Turkish) must take a Turkish language course in their first term (fall for fall semester and academic year students; spring for spring semester students). This course earns 4.5 UC quarter units and, depending on the university, may be called Beginning Turkish, Turkish as a Second Language, or similar. The Liaison Officer and/or international office staff will direct you to the correct course. The Turkish course may be taken as a letter grade or as P/NP.

Year participants may continue Turkish instruction in the spring semester, along with four additional courses. Those who do not take a Turkish language course during the spring term must still enroll in five courses totaling 22.5 quarter units.

Registration

In addition to registering at your host university, you must also complete your MyEAP Registration Study List. The faculty Liaison Officer and/or international office staff will guide you through this process and advise you of deadlines for course changes and petitions, with some assistance from the UCEAP Systemwide Academic Specialist for Turkey. Be sure to read all e-mails regarding the registration process and review your final Study List carefully, as it determines how your Turkish courses will appear on your UC transcript.

Previous students have registered for graduate courses in certain areas (with permission from the instructor and the department, and with a UCEAP General Petition indicating that you have the required background) and have found this provides an enjoyable challenge.

Boğaziçi University (Summer Term)

Registration occurs prior to departure. You will be e-mailed instructions plus a username and password to pre-register via an online system (OBİKAS). Expect to receive the e-mail early to mid-May.

Boğaziçi University (Immersion)

You will be assigned an academic advisor by the international office, which is responsible for the registration of all exchange students upon arrival. After orientation, you will register for courses just before and during the first week of classes. You may need to be flexible, since class times and enrollment limits may change. Some prerequisites will require approval by your academic advisor.

Koç University

You will be assigned to an academic advisor at the time of acceptance. Students make their final course selections with the help of their designated academic advisor after arrival. You will register for courses during the first week of classes. Some courses may have pre-requisites which require approval by your academic advisor.

Bilkent and METU

Turkish students register for classes online, but this system is not offered to UCEAP and other visiting international students. You will register for classes during orientation in Turkey. Registration requires visits to multiple departments and offices for permission and signatures from instructors, especially if you decide to change courses from initial selections or wish to take graduate-level courses. The process can seem chaotic, particularly since it takes place during the first couple of weeks when you are not yet familiar with the campus and the system. UCEAP participants emphasize that it is important to avoid undue stress during registration; though it can seem disorganized at the time, it generally works out fine in the end, especially when you have multiple backup course choices in mind before coming to Turkey.

In general, you may register for any courses for which you meet prerequisites (if applicable) and in which space is available, although in some cases courses are restricted to majors in the field or have limited availability.

Early Exams

The fall semester ends in mid-January at all Turkish universities. If you wish to return to UC in late December for winter quarter or spring semester, be flexible with your course choices, discuss early exam options with instructors at the beginning of the semester, and be willing to change your course selections if a particular instructor is unable or unwilling to make such arrangements. Since the arrangements must be negotiated with individual instructors and departments after arrival in Turkey, they cannot be guaranteed in advance.

The ultimate decision for early exams is the professor's. If a professor does not allow early exams, neither the Liaison Officer/International Office staff nor UCEAP can influence that decision. Keep in mind also that even if you personally leave early, the official program end date is still mid-January, and your finals may or may not be graded until all other students have completed their work in January.

Internships and Field Study

- ▶ You may volunteer for work at local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and schools.

In the summer after the academic year, there may also be opportunities to participate in archaeological excavations at historic sites. The projects may be run by university departments; or department teachers may be prominent members of another institution's project; or a project may request student workers from a specific university; or an excavation may not fit into any of these categories but is open to students. Due to the vast number of opportunities, all students who want a place have been able to find one. You must submit your application in the fall to work the following summer due to Ministry of Culture and Tourism application deadlines. The UCEAP Liaison Officers can assist with the application process. Bring a résumé and letter(s) of reference with you to Turkey if you are interested in applying for these opportunities. Spring semester students wanting to participate may contact the UCEAP Liaison Officers in early fall to submit an application for the following summer.

Grades

For information about grades, see the [Academic Information](#) chapter of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

Most of the professors were fluent English speakers; many of mine were American or British, in fact. The students were also English speakers, although many of them were reluctant to use it or were less rehearsed in casual, conversational English.

The standard of English varies according to the department.

What I found is that if a teacher speaks a lot of Turkish in the classroom, he or she will compensate by personally working with the foreign student, or by giving the foreign student more leeway in completing assignments or coursework.

”

Academic Culture

Education in Turkey is organized and supervised by the Ministry of National Education. In addition, the Council of Higher Education acts as an independent coordinating body for public and private universities.

The typical Turkish high school graduate has received 11 years of formal schooling. A set curriculum is used across the country. There are few elective classes in secondary education, although efforts are underway to increase the flexibility of the curriculum. About one-quarter of students who graduate from secondary educational institutions take the centralized University Entrance Examination, and only a small percentage of those are accepted into four-year universities. Bilkent, Boğaziçi, Koç, and METU are among the highest-ranked of Turkey's universities, enrolling the top students in the country.

Teaching practices and grading are similar to those used in the U.S. The majority of the teaching staff are full-time university faculty. Many have received advanced training in the U.S. and in Europe. Regular faculty members teach most undergraduate courses and hold regular office hours. In addition, faculty mentors may be available for UC students. Graduate assistants usually supervise labs.

English is the language of instruction. All Turkish students are required to either meet English proficiency requirements at the time of admission or undertake preparatory English coursework prior to being allowed into regular university classes. University regulations stipulate that all lectures and readings must be in English.

For the vast majority of students and faculty, English is the formal, academic language, whereas Turkish is the social and informal language. Turkish is often used in addition to English in the academic setting. Professors will lecture in English but Turkish students may, for example, ask questions or engage in discussion in Turkish during class, and professors may occasionally answer questions or clarify points in Turkish. Discussion sections may be held in Turkish, but must be held in English if any students request it. A few professors may not follow university policy and may lecture mostly or entirely in Turkish, especially when there are no foreign students in the class, but this is rare. In these cases, the professor will usually switch to English if he or she is aware that there is an international student in the class. In some classes where the professor teaches entirely in English, lectures may proceed at a somewhat slow pace if the majority of students in class do not have strong English-language skills. (This can be the case particularly in first- or second-year classes.)

UCEAP participants recommend approaching professors individually at the beginning of the semester and introducing yourself as a foreign student. Professors who use some Turkish in class or allow student discussion in Turkish will usually make an effort to minimize this if they know that there are native English speakers in class. The International/Exchange Office may often have good advice on how to interact with faculty and classmates in and out of the classroom. Do not hesitate to go to them if you are having difficulties with this or any other academic issues.

All universities in Turkey participate in the SOCRATES/ERASMUS programs of the European Union for student and staff mobility among nations. Numbers of incoming international students have increased at all universities in Turkey.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

Hang out and go places with Turkish students, relax, and try to understand local beliefs. Learning Turkish was the biggest obstacle for me in assimilating into the culture.

”

CULTURAL AWARENESS

Educate Yourself

Get acquainted with your new host city, country, and culture before you leave the U.S. Travel guides and travel-related websites, such as [Lonely Planet](#) and [Urban Lowdown](#), are excellent resources.

Keep up with current events by reading articles in newspapers, magazines, and journals. A good video, available in the UC library, is *Conversations Across the Bosphorus*.

You will also need to understand the local culture and history. These sources should help you prepare before departure.

Recommended Books

Ahmad, Feroz	<i>The Making of Modern Turkey</i> , New York: Routledge, 1993.
Çelik, Zeynep	<i>The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century</i> , Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
Cross, Toni & Gary Leiser	<i>A Brief History of Ankara</i> , 1st edition, Vacaville: Indian Ford Press, 2000. (The only such book in English.)
Davis, Fanny	<i>The Ottoman Lady: A Social History from 1718 to 1918</i> , Westport: Greenwood Press, 1986.
Fisher, Sydney Nettleton & William Ochsenwald	<i>The Middle East: A History</i> , 6th edition, Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004.
Freely, John	<i>Istanbul: The Imperial City</i> , New York: Penguin, 1998.
Gates, Charles	<i>Turkish-English, English-Turkish Dictionary and Phrasebook</i> , New York: Hippocrene Books, 2002.
Kemal, Yaşar	<i>Anatolian Tales</i> , translated by Thilda Kemal, New York: Dodd, Mead, 1969 (Turkey's best-known "village" novelist); <i>Memed, My Hawk</i> , translated by Edouard Roditi, New York Review Books, 2005.
Kesaba, Reşat	<i>The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: The Nineteenth Century</i> , Albany: SUNY Press, 1988.
Keyder, Çağlar	<i>State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development</i> , New York: Verso, 1987.
Kinzer, Stephen	<i>Crescent and Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds</i> , New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2008.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

There was a lot of Turkish spoken on and around campus; just go with the flow. It'll take some adjustment.

”

- Lewis, Bernard *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 3rd edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002; *Istanbul and the Civilization of the Ottoman Empire*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963.
- Lewis, Raphaela *Everyday Life in Ottoman Turkey*, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1971.
- Mango, Andrew *Atatürk*, Woodstock: Overlook Press, 2000.
- McDowall, David *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 3rd edition, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2004.
- Nesin, Aziz & Joseph S. Jacobson, trans. *Istanbul Boy: Böyle Gelmiş, Böyle Gitmez (that's how it was but not how it's going to be): The Autobiography of Aziz Nesin*, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 1977. (Turkey's most famous writer of "humor" describes his boyhood.)
- Nesin, Aziz and Talat Halman, trans. *The Tales of Nasrettin Hoca*, Istanbul: Dost Yayinlari, 1988. (A personal telling of an old story tradition.)
- Pamuk, Orhan & Victoria Holbrook, trans. *The White Castle: A Novel*, New York: Vintage Books, 1998. (Turkey's best-known modern novelist.)
- Seal, Jeremy *A Fez of the Heart: Travels Around Turkey in Search of a Hat*, San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1996.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“ Openness to new things is a must and understanding that not everyone is or has to be like us. Go with a mindset to learn new things.

Be prepared for bureaucracy at every turn.

People here don't like to say 'no' directly if they don't have to, so they'll try to talk around something or get you to do something differently rather than flat out turn you down.

”

Getting Settled

Summer Program

Since summer classes begin right away, you may find cultural adjustment to be difficult. Discuss any issues you may have with staff at the International Office. They are experienced in working with international students and will have good advice for you. Summer participants do not report much trouble finding activities to enjoy; you will have easy access to all the attractions of cosmopolitan Istanbul.

Semester and Year Programs

UCEAP students have commented that the first couple of weeks in Turkey can be both exhilarating and difficult. The orientation period is busy and full of activities, excursions, Turkish language lessons, meetings, and opportunities to become acquainted with Turkish host students as well as international students from around the world who have come to study in Turkey. However, it is also a time when most Turkish students are still on vacation and many university services (dormitory phones, computer labs, libraries, many of the restaurants, etc.) may still be closed or curtailed for the summer.

Course registration, which takes place at the end of orientation, can also seem confusing and chaotic. And of course, you are going through many adjustments to culture, language, food, and an entirely new environment. UCEAP students suggest that it is important to keep this time in perspective and recognize that things will settle into a routine once the regular semester starts.

Social Conduct

Drugs are prohibited and punishment is strictly enforced. Driving while drinking is a punishable offense. Alcohol is not permitted on campus. Religious proselytizing is also forbidden by law.

Turkish Culture

Many UCEAP students find Turkish culture a fascinating though sometimes confusing blend of seemingly contrasting elements. While 99 percent of the population is Muslim, and Islam is a strong influence on Turkish history, culture, and daily life, Turkey is officially and firmly a secular state.

Formal courtesy and hospitality are central components of Turkish culture, yet bureaucratic regulations can be frustrating when dealing with any aspect of Turkish officialdom.

You can prepare for this by learning as much as possible about Turkish culture prior to departure by reading, talking to returned students, seeking out Turkish students and faculty on your campus, and being prepared for the unexpected and frustrations after arrival.

Also note that Turkey, although not an ethnically homogeneous country, has very little immigration from East and Southeast Asia or Africa. UC students of African, Asian, and Pacific Islander backgrounds in particular may frequently find themselves the object of stares and comments. This attention has been described as annoying, but not physically threatening. Throughout Turkey you will be approached by people of all ages who simply want to speak English.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

I think the hardest thing to accept was the stares; if you look even a little different people want to stare at you.

Turks are very proud of their culture and history; remember that you're there to learn.

Don't expect everyone to be wearing a scarf or women to be covered up (in fact women can't wear a headscarf at the university or if they work in a government office). At Bilkent and in most big cities (Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara) women are as Western (in custom and dress) as any UC student.

”

Turkish law significantly restricts criticism of Turkish political figures and institutions, particularly the founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. It is currently a crime in Turkey to insult or deface statues and images of Ataturk or the Turkish flag, including its use on clothing. Turkish authorities enforce these laws vigorously.

Relationships

Both male and female UCEAP students should not expect to date in the American sense. Male students in some countries have found themselves expected to marry the person they are dating. Female students have found their “dates” to have a different expectation of the purpose of the date and have had difficulties in resolving the misunderstanding.

Avoiding Harassment

Women may be approached or harassed by men, particularly if they are dressed in a way that is viewed within the culture as inappropriate. On campus and in the residential areas where students live, women usually do not encounter difficulties. The university is a safe place in which you can walk freely and feel comfortable. In the downtown, off-campus areas, maintain a heightened awareness of your surroundings.

To minimize harassment in public, consider the implication of your dress, comments, and actions. It is advisable to talk to and observe Turkish women in their daily activities. Young Turkish women handle potential harassment problems by dressing inconspicuously and by avoiding eye contact with men. Female students should avoid crowded buses and other confined public places.

If you ignore local social conventions, you may be subject to social disapproval and may receive unwelcome advances. Women on UCEAP must quickly learn where and under what circumstances they can behave in a particular way without attracting unwanted attention.

Head Scarves

At this time it is illegal for women to wear head scarves in classrooms or government offices. The scarf is considered a symbol of a political ideology, and not only a reflection of a religious belief. You are free to wear head scarves outside the classroom, but universities are required by the government to apply this regulation. Recent court rulings have confirmed this Turkish law, although there is presently much discussion about its constitutionality.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

It can be hard to meet Turkish students because of the language barrier—most of them are very reluctant to try English outside of class because they don't want to make mistakes. But as the foreign student you have to take the initiative—there's no reason they should just come up to you and make friends.

All the staff outside the International Office (secretarial, maintenance, administrative) had limited or no English; all signs, etc., were in Turkish.

I have to admit, I went expecting a low standard of English and I found that the Turkish students have much better written English than spoken. Some students find it impossible to have English conversation beyond small talk.

”

Improve Your Language Skills

- ▶ Take a copy of any good Turkish grammar book and try to seek out people fluent in Turkish to practice conversation.

English Language and Student Life

The more Turkish language you know before departure, the more rewarding your term or year will be. English is the primary academic language at the host universities, but the social language is Turkish—even for students, faculty, and staff who are fluent in English. Signs, instructions, and other written materials posted on the campus, especially in non-academic offices, often are in Turkish only. While all staff in the International Offices speak excellent English, in many other student-life and administrative offices around the campus you may find that most or all staff speak only Turkish. And while all students are proficient in English, many students are shy about using their English skills outside the classroom setting and will immediately switch to Turkish once class is over.

Many UC students are initially surprised and frustrated by this phenomenon. It can seem especially overwhelming during the orientation period, when most Turkish students and faculty are still on vacation. Once Turkish students return to campus, you will find that you can easily find help from fellow students in translating when needed, for example, when visiting administrative offices or when communicating with dormitory staff.

UCEAP participants recommend seeing this situation as a challenge and a unique feature of studying in Turkey, rather than allowing the frustration to become overwhelming. They report that learning even the most basic fundamentals of the language prior to departure is well worth the trouble, and it will make it easier to meet Turkish students, learn your way around the campus and the city, etc.

Recommendations

Although knowledge of Turkish is not required for this program, it is recommended. Learn as much Turkish as possible—the Turkish alphabet, common vocabulary and phrases, pronunciation, and the beginning elements of the grammar—prior to arrival to make the transition easier. It will also provide an icebreaker in most situations. If you have already studied the language, devote extra time outside of the classroom to improve written and spoken skills.

A good place to start is with a beginning language CD or video and book, available at major bookstores or online retailers. There are also some beginning Turkish resources online, such as onlineturkish.com. Also, keep a journal of phrases, expressions, whole sentences, and structures that you would like to add to your vocabulary.

If you have some previous knowledge of Turkish, read Turkish newspapers, magazines, or cartoons, using a dictionary as necessary. Also, read aloud (anything in Turkish) for 20 minutes at a time. Strive for correct pronunciation; read progressively faster, maintaining correct pronunciation. Read a book or two in Turkish, preferably one fiction and one non-fiction. Practice Turkish phrases picked up from conversation and reading.

ARRIVAL & ORIENTATION

Travel Documents

- ▶ Additional information about passports, visas, and other required documents is provided in the [UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad](#) and in the EAP Predeparture Checklist.

Visa Requirements

Boğaziçi Summer Program: Obtain a tourist visa upon arrival in Turkey; a student visa is not required for the short duration of the summer program.

Bilkent, Boğaziçi, Koç and METU Immersion Programs: Obtain a student visa in the U.S. prior to departure. Do not enter Turkey without a student visa. Once abroad, it may be impossible to obtain the necessary student visa.

Residence Permit (Bilkent, Boğaziçi, Koç and METU Immersion Programs)

You will need to acquire a Residence Permit within one month after arrival in Turkey. The International Offices at Bilkent, Boğaziçi, Koç, and METU will assist with the application procedure. To obtain the Residence Permit you must be prepared to submit the following eight materials:

- 1) Passport (the passport will be held by the authorities for approximately one week, so you will not be able to leave the country during this time)
- 2) Photocopy of passport
- 3) Resident Certificate, obtained from the Dormitory Administration
- 4) Four copies of the Declaration of Residence Permit, each with an attached photo (the form is obtained from the Registrar)
- 5) Three additional passport-sized photos
- 6) Statement from the Registrar indicating your exchange status
- 7) Three copies of Student Personal Information Form, obtained from the Registrar
- 8) Application fee: the Turkish equivalent of approximately U.S. \$48

Photos

Take at least 12 passport-sized photos with you for use after arrival in Turkey.

Packing Tips

Luggage restrictions vary by airline. Most carriers have weight restrictions.

Identify each item of your luggage on both the inside and the outside with your name, home address, and destination. To avoid theft, never leave your luggage unattended.

When traveling always carry your passport, visa, ticket, prescription medications, and money. Never put valuables in your checked luggage. Leave extra credit cards at home, and carry only what is necessary.

Essential

- Layered clothing (T-shirts, shirts, fleece/quilted vests, button and pullover sweaters)
- Jeans and fleece-lined pants
- Lightweight and warm jackets
- Warm socks
- Scarf and gloves
- Flip-flops, walking shoes, casual footwear
- One dressy outfit
- Coat
- Umbrella
- Rainwear and rainproof boots

Optional

- Bathrobe and slippers
- Beach towel
- Lightweight blanket
- Converter and adapter plugs (see *Computers and Appliances* in this chapter)
- Seat pad (good for train and bus travel)
- Travel-sized sleeping bag (also useful until the heat is turned on in the dorms)
- Empty backpack (to bring home items purchased abroad)
- Battery-operated travel alarm clock and flashlight
- Small gifts for new friends (see *Gifts* in this chapter)

Do Not Pack

- Medications that are illegal in Turkey
- Fragile items unless they are bubble-wrapped

Climate

Turkey has four distinct seasons and a continental climate with extremes of heat and cold. When fall and year participants arrive in early September, the weather is typically hot and dry, with cool nights. Cold weather can set in by late October. Winters are cold and rainy with intervals of snow. Average temperatures in the summer are in the high 70s and low 80s, while the average hovers just below freezing for much of December and January.

► The UCEAP student budget does not include funds for the purchase of clothing abroad.

Clothing

Take lightweight pants and tops for summer and for the beginning of fall semester, when the weather will be hot. Women should bear in mind that shorts, short skirts, tank tops, and tight clothes will attract unwanted attention.

Pack an umbrella and sturdy shoes suitable for wet weather, or plan to buy them after arrival. A winter coat and warm winter clothes—including gloves, socks, scarves, and lightweight long underwear—will also be necessary; these items can be brought from home or purchased after arrival in Turkey. Heat may not be available in the dormitories until the beginning of November, even if cold weather sets in early; therefore, a sleeping bag will be useful for the dorm and also for traveling.

Attire on campus is casual, but when traveling to smaller towns and rural areas, dress modestly and conservatively.

If you are interested in winter sports, skiing is available at Elmadag Mountain (about 23 kilometers from Ankara). Take your own ski clothing.

Computers and Appliances

If you own a laptop, you may wish to take it to Turkey as all dorm rooms are wired for Internet access. If possible, take the purchase receipt to show customs officials when departing Turkey. Also verify with the manufacturer that the computer is equipped with a converter for use with a 220V electrical system or purchase a converter. Computers will require adapter plugs for use in Turkish electrical outlets.

Any electrical appliance requires a converter to 220V for use in Turkey. Plugs are European-style and will require adapters. You can purchase a converter and adapter at a travel or luggage store, or you may choose to purchase any small appliances such as hair dryers once abroad.

Do not ask others to carry any items abroad for you (laptop, camera, extra bags, etc.) and do not volunteer to do so for others. Airlines may not allow you to take them or customs abroad may charge you a high duty tax. This is particularly a concern with electronic goods.

Gifts

Take a few small, lightweight, American gifts for foreign hosts and new friends. Some gift suggestions include Frisbees; T-shirts with city, state, or campus logos; UC pens or pencils; decals; baseball caps representing sports teams; and California postcards, posters, or scenic calendars.

Insurance

The [UCEAP Insurance Plan](#) includes a personal property benefit; however, it is your responsibility to determine if it will suit your needs. You must look into the benefits prior to departure and decide whether or not you will need to purchase additional coverage, especially if you are bringing anything of value like a laptop or camera. It is best to obtain insurance before departure because most theft occurs in the airport or while moving into housing. The host university does not protect student belongings—even in university accommodations.

In addition, your parents may already have insurance coverage for personal possessions, though it may not cover items that are in transit or abroad. Find

out if your parental policy, combined with the UCEAP policy, is sufficient to cover the items you will be taking with you.

Travel to Turkey

UCEAP does not make travel arrangements for this program. You must independently arrange to arrive in Ankara. Even if you are on full financial aid, you are responsible for reserving and purchasing your ticket. You are strongly urged to purchase a changeable ticket; standby tickets are not appropriate.

You must arrive in Turkey by the Official Start Date for your program. This date is provided in the program calendar, located in the [Participants](#) portal of the UCEAP website. Specific arrival information is provided in the Arrival Information Sheet accessed via the UCEAP Predeparture Checklist. If you fail to arrive on the Official Start Date, you are subject to dismissal from the program (per Student Agreement in MyEAP).

The start date of the program can change due to unforeseen circumstances. You are responsible for making modifications in your travel itinerary to accommodate such changes. In addition, flights are routinely changed or canceled. Confirm your flight schedule about two weeks before departure. UCEAP is not responsible for any unrecoverable transportation charges you may incur for travel arrangements.

In order to be kept informed of any program changes, update your contact information in [MyEAP](#) with any changes in your mailing address, telephone number, or primary e-mail address. You will be expected to check e-mail announcements from UCEAP regularly; so you must maintain an e-mail account that is accessible at all times, even when traveling. There are many free online accounts available. If you know you will be discontinuing your present e-mail account or that your account will not be accessible after departure from UC, investigate the available online options and set up a new account as soon as possible.

E-mail or fax your flight and arrival itinerary, including any subsequent changes, to the International Office at your host university no fewer than three weeks prior to arrival.

Financial Aid Students

Your financial aid package is based partly on the UCEAP Student Budget for the program. The estimated round-trip airfare is based on the cost of a changeable student fare to Turkey. If your independent travel costs are greater than the airfare estimate in the UCEAP Student Budget Worksheet, notify your financial aid counselors. Neither UCEAP nor the Financial Aid Office can guarantee that the additional cost will be funded by financial aid.

Arrival

Boğaziçi: You should arrive in Istanbul and go to the Boğaziçi University campus on your assigned dormitory move-in date. Details on local transportation options to the campus are found in the Arrival/Orientation instructions in the UCEAP Predeparture Checklist.

Bilkent: The International Office provides a shuttle service twice a day from the airport to the campus on the Official Start Date.

Koç: You should arrive in Istanbul and go to the Koç University campus on your assigned dormitory move-in date. Details on local transportation options to the campus are found in the Arrival/Orientation instructions in the UCEAP Predeparture Checklist.

METU: The International Office will arrange for all UCEAP students arriving on the Official Start Date to be met by Turkish host students at the airport and escorted to the campus if this service has been requested. The hosts will accompany you from the airport (a 40-minute drive) to your dormitory, which is a valuable service. The hosts are members of an on-campus organization that helps international students settle in and begin to learn the practical details of campus life, and they can help introduce you to student life and social activities.

Early Arrival

- ▶ You are strongly discouraged from arriving early.

Plan to arrive at your host university on the Official Start Date, not before. For the Immersion programs, orientation takes place for two weeks prior to the start of the regular semester and if you arrive early you will find the campus mostly deserted, with many services curtailed. If you decide to arrive before the Official Start Date, be aware that you are responsible for your transportation from the airport and for your accommodations prior to the official start of the program.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

Bilkent and METU: Orientation was well done and much effort was put into it by the host university. The Turkish student hosts were extremely helpful and made my experience much more enjoyable. We were taken on tours around the city to major sites and places to shop and eat. As a whole I felt it was thorough.

”

Orientation

Boğaziçi Summer

Orientation concerning emergency contacts, health, safety, cultural adjustment, and other important topics occurs one day before the first day of classes. Be prepared to receive a less thorough orientation than you expect. Ask the international office staff any questions you may still have after the orientation. Past UCEAP students did not receive the information they expected about banking and other logistical issues. The orientation session is mandatory for UCEAP students.

Immersion Programs

With the exception of the Bilkent spring semester program, the programs begin with a mandatory two-week host university orientation and intensive Turkish language training. The orientation period is brimming with events thoughtfully planned by the International Centers.

Turkish language study occupies approximately three hours per day in the morning during the orientation program. The rest of the program consists of workshops, social activities, campus and city tours, and excursions to archaeological sites and other places of interest, such as local wineries. The International Centers also organize weekend trips during the academic term to destinations such as Istanbul and the Aegean and Mediterranean coasts for interested students. These excursions are optional and involve additional fees.

If you are fluent in Turkish, you may request an exemption from the language classes, but you are still required to attend all orientation meetings and group activities and excursions. The Turkish language courses you take during the orientation transition into the Turkish language classes you take during the semester. Arriving late for orientation is not allowed.

Accommodation is provided in dormitories on campus. Since the orientation occurs prior to the beginning of the semester, few Turkish students will be on site and some services, such as Internet access, will not yet be available.

For spring semester students at Bilkent, the program begins with a mandatory three-day host university orientation. You will not receive the same intensive Turkish language training as the fall and year participants.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Students at universities in Istanbul have access to all major forms of city transportation, including a pleasant boat ride into the city from the Bosphorus Strait into the Black Sea. There is regular shuttle service throughout the campuses and into the city, free for students. Check the university websites for details on how to reach numerous nearby shopping centers and other places.

Students at universities in Ankara have four types of transportation:

- 1) Free shuttle buses provided by the universities. This includes a shuttle service running between Bilkent and METU. Bilkent provides regular shuttle buses that run every hour to and from downtown Ankara, including weekends, as well as a campus shuttle system that connects the dormitories with the rest of the campus. These buses are free for students and run as late as 3 a.m. on weekends.
- 2) Dolmuş or shared minibuses. These buses follow a set route, but stop to pick up passengers all along the route (so schedules are less predictable). Dolmuş go to the downtown area and other locations around the city. There are also several minibus services between METU and various city centers.
- 3) Municipal buses. Several city bus routes connect METU with the main parts of Ankara. These buses generally run on the hour and half hour during work hours and less frequently after work hours, including holidays.
- 4) Taxis. Taxis serve both campuses and are relatively inexpensive, especially when shared.

► The UCEAP Student Budget does not include funds for recreational travel abroad.

Travel around Turkey

Most students take advantage of weekends and holiday breaks to travel throughout Turkey; Ankara's central location provides easy access to Istanbul, the Aegean coast, the Mediterranean coast, and many historic and cultural sites in the interior.

Intercity buses are the easiest and most popular means of travel for students; an extensive system serves virtually every location of interest throughout the country. The journey between Ankara and Istanbul takes five to six hours. Multiple private companies serve each location. Purchase first-class tickets on the most reputable bus companies as they are safest in terms of driver training and equipment maintenance; they also tend to be more comfortable and punctual. Avoid bus companies with inexpensive fares, because maintenance and driver experience worsen as fares decrease. Bus accidents are more frequently reported among less expensive bus companies. The International Offices can provide recommendations about which bus companies to use, where to purchase tickets, and other details.

Return Travel

If you buy a round-trip ticket to Turkey, make sure that it allows changes to the return date for a relatively low fee; such tickets are often available through student travel agencies.

If you do not make round-trip arrangements, be sure to book a return flight with plenty of lead time once abroad. The International Center staff can refer you to a local travel agency for information on return travel. Flights to the U.S. fill up fast and economy-fare seats are booked early.

► It is important that you carefully read all of the information available in the [UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad](#) and discuss it with the person who will assist you with your finances while you are abroad.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Understanding Your Finances

Understanding your finances before, during, and after your program is crucial to having a successful time abroad. The following list outlines just a few of the many things you will need to know before departure.

Detailed information on the following topics can be found in the [Money Matters](#) chapter of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*:

- Contact information for finance questions
- How to estimate the cost of your program
- Budget instructions and information
- How to and who can make payments to UCEAP
- UCEAP student account information
- Banking before and after arrival
- Fees and penalties
- Loan information
- How financial aid works while abroad (how do I get my financial aid from my home campus and how are my fees paid?)
- Various forms (e.g., direct deposit, etc.)

MyEAP Student Account

Your MyEAP Student Account is similar to your UC campus financial account. It will be available as soon as you are selected for your program in MyEAP. You can make payments through this account using e-checks or credit cards (MasterCard, American Express, or Discover). The fees that you owe UCEAP will be applied to your account after your program predeparture withdrawal date, which is listed in MyEAP. For the amount due to UCEAP prior to fees being posted on your account, refer to the UCEAP Student Budget Payment Vouchers. Program fees are subject to change.

UCEAP Student Budget

Carefully review your [UCEP Student Budget](#).

Your UCEAP Student Budget lists the fees you will pay to UCEAP and an estimate of the personal expenses you will need to plan for. It does not include the cost of recreational travel or personal entertainment. Review your UCEAP Student Budget frequently. The Payment Vouchers are on the second page of the UCEAP Student Budget.

Instructions

- **Download** and **print** your UCEAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers.
- Note the deadlines on the Payment Vouchers.
- Give the UCEAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers to the person responsible for paying your UCEAP bills. Sign this person up for Third Party Authorization so they can make payments online.

For further information see the [Money Matters](#) chapter of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad* and the Money Matters tab of your Participants Portal. If you will be receiving financial aid, see also the [UCEAP Financial Assistance](#) web page.

- ▶ It is important that you carefully read all of the information available in the [UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad](#) and discuss it with the person who will assist you with your finances while you are abroad.
- ▶ The official unit of currency is the Turkish lira (abbreviated TRY).

Handling Money Abroad

Arrange for more than one way to access money while abroad:

- Take at least \$1,000 (or more) in U.S. travelers checks for initial expenses such as rent, food, and incidentals, and follow all rules for safe use and storage of travelers checks (available from the issuing financial institution).
- Arrive in Turkey with at least some local currency (lira).
- Take a credit card (in your name) and an ATM card from your U.S. bank account. The ATM card must have an international (four-digit) PIN.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash while traveling, as this is unsafe.

Before leaving the U.S., change some dollars into lira. This provides an opportunity to become familiar with the currency and you will need the funds when you arrive for snacks, transportation, tips, and unexpected purchases. Your U.S. bank can purchase the lira; the process may take a week or more. You can also exchange money at the airport in Turkey at a bank window that is located just before the airport exit; however, it is useful to arrive with at least a small amount of lira in case the exchange window is closed at the time of arrival.

Banking

Banking is relatively easy as long as you make arrangements prior to departure. The best banking option is to open a dollar account with a Turkish bank and have money transferred from the U.S. It will take about a week for the transfer to be finalized. No commission is charged if money is left in the bank for one month.

Travelers Checks

Americans currently in Turkey are successfully using American Express travelers checks. However, do not count on using travelers checks exclusively. It is recommended that you bring about \$600 in travelers checks as a backup, plus at least \$300 in cash. If you plan to rent an apartment off campus, you will need an additional \$1,500 in travelers checks to cover the refundable deposit.

ATM Card

ATMs provide a convenient way of getting cash, making deposits and transfers, and verifying account balances. To use an ATM card you must have an account at a bank or credit union in the U.S. Most U.S. banks and credit unions offer ATM cards. They are usually connected to a checking or share draft account. Check with the bank to make sure the ATM card can be used to access funds in Turkey. The bank will issue the ATM card and a personal identification number (PIN); make sure you have a four-digit PIN as most ATMs abroad will not accept longer PINs. Once abroad, the ATM card can be used to withdraw money from the U.S. account. There is no waiting period; money deposited in the U.S. is immediately available for withdrawal abroad. There may be limitations on the amount of cash accessible per transaction, and there may be fees. Check with your U.S. bank to see what options are available.

Credit Cards

Major credit cards such as Visa and MasterCard are accepted in many restaurants and stores. Before departure, check with your bank about services available in Turkey. Credit card transactions are charged in Turkish lira. Cash withdrawals are possible from Visa and MasterCard, which are used like ATM cards, as long as the cardholder has established a PIN for use with the card. Again, check with your U.S. bank before departure and inquire about fees and limits on cash withdrawals.

COMMUNICATIONS ABROAD

Mail

Boğaziçi

[Student Name]
c/o Mr. Kaan Emirhan
(for Summer Program)
c/o Ms. Jana Stolarikova
(for Term/Year Program)
Office of International Relations
Boğaziçi University
Bebek 34342
Istanbul, TURKEY

Bilkent

[Student Name]
c/o Ms. Aysegül Basol
Exchange Programs Coordinator
Bilkent University/Bilkent
06533 Ankara
TURKEY

Koç

[Student Name]
c/o Ms. Burcu Albayrak
International Programs Office
Koç University
Rumeli Feneri Yolu, Sariyer 34450
Istanbul, TURKEY

METU

[Student Name]
c/o Ms. Esra Akgul
International Students and Study
Abroad Programs
Middle East Technical University
06531 Ankara
TURKEY

Phone

► Approximate time difference: add 10 hours

Dormitory phone service will usually not be connected until the regular semester begins and Turkish students arrive on campus. Plan to use public pay phones during the orientation period.

Be sure to phone home to let friends and family know of your safe arrival before leaving the airport; if you are met on arrival by a Turkish host student, ask how to use the pay phone. Because dormitory phone service will not be connected and pay phones can be tricky to use at first, you may not have another opportunity to call home for a day or two.

Phone calls can be made from public phone booths run by Turk Telecom and from post offices (PTT). Some pay phones accept credit or calling cards, and all accept 30-, 60-, and 100-unit prepaid phone cards, which are sold at all post offices and at kiosks around the country.

Cell phones are widely used in Turkey and UCEAP students have found it worthwhile to purchase cell phones with prepaid calling plans while abroad; the international offices at all four universities can provide information about this option after arrival. UCEAP students note that most students have cell phones, so purchasing one will help you better assimilate on campus. You can buy cell phones inexpensively at the downtown bazaar.

Computer Access & Use

You will be assigned a computer account that allows for e-mail and Internet access. Dorm rooms are wired for Internet access; there are also computer rooms in the dormitories and in many of the academic departments.

Numerous Internet cafés can be found in virtually every town, as well as all the major cities throughout Turkey. Rates range from 75 cents to two dollars per hour.

Semester and year program students will not receive a university computer account until the end of orientation. University computer facilities usually do not open for business until the end of orientation and the beginning of the regular semester, almost two weeks after you arrive. During this time, you can use Internet cafés, but do not count on daily access; the orientation schedule is busy, and the nearest cafés may be a 15- or 20-minute bus ride from campus.

- ▶ Students are unanimous in advising against choosing the least expensive dorms:

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

I moved once—the first dorm was pretty uncomfortable: thin walls, metal room furnishings, lockers instead of closets, old bathrooms. My second dorm was much nicer.

My first dorm was similar to cheap dorms at UCLA, but with squat toilets; no toilet paper was provided so it was a bit of a pain to have to carry your essentials every time. There was a kitchen in which my food was often stolen. I moved to the nicer dorms, which were almost too nice and a bit excessive, but I was much happier there.

I stayed in one of the better Bilkent dorms. I had a room to myself, my own bathroom, and I shared an adjoining kitchen with another girl in the neighboring room. If it's your first time away from home it's worth the extra money.

”

HOUSING & MEALS

Boğaziçi Housing

On-campus accommodation is required by UCEAP for summer program participants. Boğaziçi will place most international students in the Superdorm for the summer program. Dormitory check-in is limited to an assigned date and time. There are no guest rooms for visitors. You will need to provide your own bed linen, blankets, and towels. Shopping centers are nearby and shuttle buses connect the various campuses of the university.

See the university's website for detailed information on [dormitory](#) accommodations (Superdorm and Ucakavar Dorm), including their amenities and regulations.

Note that profanity, smoking, alcohol, gambling, and drug use are not allowed on dormitory premises, in addition to other behavioral rules (see the Boğaziçi University Student Dorm Regulations). Though students typically do not like the regulations, they acknowledge the rules are not difficult to follow for a program of only seven weeks. Students who cannot adjust to Turkish dormitory life should not participate in the summer program. Semester and year participants may choose on- or off-campus housing.

Bilkent Housing

Bilkent will send you a housing form along with the acceptance letter and other materials. Complete and return the form as soon as you receive it. Payment is made upon arrival.

Bilkent offers several dorm options for international students, including single, double, and four-person rooms. The range of on-campus housing is vast; dorm options and costs vary much more than they typically do at UC. UCEAP students recommend that you avoid the temptation to save money by choosing the least expensive option. Dorms designated as private or “special” (with suites and studios) generally offer a high level of comfort, while the least expensive options may include worn furniture and bedding and communal bathrooms. Privacy, water, and heating can be problematic. Generally, the mid-range to expensive options offer conditions that would be comparable to what is found on a UC campus, with the most expensive offering the best conditions. The lowest-priced dorms have one kitchen per building, while the higher-priced dorms have one kitchen per floor. Common to all dorms are access to full kitchens, study and computer rooms, laundry facilities, cafés, housekeeping, phone service, and in-room Internet connections. Bed linens are provided in the dorms, but UCEAP recommends that you take a sleeping bag for the early fall—before the heat is turned on—and for travel. Pack your own towels or purchase them after arrival.

While the dorms are convenient and provide an excellent opportunity to meet Turkish students, all dorms have strict regulations that you will be required to follow. These regulations include curfews, which are usually midnight. All dorms are segregated by gender and visitors of the opposite sex are allowed in common rooms only; no visitors of the opposite sex are allowed in your room. All students and visitors are required to check in with the front desk every time they enter, and must be “buzzed in” to the dorms. If you plan to spend the night away from the dorm, you must inform the dorm director in advance. Alcoholic drinks are not allowed in the dorms.

Dorm #50 has received a positive evaluation from past UCEAP students.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

The first two weeks at METU we stayed in the state dorms, which weren't that nice. For the semester I picked the private dorms, which were nearly three times the price—about the quality of the UCLA dorms, but without some of the luxuries we have there. I'm glad my mom made me stay in the better dorms!

If you choose a dorm option with a kitchen shared by the whole floor, be prepared for problems with theft—not just little things but big packets of meat, etc.

”

Koç Housing

You will apply for on-campus housing online, using a username and password sent to you by Koç University's Registrar's Office. Payment for all on-campus housing must be made within one week of moving in.

Koç offers a number of dormitory options for undergraduate students, both on the Main Campus and on the West Campus, which are roughly 2.5 miles apart but connected by a shuttle service. Housing costs vary considerably depending on room occupancy, facilities, and campus location; options with a private bathroom are more expensive, but may be worth the expense. All rooms on both campuses offer Internet, cable, and phone access with weekly cleaning services. Along with desks and chairs, each room is equipped with a mini-refrigerator and bedding, though students should bring their own sheets and pillowcases.

On the Main Campus, single, double, and quadruple rooms are available. Each building has a kitchen, laundry room, and lounge with TV and computer. The West Campus offers only double bedrooms, which share a number of communal bathrooms on each floor. In addition, West Campus dormitories do not have kitchens, instead providing students access to the main cafeteria.

Although dormitories offer the convenience of proximity and a place to interact with Turkish students, you should be aware of strict regulations that differentiate Turkish dorms from the typical U.S. dorm. Although there is no curfew for residents, visiting hours are restricted and visitors of either gender are limited to the dorm's common area. In addition, smoking and drinking (and any empty alcohol containers) are prohibited in the dorm, and you may be subject to discipline if you return to the dormitory intoxicated.

METU Housing

The range of on-campus housing is vast, from state-owned to privately owned and managed; dorm options and costs vary much more than they typically do at UC.

International students at METU can live in semi-private or private dorms. Semi-private dorms offer options from a single room, sharing a bathroom and kitchen with three other rooms, to a four-person room sharing communal bathrooms. The first and last months' rent is due upon arrival, and rent is paid monthly thereafter.

Private (EBI) dorms are available for rent on a semester or year basis. Options range from a double room with shared bath to a single room with private bath. The full semester's (or year's) rent is due upon arrival. Generally, facilities in the private dorms are better maintained than in the semi-private dorms. EBI as a private provider offers a variety of housing at other universities and in other countries. If you check their website, be sure to find the correct information for housing at METU.

UCEAP students recommend that you avoid the temptation to save money by choosing the least expensive options. Dorms designated as private or “special” (with suites and studios) generally offer a high level of comfort, while the least expensive options may include worn furniture and bedding and communal bathrooms. Privacy, water, and heating can be problematic. Generally, the mid-range to expensive options offer conditions that would be comparable to what is found on a UC campus, with the most expensive offering the best conditions. The lowest-priced dorms have one kitchen per building, while the higher-priced dorms have one kitchen per floor. Common to all dorms are access to full

kitchens, study and computer rooms, laundry facilities, cafés, housekeeping, phone service, and in-room Internet hookups. Bed linens are provided in the dorms, but UCEAP recommends that you take a sleeping bag for the early fall—before the heat is turned on—and for travel. Pack your own towels or purchase them after arrival.

While the dorms are convenient and provide an excellent opportunity to meet Turkish students, all dorms have strict regulations that you will be required to follow. These regulations include curfews, which are usually midnight. All dorms are segregated by gender and visitors of the opposite sex are allowed in common rooms only; no visitors of the opposite sex are allowed in your room. All students and visitors are required to check in with the front desk every time they enter, and must be “buzzed in” to the dorms. If you plan to spend the night away from the dorm, you must inform the dorm director in advance. Alcoholic drinks are not allowed in the dorms.

There are no METU accommodations on campus for students with children, but METU will help students with children find off-campus housing if needed. The only English-speaking schools for younger children are private and expensive.

Off-campus Housing

Past participants of Turkey programs generally recommend on-campus housing, although you are free to arrange your own semester or year accommodation off-campus if you choose. Read the considerations below before making any decisions regarding on- or off-campus housing.

- There is no campus organization to assist in locating off-campus housing.
- Most affordable rentals are located relatively far from the campus and involve a commute to and from the campus for daily classes.
- Rental units are usually unfurnished and have no telephone.
- You make your own arrangements for utility services.
- If you rent an apartment off campus, you may find yourself isolated from campus life.
- Neighbors or landlord may not speak English, increasing your isolation.

Meals

Food and meals are taken seriously in Turkey, and many students become fond of Turkish cuisine. Breakfast is substantial and in the Turkish home or restaurant generally consists of bread, feta cheese, tomatoes, olives, cucumbers, yogurt, fruit, small Turkish pastries, tea, and coffee. Lunch is a relatively light meal for students and usually consists of sandwiches, *döner* (similar to Greek gyros), or kebab (grilled meat). Dinner is generally served later than is typical in California—usually around 8 p.m. The traditional Turkish dinner is formal and multi-course, beginning with *mese*, small dishes or appetizers eaten sequentially with salad and bread. The main meal often includes a soup, a meat course, a vegetable course, and a dessert.

Ankara and Istanbul are cosmopolitan cities with a wide variety of restaurants with various international cuisine, as well as Turkish restaurants in a wide range of budgets, and fast-food restaurants from many major American chains.

Universities offer multiple on-campus dining options at reasonable prices. The food is good, easy to find, and the various on-campus and communal eating areas are a great place to practice Turkish and meet fellow students. In communal areas you will not encounter much spoken English.

Boğaziçi University

There are many food outlets on campus as well as nearby supermarkets and a farmer's market. Most of the food outlets will deliver to your dorm room. The dorm common rooms have a sink and refrigerator. Past students suggest purchasing both a hot plate and a panini press after arrival in Turkey in order to cook simple meals for yourself and take advantage of the abundant fresh fruits and vegetables and lower cost. You will need to bring your own eating and cooking utensils, or purchase them after arrival. Dorm mates usually share cookware, so past students suggest waiting to purchase cookware until after you know what is already there for your use.

Bilkent University

Dormitory kitchens are fully stocked with all cooking appliances and utensils. There are seven cafeterias located on the Bilkent main campus as well as several cafés, fast-food restaurants, and convenience stores. Bilkent also has the Tribeca Café where you can buy bagels, salads, and desserts. The Bilkent Center Shopping Mall, a 15-minute walk or 5-minute bus ride from campus, offers a number of eateries including international and fast-food options.

Koç University

In addition to dormitory kitchens where students can prepare their own meals, Koç offers a number of on-campus dining options. Aside from the main cafeteria which is open from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., there are five smaller dining areas offering an array of foods from pastries and coffee, to pizza and sandwiches. There are late-night dining options as well, including one 24-hour dining center serving fast-food and wraps.

METU

Dormitory kitchens are fully stocked with all cooking appliances and utensils. At METU there is one central cafeteria on campus. Every department also has a student canteen, which usually serves lunch at the noon hour and tea, coffee, snacks, and sandwiches throughout the day. There are also several dorm canteens that serve snacks, sandwiches, and drinks from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. The campus shopping center includes a food court with restaurants and cafés that serve fast food, pizza, kebabs, etc., and an on-campus grocery store where you can purchase food to stock your kitchen.

Vegetarians and Vegans

Vegetarianism is not widely practiced in Turkey and you may find it difficult to find restaurant meals that do not include at least some meat or a meat-based broth; outside of the major cities and tourist areas, it may be impossible. The first course, or *mese*, in a traditional Turkish meal often includes dishes that will be acceptable to most vegetarians, including salads, grilled vegetables, fresh bread, cheeses, lentil dishes, soups, and dips.

Vegans will probably find that they need to cook for themselves. All dorms include access to full kitchen facilities, which allow students to cook. If you plan to cook mostly or entirely for yourself, or if you have dietary restrictions, consider choosing a dorm option with a private kitchen or a kitchen shared with only one or two other people, as maintaining dietary preferences in a communal kitchen shared by many will be more difficult.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

I took a tai-box class at the gym in which I met a lot of Turkish students.

Use the bus services provided to get off campus and walk around the city, shop, etc. I can't emphasize enough how vital it is to get off campus to really experience Turkey.

”

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Get Involved

Participating in extracurricular cultural and social activities while on UCEAP is an excellent way to meet people, improve your language skills, and integrate more fully into the community.

Join sports, musical/theater/arts groups; volunteer at local organizations; attend lectures and receptions held in academic and community circles; and get the most out of your time abroad.

You will have access to student clubs and athletic facilities. Numerous student clubs engage in activities on and off campus; most clubs are conducted entirely in Turkish. The International Center can help you find clubs that are conducted in English. Local staff have information on cultural and social events.

Boğaziçi University sports facilities include both outdoor and indoor swimming pools, tennis courts, and a fully-equipped fitness gym. Social and cultural activities are also easily found in the nearby city center.

Bilkent has extensive sports facilities including a new sports center with an indoor running track, aerobics studios, swimming facilities, and courts for squash, basketball, volleyball, and handball, as well as a fitness room containing a full array of free weights and stationary equipment. Intramural sports include basketball, soccer, and squash; physical education classes are available in mountaineering, aerobics, Turkish folk dancing, and more.

Koç University sports facilities include a fitness center, tennis and basketball courts, soccer fields, a swimming pool, and an indoor ice rink. Students participate in a number of clubs, not only dedicated to sports but also including academic groups focusing on art, languages, investment, Turkish music, and many others.

METU sports facilities are extensive and include three gymnasiums, complete with body-building facilities, a fitness center, gymnastic halls, tennis courts, basketball and volleyball courts, soccer and cricket fields, and table tennis facilities. There is an Olympic-sized indoor swimming pool for year-round use and an outdoor pool for use during the summer. Intramural and club teams are offered in a wide variety of sports, and fitness classes such as aerobics are available. Lake Eymir, located about 20 kilometers from the city center, is available to METU students and staff for rowing, fishing, and other recreational activities. METU also maintains ski lodges for use by students and staff.

- ▶ **Contact the Turkish embassy or consulate for information about working abroad.**

- ▶ In addition to the following sections, read the [Health chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad](#).
- ▶ Before departure, review the U.S. CDC [Travelers' Health](#) information website for specific health information for all your travel destinations.

HEALTH

Insurance

Read the [UCEAP Insurance Plan policy brochure](#) so you understand your coverage while on the program. University Of California automatically purchases accident, health and repatriation insurance for all participants. There is no co-pay or deductible. In case of an emergency, the UCEAP health and accident insurance coverage includes access to a 24-hour emergency assistance professional network. This multilingual service can help locate medical treatment, coordinate with doctors and hospitals, confirm health insurance coverage, and arrange direct payment of medical bills. It can also help with emergency medical evacuation and provides an emergency reunion benefit for a parent to travel to bedside if you are in a hospital, etc. Print your [insurance card](#) and carry it with you at all times. Give a copy to your parents.

For more information on medical and non-medical benefits, read the [Insurance](#) chapter of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*.

Pre-existing Health Conditions

If you have any preexisting health condition, carry a letter from the attending physician describing the medical condition, treatment, and any prescription medications, including the generic name of all prescribed drugs. Any medications carried abroad must be stored in their original containers and clearly labeled.

Prescription Medication

Before departure, make sure any required medications are not considered illegal substances in Turkey. To find out, contact the UC travel assistance provider, Europ Assistance:

Phone: 1+ (866) 451-7606; **E-mail:** ops@europassistance-usa.com

Preventing Illness

While in Turkey, drink bottled water and other bottled beverages, or beverages made with boiled water such as coffee and tea. While tap water is chlorinated and generally safe, unfamiliar microbes in the water can cause an upset stomach and traveler's diarrhea.

Exercise caution when buying food from street vendors; eat only thoroughly cooked meat that has been properly refrigerated and handled. Eat raw fruits and vegetables only if you have peeled them yourself.

You will receive updated specialized travel health information during the required UCEAP online health education certification course. Follow recommendations closely and make an appointment with a travel specialist.

Smoking

Smoking is ubiquitous in Turkey. Smoking is common indoors, in restaurants, and in public buildings and offices. If you have any chronic respiratory illness, consider carefully whether or not you will be comfortable in this environment.

There are some restrictions on smoking at the university campuses, but be prepared to encounter cigarette smoke on a daily basis.

On-Site Health Care

If you feel sick or have a medical emergency abroad, contact the host university International Center immediately. The center staff will recommend a clinic or health care provider to visit, provide information about the UCEAP insurance claim process, and also help make arrangements with your professors if extended absence is expected.

The student health centers offer a full range of non-emergency and emergency services 24 hours per day. A number of additional specialists such as a dentist and psychologist are also available.

Accessibility

Students with disabilities may find accessibility and accommodation very different in Turkey from the United States. The Turkish constitution prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in the provision of state services, employment, education, and access to health care, and the government generally enforces the law effectively. However, the law does not mandate access to buildings and public transportation for persons with disabilities, and access in most cities is quite limited.

Turkish airports and metro stations are easily accessible, but it is not the same for public transportation such as buses or taxis. There are reserved seats for individuals with disabilities in public buses, but neither the roads nor the buses are designed for easy access. In a few big cities, some traffic lights have sound systems for individuals with visual disabilities but it is uncommon.

The pedestrian crossing rules and their enforcement are different than in the U.S. Cars rarely stop when they see a pedestrian, and may not stop when the traffic light is red or at a pedestrian crosswalk. Sidewalks or footpaths are high and uneven. Overpasses and underpasses are generally not designed for individuals with disabilities. Roads and footpaths are frequently under construction and may contain extensive obstructions. In addition, vehicles may park on footpaths or in a way that obstructs access to footpaths.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

Sexual attitudes are extremely different and much more conservative than in the U.S. Although I never had a directly negative experience with sexual harassment, as a foreigner and particularly as a woman, I received a lot of unwanted attention.

Most of the time the only form of harassment is staring—lots of it, from men, women, children, everyone. You get used to it after a while and stop noticing the attention.

”

SAFETY

Your Role in Minimizing Risks

Many students and their families have concerns about safety and security abroad. Study abroad, like most other things in life, does involve the possibility of risk. UCEAP makes every reasonable effort to ensure a safe environment in its programs abroad and to counsel students on potential risks and necessary precautions. However, no one can guarantee security either in the U.S. or abroad.

UCEAP cannot guarantee the safety of participants or ensure that risk will not at times be significantly greater than on a UC campus, nor can it monitor the daily personal decisions, choices, and activities of individual participants any more than is the case on a UC campus.

You and your family have a role to play in minimizing potential dangers, and UCEAP expects you to participate actively in minimizing your risks while abroad. The host universities will provide safety information sessions during orientation. Pay careful attention to all safety information and to any updates during your stay in Turkey. Student safety and security are UCEAP's top priorities and you are expected to observe all precautions and warnings.

There are some strategies you can practice anywhere in the world to minimize your risks. Personal safety starts with awareness. Be alert to potential dangers and risks to your well-being, and know what is going on in your immediate environment. The choices you make about behavior, attire, travel, personal property, relationships, etc., can directly influence your exposure to risk. Follow your instincts. If a situation is uncomfortable, remove yourself from the situation. Carry official identification and a charged cell phone with you at all times. Follow safety advice carefully.

Street Crime

Istanbul's overall crime rate remains lower than that of other cities of comparable size. Non-violent theft and scams are much more common than violent crime. Hundreds of thousands of tourists safely visit or reside in Istanbul by using common sense and good judgment. Before traveling to Istanbul, read the U.S. embassy in Ankara's [Street Crime](#) briefing online. While the majority of crime is non-violent in nature, both the level of crime and aggressiveness of criminals remain a concern. Criminal incidents involving foreigners tend to be concentrated in tourist areas such as Taksim Square, Istiklal Caddesi, Sultanahmet, and the Grand Bazaar.

As the capital and second-largest city in Turkey, Ankara enjoys a relatively low crime rate. The U.S. government's interagency Overseas Security Policy Board continues to rate Ankara's crime level as low. In major urban areas and tourist destinations in Turkey, as in most of the world, pick-pocketing, petty theft, and purse-snatching are problems; use common sense and follow precautions. Avoid unfamiliar areas, especially at night. Do not travel alone, carry large amounts of cash, or wear valuable jewelry. Always be alert to your surroundings.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“Boys will constantly call your cell phone and yell at you on the streets—it gets very tiring. But it’s only verbal and not physical.

Women have it hard here. If you have blond hair expect everyone to stare at you wherever you go. They only stare because it’s so rare, so it shouldn’t be thought of as threatening.

”

Campus Safety

Turkish universities are conscious of security. The UCEAP host universities in Turkey have guarded entrances at which everyone must show university identification or other documentation of affiliation to gain entrance. Dorms have additional security, with all entrances electronically controlled by dorm staff. Campuses also have large resident populations and are generally highly populated with students at all times, contributing to a reasonably safe environment. Nonetheless, use common sense and take the same precautions you would take at home: avoid deserted areas of the campus, walk with other students after dark, always lock your doors, etc.

Terrorism

The threat of terrorism in Istanbul from both transnational and indigenous groups remains high. However, the Turkish National Police continues to be successful in combating—though not eliminating—this threat. The most prominent of the terrorist organizations in Turkey is the Kongra-Gel (KGG, PKK). Composed primarily of ethnic Kurds with a separatist agenda, the KGG operates from southeastern Turkey and northern Iraq and mainly targets Turkish security forces. In 2011 KGG activities increased in both number and lethality and began to target civilians and urban areas in addition to Turkish military and police forces.

While Turkish institutions are usually the targets, terrorist attacks could be carried out at locations frequented by foreigners. There is a significant military presence in southeastern Turkey and along the border with Iraq. Military air and ground strikes occur frequently against identified targets in the Turkish/Iraqi border area.

In some parts of Turkey the detonation of “sound bombs” by indigenous terrorist groups is a periodic occurrence. Most bombings have been at resort or tourist sites far from the host universities. However, recently there have been bombs in both Istanbul and Ankara. The U.S. embassy recommends that Americans in Turkey exercise caution and good judgment, keep a low profile, and avoid obviously “American” or “Western” destinations, such as U.S. chain restaurants, nightclubs, etc.

Civil Unrest

Avoid demonstrations. They occur periodically in the downtown Kizilay area of Ankara, and across the street from the U.S. Embassy. Most demonstrations are directed at the government of Turkey for internal policy reasons, while demonstrations near the U.S. Embassy focus primarily on U.S. foreign policy issues. Although most protests conclude peacefully, police occasionally detain demonstrators.

Traffic & Transportation

There are no special transportation security concerns in Turkey, but risks exist in every mode of transportation.

Although Ankara is one of the safest cities in the Middle East, traffic remains a serious problem. The rate of death from traffic accidents is well above that in the U.S., and you are discouraged from driving a car. In addition, use only reputable intercity buses for travel. See [Local Transportation](#) in this guide for more information.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

In the dorms, male students would call my room. They guess your telephone room numbers by counting the windows outside. Also in Istanbul there was a lot of whistling. My sister was grabbed. Expect lots of unwanted male attention if you go to the clubs.

I'd never walk alone as a woman.

”

Pedestrian Safety

Drivers in Ankara, Istanbul, and other popular destinations for weekend travel do not stop for pedestrians. Drivers are aggressive and frequently ignore basic traffic regulations by driving through red lights and stop signs or by turning left from the far right lane. Pedestrians do not have the right-of-way; exercise extreme caution when crossing streets.

Travel Advisories & Smart Traveler Registration

Before traveling, always consult the host International Office and the U.S. Department of State [travel information](#) for American citizens to learn about the security of the areas you intend to visit. You must comply with all travel advisories issued by the host university, UCEAP, and the Department of State.

The International Offices are registered with the U.S. embassy's Warden Network, which communicates security information and precautions to Americans living abroad. Register online with the U.S. embassy before departure through the [Smart Traveler](#) Enrollment Program to receive important safety and security announcements. Your registration will help your friends and family contact you in an emergency.

Travel to Southeast Turkey

The U.S. embassy recommends that American travelers to southeast Turkey exercise extreme caution due to ongoing tension and military action between the Turkish government and Kurdish independence groups. The PKK/KADEK terrorist organization retains a residual presence in certain parts of southeastern Turkey. Travel only during daylight hours and on major highways, and be prepared to cooperate and produce identification at frequent checkpoints. Department of State personnel are subject to travel restrictions in the provinces of Sirnak, Diyarbakir, Van, Siirt, Mus, Mardin, Batman, Bingöl, Tunceli, Hakkâri, Bitlis, and Elâzığ.

Check with the U.S. embassy in Ankara and the International Office at your host university for the latest updates and recommendations before planning any travel to these areas.

Natural Disasters

Turkey is a seismically active country. A major earthquake fault runs east to west through Turkey and smaller faults are found in the southwest and southern parts. While earthquakes are not expected in central Ankara, tremors can be felt.

During the orientation program at the beginning of each semester, METU provides information on earthquakes both verbally and in an orientation booklet, including an earthquake map showing the fault areas.

You will receive instructions about what to do in case of strong tremors in Ankara and what to do if you are traveling in an area when an earthquake occurs.

The city of Istanbul sits on the North Anatolian fault line, and is very susceptible to earthquakes. Since the major earthquake in the Istanbul region in August 1999 (M7.6), the disaster management procedures have improved and the building codes were updated to include modern earthquake provisions. However, most buildings in the city do not comply with Western earthquake standards and would likely sustain heavy damage in the event of a significant quake.

Earthquakes strike suddenly and without warning. Surviving an earthquake and reducing its health impact requires preparation, planning, and practice. Read the informational [Emergency Survival Guide](#) prepared by Los Angeles County, which has valuable information that applies to any natural disaster around the world. You can also access the US CDC [earthquake preparedness information](#).

Flooding occurs in some parts of Turkey and can be dangerous for travelers. However, there is always ample warning and travel restrictions to affected areas are enforced when floods occur.

Fire Safety

When traveling, it is important to become familiar with your surroundings. Purchase a battery-operated smoke alarm/emergency light before your departure so you have it from the moment you move in. Have an exit plan and read more information in the [Fire Safety](#) section of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*.

Emergency Contacts

What Is an Emergency?

An emergency is a serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate action. The following are considered emergencies:

- Any life/death situation
- A traumatic event requiring immediate assistance
- An arrest
- Civil unrest or natural disaster in the host country

In an Emergency

Contact local emergency services first and then contact the following:

If you are in the U.S.

- During office hours (8 a.m.–5 p.m. Pacific Time): Contact your Operations Specialist at the UCEAP Systemwide Office
- After office hours: Call the 24-hour emergency phone number at (805) 893-4762

If you are abroad

If you have a health, travel, or safety emergency and do not have access to local or UCEAP representative emergency information, contact the UCEAP travel assistance provider, Europ Assistance, available 24/7:

- **Call international collect:** 1+202-828-5896 or
- **Call within the U.S.:** 1+866-451-7606
- **E-mail:** ops@europassistance-usa.com

U.S. Consulate in Ankara

110 Atatürk Bulvarı
06100 Kavaklıdere, Ankara

Phone: (90) (312) 455 5555

Fax: (90) (312) 466 5684

Website: turkey.usembassy.gov