Important Names & Addresses

The Learning Abroad Center provides a full range of services from preliminary program advising to assistance with re-entry. Do not hesitate to contact the Learning Abroad Center with any questions.

In the United States
Learning Abroad Center
University of Minnesota
230 Heller Hall
271 19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455-0430
Phone: 612.626.9000
Fax: 612.626.8009
Toll Free: 888.700.UOFM
Email: UMabroad@umn.edu
Website: www.UMabroad.umn.edu

Contact prior to departure
Eric Leinen, Associate Program Director
lein0032@umn.edu
612.625.9008

Christine Anderson, Program Director
ander590@umn.edu
612.625.2311

In case of emergency, contact the Learning Abroad Center at 612.626.9000 at any time. If it is after business hours, there will be a recording giving you a number to call. The Learning Abroad Center has someone on call to deal with emergencies and can contact the on-site administrators if needed. Once overseas, participants should contact ACCENT in case of an emergency.

In Istanbul
ACCENT
Hoca ali Sokak 5, Galata
34425 Beyoglu, Istanbul, Turkey
Phone: 011.90.545.879.7702

ACCENT Staff
Deniz Bongol, Resident Director

Know Before You Go
Before you leave the country, make sure that you have read and understood the information in your Confirmation Checklist, Online Orientation and the Learning Abroad Center’s policies (www.UMabroad.umn.edu/students/policies.php). These materials will guide you on a safe and successful learning abroad experience.

Friends and Family Resources
Valuable resources for your friends and family members can be found at www.UMabroad.umn.edu/parents. Topics such as health and safety, program prices, logistics, and travel are discussed.

Friends and family members should not contact ACCENT directly but rather direct all program questions to the Learning Abroad Center even once the participant is overseas.

Please make copies of this page to leave with friends and family.
Program Calendar

Spring 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 16</td>
<td>Depart US</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 17</td>
<td>Arrive in Istanbul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2–16</td>
<td>Academic Excursion to Rome, Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 28</td>
<td>Program ends</td>
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Introduction

Once the seat of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires, modern-day Istanbul is a crossroads between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Located near Taksim Square—the heart of modern Istanbul—this program offers you the opportunity to study in Europe’s second-largest and fastest-growing city, within easy access to all the sights and sounds of the heart of Istanbul. A partner of the Learning Abroad Center, ACCENT offers on-site program administration and classes at their center in Beyoğlu. Situated just minutes from several historical sites in central Istanbul, ACCENT supports a wide range of courses and provide state-of-the-art facilities for students.

Turkey, however, is not like the United States, and you should not expect everything to be the same. Although some differences may seem obvious, it is important to prepare yourself for your upcoming experience by reading the enclosed information carefully and by preparing for unexpected differences in the new culture. While the program will provide a solid support system for you on-site, the ultimate success of your time abroad depends on your ability and commitment to make the most of the experience and to adjust effectively to the changes you will encounter. The following information is intended to help prepare you for your upcoming experience by acquainting you with certain customs and aspects of life in Turkey and Istanbul, which may not be familiar to you. It also addresses academic issues including the academic program in Istanbul and issues you should consider at your home institution in the US.

Take this guide with you. It offers an overview on certain topics, but is not comprehensive; you are encouraged to read other information in preparation for your stay. You will find a resource list in the appendix. You may also want to check your local libraries for additional information. The better prepared you are, the quicker you will adjust and function effectively in Turkish society. Study abroad requires independence and individual initiative. To encourage and guide you, the Learning Abroad Center provides a full range of services such as preliminary program advising, travel help, and assistance with re-entry. Do not hesitate to contact the Learning Abroad Center or your local institutional study abroad advisor with any questions you have.

Preparation & Planning

Documents

Passport
A valid passport is required to enter Turkey and to re-enter the United States. In pencil, write the name and address of the ACCENT office on page five of your passport under “Bearer’s Foreign Address.” Information can be found at www.UMabroad.umn.edu/students/travel/passports.

Visa
US passport holders visiting Turkey for fewer than 90 days should obtain a multiple-entry tourist visa at any of Turkey’s official ports of entry (airports and land-border crossings) and paying $20 USD cash only. Make sure to have $20 cash (exact change required) when you arrive in Turkey, as you cannot pay by credit card. Study Abroad in Istanbul was specifically designed to be under 90 days long, allowing students to enter as tourists, eliminating the need to obtain a student visa.

For more information, contact the Turkish Consulate assigned to the region you live. Visit the Turkish Consulate General’s website at www.vasington.be.mfa.gov.tr and click “Consular Services Menu” to find the appropriate consulate for your region.

Once in Turkey, do not carry your passport except when necessary (for example, when exchanging money or traveling outside of Istanbul). Instead, you should carry a photocopy of your passport with you. If your passport is lost or stolen, you should notify the local police and the American Consulate in Istanbul.

Istinye Mahallesi, Uc Sehitler Sokak 2
Istinye 34460 Istanbul
+90.212.335.9000

Keep copies of all of the following documents and phone numbers and report them if they are lost or stolen. Keep them in a safe place separate from the documents themselves.

- Passport and visa
- Airline ticket
- Insurance policy
- ATM card and credit card with emergency number
- Phone numbers at home in case of an emergency
- Traveler’s checks and the list of check numbers

Power of Attorney
We strongly encourage you to designate someone as your Power of Attorney while you are abroad. Your Power of Attorney can act as your legal representative in a number of situations. Review the information on the website at: www.UMabroad.umn.edu/students/policies/finances/powerofattourney.php.

US Embassy Registration
The Learning Abroad Center will register you with the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP), which makes your presence in Italy known to the US Department of State. Once you are enrolled in this program, you will received the latest travel updates and information. In addition, the local embassy can be a source of assistance and information in the case of an emergency. For more information visit travel.state.gov.
Your Address
In order to ensure that all official communication is sent to the correct address while you are abroad, check your official contact information prior to departure. Visit onestop.umn.edu to verify that the information is correct. If your contact information changes, you must notify the Learning Abroad Center.

Health & Safety

Health Insurance
All students enrolled at the University of Minnesota are required to have US health insurance. This includes students registered for education abroad. For more details and specific process information for students with University of Minnesota Student Health Insurance through the Student Health Benefits Office, visit the Learning Abroad Center’s US Insurance webpage: www.UMabroad.umn.edu/students/healthsafety/intlhealthinsurance/ushealthinsurancerequirement.

In addition to your US health insurance, the University has contracted with Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) to provide comprehensive international travel, health, and security insurance. This coverage is mandatory for all students and included in the program fee. You are covered by CISI only for the dates of the program. If you plan to travel before or after your program you should extend your CISI coverage or purchase your own insurance.

CISI does not include any preventative care, and individuals are advised to consult their medical providers for any check-ups or preventative care prior to departure.

Your CISI card and insurance policy will be emailed directly to you. Carry the card with you at all times. If you have any questions or need additional information about CISI, visit the Learning Abroad Center’s insurance webpage: www.UMabroad.umn.edu/students/healthsafety/intlhealthinsurance.

Safety
Demonstrations occur regularly in Turkey. Avoid any gathering whether it is of anti-American character or not. Although most demonstrations are intended to be peaceful, they can escalate into violence. Turkey has a low rate of violent crime compared to other European countries, and little is directed toward tourists. Petty crimes such as pick pocketing, theft from parked cars and purse snatching are serious problems, especially in large cities. Most reported thefts occur at crowded tourist sites, on public buses, metros or at the major rail stations.

Thieves in Turkey may work in groups or pairs. Pairs of accomplices or groups of street children are known to divert tourists’ attention so that another can pickpocket them.

Criminals on crowded public transportation slit the bottoms of purses or bags with a razor blade or sharp knife, then remove the contents.

Check the US State Department website for more detailed information at travel.state.gov.

Emergency Procedures
In case of an emergency, the Learning Abroad Center will be in close contact with ACCENT who will seek advise from the US Embassy or Consulate.


Considerations during Planning

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Issues
Attitudes toward sexuality vary greatly from country to country. Some cultures are open about homosexuality, and strong gay communities exist in many cities. However, some cultures and peoples are intolerant of different sexual preferences, and strict taboos or laws against such relationships may exist. We encourage you to find out how different sexual preferences are viewed overseas and where your support may exist, so that your time overseas can be as enriching as possible.

For additional resources, you can contact the Office for Equity and Diversity at www.academic.umn.edu/equity.

Students of Color
You may wish to consult the resources available at the Learning Abroad Center on issues related to students of color and learning abroad. Also, country-specific material may include information more specific to the host culture. If you have questions about the country in which you will be studying, do not hesitate to contact a Learning Abroad Center staff member.

For additional resources, you can contact the Office for Equity and Diversity at www.academic.umn.edu/equity.

Students with Disabilities
Many of the disability accommodations or services that are provided at US universities may be different or unavailable overseas. Being in a new environment can also be stressful, and accommodations that you may not have needed at home may become necessary in an unfamiliar setting. Participants with any kind of disability, whether hidden or visible, should contact the Learning Abroad Center in advance to discuss their particular needs.
Arrival Logistics

A Twin Cities travel agent, Village Travel, in consultation with the Learning Abroad Center, organizes an optional coordinated flight. Travel can be arranged from any location in the US, and Village Travel will attempt to connect you with the coordinated flight.

Participants are not required to choose this coordinated flight, but it is designed to offer participants supportive travel assistance. Information, booking, and payment are handled directly by the travel agent. If you have not received information on this coordinated flight, check the Village Travel website at www.villageinc.com.

All students must notify the Learning Abroad Center of the flight itinerary. If your flight is delayed or cancelled, contact the Learning Abroad Center if you are in the US If this happens while you are in Europe/Italy contact ACCENT. Directions and instructions on how to get to the ACCENT center will be sent to you via email approximately one week before the program begins.

If you are on the group flight, staff will help you take a taxi to your apartment or homestay. If you do not take the coordinated flight you are responsible for checking in with the ACCENT center between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on the day of arrival. The rest of the day you will spend settling in. The following morning you will attend orientation at the ACCENT center. If you take a taxi on your own from the airport to the ACCENT center, check to make sure your cab has a working meter. If the taxi does not have a meter, make sure to negotiate the price before you get in the cab.

If you make your own travel arrangements to/from Turkey, be advised the program dates do not allow for additional days in Turkey. While you can spend additional time traveling in other EU countries, additional time in Turkey will not be possible. Without a student visa US passport holders are allowed no more than 90 days in Turkey. Study Abroad in Istanbul uses most of those 90 days, eliminating the possibility of an extended stay in Turkey.

Academic concerns that cannot be addressed with the professor should also be brought to the attention of the ACCENT staff.

Your main contact at ACCENT is Deniz Bongol. Since ACCENT serves the needs of all students who reside at their housing, it is important for students to take their own initiative and solve minor questions and problems on their own. Part of a successful study abroad experience is the ability to tackle issues and discover solutions independently.

Accommodations

Students will live in shared, multiple-bedroom apartments. Rooms are furnished with a bed, closet, pillows and blankets. Apartments are generally co-ed with single-sex bedrooms, accommodate up to six people, and may be shared with other program participants or international students. Bathrooms are small, usually with one bathroom per apartment. Kitchen facilities include a range, refrigerator, and basic utensils. Facilities are shared by everyone in the apartment. Each apartment will have one or more areas for studying, and a shared living space.

Each apartment is unique and will vary in size, condition, and proximity to the study center. Keep in mind living standards in Turkey are different than in the US, and apartments tend to be smaller and older. Buildings may also be home to Turkish families. While there are no set curfews, quiet hours are generally observed between 10pm and 8am. Loud parties are not permitted in the apartments, and those who violate these rules may be expelled from the apartments.

Money Matters

Currency

The Turkish lira (TRY or TL) is divided into 100 kurus and is the monetary unit in Turkey.

Check the exchange rate at www.xe.com before you travel since the value fluctuates.

Cash & Traveler’s Checks

The Learning Abroad Center recommends that you enter a country with some of its currency in hand. You may be able to exchange money at major banks or airports. You can also withdraw lira from an ATM upon your arrival in Turkey.

With access to ATMs widespread and credit cards accepted in many places of business, traveler’s checks have become much less common. They are also increasingly difficult to cash. They can be a back-up source of money in case your wallet is lost or stolen and you need fast access to cash.
Debit & Credit Cards
One of the easiest ways to obtain lira is by using your debit card at an ATM. This is convenient because you do not need to find a bank, carry large amounts of cash or pay commission for converting fees. Most ATMs accept cards on the Cirrus or Plus networks. You will need a four digit numerical PIN. A standard fee is charged for each transaction, so do not plan to withdraw money daily. Check with your bank regarding any additional charges.

A credit card is recommended for emergency situations but you may incur large fees for using it at ATMs.

Communications

Telephone
Study Abroad in Istanbul requires all students to purchase and carry a cell phone while abroad. This is not only a good safety precaution, but it also facilitates communication between students and program staff. On-site staff will assist students with selecting and obtaining cell phones and service contracts. The costs of the cell phones are included in the additional expenses in the program's budget estimate. The service contract or minutes that are purchased by students are not included in the budget estimate. Turkey is eight hours ahead of US Central Standard time. You may want to take along your telephone company's calling card (Sprint, MCI, AT&T) to make a short call, and then have the person back home return your call to the pay phone. To make a call outside Turkey, dial 00 to get a line outside the country, then the country code (1 for the US), area code and the number.

If you choose to take your US mobile phone and purchase a Turkish SIM card, you may be required to register your phone with the Turkish police at a cost of roughly $100. It is advised instead, upon arrival in Turkey, to purchase an inexpensive phone that does not need to be registered.

Mail
Your family and friends should send any mail to you directly to ACCENT at the address listed earlier in this guide. They should not send mail to your apartment. Your family or friends should NEVER mail medication to you. Also, if anyone mails you “goods” (food, clothing, and so on), you may be forced to pay custom fees to receive the package.

Email
Computers and wireless service are available at the ACCENT center. If you choose to bring a laptop, you can connect wirelessly in many places (internet cafes) throughout Istanbul.

Students should not expect internet service in their apartment. Students may be able to purchase a wireless internet plan providing internet access through a USB connection.

Social Media
Not all countries share the same laws about freedom of expression that we have in the US. Students should keep in mind that derogatory comments, especially on social media, can result in legal claims and have extended legal implications even after a student has returned to the United States.

Communicating with Your Family
Before you leave, you and your family should read as much as possible about where you are going in order to gain some perspective about the experience. This might include reading guidebooks, international newspapers, magazines, novels, plays, poetry and political and economic analyses. You may also want to talk to international students and returned students who have been where you are going. You may not be able to call home immediately upon arrival, as this may be too inconvenient, complex, or difficult. Please share this reality with your family before departure.

During certain phases of adjustment, your friends and family should be prepared to receive calls or correspondence in which you complain and talk about how frustrating life is abroad. While these feelings should be taken seriously, students abroad tend to call and write home when things are not going so well and do not call or write when things are going well; share the many new and exciting experiences you are having as well offer an honest, balanced report.

Study Tours & Travel
Students will participate in academic study tours throughout the program and some tours will occur on the Fridays and on the weekends. Possible study tours will include places like Cappadocia, Bursa, Ankara, or other locations within Turkey. The program also includes a two-week excursion to Rome, Italy. Study tours will be coordinated by ACCENT. Do not make travel plans before arriving in Istanbul. As this is an academic program, you should be careful about the amount you travel during the weekends. Plan longer trips before or after the program. When you travel, notify ACCENT and your roommates of your destinations, planned return dates, and where you can be reached.

FERPA
It is important to be aware that the Learning Abroad Center and the Office of Student Finance, in compliance with the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and Regents policy, cannot share financial or personal information with a third party (including parents, spouse, guardians, etc.) without your written permission. You can download a Student Information Release Authorization at onestop.umn.edu. Complete the form and send it to OneStop Student Services, 200 Fraser Hall, 106 Pleasant St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455. The Learning Abroad Center must receive a copy of a notarized Power of Attorney form in order to share any program-specific information.
Academics

See the Learning Abroad Center’s website for academic policies: www.UMahbroad.umn.edu/students/policies.

Program Structure

Most courses will take place at the ACCENT center. ACCENT staff will work with the course instructors in coordinating and overseeing all the program’s administrative issues.

Students enroll in 13-18 credits. All courses, with exception of the Turkish language courses, are taught in English by Turkish and international faculty. Available courses vary between the semester and the summer program. A full course list, as well as a current syllabus for each course, is available on the Learning Abroad Center’s website.

Students register for classes according to their interests and current US coursework. Each course includes readings and assignments just as in the US. You will earn a grade based on effort and ability. Incomplete grades are usually not an option, since professors are hired only to teach for the duration of the program. If you have a personal emergency which requires you to return from the program early, you must speak with the on-site staff in advance to discuss the possibility of any incompletes.

Registration

All University of Minnesota-Twin Cities students will be responsible for registering themselves for the Study Abroad in Istanbul program. You will be given all the necessary information for registration by the Learning Abroad Center. Do not look for your class number to appear on the online class list. The numbers you need for registration can only be obtained from the Learning Abroad Center. If you register for a course listed on-line, you have registered for the wrong course and may be subject to tuition charges.

Register after your designated registration queue time. Students from the University of Minnesota Morris, Crookston, or Duluth campuses, as well as non-University of Minnesota students, will be registered by the Learning Abroad Center and may disregard these instructions.

Complete your registration no later than two weeks prior to the start of the University of Minnesota term during which you will be studying abroad. Failure to complete registration may result in late registration fees and may delay or prevent financial aid disbursement. Contact helpingu@umn.edu or www.onestop.umn.edu with questions about financial aid. If you do not register for study abroad, your grades cannot be processed. Failure to register before departing for study abroad may result in no credit for your study abroad program.

Before Registration:

1. Meet with your academic adviser(s) and complete the Academic Planning for Study Abroad Form.
2. Check online for holds or required registration approvals that would prevent you from registering for classes and clear them before the registration date. Learning Abroad Center can not remove holds on student accounts. To check for holds, go to www.onestop.umn.edu/registrar/registration/holds.html.

Post-Program Registration

University of Minnesota students and most other students will need to register while overseas for classes for the following term on their home campus. You must make these arrangements prior to departure. In many cases students are able to register online.

Drop/Add

You will be enrolled in the classes you signed up for on your Course Enrollment Form, although you have flexibility to change your enrollment after arrival in Istanbul. You should list alternate courses in the event that a course is cancelled. We will contact you as soon as possible in the event a course in canceled. You will be able to access your Course Enrollment Form through your Education Abroad Application Checklist.

You will receive a “W” on your transcript if you drop courses after the add/drop deadline, and you will need the approval of on-site staff and the Learning Abroad Center to drop courses.

Coursework

Students will be enrolled in the classes listed on their Course Enrollment Form at the time of application. The program is designed to be academically rigorous, and it is up to each individual student to maintain good study habits and to complete assignments on time. Students must enroll in a minimum of 13 credits. All courses must be taken for a standard A–F grade. S/N (pass/fail) is not an option.

Global Identity: Connecting Your International Experience to Your Future

This optional, one-credit online course provide opportunities for you to “make meaning” of your learning abroad experience and prepare you to communicate your intercultural competence to friends, family, future employers, and graduate schools. As global connectivity becomes increasingly important, you are asked to think beyond the borders of your own perception and better understand the world based on the new ideas and experiences to which you are exposed. Your ability to work in a multicultural setting and to succeed in different cultural contexts is vital to your future. This course will help you apply these skills to your post-graduation plans.
Professors

While on a study abroad experience the professor/student relationship can be quite different from the kind of relationship you may be accustomed to in the US. You may find your interpersonal relationships with your instructors vary depending on differences in cultural background and teaching style. If you have questions about a course, discuss your concerns with the professor teaching the course. If you need additional assistance, contact the ACCENT staff.

Many students have expressed in their evaluations that they have had some of the best teachers of their academic careers while studying abroad, citing the professor's passion for the field and extensive knowledge of the subject matter. However, any course demands student participation in order to be stimulating, and it is important for participants actively engage in class discussions and complete all assignments.

Grades & Transcripts

Grades will be available 6–8 weeks after the program ends. The Learning Abroad Center will provide one free transcript to all non-University of Minnesota students, and transcripts will be sent to your home institution, using the address provided on your Transcript Request Form. Additional transcripts can be ordered separately at an additional charge. University of Minnesota students can obtain an unofficial student copy free of charge.

Your professors will give you grades according to the US system, based on the grading rubrics outlined in each course’s syllabus.

Student Grievances

Academic grievances are complaints brought by students regarding the provision of education and academic support services affecting their role as students. For grievances concerning University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center or affiliated programs offered through the Learning Abroad Center, students should make inquiries and appeals to the appropriate University officials, in the following order: the program representative in the Learning Abroad Center, the Director of the Learning Abroad Center, the Student Dispute Resolution Center, and the Office of the General Counsel. For complaints concerning non-University of Minnesota programs, students should make appeals to the program sponsor.

Life in Istanbul

A Short History of Istanbul

This section taken from www.english.istanbul.gov.tr.

Across the country, there are thousands of archeological sites, historical places and ancient cities, as well as magnificent scenic spots and natural wonders. Since Roman times, Asiatic Turkey has been known as both “Asia Minor” and “Anatolia.” The European part of Turkey is called Thrace.

These lands have been continually inhabited since the Stone Age. Because Anatolia is located like a natural bridge between continents, no other country in the world has acquired so many historical treasures.

The Aegean Sea, the Dardanelles, and the Bosphorus form the western boundaries of the Anatolian peninsula. Beside the Dardanelles are the ruins of the famous city of Troy—a memento of thousands of years of history—and on the shores of the Bosphorus rises Istanbul in all her beauty and splendor, keeping the memories of her past alive.

There are many legends related to the foundation of Istanbul. According to the best known one, around 650 BC, a sea tribe from the Aegean left their city Megara and began to look for a new homeland under the leadership of Byzas.

According to the customs of the age, before any such undertaking an oracle had to be consulted. The oracle in the Apollo temple in the famous town of Delphi advised Byzas to settle opposite the “land of the blind”. The migrants searched for such a land for a long time. When they came to the headland of present-day Istanbul, they were delighted with the fertile lands and the advantages offered by the natural harbor, the Golden Horn. They also noticed the people living across the stretch of water. The migrants decided that those people must have been blind if they could not appreciate the opportunities of this ideal place and settled on the opposite shore, and they were convinced that they had found the land the oracle had described. Excavations have revealed findings dating back to the third millennium BC at the tip of the Golden Horn and on the Asian side.

The city of Byzantium existed as an independent state but succumbed from time to time to the superior powers ruling the region. The acropolis of the city stood where Topkapi Palace stands today. It had a well-protected harbor, still used today, in the Golden Horn. A fortified city wall starting here surrounded the city and reached the Sea of Marmara. Byzantium was an important seaport and a center of trade under the Roman Empire. However, it sided with the wrong party during a struggle for the throne in 191 AD, and after a siege that lasted two years, it was conquered and razed by the Roman Emperor Septimius Severus. The same emperor later reconstructed the city on a larger scale. New city walls were built and the city was adorned with new buildings.
By the 4th century AD the Roman Empire had expanded considerably, and the capital Rome lost its central position in the empire. While looking for another city as his new capital, the Emperor Constantine the Great finally chose Istanbul, realizing the strategic position of the city at the intersection of sea and land routes and the importance of its perfect climate.

New city walls were constructed, enlarging the city again, and numerous temples, governments, palaces, baths and a hippodrome were built.

Finally in 330 AD it was officially declared the capital of the Roman Empire. Many ceremonies were organized for the occasion, which marked the beginning of a golden age. Although the city was initially called the Second Rome or New Rome, these names were soon forgotten to be replaced by “Byzantium” and in later ages by “Constantinopolis”, while the people favored the name “Polis.”

The successors of Constantine the Great continued to improve and beautify the city by building new avenues, aqueducts, monuments and edifices. The first churches in the city were also built after the time of Constantine.

The Roman Empire was divided into two in 395 AD. Although the Western Empire collapsed in the 5th century, the Eastern Empire, which was administered from the capital, Istanbul survived for over 1,000 years afterward.

This empire was named the Byzantine Empire by modern historians. Byzantium had a very interesting history, because its development was influenced both by the earlier Anatolian civilizations and, more importantly, by Christianity; its laws and rules were adopted from Rome, but its pomp and ceremonies from the East.

The city was enlarged once more with the erection of new city walls in the first half of the 5th century. The magnificent city walls on the landward side that we see today were built by Emperor Theodosrus If. They are 6,492 m long. In the 6th century, the city, that now had a population of over half a million, lived through another golden age during the reign of Emperor Justinian. The famous Hagia Sophia is the work of this emperor.

The later history of the Byzantine Empire and its capital Istanbul is filled with palace and church intrigues and Persian and Arab attacks. The throne frequently changed hands after bloody feuds between royal families. Between 726–842, all kinds of religious images were outlawed in the city during the iconoclastic movement. This led to much destruction (and much concealment) of paintings and statues.

The Latin invasion was a dark page in the history of Istanbul. It started with the invasion of the city by the armies of the Fourth Crusade in 1204, and for many years all the churches, monasteries and monuments in the city were robbed of their treasures. Although the Byzantines regained control of the city in 1261, Istanbul never fully recovered its former wealth.

Increasing threats of the expanding Ottoman Empire finally came to an climax when, following a siege of fifty-three days in 1453, the city was captured by the Turks. The large caliber cannons of Sultan Mehmet, the Conqueror, used for the first time in history, were one of the factors that enabled the Turks to penetrate the city walls of Istanbul. Another factor contributing to the conquest was that the Byzantine Empire had reached the end of its natural life span.

Mehmet, who was only twenty-one years old then, moved the capital of the Ottoman Empire to Istanbul, increased the population of the city by bringing in immigrants from different regions of the country, and started to reconstruct the deserted and wrecked city. He granted freedom of worship and social rights to the former inhabitants.

It was thanks to the rights granted by Mehmet that the Patriarchate of the Greek Orthodox is even today located in Istanbul. Some of the dilapidated churches in the city, including Hagia Sophia, were renovated and converted into mosques.

Istanbul was fully reconstructed within a short period after it was conquered by the Turks. A century later, Turkish art had left its mark on the city, and domes and minarets dominated the skyline.

In the 16th century, when the Ottoman Sultans assumed the office of Caliphate, (chief civil and religious authority of Islam) Istanbul became the center of the Islamic world as well. The city was totally reconstructed and acquired a magical ambiance under the sultans. Although no wars featured in Istanbul’s history during this time, frequent fires repeatedly devastated large sections of the city.

The Imperial Topkapi Palace built on the site of the old acropolis commands an extraordinarily beautiful view of the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn. As a result of closer contacts with the West, mosques and palaces in European style were built along the shores of the Bosphorus by the 19th century.

These numerous palaces, built in a very short time, also symbolize the decline of another empire. For at the end of World War I Istanbul witnessed the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Empire was broken up and while the internal and external enemies were fighting among themselves for a larger share of the spoils, one of the valiant commanders of the Turkish army was engaged in a struggle on behalf of the Turkish Nation.

This national hero, Mustafa Kemal, founded the Republic of Turkey after a war of independence that lasted more than four years.

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk assumed the Presidency of this first republic in Asia, and changed the course of his country toward the principles of western civilization. The Sultan and his family were exiled, the Caliphate was abolished, the Latin
alphabet was adopted, the fez and veil were outlawed, and women were granted voting rights.

By the time Ataturk died in 1938, the Republic of Turkey was already recognized as a member of the western world. The relocation of the capital to Ankara never reduced the importance of Istanbul, and this incomparable city continued to maintain its enchanting appearance and life style.

The Republic of Turkey has now proceeded for seventy-five years on the path of reason, based on scientific thought and facts pointed out by Ataturk.

The people of the country are determined to continue their march in the direction of contemporary civilization. The next millennium will be an even more prosperous age for the secular and democratic republic. The citizens of the country will follow in the footsteps of Ataturk as individuals who are independent, enlightened, unfettered in life and religion, at liberty in prayer and education, free in will, and loyal to the country.

Cultural Adjustment

Language

Living in another country where the native language is not that of your own may be intimidating, but it is important to take advantage of the opportunities offered, by the program and the country, to interact with the host people and culture.

Here is a list of ways to take advantage of these opportunities:

- Frequent places like markets, local restaurants, or a bakery.
- Do what the locals do. Don't spend a lot of time in touristy hangouts.
- Participate in activities your program may offer that includes host country nationals.
- Spark up conversations when possible with Turkish locals.
- Venturing out in smaller groups can make it easier to meet people.
- Make an effort to speak the language.
- You may be offered to take tea, even by a complete stranger. Tea time is a great opportunity to meet new people and become engaged with the community around you.
- Bartering for items is entirely acceptable, even expected, in many situations in Istanbul. Bartering can be a great opportunity to practice language skills and engage in the culture.

You can minimize the stress involved in adjusting to life in Turkey and get maximum benefit from your experience abroad by preparing adequately. The cultural differences you encounter can enrich your life by presenting you with a different worldview and new approaches to solving problems. Read as much as possible about where you are going to gain some insight. Talk to international students and veteran travelers who have been where you want to go. The Learning Abroad Center has travel tips from return travelers, many of whom are willing to be contacted and give advice in person. The Learning Abroad Center can also put you in touch with past participants willing to share their experiences with new travelers.

Local Transportation

Istanbul has an interconnected light rail and metro system. “Tramvay” is the light rail system, which serves the suburbs and has many stops in the city center. Istanbul’s Metro system is made up of one line but covers most of the city’s business center, connecting with the light rail at Taksim Square. The bus system is called “Metrobus” and intersects the tram and metro, and crosses the Bosphorus Bridge to the Asian side of Istanbul.

Coming Home

By the time you return home, you will likely have experienced significant personal, intellectual and emotional growth. You may find yourself experiencing reverse culture shock. Many students find returning home is harder than leaving. It is very normal to experience these feelings and you aren’t alone. You are encouraged to tap into the resources available in order to make the transition home easier.

To stay connected to your study abroad experience, you may want to:

- Become a Global Ambassador Intern: [www.UMabroad.umn.edu/students/process/reentry/internships](http://www.UMabroad.umn.edu/students/process/reentry/internships).
- Become a classroom visit intern
- Serve as a past participant at pre-departure meetings
- Stay in contact with friends from your program

These are just a few ways to stay connected. More information can be found at: [www.UMabroad.umn.edu/students/process/reentry](http://www.UMabroad.umn.edu/students/process/reentry).

Stop by the Learning Abroad Center office any time. Staff enjoy talking to students returned from study abroad, and would love to talk about your experience.
Cultural Adjustment

The On-Site Experience

What happens when you suddenly lose clues and symbols that orient you to situations in everyday life? What happens when facial expressions, gestures, and words are unfamiliar? The psychological discomfort and adjustment period in a foreign country is commonly known as culture shock or cultural adjustment.

You will almost certainly experience some form of culture shock. It might hit you after two days, two weeks or two months—timing varies widely for different people. Six common phases of cultural adjustment are listed below. These may be out of order for you, one phase may last longer than another or you may skip a step entirely.

Initial Fascination: On arrival your surroundings seem glamorous and exotic, you feel like the focus of attention and activity.

Initial Culture Shock: The initial fascination and euphoria fade as you settle in and you enter an emotional decline.

Surface Adjustment: After the initial “down” (a few days to a few weeks for most), you begin to truly adjust and settle into your surroundings. Language skills begin to improve, and you’ll feel less fatigued. Often you’ll be forming a small group of friends at this stage as well.

Feelings of Isolation: Difficulties in your new culture seem to stubbornly remain and you grow frustrated with the process.

Integration/Acceptance: After continued effort you find yourself more at ease with language, friends, professional, and academic interests. The culture you are living in is more easily examined. Differences between yourself and the society you live in become understandable and you come to accept both the situation and yourself in it, allowing you to relax and feel at home.

Return Anxiety: Just when you feel at home in the new country it’s time to go. Thoughts of leaving new friends raise anxiety similar to those felt before departure. You sense that you’ve changed as a person and apprehension grows when you think about people at home that may not understand your new feelings and insights, yet you may feel guilty for wanting to stay.

When in any of the above phases you may experience: changes in sleeping habits, feelings of helplessness or hopelessness, loneliness, depression, unexplainable crying, placing blame for difficulties on the program or host culture, homesickness, getting angry easily, increase in physical ailments or pain, compulsive eating or lack of appetite.

Other symptoms may manifest themselves as well. It is important to understand these are part of a normal process of adjustment, however, if uncomfortable feelings persist for extended periods or seem unbearable, seek assistance from your programs onsite support staff.

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A sense of isolation sets in. Boredom and a lack of motivation often follow. Unresolved personal issues often surface during this stage.

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Adjusted from Oberg (1960) and Gallahorn (1963)
Appendix

Suggested Packing List

It is extremely important you pack lightly, as you will be carrying your luggage yourself during the trip, often for long stretches in airports, bus, and train stations. Take only as much as you can carry easily by yourself. One way to measure what is "easily carried" is to pack everything you would like to take, pick it all up, and walk around the block. If you are not comfortable doing so, you may want to reevaluate what you've packed.

Necessary Items

- Seasonable clothing you can wash and wear, plus one or two formal outfits for special events
- Walking, hiking, or running shoes. These can be expensive to purchase in Turkey.
- Supply of any prescription medication and vitamins you require (bring enough for your full stay and make sure it is in its original bottle for customs)
- Do not have friends or family mail you prescription medications abroad
- Voltage converter and outlet adapter if you bring any electrical appliances
- Earplugs to eliminate background noise for study/sleep
- A reusable water bottle of metal or heavy plastic

These items are available but may be expensive abroad:

- Camera, memory card, and batteries

All apartments and homestays are equipped with washing machines. Dryers are rare so be prepared to let clothes air dry. Overnight-drying and wrinkle-free clothes are desirable.

Resources

travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1146.html
Consular information sheet and country information

wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/turkey.aspx
Health information for travelers to Europe

AIDS/HIV prevention

http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/content/safe-food-water.aspx
Food and water precautions/travelers’ diarrhea prevention

www.lonelyplanet.com/turkey
General info about Turkey and travel in the country

www.kultur.gov.tr
Turkish cultural events

www.tourismturkey.com
General tourist information for travellers

www.timeout.com/istanbul
A general guide to events around the city

The *DK Eyewitness Istanbul Guide Book* has been recommended by past participants.