Internships in Istanbul: A Comparative Approach to the Turkish Workforce

COURSE DESIGNATOR ISTN 3013
Language of Instruction English
NUMBER OF CREDITS 3 credits
Contact Hours 24 hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on five important themes in which students are expected to develop and enhance over the course of the semester through class seminars and on-the-job experience:

1. Analysis of cultural differences between the U.S. and Turkey
2. Communication skills
3. Work ethic and social responsibility
4. Organizational analysis
5. Personal growth and development

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Deniz Bingol

COURSE GOAL

The primary objective of this course is to teach the cultural differences and practices in the Turkish workplace. It will provide the foundation for doing business in Turkey and help develop analytical and critical thinking skills for working in a multi-cultural environment. The course will review several important aspects of employment in Turkey, including:

- current political climate and its impact on the economy;
- the role of secularism versus religious freedom debates affecting the workplace environment and legislation;
- the recent changes to legislation to regulate maternity and paternity leaves and legislative changes allowing religious dresses and symbols in the workplace;
- unemployment rates;
- trade unions and workers’ rights;
- public / private institutions;
- socioeconomic influences;
- cultural business practices;
- the role of women and family in the workforce;
- the impact of immigration on the economy;
- career placement and internship resources for Turkish university students;
- the role of Islam in the workplace;
- sexual and age discrimination;
- etc.

REQUIRED READING/MATERIALS
GRADING

In addition to the rubric below, students will select three choices from a menu of cultural activities supporting the themes of the course and will reflect upon these in one-page reaction papers. Students will use their internship experiences, cultural experiences, interactions with Turkish colleagues, and weekly readings and lectures to write constructive and analytical observations in their assigned journals. Students will be expected to write entries in their journals following each day on the job, discussing their daily experience at their internship sites.

Cultural Activities Menu for Reaction Papers:

All reaction papers should be a minimum of one page in length, double-spaced. Students may choose any three of the topics below for reaction papers:

1. Attend a demonstration organized by trade unions or women’s rights NGOs, and interview participants, activists and organizers. Theme to be agreed upon by the instructor.
2. Visit a public Turkish university campus and interview Turkish students of your major about job and internship prospects (contact information will be provided).
3. Visit the Internships and Career Center at Bogaziçi University (public university) and obtain information regarding resources provided to Turkish students (contacts will be provided).
4. Visit Bilgi University campus (private university) and interview Turkish students of your major about job and internship prospects (contact information will be provided).
5. Visit Bilgi University campus (private university) Placement and Career Education Office and obtain information regarding resources provided to Turkish students (contact information will be provided).
6. Interview a working professional from your field of study (NOT your employer), and discuss the steps to getting a job in your field in Turkey.
7. Attend a current affairs talk show at CNN Turk.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING AND GRADING STANDARDS

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<tr>
<th>Grading Rubric</th>
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<tr>
<td>A  95+</td>
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<td>A-  90-94</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+  86-89</td>
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<td>B  83-85</td>
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<td>B-  80-82</td>
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<td>C+  76-79</td>
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<td>C  73-75</td>
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<td>C-  70-72</td>
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<td>D+  66-69</td>
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<td>D  60-65</td>
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<td>F  &lt;59</td>
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Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

Summary of how grades are weighted:

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<tr>
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<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction Papers</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation by Employer</td>
<td>10%</td>
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CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

- Introduction to the syllabus.
- How do Turks find jobs? A look at the role of the family, and concepts such as extended family versus households with single parents, filial piety, women’s honor, and the various cultural perspectives co-existing in contemporary Turkish society.
- Important vocabulary: a review of terms relevant to the Turkish workforce and Turkish classifieds.
- Internship placement: individual meetings with students on placement, goals and expectations.
- Preparing for a Turkish job interview: a coaching session discussing ways for you to ace your first interview.

Assignment:
- Draft a one-page contract of goals and objectives for the duration of the internship placement to be handed in during Class #2 along with CV and cover letter.
- Reading #1 and first journal entry (one page) based on assigned reading.

WEEK 2

- Turn in CV, cover letter, and one-page contract with goals and expectations.
- Review Reading #1 and class discussion.
- From student to adult: a discussion on when Turkish students become self-sufficient and independent.
- Turkish education: a look at the Turkish university and job prospects for college graduates.

Assignment:
- Reading #2 and second journal entry (one page) based on class lecture.
- Journals – including first and second entries – to be due at beginning of Class #3.
- Prepare for a class debate / roundtable discussion with Turkish students planned for next class.

WEEK 3

- First and second journal entries due.
- Review of Reading #2 and class discussion.
- A debate / roundtable discussion on various themes affecting university students, including:
  - Rising tuition at US colleges and universities.
  - Difficulties faced by US students paying back student loans and urgency to find employment soon after graduation.
  - Why are many young Turks leaving Turkey to look for work abroad?
  - Why is it so difficult for young Turks to establish independence?
  - Lack of resources in the Turkish university system to help students find jobs after graduation.
  - Private versus Public / State universities in Turkey.
  - Istanbul and urban universities versus universities in rural areas.

Assignment:
- Reading #3 and Reaction Paper #1 using one of the topics listed in the Cultural Activities Menu.
- Students will be asked to present their first Reaction Paper in Class #5.

WEEK 4
- Guest lecture (Speaker and topic TBA)
- A discussion of the Turkish Employee: rights, responsibilities, contracts, and problems they may face in the current political climate.

### WEEK 5

- Students present Reaction Paper #1.
- Review of Reading #3 and class discussion.
- Sex, Age and Race Discrimination: a look at the role of women and immigrants in the workforce.

Assignment:
- Reading #4 and journal entry (one page) based on assigned reading.

### WEEK 6

- FILM: A screening of the award-winning documentary “Ekumenopolis,” about urbanization, environmental sustainability, globalization of Turkish culture and economy, and Istanbul as an urban laboratory for globalization tensions.
- To be followed by discussion with the director, Mr. Imre Azem.

Assignment:
- Reaction Paper #2 using one of the topics listed in the Cultural Activities Menu.

### WEEK 7

- Present Reaction Paper #2.
- Review of Readings #4 and #5 with class discussion.
- Discussion of final project.

Assignment:
- Reading #6 and journal entry (one page) based on reading.
- Students will turn in journals at beginning of Class #8.

### WEEK 8

- Journals due.
- Review of Reading #6 and class discussion.

Assignment:
- Reading #7.

### WEEK 9

- Review of Reading #7 and class discussion.

Assignment:
- Reaction Paper #3 using one of the topics listed in the Cultural Activities Menu.
WEEK 10

- Present Reaction Paper #3.
- Roundtable discussion with Turkish university students on internships, job markets and prospects for life after university.

Assignment:
- Journal entry (one page) on discussion with Turkish students.
- Reading #8.

WEEK 11

- Review of reading #8 and discussion of final projects.

WEEK 12

- Journals due.
- Students present Final Project in class.

WEEK 13

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance and punctuality are mandatory in order to earn full marks. The final grade will take into consideration preparation required for class (i.e. readings) and participation in class discussions. If you miss any meetings without an excused absence from the on-site director, your final grade will be dropped accordingly. In the case of absences, it is the student’s responsibility to find out what information was given in class including any announcements made.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY:

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an “F” or “N” for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

STUDENT CONDUCT

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct and student needs. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.