

Grant Administration

The Commission has also taken another initiative within the auspices of our Student Program. For years, the administration of our student grants has been carried out by the International Institute of Education (IIE) on behalf of the Commission. As of this year, the entire process of grant administration will now be carried out by the Commission, allowing for greater local control, flexibility, and guidance in the grant process.

Three of the Commission staff (Deputy Executive Director & Turkish Programs Officer Ms. Seher Turkyilmaz Sinclair and Program Assistants Ms. Pinar Kilichan Sener and Ms. Begum Nebol) visited IIE headquarters in New York City for a 3-day training program in October. Following the training provided by IIE, the team has started developing Grant Administration Process tools, which will be specifically designed and used for the Turkish Fulbright Commission student program administration.

Stories from Our Turkish Fulbright Grantees



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When I was a small child, my mother told me stories of Rapunzel, Little Red Riding Hood and Hansel and Gretel who all lived in castles or houses in the forest with cute animal friends. I was born and grew up in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey, where I did not have many opportunities to spend time close to nature. Maybe that is why I always dreamed about a house in the forest as in the story of Snow White. However, I never could have imagined that my dreams would actually come true by being a graduate student at Duke. I am not living in the forest, of course, but every day it is really nice to see squirrels on the way to class, and when I am having a lucky day, I even see deer while waiting for the bus. Sometimes, I spend time in the Duke Gardens, which is just behind the Social Sciences building, after my morning classes.

I would like to share a few words about how I spend time in a typical week as an economics master student at Duke. Like other graduate students, I am busy with midterm examinations, projects and assignments. I also started to work for one of my professors as a research assistant. One of my professors always says "life is not linear," that is, there is always more things to do. As I am interested in a career in academia, I know that I will always be busy with such activities for the rest of my life. Therefore, I also recognize the fact that it is also very important to take time off for extracurricular activities.

I think the International House at Duke plays a key role in helping students

have a social life as they organize different weekly events. The Chinese Conversation Club is one of these activities. I joined this club not only to develop my Chinese, as I have been learning Chinese for two years, but also to have a chance to meet Chinese students and learn about the Chinese culture. Also, inspired by the Duke Language Partners Program, I started to teach Turkish to one of my friends from Guatemala and he started to teach me Spanish.

I would make the following suggestion to incoming international students. Enroll in an academic writing and presentation course even if you believe you may not need it.

Many universities offer such classes for international students as electives in addition to the required courses. You get to know students in your own department in courses in your field of study that you take with them. By taking an academic writing or presentation class, however, you have an opportunity to meet students from different departments.

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