

Project Name Synergy & Systemness: Making the Most of Innovative Technology & Collaboration

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Campus Empire State College

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Tier Tier One

Project Team

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Overview Summary

A pilot course to study effectiveness of collaborative international online learning later combined with a ten-day business study tour in Turkey. Before and after the trip, students engaged in learning activities via an online learning platform.

Outcomes Summary TBC

Project Abstract

We propose the development of a pilot course limited to thirty students combining online learning with a ten-day business study tour in Turkey. Students will be encouraged to participate in the study tour component, though special allowances will be made for those unable to participate. This course is a collaborative effort by

two SUNY campuses—Empire State College and SUNY Cortland—with their Turkish partner, Anadolu University. In doing so, we anticipate working closely with the COIL Center. Both SUNY Cortland and Empire State College are active participants in the COIL Nodal Network. This pilot course is a prototype for other such courses aimed at further efforts to internationalize our respective campuses and, notably, serving as a model for other SUNY campuses seeking innovative ways of working with international partners.

Our four major goals:

- 1) Shared Instructional Design: Working closely with COIL, we will develop a course that will effectively meet the curricular and technical challenges inherent in bringing students and faculty from three different universities into a common online learning environment.
- 2) Business Study Tour: Preparing students for tour activities is a key focus of the course and will be embedded in the online platform. The course will begin by introducing students to the society and economy of Turkey, presented in the larger context of Turkish history, and will then focus on present-day Turkey as one of the world's top emerging market nations. This will be followed by the study of specific enterprises, previously identified for the study tour visits. The 10-day tour will include meeting executives of key industries, visits to manufacturing sites, and meetings with Turkish and U.S. officials responsible for promoting economic development and international trade. The course ends with students either individually, or in teams, presenting final projects.
- 3) Collaborative Online International Learning: ESC faculty members are adept at offering courses online and in a blended format, but the introduction of concurrent collaborative activities and co-teaching including another SUNY campus and an international partner, all combined with a study tour, is breaking new ground. All the participants would benefit from the advisory role of the COIL Center and its expertise in establishing best practices for an online international collaboration of this scale. Instructors require time, support, and resources to help them work together effectively to design this new instructional model. Funding for this project is directed exclusively at making opportunities available for instructors to design tasks for students that take into account the inherent cultural sensitivities and technological complexities of working in this format. We anticipate that the mix of students will create a unique learning environment—one to be enhanced certainly by the faculty from the three institutions serving as course designers and instructors. The course will include: ESC's middle-aged students who bring their practical business acumen to the course, Cortland and Anadolu students of a more traditional college age, who themselves will bring important cultural dimensions to the learning experience.
- 4) Innovative Use of Technology: The inherent challenge in this course, which is also a significant dimension for the faculty role, is how to make the best use of existing technology to bring the students together to promote cohesion of the group and making the most of the experience. In addition to having students participate in online asynchronous discussions, we will have a series of videoconferences before and after the actual study tour. This will help students from the three campuses develop working relationships.

The appropriate use of technology will be key to the cohesiveness of the students, in effect, creating one group out of three. Before the study tour, we will create workgroups based on specific themes:

- Highlights of the history of Turkey after the fall of the Ottoman Empire & the rise of the Republic
- U.S.- Turkey relations during the Cold War & recent developments
- Turkey's recent economic ascendancy & its role in the world as an emerging economic and political power
- Trade relations with the U.S. & the European Union

In addition to preparing journals that detail what was learned from the study tour, students will be required to identify research project that will be presented at the end of the course. Both journal and project will include supporting photos, audio and video materials gathered during the tour. Turkish students will be exposed to American views and will actively participate in all learning activities. The Turkish instructor & students will present Turkish perspectives on U.S. foreign policy and its impact on international business. Discussions will highlight the complexities of this relationship.

This project is a historic step for SUNY and COIL. It will be the first time that a collaborative online international learning initiative is paired with an international study tour. In effect, the project is a microcosm of

the global business world, requiring the effective use of teams composed of individuals from disparate parts of the world, acting cooperatively to bring a project to fruition.

Turkey is a strategic choice of venue for this project, not only because of existing institutional linkages with Anadolu University that will immensely facilitate the development and execution of the project, but because of its importance as an emerging market and its growing influence in the world.

Reports and Resources

- [Project website](#)
- [Final project report](#)
- [SUNY Global Newsletter May 2013](#)
- [Empire State College article Field Study](#)

Faculty Development

- Organizational Models of Faculty Support

Instructional Design

- Online Education
- Student Learning Support