Turkey Travel Seminar 2016

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Do I have to be a political science major?
A: No. The trip is 1-3 credit hours in political science, but is designed to appeal broadly to students with a variety majors. Any student wishing to learn more about Turkish culture, history and politics will enjoy the trip.

Q: Will we have free time in each city?
A: Some. A guide will provide tour of each city for the group, visiting some of the most remarkable sites, but students will also have some down time to relax and enjoy the local culture.

Q: Do I have to know the languages of the places we are visiting?
A: No. We will have some language tutorial sessions before we travel, but these sessions will only provide a very basic vocabulary so that you can politely inquire if the person you are speaking with speaks English (in many cases they will and they will be glad to help you).

Q: What are the graded components of the class?
A: The class is designed toward experiential learning and is simply graded on a credit/non-credit basis. The requirements for a passing grade are attending the three class sessions before the trip, and writing daily in a travel journal.

Q: Can I participate if I am not a WSU student?
A: Yes. The WSU admissions office allows non-WSU students to be admitted as "guest students" for a fee of $30. You can then enroll in the Travel Seminar.

Q: When do I enroll in the class?
A: The Travel Seminar (Pol S 399) is offered as a Summer course. You can enroll in the spring 2016 for 1 or 3 credit hours.

Q: What does the cost of $2,500 include?
A: The cost includes airfare, lodging, meals, and tour fees for the entire trip.
Q: **What is NOT included in the cost?**  
A:  
- 1-3 credit hours tuition for Travel Seminar 399  
- Passport ($110 + photo). Processing time approximately 8 weeks. Go to www.state.gov for more information.  
- Souvenirs and sundries

Q: **Do I have to pay the full price at one time?**  
A: No. The first deposit to reserve your spot is $500 due Oct 15. $1000 is due December 1. $1000 is due February 15.

Q: **Is money deposited refundable?**  
A: The first $500 deposit is refundable until Dec 1 when the 2nd payment is due. After that date, you are committed to the trip unless you can find a replacement for yourself. (There are usually a few people on the waitlist, so if you cannot travel for any reason there is usually someone who will take your place so you can get your money back, but there is no guarantee of this.)

Q: **Where will we be staying?**  
A: We will be staying in modest hotels in each city. You will share a double room with another student of the same gender.

Q: **Do I have to have travel insurance?**  
A: Your payment includes the purchase of Global Emergency Medical Assistance. This will cover you if you have a severe medical condition and will include immediate return transportation to the US if necessary. It is NOT for non-emergency care. You should check with your own health insurance company to see what kind of coverage they offer when you are traveling abroad.

Q: **How do I get the right kind of currency for my expenses?**  
A: The easiest way to get the right currency at the lowest exchange rate is to use an ATM machine. ATMs are readily available just as they are in the US. The bank will handle the exchange and the only fee will be for the ATM machine. Make sure you have enough money in your account to cover your expected (and possibly unexpected) expenses.

Q: **Can I use my credit card to pay for purchases?**  
A: The simplest way to pay for your purchases is with cash. Unless you are making a purchase over $15, many merchants will not take a credit card. If you do need to charge a purchase, Mastercard and Visa are the most widely accepted cards. I would encourage you to set a specific budget for your souvenir purchases and to stick to it carefully. You don't want to run out of money before you get back home! Be sure to contact your credit card company in advance to let them know you will be traveling, otherwise they might freeze your account thinking your card has been stolen.
Q: **Where will we be eating?**
A: Breakfasts will most often be at the hotel where we are staying, with lunches and dinners at restaurants on the way. We may periodically visit a grocery store to purchase a picnic meal.

Q: **How much do you tip in Turkey?**
A: Tips will be included in our meal package, so you do not have to worry about providing tips.

Q: **What are the guidelines for alcohol consumption?**
A: Turkey is a majority Muslim country where alcohol is rarely served with meals, and is not consumed by devout Muslims at all. Although there is a large secular population and alcohol is available, out of respect for our partner hosts, students are strongly discouraged from consuming alcohol on the trip.

Q: **Should I be worried about security concerns?**
A: I do not anticipate any serious security concerns, but urge everyone to use caution and common sense to avoid any potential problems. We will be traveling in several large cities. You should always be aware of your surroundings and look out for the other members of our group. Always travel with at least one other group member if you are going out on your own during your free time. Pickpocketing is a serious problem in a number of places. You MUST carry your passport and larger currency bills in a hidden waist pouch or neck pouch. These can be purchased for a few dollars in the travel section at Walmart.

Q: **How will we be getting around?**
A: We will be traveling almost exclusively on a mini tour bus (seating 15 people). You will be responsible for handling your own luggage, so pack sensibly. We will also do a lot of WALKING, so you might want to take some laps on the treadmill before we leave town.

Q: **Will my electrical appliances work in Turkey?**
A: Turkish plugs and electric current vary from the US. Converters and adapter kits can be found many places for approximately $30. (see: http://www.walkabouttravelgear.com) You might consider making this purchase with a travel mate and sharing it.

Q: **Is there internet connectivity available?**
A: Yes. Many hotels have free wifi service.
**Q: How easy is it to call home?**

A: Most phone plans include an option to activate international calls, but it is usually expensive. Our days will be full and it may be difficult to take time out of the schedule to call home often (especially considering the time difference). I HIGHLY RECOMMEND "UNPLUGGING" DURING THIS TRIP. Previous travellers have found it extremely enjoyable NOT to be linked to the world by a cell phone. They could enjoy the company of the group and immerse themselves in the sights and experiences around them instead of being at the beck and call of an electronic device. You can easily arrange to use Skype or a similar service to check in with family members periodically so they know you are ok.

**Q: Can we do laundry there or do we need to pack for a full 12 days?**

A: You should pack enough clothes so that you don't have to do laundry, but don't go overboard. A large suitcase is not fun to handle when traveling from city to city. Just pack the essentials.

**Q: What kind of weather might we expect?**

A: The weather can be quite variable in June. We may experience rain and 60 degrees, or sun and 80. You should have a flexible wardrobe that can accommodate these variations.