

APPLICATION CHECKLIST & BUDGET FORM

Research, Scholarship, and Creativity Grant

Deadline February 10th

Please complete this checklist and attach it as the cover page of your grant application, whether you submit electronically or via hard copy.

Faculty Information

Name: ASLI ILGIT

Dept: POLITICAL SCIENCE

Email: ailgit@gustavus.edu

Rank: ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Checklist

X ☐ **Description of previous projects (and outcomes) funded by RSC grants**

X ☐ **Complete project description, including separate statements of:**

- 1. Purpose.** What are the intellectual, conceptual, or artistic issues? How does your work fit into other endeavors being done in this field?
- 2. Feasibility.** What qualifications do you bring to this project? What have you done/will you do to prepare for this project? What is the time period, i.e. summer, summer and academic year, academic year only? Is the work's scope commensurate with the time period of the project?
- 3. Project Design.** This should include a specific description of the project design and activities, including location, staff, schedules or itineraries, and desired outcomes.

X ☐ **RSC Budget Proposal Form**

X ☐ **If successful, my proposal can be used as an example to assist future faculty applications. This decision will not in any way influence the evaluation of my application. Check box to give permission.**

Submission instructions

Electronic — Submit a single document containing the entire application to rsc-proposals@gustavus.edu.

Paper — Submit one (1) copy of completed application to the John S. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning (SSC 119).

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- Directions:
1. Enter your **Name**
 2. Enter the **Stipend Costs**
 3. Enter the **Project Costs** (both individual costs and **Total Project Cost**)
 4. Enter **Total Amount Requested** (Total Project Cost + Stipend)

NAME: ASLI ILGIT

STIPEND (Please check one box to indicate your distribution preference)

*Note: The RSC grant will fund up to 1,500 towards **Project Costs**. If your project costs will exceed this amount, you may opt to apply a portion (or all) of your stipend to cover these additional costs. If this option is your preference, please select "Partial Amount".*

X ☐ **Full Amount** (\$700- assistant professor; \$600-associate professor; \$500-full professor)

☐

Partial Amount (apply a portion of the full amount to project costs)

Partial Amount: Please indicate the amount that you would like to apply towards project costs (\$ _____) and the remaining stipend after this deduction (\$ _____)

PROJECT COSTS: List each item individually with its cost. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

I. Equipment (e.g. transcription machine, camera, digital recorder—but not computer hardware)

1. Digital Voice Recorder
2. Portable Scanner
- 3.

II. Materials (e.g. books, printing, software, lab supplies)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

III. Personnel (e.g. typist, transcriptionist, student assistant)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

IV. Travel (cannot include conference travel, see

<http://gustavus.edu/finance/travel.php> for allowable expenses)

1. Travel to Minneapolis, MN (by car, 5 days, 140 miles, .50 cents/m)
2. Airfare to Washington, DC
3. Accommodation in Washington, DC (four nights)

Project Costs Amount

I. Equipment

1. \$ 60

2. \$140

3.

II. Materials

1.

2.

3.

III. Personnel

1.

2.

3.

IV. Travel

1. \$350

2. \$400

3. \$550

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS

\$ 1,500

TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED (Total Project Costs + Stipend)

\$ 2,200

(Note: The RSC grant will fund up to an amount equal to your Full Stipend + 1,500 for Project Costs)

Research, Scholarship, and Creativity Grant: BUDGET INFORMATION

Research, Scholarship, and Creativity Grant 2012

Asli Ilgit
Assistant Professor
Department of Political Science

Project Title

Diaspora as “Agent of Influence”? American-Turks in Turkish-American Relations

Research Project, Its Significance and Contribution

This is the first project that I am applying for an RSC grant. This project is about the construction of identities of a highly understudied immigrant group in the United States, the Turkish community. It seeks to answer three main questions: How do social, cultural, economic and political imperatives of both Turkey and the United States shape identities of American-Turks? To what extent and how are they mobilized around events pertinent to Turkish politics? And what kind of role do they play in Turkish-American relations?

In today's interconnected world, immigrants are no longer detached from their “home” countries and confined to the borders of their “host” states. Today's immigrant communities are part of the recent phenomenon of what is called “transnational space,” in which they stay connected to both their home and host states by maintaining personal, familial, political and other forms of involvement and by means of modern communication technologies (Kaya 2007). This interconnectedness penetrates all dimensions of immigrants' life, fostering multiple identities. Furthermore, immigrant communities are increasingly recognized as “agents” of their home countries and expected to play an active role in cross-state relations between their home and host states (Sørensen 2007).

This understanding and expectation has, therefore, led to the growing tendency among emigrant states to cultivate relations with their overseas communities. For example, in 1990 Mexico created the Program for Mexican Communities Abroad in the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs to tighten ties with people of Mexican origin living abroad (Gutierrez 1999). In 2001, Italy extended the constitutional right to vote in national elections to Italian citizens living abroad (Choate 2007), while India emphasizes a “global Indian nation” by declaring the borders of the nation-state not limited to Southeast Asia (Varadarajan 2010). Similar to these state policies, in February 2010 the Turkish government invited members of the Turkish diaspora across Europe to a conference in Turkey - all expenses paid by the Turkish government - to discuss their role as “agents of Turkey's influence.” Turkey's most recent effort is a sign of the Turkish government's changing attitudes toward its citizens abroad, a community of five million people, 300,000 of whom live in North America, according to the official statistics of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

While the topic of Turkish immigrants in Western Europe, especially in Germany, has been widely studied by numerous scholars from different disciplines (Kaya 2007; Ostergaard-Nielsen 2001; Chapin 1996), the Turkish community in the United States has been, until now, an understudied topic due most likely to its relatively small size compared to other immigrant groups. The Turkish diaspora is, however, becoming more important symbolically and numerically than it was before, creating a large and diverse network of Turkish-American organizations in the United States and giving rise to scholarly interest in the

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Turkish-American population. Examples of such interest include, but are not limited to, the first edited volume on the history of Turkish immigration into the United States and a few recent Ph.D. dissertations on the assimilation of the Turkish diaspora into American society (Anil 2010; Yavuzer 2009; Balgamis and Karpat 2008; Acehan 2005; Grabowski 2005; Angin 2003).

These studies are undeniably instrumental in bringing scholarly and general attention to a highly underexamined immigrant population. They also have paved the way for the collection of archival materials of early Turkish immigrants at the Immigration History Research Center of University of Minnesota. However, unlike studies on Turkish immigrants in Europe that have examined immigration in many stages and with diverse approaches from various disciplines, research on Turkish communities in the United States is still at its early stage, focusing largely on highly descriptive and historical analysis of early Turkish immigration. My project draws on and contributes to this emerging interest in the Turkish population and their place in the United States. Instead of concentrating on the early immigrants from the Ottoman Empire, though, my project examines transnational identities of Turkish immigrants and their transnational political practices. Given Turkey's ever-changing political and social environments and the recent ups and downs in U.S.-Turkey relations, I am particularly interested in Turkish-Americans' diverse and multiple identities created by the interaction with Turkey's and the United States' culture, their responses to the events in their homeland, and their role in cross-state relations between Turkey and the United States.

My project is important for three reasons. First, it contributes to the literature on immigration by providing an underexamined empirical case of contemporary Turkish immigrants in the United States and their construction of transnational identities. Second, it directs attention to a particular subculture within American society and its influence on United States' foreign relations and diplomacy. Finally, this study intersects with a number of areas of academic interest, including identity, immigration, diaspora, political mobilization, foreign policy, and transnationalism. Hence it presents a potentially rich and interdisciplinary research agenda for immigration scholars in a variety of academic disciplines, such as political science, international relations, history, sociology, and gender studies.

Feasibility and Project Design

I will rely on archival data as well as semi-structured interviews with representatives of the Turkish diaspora to address my research questions. I intend to start the data collection part of my research in June 2012, spending half of my time in the archives of the Immigration History Research Center of the University of Minnesota, where the collection of Turkish-American organizations' newsletters and other publications are archived. I am a native speaker of Turkish, and most of the publications are both in Turkish and English. In the remaining two weeks, I will travel to Washington, D.C. to conduct interviews with members of the Turkish diaspora. Drawing on the limited but growing literature on Turkish immigrant groups in the United States, I have already identified a variety of Turkish-American organizations that I plan to contact and visit in Washington, D.C.: *Assembly of Turkish-American Associations (ATAA)*, *Ataturk Society of America (ASA)*, *Washington Turkish Women Association (WTWA)*, *American Turkish Association of Washington, D.C. (ATA-DC)*, *Turkish-American Business Council (TAIK)*, *Turkish Coalition of America (TCA)*, and *American-Turkish Council (ATC)*.

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These organizations are different in size, type, focus and membership, and provide me with a variety of resources and information about Turkish communities. I will interview with members of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee as well as staff and other members of these organizations. Some of the questions that I will be interested in exploring in my interviews and archival research are:

- How do the members of Turkish diaspora identify themselves? Do they accept their categorization by the United States by their “national-state identity”? If not, what other labels do they use to identify themselves?
- How often do they visit Turkey? What other ties do they have to Turkey?
- What is their self-representation of their relationship to events pertinent to Turkey and the United States?
- To what extent do they engage with each other, especially on issues relevant to Turkey?
- How do they historically talk about other events involving Turkey and the United States, for example, the Iraq War?
- Do they react to the United States’ negative or positive arguments about Turkey? If so, how?
- Who are the audiences these Turkish-American organizations address?
- How do they engage with other immigrant groups in the United States?

I intend to write and complete two article manuscripts by the end of the fall of 2012 academic semester before submitting them for consideration by academic journals such as *Diaspora*, *International Migration Review*, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, and *Turkish Studies*.

This project is drawn from both my academic and personal interests. For about three years now I have been interested in immigration issues in international relations, a topic I began to think about under the umbrella of international security during graduate school. During my graduate program, my advisor and I turned our mutual interest into a collaborative project on immigration and security, ultimately submitting our research as an article, still under review, to an academic journal. In the summer of 2010, the National Endowment for Humanities (NEH) provided me an opportunity to further develop my interest in the politics of international migration and diaspora. I was selected to participate in the NEH Summer Seminar on “Rethinking International Migration” at the University of California, Los Angeles, which helped me develop my research ideas on cross-state relations through diaspora communities. Furthermore, I was able to integrate my research into my teaching at Gustavus this semester by offering an upper-level course on International Immigration and Transnational Politics. On a more personal level, as a Turkish immigrant living in the United States, I found myself connected to both my home and host states through various networks and by means of global communication, which enabled me to follow and be part of both American and Turkish political and cultural life. Based upon my professional and personal interests, I look forward pursuing a research agenda that focuses on immigrant groups and their role in cross-state relations. This project represents the first initiative within this new research direction.