# ANADOLUM E-CAMPUS SYSTEM

■ Res. Asst. Çağlar KARADUMAN

Anadolu University has made continuous efforts to improve the quality of open education programs offered in the Faculties of Open Education, Business Administration, and Economics since the launch of open education system in 1982.

A wide range of innovative e-learning environments have been developed so far to support studying and learning processes of distance learners. Anadolum e-Campus System, introduced in the spring semester of 2015-2016 academic year, aims to maximize learners' interaction and motivation, taking advantage of the potentials of learning and communication technologies.

Anadolum e-Campus is not a platform where learning materials are offered independently. All materials are interrelated and integrated in this learning environment. The learning materials offered so far in the open education system are brought together under Anadolum e-Campus. One of the most important advantages of this environment is that it allows greater learner-learner and learner-course instructor interaction.

Anadolum e-Campus, an environment developed on the basis of communication and learning technologies, has a modular design that offers open and distance learning materials as a package, maximizes interaction in distance learning, and provides support to learners in the learning process.



Learning materials offered in different environments have now been brought together under Anadolum e-Campus. The most important components of the system are learning management system and learner analytics. Learner analytics will allow us to track the frequency and effects of using learning materials, and hence to improve the system regularly with a view to ensuring higher effectiveness and efficiency. Anadolum e-Campus additionally comprises the components of social network management, examination system, and student support system.

Anadolum e-Campus is designed as a structure connected to external systems and integrated to institutional databases.

The system is based on four main aspects, each of which contributes to meeting stakeholders' needs. These are content, management, evaluation and communication. The integration of all contents and learning materials into a single environment will enable us to track the performance of learners, course instructors and administrative staff, to observe the impacts of content on success, and to promote interaction.

In Anadolum e-Campus, discussion forums are integrated into chapter contents in order to facilitate interaction between course instructors and learners. These forums are managed according to certain rules by course coordinators and moderators. The activities designed for each chapter are Search & Find, and Ask & Learn.

In the first activity, students have the opportunity to get engaged in a discussion introduced by the course coordinator. For each chapter, the course coordinator asks an open-ended question, and students write their answers and ideas related to the topic and read other students' ideas during the week. At the end of each chapter, the course coordinator uploads the answer to the question.

In the second activity, students post on the forum to exchange information, and course moderators observe learners' interaction on the forum and provide feedback, when required. During this activity, learners can ask questions to other learners and/or answer their questions. Anadolum e-Campus is thus expected to promote learners' interaction and motivation.
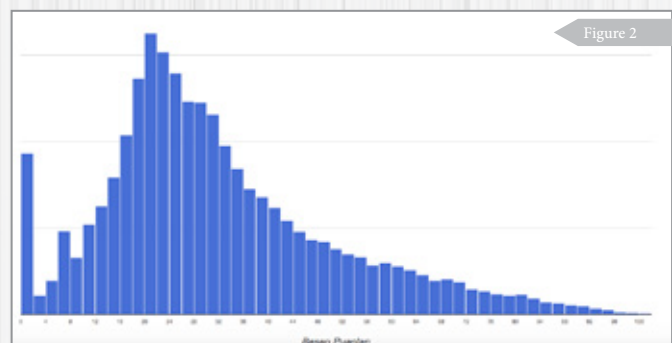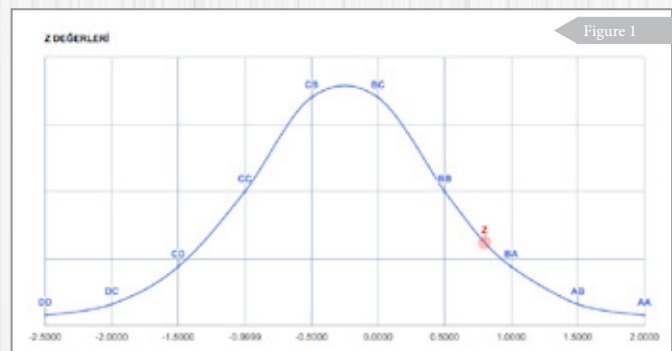
# OPEN EDUCATION STUDENTS GET A SCORE REPORT

■ Res. Asst. Gökhan ÖNDER

Open education students can get a score report as of the fall semester of 2015-2016. The report will enable students to compare their success in a course (based on examination results) with that of other students taking the course. Students can access the reports at **https://aof.anadolu.edu.tr/anasayfa/Default.aspx** (see Figure 1).

Information about student success in examinations is available to editors and question writers at **sinavanaliz.anadolu.edu.tr** as from the fall semester of 2015-2016 academic year. Thus, editors and question writers will have online access to information on the number of students in each range in the grading scale and the difficulty of questions as well as statistics related to examination questions (see Figure 2).

Note: The graphs below are drawn to give an example, and do not represent any course in the open education system.


Figure 1


Figure 2

# EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE (EVS) PROGRAM AS A PART OF ERASMUS+

■ Asst. Prof. Dr. Didem PAŞAOĞLU

We had an interview with Mustafa Avci about Erasmus+ for this issue of the newsletter. We talked about the European Voluntary Service (EVS), which is a program offered as a part of Erasmus+. We would like to thank to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bilge Kağan Özdemir, Head of the International Office, and Mustafa Avci for their support and contribution.

**Can you please inform us about the European Voluntary Service, which is one of the youth programs of Erasmus+?**

EVS is a mobility program for young people under Key Action 1: Learning Mobility of Individuals of Erasmus+. This program gives young people aged 17-30 the chance to spend time abroad as a volunteer from 2 weeks to 12 months in a non-profit organization in Europe.

Students are eligible to participate in the program unless they are over 30 years old when the project starts. Parent permission is required for students aged 17.

Volunteering projects are mostly implemented in EU member countries. However, there are also organizations participating in the EVS program from non-member countries, e.g. Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

A substantial part of the budget is allocated to foregoing countries. A limited number of volunteer service projects are run by organizations in the following countries:

**a) The Balkans:** Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia.

**b) The Eastern Partnership:** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

**c) The Southern Mediterranean Countries:** Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.

**d) Russia**

**What is a non-profit organization?**

A non-profit organization is an organization that is engaged in public services not to make a profit, but to make positive changes in individuals' quality of life. In this respect, non-profit organizations include asso-

ciations, foundations, youth centers, art centers, social clubs, non-governmental organizations, chambers of industry and commerce, chambers of merchants and craftsmen, professional organizations, educational associations, trade unions, employers' unions and international organizations that work for public services. Universities also carry out projects under the EVS program.

**What do participants of this program volunteer for?**

They volunteer to work in a wide range of areas. The topics include support to individuals with special needs and disabled young people, social activities with children and young people, creativity and culture, arts activities, media and communication, education through sport and outdoor activities, environment and climate change, social inclusion and equality of opportunity, EU citizenship, EU awareness, gender equality, youth policy, youth leisure, health care, and many other areas that allow the transformation of youth energy into social benefit.

**What are the application requirements?**

To apply for the EVS program:

a) Young people are not required to speak a foreign language. Not speaking a foreign language is not a disadvantage in EVS applications. It may even be an advantage in some organizations.

b) Students are not required to be trained, skilled or experienced in the project topic. EVS is not a job, but a volunteering experience. Open education students will soon be able to get detailed information on EVS online or in face-to-face and one-on-one sessions. Thus, candidates will be equipped with more information on application and selection processes.

c) Students are not required to have prior experience in volunteering. Prior experience may provide advantages in some situations, but is not a requirement.

d) To apply for the EVS program, students need to be aged between 18 and 30 years, and be patient and willing.

**What is the scope of two-week or twelve-month projects?**

Projects up to two months are short-term projects for disadvantaged individuals. The others are longer projects. A volunteer that takes part in a short-term project can work in another project afterwards, as



Meeting of Prof. Dr. Yücel Güney, Vice Rector for Open Education System and Dean of the Faculty of Open Education, with Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bilge Kağan Özdemir, Head of the International Office, and his team

long as the total period of volunteering does not exceed 12 months.

**What is the scope of (financial) support to EVS volunteers?**

• Passport - Visa: The International Office Provides a letter for exemption from payment of passport fee. The National Agency provides the letter required in visa application. Visa costs are covered by the project budget.

• Health Insurance: EVS volunteers are covered by Cigna group insurance plan, and insurance-related procedures are carried out by the International Office. The cover is free of charge to the volunteers.

• Travel Expenses: Travel expenses are calculated on the basis of distance and covered by the project budget.

• Accommodation: Accommodation costs are covered by the receiving organization. Volunteers accommodate in dormitories or in houses of host families. Whatever the type of accommodation is, volunteers do not pay the rent or other costs of accommodation. In short, costs related to accommodation are covered by the project budget.

• Food: Volunteers get a reasonable grant for food fixed per host country. The amount of grant is enough to cover the costs of three meals a day.

• Local Transportation: Any costs of local transportation are covered by the project budget.

• Language Lessons: Volunteers can attend four- or five-hour language lessons per week free of charge.

• Mentor Support: Each volunteer is assigned a

mentor who mediates between the volunteer and the receiving organization, and meets the volunteer regularly to discuss positive and negative aspects of the experience.

• Monthly Allowance: The European Commission pays volunteers a monthly allowance that is fixed per host country, and ranges between €70-145. For example, €90 for Hungary, €85 for Poland, or €105 for Spain.

• Working hours, holidays: Volunteers work five days and maximum 35-40 hours per week. They have two days off per week and two days of holiday per month during the duration of the EVS project.

### What are the application procedures?
• Before making an application, students should define their personal motivation and expectations clearly and be determined, and then identify a project area according to their expectations.
• There should be a sending organization.
• Students write a CV and a motivation letter (or video), explaining their motive for wishing to take part in a project in the area they selected.
• Students also need to write a cover letter of a couple of sentences, introducing themselves briefly, to make a good first impression in the receiving organization.
• Students can submit an application after their CV and letters are ready.

### How does a student apply for the EVS program?
• European Youth Portal lists the organizations accredited to run projects and the ongoing projects. http://europa.eu/youth/volunteering/evs-organisation_en
• On this portal, students can find projects by filtering project titles and countries.
• Students submit an application to the project they are interested in by sending a cover letter (including their CV and motivation letter) to the contact e-mail available in project details. Students must keep in mind that CV and letters should be in English.

### What are the replies that students are likely to receive after they submit an application?
Organizations may ask students to provide additional documents or to wait some time. Students may receive out-of-office messages or may be rejected because the organization no longer has a project. Or-

ganizations may wish to have a Skype interview with the candidate, or accept the candidate directly to the project.

### What should students keep in mind when writing a CV and motivation letter?
Students can create a CV, using the Europass template, or write a more creative CV. Europass CV template is available at https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/editors/tr/cv/compose.

The guidelines of the National Agency is useful in writing a motivation letter. http://www.ua.gov.tr/docs/default-source/gen%C3%A7lik-program%C4%B1/motivasyon-mektubu-nas%-C4%B1l-yaz%C4%B1l%C4%B1r-.pdf?sfvrsn=0

### What are students required to do once they are accepted?
They must immediately get in touch with the sending organization, i.e. Anadolu University International Office. We need to sign documents to guarantee the volunteer's rights and responsibilities and to clarify all details.

### Thank you very much. Do you have anything else to add?
Students can contact us at evs@anadolu.edu.tr for any questions.



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