



International Fellowships Newsletter

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Fulbright Edition

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The Fulbright Program

By Olivia Chen



The Fulbright Program was established in 1946 to foster a better understanding of international affairs and to promote cultural exchange with other nations. In 2008, U.S. Congress appropriated approximately \$250 million for the Fulbright grants, benefitting students, teachers, professionals and scholars interested in promoting the Fulbright mission. Government agencies in the United States, as well as other agencies in 140 different foreign countries also make financial contributions to the program by offering tuition waivers or housing stipends.

The Fulbright Program is a family of four different programs:

- A. *The U.S. Student Program*
- B. *The Foreign Student Program*
- C. *The Fulbright Scholar Program for Post Doctoral Research and Lecturing*
- D. *Special Fulbright Opportunities*

The most common program in the Fulbright family is the U.S. Student Program. This program consists of the Student Research and Study Grants, the English Teaching Assistantships, the mtvU Awards, the Fulbright Business Grants, the Fulbright Journalism Grants and a handful of Fulbright Country-Specific Awards. Grants in the U.S. Student Program are only open to U.S. nationals.

Since 1994, the Fulbright commission has awarded 75 grants to students at USC. In this edition, you will find helpful information that will guide you through your Fulbright application process. When you have time, join our Facebook USC Fulbright Scholars Fan Page so you can receive the most updated information regarding the Fulbright program, ask questions, meet fellow applicants and conduct anonymous peer reviews of your statements. More importantly, this community is one of the many resources that you can access during this important process.





(Above) Candace Weddle
(picture courtesy of USC)

(Below Left) Candace with
Fulbrighters and the US
Ambassador to Turkey,
Ross Wilson

(Below Right) Candace on
Nemrud Dag next to
sculpted heads that deco-
rated the tomb of Antiochus
I (69-34 BC), King of the
Commagene empire

Archaeological Explorations

Interview by Olivia Chen

When we emailed Candace Weddle (Fulbright recipient '08, Ph.D. candidate in Art History) in February, she shared with us her adventures abroad in Turkey. More importantly, she gave invaluable advice for students wanting to improve their chances of receiving a Fulbright grant. Originally from Greenville, Texas, Candace completed her undergraduate at Baylor University. While at USC, she earned the award for Outstanding Teaching Assistant in 2006, and served as a member of the Provost's Graduate Student Advisory Committee.

Tell us about your initial reactions and the challenges you encountered when you arrived in your country of choice.

The bureaucracy in Turkey can be completely maddening. Opening bank accounts, acquiring temporary residency, and securing research permissions requires many hours of time in lines in governmental offices and filling out paperwork. Often, multiple visits to the same office are required, sometimes to complete the same task a second time. Luckily, I had the help and support of Fulbright staffers in the Istanbul office who were familiar with the traditions of Turkish bureaucracy and knew when to argue, when to agree, and when to push to the front of the line. Without them, I'm not sure I would ever have become a legal resident of Turkey!

If you can summarize your experience in one sentence, what would it be?

My time in Turkey has been important for me not only in terms of advancing my dissertation research, but because it has allowed me the time and freedom to travel widely and experience the great variety of cultures of the Turkish people.

Tell us one memorable moment that represents your experience so far.

As part of a group of scholars from the Koc University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations which I am associated with, I made a trip to Northern Cyprus (the half of the island which is controlled by Turkey and is walled off



from the southern, Greek half of the island). While there, we visited the Greek Orthodox monastery of St. Apostolos Andreas in the wilderness at the northernmost point of the island. There we met 92-year old Sister Vespina, the last remaining nun at the monastery. Because of the ongoing political situation in which Northern Cyprus is recognized as a sovereign nation only by Turkey, but viewed by the rest of the world as military-occupied territory, the Orthodox Church cannot assign new monks or nuns to the monastery. As a result, Vespina lives there alone now, in almost complete isolation. She asked us to tell Bartholomew (His All Holiness Bartholomew I, the Patriarch of the Orthodox Church) to come and visit her.

As leader of the Orthodox church worldwide (the Orthodox equivalent of the Pope), it is politically impossible for the Patriarch to visit Turkish Cyprus. However, after returning to Istanbul, four of us attended the Christmas liturgy at the Orthodox Patriarchate where we were allowed to meet the Patriarch, speak with him briefly about the plight of Sister Vespina, and give him pictures of her and of the current state of the monastery. We were happy to be able to provide a link, however small, between Sister Vespina and her Patriarch, although the two of them remain divided by the political and military situation. This experience encapsulates the value of my time here in Turkey: the opportunity to travel to Northern Cyprus to see and study the important Byzantine and Medieval monuments there was useful for me academically, but the experience also allowed me to develop greater understanding of the political situation in modern Turkey. It is also unlikely that without my association with the Research Institute (Fulbright requires an academic association within the host country) I would ever have had the opportunity to meet and speak with one of the most important religious figures in the world.

What are some notable differences between your academic life in the U.S. and abroad?

As a Ph.D. student, my case is probably different from that of many students studying abroad. I

See *Explorations*, on page 3



Explorations, from page 2

am already accustomed to working independently on my research project. The primary difference here in Turkey is that access to academic resources can be more difficult to acquire. Each archaeological site, library, or institution that houses materials I need to consult for my research has its own rules and application process, and each permission can take weeks or months to come through. In addition, published materials in my field of art history and archaeology are not as readily accessible here as in the States.

How did you do to prepare for this scholarship/fellowship?

I researched the individuals and institutions in Turkey that are carrying out work related to my research topic. I made contacts with individuals in my field via email and in person, both at conferences in the United States and during a short trip to Turkey in the summer before I made my application. This allowed me to acquire letters of support from a range of scholars working in my field. I have no doubt that number and range of contacts within Turkey that I was able to include in my materials greatly strengthened my application.

Also, although Turkey is one of the countries for which knowledge of the language is not a prerequisite, I took instruction in Turkish, enrolling first in classes through a local Turkish culture organization in LA, then in private lessons, before moving here. This investment of time and money has paid itself off many times over.

What advice do you have for prospective applicants?

Be sure you make a very strong link between your proposed research project or course of study and the host country. That is the common trait between myself and all of the other Fulbrighters I know here in Turkey: although everyone's projects are very different, each is working on a project that is directly related to the sites, the language, the politics or the culture of Turkey.

Have as many people as possible read your application materials. Family, friends, professors – even those who have no knowledge of your topic or field are helpful readers. Remember that the committees selecting grantees are made up of a range of people who are not in your field of interest.

Something that makes sense to you may not be comprehensible to someone outside of your field.

Also, it may be helpful (especially for those applying to countries with a culture very different from Western culture, or in which a complicated political situation is currently in effect) to have someone who is familiar with the culture and politics of the country read over your application materials. In most countries a range of individuals will read and make decisions on the applications, and it is best not to appear to have a bias towards one particular political or cultural viewpoint, something that is easy to do unintentionally.

What interested you in applying for the scholarship/grant/fellowship?

Because of the nature of my dissertation topic, I needed to spend time at the sites I am researching, and I could not complete my dissertation using only secondary published sources. A Fulbright offers the opportunity to stay in the host country for an extended period of time. This is better than making short research visits to the country, which is all that is possible using funding from many other types of fellowships. I knew that nine months in Turkey would allow me to familiarize myself with the modern situation in the country as well as the history of the region, and that my dissertation would be able to develop more organically than would be possible if I were making short, infrequent research trips.

"My time in Turkey has been important for me not only in terms of advancing my dissertation research, but because it has allowed me the time and freedom to travel widely and experience the great variety of cultures of the Turkish people."

Candace Weddle (Ph.D. Candidate)



(Left) Candace with children in Turkey



(Right) Photo courtesy of Avkat Project. Candace with other members of the Avkat Project.

The Fulbright Application Process at USC

The USC Fulbright application deadline is September 18, 2009. Current USC students who are applying for the Fulbright Student Grant are required to submit their applications by the campus deadline for faculty review consideration. The following materials are required for the USC application process:

1. **Online Application.** Applicants are required to use the Fulbright online application system. Please visit <https://apply.embark.com/student/fulbright/usa/22>

Please print and submit your application in quadruplicates (original plus three copies) to **Student Union 202** by the USC deadline. The USC Fulbright Program Advisor will only make copies of confidential materials, i.e. transcripts and letters of recommendation.

2. **Transcripts.** Official transcripts are required from every college/university you have attended. Request that these transcripts be sent to you, but do not open the sealed envelopes. Submit all transcripts with your application. You do not need to provide additional copies of your transcripts.



3. **Reference letters.** Collect the three required reference letters (or reference forms for ETA applicants) in sealed, signed envelopes and submit with your application by the USC deadline. You do not need to provide additional copies of the references (Note: Fulbright asks that in addition to hard-copies, reference letters also be posted online. See online application instructions for details).
4. **Overseas affiliation.** Establish contact (s) in your host country and obtain a letter from that contact person for inclusion in your Fulbright application. This letter must be submitted by the September 18 deadline. (For more information about the affiliation: http://us.fulbrightonline.org/preparing_affiliation.html). **Affiliations are not required for ETA applicants.**
5. **Language proficiency.** If required for

your country of choice, secure the language proficiency evaluation from an instructor who specializes in that language. Collect the language proficiency form in a sealed, signed envelope and submit with your application. (Fulbright asks that in addition to hard copies, language evaluation also be posted online. See online application instructions for details).

6. **USC information for the online application.** On the online application, you will be asked to provide the following:

Institution: University of Southern California
Fulbright Program Advisor: Noosha Malek
Telephone: (213) 740-9116

7. **Campus Interviews.** We will notify you of your interview appointment after the September 18 campus deadline. Interviews take place in late September/early October. You will be interviewed by a small faculty committee from a broad range of academic disciplines. The resulting evaluation of your application will be sent to Fulbright by our office. The committee will also provide you with feedback. After the interview, you will have approximately one week to make final changes to your application before submitting your final version to the USC Fulbright Program Advisor.

Applicants applying from a distance and "At-large"

Applying from a distance. Fulbright requires enrolled students to submit applications to the campus Fulbright Program Advisor by the campus deadline. If you are unable to be present in person for an interview during this period, you may still submit an application. However, the Campus Evaluation Committee will only review your written application. Interviews and feedback are not guaranteed.

"At-large" applications. Fulbright expects enrolled students to submit applications via the campus Fulbright Program Advisor and campus deadline. USC graduates who are no longer enrolled during Fall 2009 may choose to apply at-large (submit application directly to Fulbright by their deadline). Enrolled students who fail to meet the campus deadline must apply at-large. Late applications will not be accepted for campus review.

Tips for Writing a Fulbright Proposal

WHERE	...do you want to go and why? (be specific about geographic locales, institutions you will visit or be affiliated with, and your rationale for those decisions)
WHY	...is it important to go abroad to that location to carry out your project? ...is your project important or timely? ...is this project important to you?
WHEN	...do you want to go? (be as specific as possible about arrival/departure dates and internal travel, for example, if you are traveling within a country, how long to you intend to spend in each city?)
WHAT	...do you propose to do in your project? ...questions will you seek to address? (provide 2-3 core questions) ...special skills or preparation do you have to undertake the project (for example, language skills, coursework completed, prior travel experiences, archival research experience, and others)
WHO	...have you contacted at your destination(s) and have they agreed to help or host you?
HOW	...will you find answers to your core questions? (be as specific as possible about methodology) ...is your approach to this topic different from others who may have worked on similar questions? ...will you document your experience (for example, notes, journals, recordings, photography, drawings, and more) * The above "HOW" questions should be the focus of your research proposal* ...will the experience of this project serve to advance your personal, academic, or career goals?

Resources for Fulbright Applicants

The office of Academic Recognition Programs (ARP) is committed to helping students apply for the Fulbright grants. The following are some of the lesser-known resources available for Fulbright applicants.


Fulbright Booklet—Get your copy from our office at STU 202. The booklet contains detailed grant information for each country in the Fulbright Program. You can also access this online at http://us.fulbrightonline.org/program_regions_world.html

Fulbright Student Essays—ARP keeps a confidential binder of previous finalists and semi-finalists grant proposal statements. You can access these at our office, STU 202, and get some ideas on how to structure your grant proposal. You can take notes but cannot make copies of these essays or remove the binder from the office.

Writing Personal Statements and Scholarship Application Essays: A Student Handbook—This reference handbook, located in our office, offers tips on how to successfully prepare a personal statement for scholarships. It also shows example essays for many national competitive scholarships, including the Fulbright Program.

Fulbright Fellows Directory—Fulbright keeps a directory of previous and current Fulbright recipients, categorized by institution, home state, field of study, country visited and year attended. http://us.fulbrightonline.org/program_students_us_search.html

Fulbright on Twitter—The Fulbright Program uses Twitter to update and inform prospective applicants with the latest news <http://twitter.com/fulbrightprgrm>

USC Fulbrighters Page on Facebook—  We know that Trojans thrive best with the support of other fellow Trojans. Join our USC Fulbright Scholars Page to network with other prospective applicants, to pose discussion questions, and to serve as reviewers for your peers

Search for USC Fulbright Scholars.



How do I find a Recommender?



- **Start building an advisor relationship with your recommender early.**

Attend office hours if your potential recommender is a professor. Discuss any

academic interests, professional aspirations, projects, or activities with your potential recommender.

- **Read through the application.** Knowing what requirements and type of applicant the fellowship/scholarship committee lays out will help you decide who to choose as a recommender. Pay attention to any limitations set by the scholarship for the personal statement or essay portions (i.e. length, word count, recommendations, etc.). Most scholarship deadlines are at the start of the academic year. It is best to prepare one term in advance.
- **Choose a recommender that knows you and your academic interests well.** Your recommender will be able to write detailed letters if they know what you intend to study, your academic goals, and your career goals.
- **Explain the scholarship/your plans/goals: See yourself as a Professional.** Recommenders need to know what the application is for and why you want to apply. They should know what type of tone and angle to use for your application. Make sure you explain how the scholarship will impact your professional and career goals. Begin to recognize yourself as a professional within your given field beyond the role of a student. Take note of any comments or suggestions made by your recommenders.
- **Give an updated resume with activity details.** Recommenders will be able to give you a better letter if they know

what you are doing outside of the classroom in addition to what you are working on in class.

- **Allow at least one month writing period, preferably longer.** Most scholarships/fellowships have early fall deadlines. Recommenders need enough time to write & discuss any questions they may have with you.
- **Provide the recommender a stamped addressed envelope.** It is common courtesy. Doing so makes it easier for the recommender to mail the letter once they are done.
- **Send your recommender a thank you note informing them of your application status.** Thank your recommender as soon as you turn in your application. Notify your recommender once you receive a response from the scholarship committee. They may have advice for you regardless of the outcome that could assist with your academic and professional goals.

“Knowing what requirements and type of applicant the fellowship/scholarship committee lays out will help you decide who to choose as a recommender.”



Preparing an English Teaching Assistantship (ETA) Statement

- Read through the Country Summary on the Fulbright booklet (available from the ARP office , or [online](#)) to learn about specific requirements.
- Use the following questions provided by the Fulbright commission as guidelines for writing your statement. You do not have to limit yourself to these questions. If you feel there is something that would contribute to your application, include it.

Why you would like to undertake a Teaching Assistant assignment

Why you have chosen the particular country specific qualifications, training, and/or experiences that you have had related to the overseas assignment

How you expect to benefit from the assignment, and what use you will make of the experience upon your return to the United States

What use you will make of your time outside the classroom. (Most ETAs work no more than 20 to 30 hours per week.)

*Keep in mind that the maximum length for the Statement of Grant Purpose and Personal Statement is **one-page each**. Therefore, you should construct these Statements in such a way as to include all pertinent information, but so as not to be redundant.*

- Most ETA Programs expect candidates to participate in community service or

vocational projects, or conduct an independent academic research. Use your Statement of Grant purpose to indicate briefly what you intend to do aside from your teaching assistantship and why you chose these activities. If you have a very specific academic research project in mind, you might consider applying for the [Research and Study Grant](#).

- **Please adhere to these additional guidelines when formatting your Word document:**

- For ETA grants, the Statement length is limited to a maximum of **one typed, single-spaced page**. Longer statements will not be presented to screening committees.

- To ensure a smooth upload and readability, use 1" margins all around and Times Roman **12 pt. font**.

- At the top the page of your Word document type the following, so that it appears in the PDF version of your hard copy application. Do not place this information in a header; it will not upload.

- On line 1, type **STATEMENT OF GRANT PURPOSE**.

- On line 2, type your Name, Country of Application, and **English Teaching Assistantship**.



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