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■ Instructor Gökhan Deniz DİNÇER

## A VIDEOCONFERENCE WITH BAKU

Anadolu University's Faculty of Open Education, using videoconference since 1999 to stay connected to its students, is one of the first users of videoconferencing in Turkey. Technological advances have enabled us to improve the quality and feasibility of videoconferences, and to reach greater number of students. Anadolu University connects to students in the programs in Azerbaijan regularly via videoconference.

On June 16, 2016, senior administrators of the Faculty of Open Education had a videoconference with our students in Baku. The participants of this meeting were Prof. Dr. Yücel Güney (Vice Rector, and Dean of the Faculty of Open Education), Asst. Prof. Dr. M. Recep Okur, Asst. Prof. Dr. Murat Akyıldız and Asst. Prof. Dr.



Gökhan Kuş (Vice Deans of the Faculty of Open Education) in Eskişehir, and Azer Hatemov (Coordinator for Anadolu University Programs in Azerbaijan) and students in Baku. Thanks to this meeting,

students took advantage of the opportunity to communicate their opinions and suggestions related to open education to senior administrators of the Faculty of Open Education.



### TRAINING ON LEARNING ANALYTICS IN RDDLT

■ Instructor Gökhan Deniz DİNÇER  
■ Selime GÖÇ



■ A training on learning analytics was held in Anadolu University Research and Development Department for Learning Technologies (RDDLT) on June 21-22, 2016, as part of events related to Anadolium eCampus system. Anadolium eCampus, consisting of Learning Management System (LMS), e-Seminar platform and mobile application, allows us to track learning analytics. It is planned to collect data, via the learning analytics system, on the use of learning materials, the time that instructors and students spend in the platform, and the level of significance between time students spend in the platform and their examination scores. Anadolu University's

needs and outcomes were taken into consideration in the design of the learning analytics system, providing a wide range of reports.

Steve Bailey, a learning analytics specialist who visited Anadolu University for the two-day training, said that he was in cooperation with Anadolu University for nine months and had several videoconferences during this period, but this was the first face-to-face training at Anadolu. He indicated that he liked working with Anadolu University, and would be here for another training in September. Bailey, as a specialist in learning analytics, made some suggestions to help us take more advantage of the system. He emphasized that

it was primarily required to define the current situation and set a goal, and then to make use of learner analytics reports to achieve the goal.

Learning analytics data have been collected since February 15, 2016. The major outcomes of this project will be describing the current situation in the university, examining and revising the use of learning materials, and removing passive materials from the system. The learning analytics system is currently not open to faculty members, and used only by Alper Tolga Kumtepe and Salih Gümüş (vice heads of RDDLT), Dr. İhsan Güneş, Abdülkadir Karadeniz, Mesut Aydemir, and Erdem Erdoğan. The system will be more effective as from September 2016 with the diversification of report types, and it will be available for use by all faculty members.



Res.Asst. Kübra AŞAN



Yakup Karadağ, imprisoned in the H-type penal institution in Eskişehir, is a student of the Faculty of Open Education. He achieved a great success, graduating with a GPA of 3.98 (out of 4) from the Program in Turkish Language and Literature.

A ceremony was held on the occasion of Karadağ's graduation in the prison library on Sunday, June 4, 2016. Among the participants of this ceremony were Hüseyin Özdemir (Public Prosecutor), Aydın Tekin (Deputy Chief Prosecutor), Prof. Dr. Yücel Güney (Vice Rector, and Dean of the Faculty of Open Education), Kamil Özdemir (Prison Director), Gökhan Kuş (Vice Dean of the Faculty of Open Education), Erol Kutlu (Eskişehir Coordinator for Open Education Examinations), and employees in the penal institution.

Emphasizing that the Program in Turkish Language and Literature is one of the most difficult programs in the Faculty of Open Education, Prof. Dr. Yücel Güney indicated that Yakup Karadağ would serve as a role model for all students with his success achieved under unfavorable conditions.

■ Imprisoned ten years ago, Yakup Karadağ (now 35) told the beginning of his success story as follows in the letter he wrote to Prof. Dr. Yücel Güney:

"... It was 2011 (I had been in prison since 2006). Reading newspaper in the ward, I came across the news about the graduation

ceremony in your university. The news included the picture of a disabled student in his wheelchair, wearing a cap and gown. Under the picture there was a capture: 'Our student ... (I do not remember the name), who ranked first in the Department of Business Administration...' That news was a sort of turning point in my life. I decided to study in an open education program. That student lacked the freedom of mobility and movement because of his physical



disability, but fully grasped the life. So, why did I turn my back on life (then I was in prison for five years). I could invest my time in education."

■ This is how Yakup Karadağ decided to start higher education. He drew the attention of prison teacher – Özgür Karakuş – in a short time. With the support of his teacher, Karadağ started studying in the prison library. During our interview with Karadağ, we observed that the prison officers were proud of his success. Karadağ explained his motivation as follows in the interview:

"I had a deal with myself. I promised myself to do the best. And I did my best under these conditions. Now I graduate and am very happy."

■ Karadağ summarized as follows the study conditions in prison:

"There are rooms in the prison. Educational service officers deliver textbooks to us. We do our best to make use of different resources and read textbooks with the support of officers and family members. The wards are crowded at the moment because the capacity is full. In general, everybody studies in their bed at night. We have to sleep less to study."

■ Karadağ closes as follows the thank-you letter he wrote to Prof. Dr. Yücel Güney after the graduation ceremony:

"... I hope my story inspires other people to write new stories. Finishing my letter, I would like extend my heartfelt thanks to you and all members of Anadolu University family for coming here and gracing me with your presence."

Yakup Karadağ will remain in prison eighteen more years. However, he is determined to dedicate this time to learning and improving himself. Karadağ is currently a student of the Program in Sociology, Istanbul University, offered in distance mode. He also wants to earn a master's degree. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors.