

I had an overall culturally and scientifically enriching experience during the 10th international summer school on Biocomplexity from Gene to System at the Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey. The summer school was sponsored by NSF, IEEE-EMBS society and department of biomedical engineering at the University of Houston. I received a fellowship from NSF for the summer school expenses and a travel grant from Drexel towards the travel expenses, both of which enabled me to be a part of this amazing summer experience. I stayed for over a week in the beautiful city, Istanbul, partly in the Bogazici University campus itself which was a serene campus along the beaches of the Bosphorous Sea which separates the European and Asian parts of Istanbul. The summer school schedule was so hectic, I didn't realize where work ended and fun started everyday. Since we were only there for a week, the organizers did a tremendous job of encapsulating the essence of their research and an overview of their field into concise talks followed by intense discussions. Topics ranged over relatively new approaches of the mathematical and computational challenges in Systems Biology and new directions in computational biology, bioinformatics and molecular engineering research, all targeted towards advancement in global health. And the students attending the school made it truly global; the diversity in every sense of the word was overwhelming. I have never before had the opportunity to interact with students working in so many different areas of research, from all over the world. I really enjoyed the informal atmosphere in which we could interact with each other and with the faculty, over coffee, breakfast and even on the sands of the beach, discussing science. Infact it didn't stop there, I bring back with me memories of the wonderful time I spent with them touring Istanbul, we visited the Blue Mosque, Topkapia Palace, Dolma-Bahce Palace, Aya Sophia (church and mosque museum) , took a cruise up the Bosphorous sea and tried some amazing Turkish dessert, baklava along the way. Over the weekend after the school was over, I spent hours with some old friends, wading through the streets of the grand bazaar finding trinkets and souvenirs to bring back home. It was the most wonderful travel and scientific experience and I would like to thank Drexel Office of International programs for aiding me in getting there.

