Yeditepe University adopts Coursera to give students and faculty the skills to succeed in digital classrooms and a global economy

OVERVIEW

As one of Turkey's largest and oldest foundation universities, Yeditepe University focuses on cultivating communities that give students the skills to compete in a global job market. As part of that effort, the university established a team tasked with finding the latest, most innovative ways to reach all learners. When the COVID-19 pandemic closed doors to in-person instruction, the senior management had to find an online education platform with high-quality, readily accessible content.

Yeditepe turned to Coursera to provide upskilling and training, allowing students to earn certificates and complete specializations in high-demand areas. Students were exposed to an international curriculum and gained insight into how certain coursework is taught and applied around the world. By using Coursera and putting new systems and processes in place, the faculty updated their knowledge in their fields of study, while shifting from a textbook and in-person teaching approach to an increasingly digital and hybrid learning model.

Enthusiasm for Coursera drove incredibly high usage rates among students, alumni and faculty. The university plans to build on its partnership with Coursera, taking advantage of content authoring capabilities to develop Turkish-language coursework.

IMPACT

112%
license use in
under a year

Students access a
truly international
education

Faculty upskilled for
hybrid and online
learning environments

"Coursera allows us to expand our courses and methods to include other international leaders and experts, and together, we prepare our students to be active participants in a changing, global economy."

Berrin Yanıkkaya, PhD
Coordinator of the Learning and Teaching Unit, YU-LEARNT

ABOUT YEDITEPE UNIVERSITY

Yeditepe University is one of Turkey's largest foundation universities, providing technical and vocational skills in areas as diverse as medicine, pharmacy, health sciences, law, education, communication, humanities, social sciences, architecture, fine arts, business, and computing sciences, among others. Headquartered in Istanbul, the university fosters a passion for learning that helps students succeed in the global workforce.

LOCATION
Turkey

INDUSTRY
Higher Education

SOLUTION
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SIZE
22,000+ students

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Bringing broad learning communities into the digital classroom

When a student enrolls in Yeditepe University, they benefit from the expertise that comes from educators at one of Turkey's largest foundation universities. The university is dedicated to developing learners who not only have the skills to succeed in a competitive global job market, but who also possess a lifelong curiosity to learn and grow.

To continually evolve its educational approach, Yeditepe University established a learning and teaching unit, YU-LEARNT, tasked with promoting the most current, innovative methods of instruction. The unit's mission is to make learning and training available to everyone and the directive is to bring students, faculty, admin teams, alumni, as well as NGOs and employers in the public and private sectors together in a learning community. Yeditepe University refers to this as a "Nexus Approach."

When the COVID-19 pandemic closed classroom doors, senior management had to find a way to move forward with immersive, job relevant education for students while preparing faculty members to teach in the "universities without walls" of online or hybrid education.

"Finding top-of-the-line resources to help our learners excel is at the heart of what our team does," says Berrin Yanıkkaya, PhD, Coordinator of the Learning and Teaching Unit, YU-LEARNT. "When we discovered that Coursera opened its catalog to universities during the pandemic, we were eager to share their high-quality, readily accessible content with our students."

SOLUTION

Yeditepe University uses Coursera to give students an international education

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Yeditepe University was at the forefront of the movement to online learning, becoming the first university in Turkey to introduce students and staff to Coursera. Yeditepe was also the first university in Turkey to offer the Coursera platform to all learners - students, administrative staff, faculty, and alumni - on a complimentary basis.

Once Yeditepe partnered with Coursera, students were encouraged to complete specializations and certificate-bearing courses that would better position them for internships and posts at some of Turkey's largest companies. Anticipating the positions of tomorrow, such as creative strategist, the learning and teaching team emphasized Coursera courses around specific job-relevant skills, including data analytics, data visualization, project management, cyber security, and business management.

As learners completed coursework developed by global leaders across academia, industry, and technology, they gained technical capabilities. The university also wanted to ensure that students preparing for the job market had the "soft skills" (skills often honed through in-person interactions) to help them shine in internships and on-the-job. To this end, Yeditepe offered Coursera courses on communication, diversity, equity and inclusion.

CHALLENGES

Provide training and upskilling accessible to all learners

Prepare faculty to lead in digital and hybrid learning environments

Give students technical and business skills to compete in a global workforce

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While the university prioritized Coursera courses in digital security, programming, and marketing, they also understood that, for their students, a passion for learning is its own reward. With Coursera, students can access curriculum developed by other prestigious universities and institutions around the world, on their own time, and at their own pace.

"With Coursera, we give learners access to a truly international education. Now, a student can take one course in business management from a college in India and another in transformational leadership from a school in Australia," says Yanıkkaya. "Coursera allows us to expand our learning community to include international leaders and experts who can show our students how certain skills are taught and applied in other countries, preparing them to be active participants in a changing global economy."

Turning to Coursera to help faculty evolve beyond textbook teaching

Students aren't the only members of the learning community to enhance their job-readiness through Coursera content. Yeditepe alumni and staff also receive access to Coursera. As lifelong learners committed to their field of study, faculty members especially benefit from Coursera.

Understanding that faculty must be up to date in the industry-specific trends and technology, the learning and teaching team has made taking Coursera courses a component of the faculty's professional development hours. Faculty members use Coursera content across technology, pedagogy, and other subjects that align with their academic interests to enhance their skills at teaching in-person and online.

Compiling their own refresher courses developed by global experts, educators revitalized their approach to their subject areas. The university's annual awards for excellence, which typically recognize areas such as teaching and research, have even added a special category for the faculty member who has completed the most Coursera courses.

RESULTS

A+ learner enthusiasm

As educators and researchers, the learning and teaching team is accustomed to using data in drawing conclusions. The team received very clear information about how much their learning community appreciated Coursera.

"Within only one month of sharing Coursera access, we saw a 55 percent utilization rate among eligible learners; in just three months, 70 percent of qualified learners were using Coursera," says Yanıkkaya. "By the end of the first year, we far exceeded our expected participation rates and needed to expand access for more students, achieving a 112 percent total use rate for Coursera."

Regardless of where they sit in the classroom, learners are enthusiastic about applying what they've studied in their Coursera courses.

"Recently, a colleague shared with me that what she's learned from Coursera inspired her to try different teaching methods that were so successful her students thanked her after class. When faculty sharpen their subject expertise and hone their teaching skills, our students see improved outcomes in the global marketplace," says Yanıkkaya.

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The university exceeded its expected participation rates and increased learner access to support all-time license use at 112 percent in under a year

Faculty applying their Coursera training to teaching receive praise from students

Students take courses led by international experts and gain insight into how skills are taught and applied worldwide

More opportunities for learners with more Turkish-language content

After seeing how Coursera invigorated their learning ecosystem, the learning and teaching team is excited to expand access to more learners, with plans to use Coursera SkillSets and Career Academy to tackle employability skills gaps in Turkey. In particular, the university wants to use content authoring capabilities within Coursera to create more Turkish-language content, with emphasis on public guided projects.

"We believe hybrid approaches to learning will remain and thanks to Coursera, we can more easily embrace all models" says Yanıkkaya. "We will use every possible tool and platform such as Coursera to achieve our aim which is to leave no one behind in upskilling and reskilling."

ABOUT COURSERA FOR CAMPUS

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