

# Diploma



When I was a senior in high school, World War II erupted. It was from that point on that I started observing signs of anti-Semitism. Back then, every senior had to take a 'graduation exam' [this exam was one that every student had to pass right after graduation from the high school. It was not administered by the school, but rather by the government. Even if a student graduated successfully from his/her high school, it was not possible to be considered a high school graduate without passing this exam]. This exam covered subjects such as Turkish, Mathematics, Science and Philosophy. I liked all of those subjects. My Philosophy teacher had graduated from Sorbonne University. I remember that I was taking a Philosophy exam once; all of my friends had cheated from me. Realizing this, my Philosophy teacher had failed me... Every student also had to take what was called the university exams after graduation in order to be able to attend a university. Students who failed this exam had to enlist in the military. I wanted to attend ITU [Istanbul Technical University- it is the best engineering school in the country]. ITU accepted its students after only one test, but only the elite or really successful students, who came first, second or third in their class, generally made the cut. Because of the graduation exam, I forgot about ITU and began studying for this test. I received 8 out of 10, and finally graduated from high school. As for the ITU exam, I was not sufficiently prepared, but I did take the test anyway. During the exam, I began to doze off. A person, whom I found out later to be a professor, told me "Do what you can, we will see what happens after the test." What he told me made me realize the seriousness of the situation. I began answering the questions with all my power. The result was not too positive. I could not get into ITU, so I began attending another technical university that was recently founded. One day, I read in the newspaper that ITU was currently accepting students that were previously waitlisted. And, my name was on that list. My mother wanted me to become a doctor because there were many doctors in our family, but I knew I wanted to be an engineer. Mathematics came easily to me... I was very happy while studying engineering, and I have always liked what I did for a living. I had the opportunity to form wonderful friendships at ITU. Suleyman Demirel [9](#) and Necmettin Erbakan [10](#) were both my classmates there. An important feature of the educational program in those years was that our faculty contained both Architecture and Civil Engineering students. Today, both fields are distinct, but back then, we had the opportunity to graduate with

two different degrees, as stated on our diplomas.