

PRESIDENT'S NEWS DIGEST

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the 16th issue of the 2nd year of the President's News Digest.



On 15 February, an all staff meeting was held in the presence of the Chairman of the BOTs and headed by the President to brief them about institutional accreditation to be conducted by the HEC within the next few months. As you are all aware, Institutions that do not achieve accreditation will not be able to operate in Bahrain.

The purpose of this all staff meeting was to brief our colleagues about the forthcoming accreditation and to brief them about where we are in terms of preparation.

It is important for all staff to read the accreditation handbook and become familiar with all 8 areas, 33 standards and 218 key indicators.

It is important to give priorities to the following items considering the mindset the panel may have: students centered approach, equity and fairness, evidence and not views, feedback and closing the loop, continuous process improvement, attendance of classes, awareness of staff, students and external stakeholders about accreditation, cross referencing mentality, quality of course portfolios, bylaws, systems and policies, separation of governance and management, teaching, learning and assessment, and resources: library, Moodle, ICT.

As you are aware, there are four assessment criteria for every area:

Fully met

Substantially met

Partially met

Not met

We need to score substantially met and above for the areas of governance, administration and management, and teaching, learning and assessment.





Class observations and peer review of teaching are important aspects during the visit. Soon, we will be recruiting an external academic to attend all classes and provide us with feedback in order to be prepared.

This is a collective effort and we should all be contributing to the success of this very important activity. The accreditation group will intensify its efforts over the next couple of weeks in order to finalise the accreditation application and the self-evaluation report and supporting materials that need to be submitted to the HEC in due course.

The starting point will be submitting the accreditation application form. According to the accreditation handbook, we need to submit an accreditation application which will be scrutinised by the HEC within 4 weeks. If we pass the scrutinisation process, they will write to us to inform us about a panel visit and to submit the self-evaluation report and all supporting materials which will be due 4 weeks before the accreditation visit.



On the visit day, they will ask for additional documentation and they have provided us in appendix A of the accreditation handbook with all the documents that will be needed on the days of the visit. Please note that the SER and all supporting materials will be submitted in English. Tania circulated again the previously disseminated accreditation handbook in both Arabic and English. All staff, academic and admin, should read the accreditation handbook in order to become familiar with the requirements.

There are 3 important areas that we need to pass which are: Governance, Administration and Management, and Teaching and Learning and Assessment. I am also sure that the panel will put a lot of emphasis on students' support. Please refer to the accreditation handbook to look at the areas, standards and key indicators that are required for accreditation purposes. The visiting panel will attend classes and observe the quality of teaching and learning. It is therefore vital to have top quality teaching material, excellent assessed work, and up to date course portfolios including course specifications.



They will be judging the quality of the delivery of teaching and how students are interacting with the teaching staff and each other in classes. Exciting and relevant teaching with clear weekly plans are essential to meet their requirements. The learning outcomes should be clearly stated and the students should be fully aware of what they are going to achieve.

Learning resources should be clearly identified including Moodle, library resources and teaching material references. The visiting panel will adopt students' centered approach and most of their questions will be related to how students are achieving learning outcomes and how we are supporting them. The following list summarises some important issues that need to be done properly:

1. Course portfolios, including course specification, syllabus, weekly study plans, relevant and up to date references and books.
2. Annual Programme Reviews Reports should be clearly drafted with clear action plans
3. University catalogue, students' handbook and program handbooks are up to date and clearly communicated to students whether they are printed or they are available on the web site.
4. The website should be kept up to date and it will be scrutinised at the accreditation application stage



5. All surveys are conducted and analysed and clear action plans are developed and followed to close the cycle
6. All committees are meeting according to plans with clear agendas, minutes and actions
7. All class observations are conducted and analysed and action plans are developed and followed
8. All staff recruitment employments are transparent and follow our staff recruitment policies and procedures
9. Students should be at the heart of all what we do and they should be supported and their voice is heard.
10. Strict quality assurance checks are in place in order to ensure that we are delivering work to the highest standards.
11. The areas of research, community engagement, and facilities should all be monitored and clear reports are produced about their performance.

On 14 February, the President and Director of Marketing and PR attended the Bahrain National Actions Charter's celebrations organised by the Ministry of Education and hosted by the University of Bahrain. HM the King attended this ceremony.

On 12 February, the President attended a presentation organised by the International Peace Institute for the Middle East and North Africa (IPI, MENA) under the Global Leaders Series Presentation. The speaker was H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey. The presentation addressed the issue of peace in the Middle East and its benefits to the region.

I would like to conclude this edition by reminding everybody that students should be at the heart of all what we do and we should give them full support in order to help them complete their studies successfully.

ASU REPRISES COLLABORATION WITH BAHRAIN BUSINESSWOMEN'S SOCIETY (BBS)

On Sunday, 12 February 2017, ASU reprised its assistance to BBS in their efforts to devise a new strategy with annual operational plan and key performance indicators.

Mr. Hatem Dammak, Acting Head of Governance and Strategic Planning Unit at ASU, led the working session at the premises of the women-led organization and helped the attendees turn BBS strategic objectives into specific, time-lined and achievable actions with clear responsibilities and measurable performance indicators.

A follow-up session will be organised at the end of the month to finalise the implementation plan and give some guidance and insight on how to implement it successfully.

ASU and BBS signed a Memorandum of Understanding earlier in 2016.





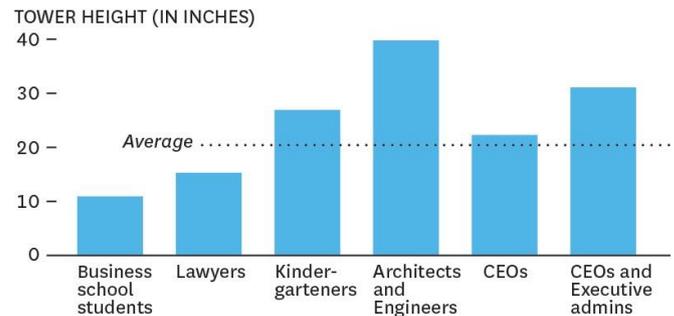
THE TRAINING CENTRE CONDUCTED THE MARSHMALLOW CHALLENGE AS A PART OF THE CREATIVE THINKING TRAINING PROGRAMME

This challenge is used to teach and develop individuals in the attributes innovation and synergy, where each team should build the tallest tower of 20 spaghetti sticks & the tower should hold a single marshmallow on top.

In the challenge, individuals naturally assume the marshmallows are light and will easily be supported by the spaghetti sticks and the tape; however, as the teams progress, they discover that it's not so easy & they will need to be creative enough in their structure to hold the marshmallow. Here is an analysis from the Harvard Business Review of how different groups have performed in the challenge.

ARE YOU MORE CREATIVE THAN A FIVE YEAR OLD?

How high can you build a tower out of spaghetti and scotch tape that can hold up a single marshmallow? You've got 18 minutes. Here's how well various teams of children and adults did.



SOURCE TOM WUJEC, TED APRIL 2010

HBR.ORG



THE BACHELOR IN ACCOUNTING PROGRAMME HELD ITS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING



The Advisory Board of Bachelor in Accounting Programme held the first meeting for the academic year 2016-2017 at Al-Safir Hotel on 5 January, 2017. The board members discussed important topics related to the programme and gave their suggestions to improve the study plan to fulfill the markets' needs with appropriate courses.

MS ZARI BAKIR'S EXPERIENCE IN LEADERSHIP & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Ms Zari Bakir, an eminent entrepreneur, was invited by Prof Saad Darwish to talk about her experience in Entrepreneurship and Leadership. As a guest speaker she gave examples of the role of entrepreneurs in developing the Bahraini economy and how to lead in different business settings. This presentation was given to Master in Human Resources Management (MHRM) students who enjoyed this event and had positive interactions with the speaker.





WORKSHOP ON STRATEGIC PLANNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The VP for Admin, Finance and Community Engagement, Dr. Mohammed Yousif and the Director of Administration & Finance, Mr. Abdulla Alkhaja attended a workshop titled “Strategic Planning in Higher Education” which took place from 5 – 7 February, 2017 in Dubai, delivered by “Center for Learning Innovations and Customized Knowledge Solutions”.



The three-day programme provided an interactive environment for executives to learn, apply and collectively share their experience while applying the tools and techniques of strategic planning through case studies and hands-on examples from similar institutions internationally. In addition to providing tools and techniques, the programme also engaged the participants to think strategically taking into account the challenges affecting higher education institutions and work in teams to chart strategic scenarios for the future.



"LAYOUT AND PRINTING TECHNIQUE" WORKSHOP

On Sunday, 12 February 2017, under the supervision of Prof. Samya Alshenawi, a workshop titled "Layout and printing technique" was held to serve graphic design 4 and printing technique courses in the Graphic Design Programme which falls under the Art and Design Department.

Mr. Mohamed Bujiri, Director of Sketch Media Company was invited to be the main speaker of the workshop.

The workshop was effective in linking the course to the labour market by showcasing the integration between the layout of a design and the printing and how to get the best results out of it. A layout should match the printing purpose which could be the type of work, the system of printing and workplace.

“Make the print reflects your targets, put your targets perfectly in printable format, allow yourself to be creative and bring more joy to your practice experience” this was the advice given to students by the guest speaker.





MS. DIANA EL HAGEOVA ATTENDED A WORKSHOP TITLED "THE HIGH PERFORMING LEARNING ORGANIZATION"

On Wednesday 15 February 2017, Ms. Diana El Hageova, Office Manager of the VP Academic Affairs and Development Office, attended a workshop organised by Stepping Stone Global entitled "The High Performing Learning Organization". The High Performance Organization is a framework that managers can use in order to improve organizational performance and make it sustainable. The workshop pointed out that nowadays, in order to ultimately be a high performing sustainable organization, it is of utmost importance to have the capacity to learn. By learning, an organization can easily adapt to constant changes and maintain the status of a leader.

GUEST SPEAKER- STEPS TOWARDS SUCCESS

On 12 February 2017, Dr. Rawya Zmari the manager of Counselling Office at the Deanship of Student Affairs organized two lectures that were delivered by Mr. Sami Alboakri in Abdulla Nass where a large number of students attended. The lectures about "Steps towards Success- Let start the Race" were very engaging; students participated and highly benefited from this type of teaching and learning approach.



ALUMNI CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2ND CYCLE- CONSTITUTIONAL MEETING

The Career Development and Alumni Affairs Office (Ms Noora Musalam) at the Deanship of Student Affairs conducted the first meeting with the selected Alumni Board of Directors for its 2nd cycle on 16 February 2017 in order to form its constitutional members in presence of Dr. Faiza Zitouni, Ms Noora Kamal and Ms Hadeel Bucheerei.



INTERVIEW OF THE WEEK

We believe our staff have a huge amount of useful knowledge and thoughts to share with us and we have found interviews to be one of the quickest, most transparent ways to do it and share it with our readers as a new initiative within the President's News Digest.

We would like to feature the first interview with:



Name: Abdulla Waheeb Alkhaja

Position: Director of Administration and Finance

1. Tell us about yourself: (Your childhood, academic background, etc.)

I was born and raised in Bahrain, where I obtained my High School Diploma from Ibn Khuldoon National School (Bahrain) and my bachelor degree - BBA in Finance from St. Edwards University (Austin, Texas).

2. Tell us about your job at ASU

I Joined ASU in September 2014 as a Financial Controller in the Finance Dept. A Year after, I have been promoted to the Director of Admin and Finance. Today I overlook and manage four important depts. in the University: Human Resources, Finance, Procurement and Logistics Services and Administrative affairs Departments.



STUDENTS' EXHIBITION IN CELEBRATION OF THE 16TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BAHRAIN NATIONAL CHARTER



On 14 February 2017, the Ministry of Education organised students' exhibition in celebration of the 16th anniversary of the Bahrain National Charter in the Bahrain National Charter Monument for schools and universities in Bahrain.

The Deanship of Student affairs and the College of Art and Science participated in the event that was coordinated from ASU by Ms Hadeel Bucheerai, greatly managed by Dr Wassem Ahmed and highly supported by Dr Belal Zaqaibeh the Dean of the College of Art and Science.

The exhibition was about displaying students' creative and innovative projects. ASU had 5 projects; 4 from the College of Arts and Science and one from the College of Administrative Science entitled "Green ASU". The students were very enthusiastic and displayed their work even though the weather conditions were disastrous with non- stopping heavy rain. Eventually the organizer of the event cancelled the exhibition due to more heavy rain being forecasted. Many thanks for all staff and students that did not give up and done and fantastic memorable work in wet conditions.



DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEM (DSS)

Under direct supervision of Dr. Mohammed Yousif, VP for Administrative Affairs & Community Engagement, the ICT & KM Directorate developed a Decision Support System (DSS) that can help ASU decision makers to choose the right path with a comprehensive reporting (charts and statistics) system that integrates with the following existed systems: Student information system, Survey system, Human resources system and Moodle system.

3. Tell us about your aspirations for the University

The love of this University has been embedded in my heart since I have joined ASU, It is my duty to create a culture of team spirit, innovation and of course raising the University's quality by introducing many great initiative to improve the overall performance of the University.

4. What do you enjoy most about your job?

The great leadership and advice that I receive from the Senior Management give me a strong incentive to commit more towards the growth of the University, which gives me a great experience and enjoyment at the same time.

5. Tell us about your hobbies

Reading, fishing, and playing soccer

6. Tell us about your favourite food

My Favorite dish is Machboos Hamour (a Bahraini traditional dish).

7. Tell us about the book you are reading now

Accreditation handbook

8. Final words

I wish all our students and staff success in their future



Mrs. Shadia Abualasal, Head of Applications Development Department presented the new system and showed its capabilities to the University President, in the presence of the Vice President for Administrative Affairs and Community Engagement and ICT & KM Director.



QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“No legacy is so rich as honesty.”

William Shakespeare

“Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom.”

Thomas Jefferson

Happy Reading

