

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.

I would like to start this issue of the News Digest by re-emphasizing the importance of the students centered approach to education.



All course portfolios should be up to date and to the highest standards, and the quality of delivery in the classrooms should be in line with university's requirements in terms of study plans, relevant teaching materials and exciting modes of delivery. Please remember that the accreditation visiting panel will attend classes and observe how teaching and learning is conducted.



In this section, I would like to brief you about the main findings from a conference I attended last week at Asyout University in Egypt addressing quality assurance issues in universities in the Arab World.

Alzarqaa University in Jordan was a major player in organizing this conference with strong presence from their Chairman of BODs, Chairman of the BOT and their President. Mr Anwar Al Nawaf, who is studying at Asyout for a PhD in Law, also attended the conference. In the session I chaired, various papers about quality assurance systems and centers in Arab Universities were presented which stressed on the role of quality assurance centres and how they can play a pivotal in a university in ensuring quality standards are met at Programme, College and University levels.

Most papers covered the issue of creating a culture of quality in universities in the Arab World. Most presentations touched on the issue of making quality embedded in the values and practices of any institution.



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One particular paper addressed the role of academic staff and programme coordinators in delivering education of the highest quality. If academic staff are delivering high standards education following strict quality guidelines, then the benefits to the students can be easily realized. In this paper, it was clearly emphasized that the programme coordinators should ensure all learning outcomes are realized by the students. Annual Programme Reviews should be produced and scrutinized by the department, college, quality and university councils.

Course portfolios are used to specify the course specifications, study plans, samples of teaching materials and the mapping of course learning outcomes and programme learning outcomes within the context of a solid assessment framework.

It was clearly stated in all presentations that quality assurance and monitoring is a collective responsibility within any university, but the quality centre should provide all the tools, systems and policies to ensure that quality standards are maintained.



A good number of papers have also focused on the importance of institutional accreditation and how it can be achieved through a rigorous quality assessment process. It was clear that most institutional accreditation methodologies use similar indicators with particular emphasis on governance, management, teaching and learning, students support, research, community engagement, facilities and labs including learning resources and quality systems and policies and procedures.

It is evident that universities can only be transformed, only when their quality systems are rigorous, sound and well understood by everybody in the University. Quality should be at the heart of all what we do and should be embedded in all our daily practices.

During the visit to Asyout University, I met with the President of the University and his advisors and in the presence of Mr Anwar and our discussions touched on many opportunities for collaboration especially in the areas of staff development, the legal clinic, research development and staff and students exchanges.



Meetings of the Association.

From 18 to 19 February, the President attended the Executive Council of the Association of Arab Universities meeting held at Alain University of Science and Technology in the UAE. The Council discussed the need to modernize the Bylaws of the Association, and the preparation for future Annual General

Last week, the Chairman of the BOTs and Director of Admin and Finance attended the Kuwaiti Embassy's celebrations of National and Liberation days.



This week, we will have an induction day for our new staff. It is important to make our new staff feel welcome and to make them familiar with our strategies, policies, procedures, ICT and HR systems. In addition, it is important for them to become familiar with admissions criteria, academic advising, plagiarism, preparation of course portfolios, and students support.



I would like to conclude this edition of the News Digest by reminding our colleagues about the importance of ensuring consistencies between our bylaws, policies and procedures, university catalogue, programme handbooks, quality manual, staff handbook, students' handbook, research handbook, SIS information, organizational chart, committees' structure, and website information. This is important from a quality point of view, especially that it is a major requirement for accreditation purposes. Prof Hilal, Prof Saad, Dr Ahmed Azzam and Mr Hatem have formed a group that is meeting on a daily basis to ensure that such consistencies are achieved.

PROF DARWISH ELECTED AS FELLOW TO THE RSA



Congratulations to Prof Saad Darwish, President's Advisor for Special Projects who has been elected as a fellow of the RSA (Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, UK). This society has been at the forefront of social change for 260 years, it operates as a global network of 28,000 people who share values commissioned by RSA. The society believes that all human beings have creative capacities that, when understood and supported, can be mobilized to deliver a 21st century enlightenment. They bring about the conditions for this change, not just amongst its diverse Fellowship, but also in institutions and communities. By sharing powerful ideas and carrying out cutting-edge research, they build networks and opportunities for people to collaborate - creating fulfilling lives and a flourishing society.

MS. DIANA EL HAGEOVA ATTENDS RESEARCHER CONNECT WORKSHOP

Ms. Diana El Hageova, Lecturer at the Department of General Studies, College of Arts and Science, attended a two-day training workshop (23 and 25 Feb 2017) called Researcher Connect organized by the British Council. The workshop was made of short interactive modules and focused on areas such as abstracts, proposals, academic collaboration and communication.



INTERVIEW OF THE WEEK

We would like to feature the interview this week with:



Name: Isa Alkhayat

Position: Dean of Admissions and Registration

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

I was born and raised in Bahrain with a childhood full of excitement and a very supportive family. I received my Bachelor degree in Mathematics from King Saud University in 1981. A year later, I earned a higher Diploma in Education from College of Health Sciences, Bahrain in 1982. Finally I obtained my PhD from UMIST Manchester in Applied Mathematics in 1981.

2. Tell us about your job at ASU

I joined ASU in December 2016 as Dean of Admissions & Registration. I am in charge of registering students, academic advising and admissions of students and everything concerning Admissions & registration.

3. Tell us about your aspirations for the University

I believe that in the near future ASU will be a very high rank university not only in Bahrain but in the region as well. ASU is working hand in hand toward achieving the accreditation and the best quality of teaching.



RESEARCH HANDBOOK SEMINAR BY PROFESSOR SIDDEEQ YOUSIF AMEEN

On Thursday, 23 February 2017, the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, Professor Siddeeq Yousif Ameen, delivered a seminar to academic staff about the new 2017 Research Handbook at Abdulla Nass Auditorium.



Prof Ameen went through each of the six chapters of the handbook with the aim to give a better understanding and interaction about the new research handbook. These included ASU research priorities, strategic and operational plan, research governance, research funding and initiatives and research ethics. The new handbook is written in English and Arabic to make it accessible to all University members of staff. The presentation also covered five appendices that highlighted the quality of publication guidance, criteria for judging case for support, local and distinguished seminars and research coordination with colleges.

DR ASSEM AL-HAJJ ATTENDED THE WEDDING RECEPTION OF MR. ABDULLAH NABIL AL-HAMAR



On Tuesday 21 February 2017, Dr. Assem Al-Hajj, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Development, attended the wedding reception of Mr. Abdullah Nabil Al-Hamar, held at Sofitel Hotel. Dr

Assem honoured the invitation extended to ASU President Prof Ghassan Aouad by Mr Nabil Al-Hamar, the Media Advisor for the Bahraini Monarchy and the former Minister of Information.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Loyalty cannot be blueprinted. It cannot be produced on an assembly line. In fact, it cannot be manufactured at all, for its origin is the human heart-the center of self-respect and human dignity. It is a force which leaps into being only when conditions are exactly right for it-and it is a force very sensitive to betrayal.” **Maurice R. Franks**

4. What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy mostly in meeting with people and especially mixing with students and dealing with them. I feel that we all work together as one family. I also feel that I can apply my experience here at the University.

5. Tell us about your hobbies

Cooking is my best hobby which I love. I also like to eat outside in restaurants to enjoy variety of food. In addition, I play sports to burn what I eat.

6. Tell us about your favourite food

I like all Bahraini cuisine especially “Ghoozi” which consists of lamb and meat and is eaten in Eid time.

7. Tell us about the book you are reading now

حياة في الإدارة - د. غازي القصيبي

“A lifetime in Administration” by Dr Ghazi Abdul Rahman Al Gosaibi

8. Final words

I am very happy to be part of ASU and its success.

I would encourage our students to enjoy and live the students’ life as much as they can as this is a beautiful experience that they will never forget.

Happy Reading

