PRESIDENT'S NEWS DIGEST

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ASU
جامعة العلوم التطبيقية
APPLIED SCIENCE UNIVERSITY

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the 25th issue of the 3rd year of the President's News Digest.

My Message this week will once again focus on the content of the Self Evaluation Report (SER) which is part of our Institutional Accreditation by the HEC, in order to keep our staff and students informed.

Today we are 9 weeks away from the Inspection Visit, which will take place 24 to 27 June 2018.

Having already covered Areas 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, this issue of the News Digest turns to Area 6: Student Recruitment, Support, Guidance and Progression. Area 6 is divided into 8 standards and 43 key indicators and our SER addresses each of these key indicators in turn, showing how we meet the requirements.

This week, the SER summaries cover our responses to Area 6, Standards 17 and 18, which cover publicising our programmes and recruiting our students.

AREA 6: STUDENT RECRUITMENT, SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PROGRESSION

Standard 17: Publicity material, printed & electronic, including the website, must provide a comprehensive, up-to-date & accurate description of the institution & its curriculum

17.1. Text and images in printed material and on the institution's website must provide an accurate description of the institution's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered.

▪ Our response notes that our website is main source of public information about ASU and provides detailed information including location, facilities, services, history, vision, mission, values, organisational structure, programmes and our academic and administrative staff. It confirms that the website holds study plans and downloadable Programme Handbooks which give comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date information on programmes, as well as the Student Handbook and the Student Application Guide. It also notes the information given on the website about ASU's directorates and about news, events, videos and records, photo galleries, the Academic Calendar and newsletters, particularly the weekly President's News Digest.

It further notes the role of the website co-ordinators (in colleges and departments) to ensure that information is accurate and up-to-date, in liaison with the Directorate of Marketing & Public Relations (MPR). Finally, it confirms that our printed material also provides clear information on all these topics and is rigorously checked and subjected to close scrutiny prior to approval and publication.

17.2. Information on the programs available must be comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date and provide details of the status of the qualifications offered, including the awarding body and level of award.

- Our response confirms that our Programme Handbooks are the authoritative guide to our programmes and that they provide applicants and students with detailed information about entry requirements, programme content and delivery, qualifications offered (and awarding body), career paths and professional body exemptions. It notes that ASU also publishes a University Prospectus, a Graduate Studies Handbook and separate Programme Brochures, which all give relevant information and that we expect students to use the information provided to familiarise themselves with regulations and what they must do to complete the programme of study successfully.

17.3. The institution's website must provide content which is current and which provides support for existing and prospective students.

- Our response confirms that ASU makes sure that the website is updated and regularly monitored, through the website co-ordinators in colleges and departments who work with the Directorate of Marketing & Public Relations (MPR) which maintains the website. It notes the role of the website working group, chaired by the Director of MPR and attended by website co-ordinators from colleges, departments, Student Affairs and Admissions & Registration, which ensures that website information is accurate, consistent and up-date-date and provides information required by prospective students (so they can make informed choices about studying at ASU) and by current students (so they are informed about programmes, events, changes, support and guidance on how to benefit from being part of ASU's learning community)

17.4. Information on staff qualifications and work experience must be made available to students.

- Our response confirms that our website homepage has a Directory of all academic and administrative offices and links to college pages, which include staff profiles, so that current and prospective students have access to information about academic staff work experience and their qualifications

INTERVIEW OF THE WEEK

We would like to feature the interview this week with:

Name: Dr Hafnida Hasan

Position: Academic Staff

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

I was born and grew up in Medan, Indonesia where I lived and stayed with my family. I graduated from University of North Sumatera, Indonesia with a Bachelor's Degree in Economic Development. By the year 2010, I went to Malaysia to pursue my master's degree as well as my PhD degree with specialization in Economics and Finance at Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM).

2. Tell us about your job at ASU

I had the pleasure of joining the Department of Accounting and Finance at ASU in September 2017, as well as Accounting and Finance, Cardiff Met Programme as Academic Staff.

I have been teaching Banking and Islamic Finance, Islamic Accounting, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and Principles of Statistic. I have been a part of the team creating the curriculum along with resources, the assessment scheme, NQF and advisory board.

3. Tell us about your aspirations for the University

I'm a hard worker with the experience to get things done efficiently, develop effective learning environments to student support and guidance, in addition to the use and value of appropriate learning technologies and design, as well as planned learning activities.

17.5.   Students must be given some indication of the type of careers graduates may follow and any professional body exemptions that may be available.

- Our response confirms that ASU students are given an indication of which careers they could follow after successfully completing their programme in the section entitled 'Future Careers' in College Programme Handbooks. In addition, it notes that academic advisors and programme coordinators provide advice which takes into account aspirations to enter a particular profession or career, particularly when students are considering elective choices. It further notes that professional body accreditation/exemptions are noted in the College Programme Handbook to guide students

17.6.   Students must be informed of the full cost of all programs, including costs of examinations and any required materials.

- Our response confirms that information on the full cost of ASU's programmes, including costs of examinations and any required materials, are provided in the Bachelors and Masters Bylaws respectively and in the Student Application Guide to ensure they are accessible to current and prospective students. It also notes that information on tuition fees and refund policy are available on the website

17.7.   Students must be informed as to the necessary English requirements for entry on to programs.

- Our response confirms that ASU informs prospective students about English requirements for entry to our programmes in the application information on the website. It notes that we have different entry requirements for programmes taught in English and in Arabic, that we use the Oxford Online Placement Test (OOPT) to test levels where a student does not have an IELTS score and how we use the OOPT test result to assign students to the appropriate English course. It also notes the English requirements for programmes we offer in collaboration with our UK partners.

Standard 18: The institution must take reasonable care to recruit & enroll suitable students for its courses

18.1.   Entry requirements for each program must be set at an appropriate level and clearly stated in the program descriptions seen by prospective students.

- Our response confirms that ASU sets out entry requirements for each programme in the University Prospectus, the relevant College Programme Handbook, the Student Application Guide, the Admissions and Registration Manual and on our website. It notes that entry requirements vary according to the programme and to ensure that students accepted have the potential to succeed.

4. What do you enjoy most about your job?

I really enjoy teaching itself; being in the classroom with students and motivating the students to be active learners. Along with that, I enjoy helping the students in developing their skills in the finance and statistics.

5. Tell us about your hobbies

I love travelling, listening to music, reading books, swimming and yoga.

6. Tell us about your favourite food

Bakso, sate and empek-empek (Indonesian food)

7. Tell us about the book you are reading now

"Give and Take: Why Helping Others Drives Our Success" by Adam Grant. It gives you to see how helping and giving to others can motivate people to be more productive, and ultimately leave them feeling happier and more satisfied with their work.

8. Final words

I wish ASU get accredited locally and internationally and have professional graduated students.

- It also notes that we sometimes admit students who are very narrowly below the required GPA, but only subject to interview. It further notes that ASU ensures that applicants are individually assessed, in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy because, as per our mission, we aim to recruit students of the highest intellectual potential, irrespective of social, racial, religious and financial considerations. It concludes by noting that we have procedures to encourage application by students of outstanding academic ability and scholarships for students who would otherwise be excluded by financial considerations

18.2.   A formal application process must ensure that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications must be verified.

- Our response confirms that ASU has a formal application process managed by the Deanship of Admissions & Registration. It notes that policies, procedures and documentation that students must provide are detailed in the Admissions & Registration Manual. It also notes that Deanship staff review application forms for accuracy, identify programme requirements, check required evidence is provided and ensure that ID and other documents are in order and comply with ASU and HEC requirements. It further notes that the Manual covers procedures for students who transfer from other accredited institutions, confirming that transfer applications are also rigorously checked by the colleges and the Deanship

18.3.   Prospective students must be properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the program(s) in which they are interested and provided with advice on choosing their program.

- Our response notes that ASU ensures prospective students have information about programmes by providing on the website our College Programme Handbooks, University Prospectus and study plans, which give details of entry requirements, programme specifications, ILOs, structure, future careers, list of courses and course descriptions. It notes that as well as information on the website, prospective students can visit the Deanship of Admissions and Registration to discuss programmes with Deanship staff and meet with departmental staff (head/programme coordinator/academics) for advice and subject-specific information. It concludes by noting that ASU has an extensive school visit programme and hosts Open Days to advise applicants on programmes and career paths

18.4.   All application enquiries must be responded to promptly and appropriately.

- Our response confirms that ASU is keen to ensure that our stakeholders receive prompt attention, so all application enquiries are directed to the Deanship of Admissions and Registration which has dedicated telephone lines for prospective students and programme enquiries. Details of enquiries received by colleges are forwarded to the Deanship, which maintains a database of enquiries, including those made via email and through the "Contact Us" link on the website. Applications are processed according to procedures in the Admissions and Registration Manual and the Deanship ensures that the stages in the process are completed promptly and that the applicant receives timely information on the outcome.

18.5.   Any recruitment agents must be properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.

- Our response confirms that ASU uses a limited number of recruitment agents, selected for their region/country experience and engaged through a detailed contract. It notes that the Director of Marketing and Public Relations is responsible for briefing/monitoring and that their performance is evaluated annually. It further notes that all applications, whether direct or through an agent, are processed under the ASU process managed by the Deanship for Admissions and Registration.

18.6.   Students must receive a proper initial assessment, which includes language ability if appropriate, to confirm their capability to complete the programs on which they are enrolling.

- Our response confirms that ASU has a clear and detailed admissions process to assess applicant suitability against the criteria for each programme. It notes that the process to ensure that they possess the required skills and aptitudes to succeed on the programme is conducted collaboratively by the Deanship of Admissions and Registration and academic staff in colleges, by reviewing documentation provided and in some cases

interviews. It also notes that ASU specifies IELTS/TOEFL scores for entry and uses the OOPT to assess English language ability as appropriate as detailed in Indicator 17.7.

18.7.   Students with special needs must be identified in order that appropriate support mechanisms can be provided.

- Our response confirms that, in line with ASU's mission to provide education to all academically qualified applicants, we have a policy for students with special needs founded on the premise that we will admit applicants who fulfil admissions criteria if they can be accommodated without posing any undue hardship to ASU or themselves. It notes that we require applicants with a disability or special need to disclose it on their application form, so they can be interviewed by a special committee (staff of Student Affairs, Admissions & Registration and academic staff with appropriate background). It also notes that the Deanship of Student Affairs encourages registered students to disclose special needs and emphasises the assistance that can be made available if the need is declared (doing so at Orientation verbally and by questionnaire, thereafter by emails). It further notes that students who have declared a special need may receive counselling, physical, academic and/or financial support (through the Deanship of Student Affairs) and notes that if a student does not notify us of a special need, he/she is deemed to have waived the right to support and, after assessing support required, we have the right to cancel registration

18.8.   Admission criteria and process must be in line with HEC regulations and resolution.

- Our response confirms that ASU's admissions criteria, set out in our Prospectus and Student Application Guide, are completely aligned with HEC requirements and rigorously enforced by the Deanship of Admissions and Registration. It notes that our procedures and processes are available for inspection by HEC and are consistent with those of other approved HE providers in the Kingdom. It also notes that HEC's directives on student numbers are strictly observed, by the Deanship of Admissions and Registration working closely with the Directorate of Administration and Finance, to ensure that staff/student ratios mandated by HEC are complied with and that physical resources for our programmes are appropriate.

18.9.   The admissions policy must be reviewed regularly with relevant external stakeholders including employers.

- Our response notes that ASU's admissions policy was established to ensure fair assessment of applicants against defined and appropriate criteria and that University Council is responsible for reviewing the policy and criteria at least every four years with input from college and department councils and Programme Advisory Boards (which involve employers and alumni). It notes one example of this process: the revision of Law entry criteria to 70% GPA rather than 60% GPA, which was based on consideration at college level of student achievement against entry qualifications, followed by University Council approval

18.10   The institution's application and recruitment process must be fair and transparent with evidence to show that equal opportunities, anti-discriminatory and inclusion issues are demonstrably addressed.

- Our response confirms that as noted in Standard 18.1, the University's application and recruitment processes are transparent and fair. ASU's approach is to set entry requirements which ensure that all students accepted onto a programme have the potential to be successful and then to assess each applicant individually, without partiality or bias, in accordance with its Equality and Diversity Policy. As stated in the University Mission, ASU aims to offer admission to students of the highest intellectual potential, irrespective of social, racial, religious and financial considerations. ASU therefore has procedures to encourage application by students who have shown prior outstanding academic ability (for example through their high school GPA) and to provide scholarship funding to students who would otherwise be excluded from participating because of financial considerations In addition, to ensure fairness and transparency, the University has a comprehensive policy to allow student to appeal against denial of admission or credit transfer; this is described in the Admissions and Registration Manual

18.11   Data on student performance must be used to inform the improvement of the student selection process.

- Our response notes that our admissions policy is reviewed every four years to ensure it remains appropriate and fit-for-purpose and that this review is informed by the annual programme review procedure, including analysis of student performance data, trends and conclusions in Annual Programme Review Reports (APRRs). It also notes that relevant reports are available from SIS and that the Deanship of Admissions and Registration can provide reports correlating student achievement and entry qualifications, so data is available to inform consideration of revisions to entry requirements or enhancements to subject delivery (which would be approved by the departmental and college councils and by University Council)

ASU PRESIDENT DELIVERED A KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT THE 4TH UAE GRADUATE STUDENTS RESEARCH CONFERENCE

On Saturday 21 April, the President delivered the only Keynote Address at the 4th UAE Graduate Students Research Conference on The Art and Science of Doing a PhD. A synopsis of his talk is included below

The Art and Science of Doing a PhD

It is widely known that doing a PhD can be a daunting experience considering the considerable length of time a PhD degree may take to complete. However, by understanding that undertaking a PhD is a process that can be planned and managed properly, the pressure of doing a research degree can be minimized. It is important for students to understand that doing a PhD is in part art and in part science. In this lecture, the PhD process will be explained and real life examples will be used. The research philosophical stance will be discussed as a good research methodology is the backbone of doing a PhD. This lecture will conclude with a set of recommendations and advice to research students that will help them in overcoming many of the problems that could be faced during their studies for a research degree.

The Conference, which included 348 papers and 50 posters, was attended by many top academicians and graduate students from across the UAE. The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education in the UAE was present as well as the President of the British University of Dubai, the Provost of the American University of Sharjah, and the Executive Vice President of Khalifah University. The Conference was hosted by the American University of Sharjah.

In his Keynote Address, the President spoke about the art of doing a PhD including creativity, story telling, passion, and presentation. He then spoke about the science of doing a PhD including evidence, research methodology, rigour, originality and validation of interesting findings. He then described the seven pillars of a good PhD including critical literature review, strong theoretical underpinnings, research methodology, data collection and analysis, validation of results, writing style and references. The President concluded his presentation with a set of recommendations in order to help PhD students complete their degrees on time.

THE WORK OF THE DEAN OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES, PROF. MAHMOUD ABDEL-ATY, HAS BEEN HIGHLIGHTED IN ADVANCED SCIENCE NEWS

Advanced Science News highlights new and exciting developments from across a broad spectrum of scientific disciplines including healthcare, materials science, sustainability, nanotechnology, energy, and electronics. Advanced Science News is edited by Jodie Haigh, Adrian Miller, and Felix Spenkuch, with content contributed by journal editors, editorial staff, and scientific researchers.

Prof. Mahmoud Abdel-Aty, Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, published a paper along with A. H. Homid, T. El-Shahat, H. Eleuch, and A.-S. F. Obada in the world leading journal, Fortschrittee der Physik, Progress of Physics, April 2018. The title of the paper is: Dynamical Controls for Improving Quantum Search Algorithm Through Flux Qubits. In this work, a new technique was developed to generate the dynamical quantum gates, depend on the ferromagnetism and antiferromagnetism phenomena in the superconducting flux qubits system at the same interaction time. According to the dynamical controls techniques of such gates, we invoke and synthesize a new algorithm called the dynamical quantum search algorithm. The Grover algorithm was obtained at a specified time for the current algorithm. This algorithm was distinguished by accuracy in obtaining high probability of finding any marked state in a shorter time compared with Grover algorithm time. The algorithm performance was improved with respect to different values of the dynamical controls.

VP FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT AND DIRECTOR QAAC ATTEND A FORUM ON NQF

On Thursday, 19 April 2018, Dr. Assem Al-Hajj, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Prof. Hilal Al-Bayatti, Director of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Center attended a forum titled "The National Qualifications Framework: Are We Closer to Market Needs?". The forum was organised by the General Directorate of Qualifications Framework (GDQ) in Bahrain and held at the Grove Hotel in Amwaj. The forum started with an opening speech by Dr. Jawaher Al-Mudhahki, Chief Executive of the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) followed by an update on GDQ activities and achievements by Dr. Tariq Al Sindi, General Director of the GDQ. The forum continued with a panel discussion titled "Designing Innovative Curriculum to Support Market Needs" followed by a presentation titled "Building Linkage between Industry and Education and Training through NQF" by Dr. Eddy Chong Siong Choy, Chief Technical Officer at the Finance Accreditation Agency in Malaysia who also delivered an interactive workshop titled "How to Utilize Market Research to Increase Learners' Employability". The last part of the forum was a presentation by Ms. Esmat Jaffar, BQA titled "Promoting Confidence in Bahrain's NQF on a Global Scale: Referencing with SCQFP". The forum ended by closing remarks followed by lunch.

ASU ORGANIZED THE FIRST STUDENT SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE (SSC)

The Deanship of Research and Graduate Studies at Applied Science University organized the First Students Scientific Conference on 11 April 2018 in Abdulla Nass Auditorium, the conference was under the patronage of Professor Waheeb Al Khaja, Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Professor Ghassan Aouad, the University's President.

The aim of the conference was to encourage students' research and innovation, and to enhance the research culture of students by creating an environment conducive to expanding their participation in all activities, presenting their research and innovations to the community to benefit from them and providing opportunities to transform them into community-based projects.

The conference started with a welcome speech by Professor Mahmoud Abdel-Aty, the chairman of the conference, Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, who mentioned that students should use the conference as an effective way to try out new ideas, share their work to staff and colleagues, and improve their research questions. He also mentioned that presenting at a conference was a great opportunity to gain valuable feedback from a community of scholars and to increase professional stature in their field.

He concluded with the fact that fifty applications had been received and 28 students from Computer Science, Graphic Design, Management Information Systems and other majors would present their work.

The students dealt with various topics in their research related to information technology, health, society, education, design, advertising, the impact of electronic advertising on consumer behavior, the world currency history, the role of women in society and other topics.

Professor Ghassan Aouad, the University's President expressed his gratitude and pleasure to see the first student conference taking place in the University. He also stated that the conference aimed to encourage students to complete research papers while at the same time boosting their research and innovation which would contribute to developing their societies.

Dr Faiza Zitouni, Dean of Student Affairs presented words of encouragement to students who participated in the Student Scientific Conference. She added that this first of its kind conference at ASU represents the first step for our students to mix within the research arena, as this will ultimately empower them to gain more experience in research as per our intended graduate attributes.

The most popular topics covered in the SSC including; Hosting Championships in Bahrain, Scientific movement of Big Data, Big data growing bigger, can we handle it? The Impact of Electronic Advertising on Consumer Behavior Organ Donation in Bahrain, The Global History of Coins, Awareness and Benefits of Network Security: A Case Study From Selected IT Companies, Reasons for the Non-Existence of Medical To urism in Kingdom of Bahrain.

Many thanks go to Professor Mahmoud for his perseverance, to all college Deans for their great support and for all students who made this event a great success.

MEETING WITH THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD (EDB) IN BAHRAIN

The Sustainability Research Group at Applied Science University represented by Dr Assem Al-Hajj – Vice President for Academic Affairs and Development, Professor Saad Znad Darwash Mihyawi - Advisor to the President for Special Projects in the University, Dr Ashraf Hendy – Dean of the College of Engineering and Dr Islam Abohela – Head of Department of Civil and Architectural Engineering visited the Economic Development Board (EDB) in Bahrain to explore the potentials for future collaboration in the field of sustainability.

The representatives from ASU were joined and welcomed by Dr Simon Galpin – Managing Director, Mr Husain bin Raja – Executive Director and Ms Dana Abdulla – Sr. Executive at EDB.

The meeting took place at Arcapita Building on Monday, 16 April 2018 and potential future collaboration between ASU and EDB was discussed.

ASU representatives gave the attendees an overview about the research work at ASU which is focused on Sustainability issues and it was recommended to get in touch with the Bahrain Unit for Sustainable Energy which is under the Ministry of Energy since they will be interested in the expertise of the research group members. According to Ms Dana new guidelines for building regulations in terms of energy efficiency is being developed by the government and it might be useful for ASU to get involved. Dr Simon highlighted that EDB main goal is to promote creating more jobs through making the Kingdom of Bahrain more attractive for business and EDB is especially interested in Startups.

The meeting was so informative for both ASU and EDB and future meetings will be scheduled for exploring more ways of collaboration.

ASU WON THE 1ST PLACE IN TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENT BETWEEN ALL BAHRAINI UNIVERSITIES

On Saturday 21 April 2018, the Deanship of Student Affairs took part in the 2nd Universities' table tennis tournament organized for students and academic staff by the Gulf University. The event was under the Patronage of Shaikha Hayat Bint Abdulaziz Al Khalifa (Bahrain Olympic Committee Board Member and Chairwoman of the Women's Sports Committee).

Five ASU students participated in the tournament including; Rashed Sanad, Yousif Ghunaim, Hussain Al Jowdar, Abdulrahman Saqer and Wafa Hubail. Our students played extremely well, Rashed and Yousif reached the semi-finals. **Yousif won the 4th place and Rashed Sanad won the 1st place.**

ASU is extremely proud of the amazing results as our students won the 1st and 4th place. The tournament consisted of 36 players from nine different universities in Bahrain. This ended with another great achievement for ASU.

In addition, two of our academic staff participated in the staff table tennis tournament; Dr. Assem Al-Hajj and Dr. Mohamad Mafaka against 16 academics from different

universities in Bahrain. We are proud of Dr. **Assem Al-Hajj who reached the finals and won the 3rd place.**

Many thanks go to Mr Mohammed Najjar from the Deanship of Student Affairs for his great supervision, enthusiasm and sheer determination in supporting our students for success.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE WORKSHOP

On Monday 9 April 2018, Dr. Shamsan Almannaei the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs delivered a lecture on "Emotional Intelligence". The lecture highlighted the importance of Emotional Intelligence for students and staff in the success of their career.

Dr Shamsan defined Emotional Intelligence as the capability of an individual to control and manage his/ her emotions, in addition to being able to control the emotion of others. He added that Emotional Intelligence is a very important skill to acquire especially for graduating students seeking success and leadership in their future career. He added that there are five main elements that affect our Emotional Intelligence, including social skills, self-awareness, self-regulations, motivation, empathy and everyone needs to develop his/ her skills to improve their emotional intelligence and hence be successful in life.

SITE VISITS

Dr. Adeeb Hamdoon Sulaiman, Coordinator for the Internship Course at the MIS Department has carried a series of Internship site visits to the court of his Highness the Prime Minister for the Kingdom of Bahrain, Cushman and Wakefield Company, and Micro Training Center. The purpose of those visits was to monitor the progress of the students taking this course and receive feedback from the site supervisors. All supervisors praised the students' performances and positive contribution to the workplace.

ASU PARTICIPATED IN THE FOURTH EXHIBITION ON EMPLOYMENT IN THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

Applied Science University represented by Ms Zuhoor Hasan, from the Administrative Affairs Department, participated in the fourth exhibition on Employment in the Educational Sector. The Labour and Social Development Ministry organised the wxhibition under the patronage of Labour and Social Development Minister Jamil bin Mohammed Ali Humaidan.

The event, which was held at the Labour and Social Development Ministry in Isa Town on April 16 and 17, aimed to employ jobseekers who have completed their secondary or higher education. The participating educational institutions and private training ones showcased their vacancies which include various administrative, educational, technical and supervisory posts.

VISIT OF H.E SHAIKH ABDULAZIZ BIN ATIYATALLAH ALKHALIFA, THE HONORARY ALUMNI CLUB MEMBER TO ASU

On 19 April 2018, Professor Ghassan Aouad the University President met H.E. Shaikh Abdulaziz Bin Atiyatallah AlKhalifa the honorary member of ASU Alumni Club Board of Directors at his office, in the presence of Dr. Faiza Zitouni the Dean of Student Affairs and Ms. Noora Musalam the Career Development and Alumni Affairs Office Manager.

H.E Shaikh Abdulaziz Bin Atiyatallah AlKhalifa viewed the latest updates of the Alumni club events and activities, and endorsed the important role of the Alumni Club members, their commitment, loyalty and shared collaboration work for the success of the University.

In addition, Dr. Faiza Zitouni highlighted the readiness of the Deanship of Student Affairs in forming the next 3rd cycle of the Alumni Club Board of Directors as this is very important time for the Alumni members to participate in the elections. Many appreciations to H.H Shaikh Abdulaziz Al Khalifa for his visit to ASU and for his continuous support to the alumni and the University.

THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICE ACTIVITIES

The Community Engagement Office Visits Fazat Shabab Society

The Community Engagement Office represented by Dr. Mohammad Alaa Al-Hamami, the Manager of the office, visited Fazat Shabab Society and met with Mr. Jasem AlMarisi, the President and members of the Society and discussed opportunities for future cooperation between the two parties.

Dr. Al-Hamami Delivered a Lecture on "Youth and Social Media"

On Saturday, 17 April 2018, Dr. Mohammad Alaa Al-Hamami delivered a lecture titled "Youth and social media". The lecture was organized by Fazat Shabab Society in the headquarters of the society located in Riffa.

Dr. Al-Hamami's lecture covered important topics about social media for youth, and the best practices of using social media in secure and safe ways.

At the end of lecture, the audience who were members of Fazat Shabab Society, Bahrain Motives Society for special needs, and local community asked questions about the related topics.

Fazat Shabab Society thanked and awarded Dr. Al-Hamami for delivering the lecture.

The Community Engagement Office Meets with Bahrain Motives Society for Special Needs

The Community Engagement Office represented by Dr. Mohammad Alaa Hussain Al-Hamami, the Manager of the office met with Bahrain Motives Society for Special Needs represented by Mr. Ryadh Ahmad AlMarzooq - the President, Mr. AbdulAmer AlAradi - The Record Keeper, and Mr. Jamel Sabet - Head of Public Relations, Media and Internal and External Coordination.

During the meeting they discussed ways of cooperation between the parties.

Dr. Al-Hamami Attended the 1st International Speakers Forum

On 14 April 2018, Dr. Mohammad Alaa Hussain Al-Hamami attended the 1st International Speakers Forum #SpeakinBahrain at the Diplomat Radisson Blu Hotel. The forum that was under the patronage of H.E. Sh. Hisham Bin Abdulrahman AlKhalifa Governor of Capital Governorate was organized by the Social Media Club in association with the United Nations Development Programme in the Kingdom of Bahrain and Bahrain Society for Training and Development and other partners. The aim of the forum was to provide world class speaking techniques and skills from thirty international speakers in thirty sessions and three workshops.

COMPUTER SCIENCE STUDENTS INTERVIEWED THE PRESIDENT OF APPLIED SCIENCE UNIVERSITY

On 16 April 2018, Computer Science students conducted an interview with Professor Ghassan Aouad the Univeristy President, who is an inspirational leader to all students at ASU and to look up to. The interview started off with the President's introducing himself, where he shared his past, his studies and experience with the students. He has been a President for almost 3 and a half years.

Why he chose ASU?

A question was asked about why he chose ASU, he answered by saying "I was in the UK working for 20 years then came to the Middle East including Dubai, and Kuwait and then after accepting the offer to be the president of ASU he is currently in Bahrain. He expressed his sincere thanks to Prof Waheeb Alkhaja, Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the trust in him to be the President of ASU. ASU got a good and noticeable reputation, and I feel I can add something to our University and improve it more". Shockingly, he didn't expect all this to happen, it just happened.

Challenges facing students

The biggest challenge students face nowadays is that students need to work hard being more qualified academically and focus on important subjects such as math and science as they are studying for Computer Science.

One of the student's biggest challenges is the lack of motivation to do their best at everything. As quoted, the President Ghassan said: "I strongly believe that everyone should be committed to improve and learn. I don't believe in weak students, I feel that weekness comes from noncommitted students". Consistency and commitment are keys to be a better student and improving your academic life.

Advice to Students

His advice to the students was to be ambitious, and not to give up and keep trying no matter what the situation is. He also advised them to have passion in whatever they are doing, whether they are working or studying, have innovation and think about ways to better yourself and how you can be different from everyone else. Dr. Ghassan mentioned the triangle of success which includes: passion, innovation and leadership.

Challenges facing President

When asked about the chaleenges he might come across as a President, his response was that any high position comes with a huge responsibility, but all challenges disappear when the President sees his own success through others like the student's excellence and commitment.

Success comes from the fact that all colleges should achieve their goals and the University achieves accreditation. Accreditation is very important and useful for everyone especially the students and they should play a major role and for that they should demonstrate passion and commitment.

When asked about his top proirity, he answered that he wanted to create a student centre university.

It was an honour that Prof. Ghassan would give us time from his busy schedule to sit and interact with us and learn great lessons from him to better our personal and academic lives.

Reported By: Reem Yahya AlZaman & Latifa Khalid AlNoaimi

MY TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AS INSPIRED FROM THE HEA SENIOR FELLOWSHIP BY DR. MARWAN ABDELDAYEM, PH.D., SFHEA

Throughout my academic life in higher education (HE), I have developed my understanding of how students learn, applying this to my own teaching and, in turn, to my colleagues and mentees helped in many cases the whole college learning environment. I reviewed diversified literatures from different sources, observed colleagues with long experience in teaching and learning and invited peers to my lectures. This scholarly activity has played a vital role in improving my teaching and I excelled within the HE environment and with observations confirming my teaching and support of students to be outstanding.

For example, in my first years of teaching I was using the one way communication in classroom. Two years later and from several discussions and informal feedback from students, colleagues and mentors, I recognized that I should change my style of teaching to be less teacher directed. Since then I began to change my approach and use two way communications in order to support students more and make the environment in classroom more enjoyable for all. This development in teaching has had an impact on both students and colleagues; as students started to participate more and link between the subject and the experience in the workplace.

For instance, when I was teaching a Finance course and how to prepare and analyze financial statements such as balance sheet and income statement I asked my students to work in groups and bring real financial statements from business organizations and banks and apply what they learned to read, analyze and interpret the financial data included in such statements. I remember well that I was very delighted when I heard two of my students saying that they are pretty sure that when they graduate and join their jobs they would be able to analyze any financial statement. The real world application of business theory is considered by many scholars as crucial to developing students future employability (Wolf and Wright, 2014),

In addition, through the classroom peer visits and observations, several colleagues and mentees expressed their interest in adopting this interactive method of teaching in their lectures and tutorials. Three years later, I was asked by Cairo University to conduct a 3 day training course for the new colleagues on how to be an effective communicator in teaching. Seventeen new faculty members attended this workshop and their formal feedback and assessment indicated that they benefited a lot in developing their communication skills when teaching and communicating with students in HE.

Moreover, I have actively initiated and led innovation in teaching and learning activities in both the courses and programmes. For instance, in ASU the majority of students are local (Bahraini) and therefore the English is not their first language. Another challenge is that the overwhelming majority of students are not strong enough in mathematical issues that dominate my courses especially in Quantitative Methods in Management and Projects Management. Hence, I had much more interaction with those types of students and their tutors who run their pre-sessional English and Math courses. Based on several meetings and discussions with these tutors, I now allow a more gradual transition to an English only classroom according to the progress of my students' abilities in English and Math on the first two semesters of study at ASU. Having initiated this approach, the number of students who were facing English and Math difficulties in my classes has decreased significantly (- 40: 50%). Therefore, I have successfully led and implemented a new approach across my college which impacted on the practice of many colleagues who were having similar problems and developed a culture of sharing professional practice focusing on students' needs which is now embedded and valued by all colleagues in the college.

Furthermore, my enthusiasm for new teaching techniques and more students support has involved me in some action research. In developing my research methodology, I was influenced by Black (2015) and Arnold (2015) who viewed action researchers as leaders making improvements through their research for the best interest of their students. As Arnold (2015) points out by conducting action research the world can be seen differently from different perspectives. Action research should follow sequential steps and it always involves planning, then making a change and then reviewing the situation to generate learning. For example, at ASU I was teaching several courses such as Quantities Methods in Management, Finance, Projects Management and Bank Management (K1). After the first semester I faced a problem with my students regarding the type of material and PowerPoint slides that I was using to deliver my courses. The problem was that most of my presentation slides were full of numbers, mathematical equations, tables and graphs that many students felt scared of, and the slides were not really attractive for most of them. Therefore, in order to tackle such a problem, I decided to conduct an action research to develop my teaching materials in a way that motivate students to participate more and to support them in understanding the subject more.

I began the action research in February 2016 for three weeks by changing the PowerPoint materials and making them less dependent on large amount of information. I also simplified the mathematical equations and used different colors and animation. Three weeks later, I measured the results of this experiment on students. I found a significant improvement in their participation and interaction in the classroom as well as major improvement (over 32%) in quiz marks.

I shared and disseminated the results of my action research with all colleagues in my college in order to inspire to them how they can improve their teaching and support of students through action research. Consequently,-as reported by the dean of my college- "I initiated a new culture within the college" and several colleagues started to conduct action research to overcome some challenges in their teaching and to use evidence-informed approaches and the outcome from research to support learning

Furthermore, I undertake the supervision of Master students and I provide them guidance in the methodology, data analysis and writing up in my office within office hours and in many cases, I made myself available in the cafeteria and coffee shop in ASU during my break time to meet some students that they found difficulty to see me within the official office hours. In addition, I provide mentoring and developmental workshops for colleagues who joined ASU recently. I also provide individual workshops for colleagues on writing research papers to be published in peer reviewed journals.

Throughout my academic life, I have worked in a wide range of learning environments including physical, psychological, and virtual learning environments (VLEs). I always try to do my best to manage and optimize the use of these types of environments, so that I can meet the needs of my students and support them more.

The introduction of VLEs changes the relationship that students have with their course of study. As students can learn without the presence of their instructor, but in this case I should manage and make the virtual environment accessible and easy to use by all of them. For example, at ASU I initiated the use of an online induction to new students to develop contact and receive information before they join the course. Another example is the use of the Moodle e-learning system provided by ASU, which allows my students to access all learning materials on a 24/7 basis in their own preferred physical environment hence, they can always download lectures notes, case studies, assignments and online quizzes and they can also interact with me by asking questions and raising some issues related to the subject that they may wish to clarify. Through my management of this element I was able to increase the satisfaction rate of my students from 42% to 93% (as reported in their formal feedback) via developing an effective learning environment. In addition, I have supported many new colleagues with training on how to use this software producing a range of supporting materials that they could use to develop their abilities in teaching and supporting students.

References

Arnold L. (2015), Action research for higher education practitioners: A practical guide, pp.1-17

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Wolf, B. and Wrightm L, (2014) Designing Curriculum for Real World, International Business needs, Journal of Teaching in International Business, 34 (3): 165-184.

REMINDER OF THE WEEK

Institutional Accreditation Inspection Visit: 24 to 27 June 2018 (9 weeks from today)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Better three hours too soon than a minute too late."

William Shakespeare

Happy Reading!