

# 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 45th issue of the 3rd year of the President's News Digest.

In this issue of the News Digest, I will address the subjects of standard 7 and standard 8 as described in the “**BQA Framework for Cycle 2: Institutional Reviews**” which are entitled “Research” and “Community Engagement”



### Standard 7 – Research

The institution has a strategic research plan appropriate for its mission that is translated into a well-resourced operational plan, which is implemented and monitored.

### Indicator 23 - Research

The institution has implemented a plan for the development of research (e.g. disciplinary specific, scholarship of teaching and learning) appropriate for its institutional type that includes monitoring its research output, together with policies and processes to ensure the ethical and effective conduct of research.

### What is expected of a HEI operating in Bahrain:

1. There is an implemented research management plan appropriate for its institutional type and mission which is operational and has key performance indicators and targets, and which is monitored.
2. In accordance with licensing regulations and requirements issued by HEC, the proportion of the institution's budget allocated for the support of research is monitored, and sufficient to support of the institution's research plan.
3. There are effective implemented policies for the ethical and safe conduct of research.
4. There are implemented research policies for the awarding of research grants, conference participation or other incentives to support academic staff in developing their research performance.

5. There are effective research capacity building opportunities for staff.

### **Indicator 24 - Higher degrees with research (where applicable)**

Where the institution offers higher degrees that include a research component, it provides effective supervision and resources for research students and ensures that its research degrees are of an appropriate level for the programme.

#### **What is expected of a HEI operating in Bahrain:**

1. The intended learning outcomes of the research components of the programme are aligned with the programme intended learning outcomes and are assessed properly.
2. The institution has implemented policies and procedures for the effective supervision and support of research students, including research capacity building.
3. There is regular monitoring and review of research students' progress and research students' satisfaction.
4. There are sufficient resources available for students to carry out their research programmes.
5. There is a rigorous implemented mechanism for the examination of research theses to ensure that these are at an appropriate level, and which includes the use of appropriately-qualified external examiners.
6. There is evidence that opportunities are provided for academic staff to enhance their capacity as supervisors through staff development programmes.

### **Standard 8 - Community Engagement**

The institution has a clear community engagement plan that is aligned with its mission and which is operational.

#### **Indicator 25 - Community Engagement**

The institution has conceptualized and defined the ways in which it will serve and engage with local communities in order to discharge its social responsibilities.

## **INTERVIEW OF THE WEEK**

We would like to feature the interview this week with:



Name: Ammar Yousif Ahmed

Position: Lecturer – Department of Computer Science – College of Arts and Science

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

I was born and raised in Manama City in Bahrain, surrounded by a lovely family. I had a wonderful childhood with many close friends from all over the area.

I was a hardworking student in high school which helped me to get a scholarship from the MOE and joined ASU as student in 2007. In 2010 I obtained my Bachelor's degree in Computer Information Systems from ASU University.

In 2011 ASU offered me an opportunity to join the University as an assistant and research lecturer.

In 2015 I obtained my Master's degree in Management Information Systems from ASU University and became a lecturer in the Department of Computer Science, College of Arts and Science.

#### **2. Tell us about your job at ASU**

I am working as Lecturer in the Department of Computer Science, I am responsible for ensuring a conducive teaching and learning environment for our students, and I am a member of many committees in and outside the College.

## What is expected of a HEI operating in Bahrain:

1. The institution has a clearly articulated statement and appropriate policies which are implemented with respect to community engagement activities.
2. The institution has identified staff with specific responsibilities for interaction with relevant external groups and communities.
3. Feedback is collected from stakeholders involved in community engagement which is used for improvement.
4. The institution has a database of community engagement activities, and there is a mechanism to monitor the effectiveness of these activities.

Also, I am an authorized lecturer and tester from the ICDL and I help the Training, Development and Continuing Education Centre in the University in conducting ICDL workshops.

### 3. Tell us about your aspirations for the University

I hope ASU becomes one of the most reputable universities in the Kingdom and the region.

### 4. What do you enjoy most about your job?

Contacts with students

### 5. Tell us about your hobbies

Watching sport and movies and Cooking

### 6. Tell us about your favourite food

Sea Food and traditional Bahraini food

### 7. Tell us about the book you are reading now

ICDL books

### 8. Final words

It's a pleasure to work in such a friendly and inspirational environment



### ASU Visit UCO Parents Care Centre:

On Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> of July 2018, Applied Science University represented by Dr. Faiza Zitouni Dean of Student Affairs and Mr. Thaer Mustafa AlRamini member of the Community Engagement Office and Student Care, visited UCO Parents Care Centre. Opportunities of collaboration have been discussed between ASU and UCO during the visit.



### Dr. Al-Hamami Participated in “10th Summer Youth Future Camp”:

On Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> of August 2018, Dr. Mohammad Alaa Al-Hamami participated in delivering “Using social media efficiently” workshop that was introduced by Social Media Club team to the students of the 10th Summer Youth Future Camp that was organized by the Royal Academy of Police.

During the workshop, students learned the basics of social media usage, how to design an appropriate profile, and the important features of content.



## Dr. Mohammad Alaa Al-Hamami Delivered a Workshop in “قمم” Programme:

On the 8th of July 2018, Dr. Mohammad Alaa Al-Hamami delivered a workshop about the best practices of creating Instagram business accounts, how to engage, how to use hashtags, in addition to a lot of useful information related to social media.

The workshop was part of the youth training programme “قمم”. The programme was organized by Um Al-Hassam Sports & Cultural Club in cooperation with Creative Training Lab and with the participation of a selection of youth trainers in the Kingdom of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia with the aim to create a group of innovative youth leaders and teams to initiate creative volunteer programs, initiatives, business projects and meaningful community dialogues.



## Community Engagement Office Visit Tamkeen:

On 19th of August 2018, The Community Engagement Office at Applied Science University represented by Dr. Mohammad Alaa Al-Hamami manager of CE Office, visited Tamkeen and met Ms. Fatima AlAnsari and Mr. Ali Ahmed Majeran from Community Engagement of Tamkeen. During the meeting, ASU CE Office and Tamkeen discussed opportunities of cooperation between them.



## WRITING AND USING GOOD MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQs) (Dr. Mohammed Yousif)

This is a brief note to staff to update you on the use of multiple choice questions as a tool for assessing students. There are, of course, many examples of MCQs which are provided as teaching resources in English language textbooks. However, depending on the subject being taught and the exact knowledge or understanding you wish to assess students on these may not always be appropriate and it is important to know the basic principles involved in creating multiple choice questions which are well suited to your teaching objectives.

### Structure of MCQs

There are 3 important parts which you must consider:

- the stem, which asks the question, poses a problem, or presents an incomplete sentence;
- the correct response;
- and normally four alternative responses which are incorrect. These are often called "distracters."



The stem must be concise and accurate giving the student a clear understanding of exactly what is required. Be careful to check grammar and spelling.

The correct response must be very carefully considered. You need to ask yourself if the correct response is the only one which is acceptable considering how the question has been phrased. If there is any doubt you may need to go back to the stem and make the question more precise.

The distracters must provide alternatives to the correct response which could feasibly be correct if the student does not completely understand the subject or has made an error in calculation or reasoning. (Distracters which are very obviously wrong will help students who are simply trying to guess the correct answer). Do not provide distracters which are designed to 'trick students'. It is also best to avoid using options such as 'None of the above' or 'All of the above'.

### **Avoid just using questions which test memory**

MCQs are often criticised as being 'trivial' types of assessment because they simply test memory. However, if correctly designed they can be effective in testing higher order learning.

If you want to test higher level thinking skills then don't just ask questions which rely on the student knowing or remembering the correct answer.

Questions which are phrased, for example, as

'Which of the following best demonstrates ...' or

'Why is it important to ...' or

'What would be the effect of ...'

'What is the best way to ...'

You may also want to consider making the stem of the question longer to include a very short 'case-study' and give choices which are based on the student having carefully read the case to determine the correct response.

### **Final points about effective use of MCQs**

Consider carefully when you want to use MCQs. They are best used to cover very specific areas of knowledge so are not suitable for use in examinations where you want the student to demonstrate a breadth of knowledge covering the whole of the course.

Consider using MCQs as a 'diagnostic' test at the start of a new course. This can be useful in helping you identify areas where students are weak or may perhaps not have covered particular topics in previous courses which they have taken.

Analyse the results of MCQ tests to show you where students are generally weak and you may need to provide additional guidance – where all students are failing on a particular question or questions this is likely to be because of a common misconception and you can then correct that.

As with all assessments check the assessment with a colleague.

Also, as with all assessments avoid repeating exactly the same questions during the academic year. If you want to test the same areas of knowledge re-phrase the question and vary the order of the responses.

## **Proposal to develop a databank of MCQs**

Because good MCQs can be difficult to design we are currently thinking of establishing a databank of MCQs which can be made accessible to all staff. This can be organised on a subject/course and level basis and when sufficiently large would give staff a valuable tool to help them design their assessments from a wide choice of possible questions (and staff could choose to use some of these or to vary them and create new questions which could be submitted to the databank).

In particular in courses taught in Arabic it would mean ASU has developed a teaching resource which as far as I am aware does not exist in any other University. It is extremely difficult to find examples of MCQs which are designed for teaching in Arabic.

It would be good to hear the opinions from staff about the feasibility and worth of setting up such a databank and also how they feel they could perhaps contribute to it

## **QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

*“The Best Leaders Have A High Consideration Factor. They Really Care About Their People”*

**Brian Tracy**

 *Happy Reading!* 