

# 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 33rd issue of the President's News Digest. In this issue, I will cover the subject of “women in leadership roles in higher education”.



Women in leadership roles in higher education is a subject of great interest across the globe. There are many issues associated with this subject including the low percentage of women leading academic institutions, especially in the third world, the pay gap, discrimination against women, and lack of opportunities amongst many others.

It is a known fact now that female students are outperforming male students and this fact is evidenced in my own university when we release results about outstanding students on a semester basis which show clearly that female students are outperforming the male ones. It is also true that there has been a big increase in female students studying for university degrees and in many places they outnumbered male students. However, women in senior higher education roles across the globe do not reflect this reality. It is a gender issue which is being addressed globally. In the UK only few female vice chancellors were leading British universities in the early nineties and now the figure is in excess of 20%. However, these figures are not reflected in the Arab world as only around 7% of Arab Universities are led by women.

The number of students will grow significantly and could reach 120 million by 2050 according to UNESCO reports. These figures will also impact the Arab World. The UNESCO highlighted this issue for Arab States by stating that “Arab States are marked by great cultural diversity, economic disparities and social instability. Here, since populations are numerous and very young, there is an urgent need to modernize systems and structures to meet the demand for higher education and to help shape a more stable society. Currently, women are very rare as leaders in higher education institutions;” This is ironic when half of the population of these nations are not contributing enough to the leadership of its higher education sector and universities in particular.

In the UK the first female Vice-Chancellor, Dame Lillian Penson (a professor of Modern History) was appointed in 1948 at the University of London. Since then, more women have achieved leadership roles and now 21% of heads of institutions are women. There has been a substantial increase in the last five years. While still low, these figures are slightly better than those for much of the rest of the world, but less than those in the United States which is around 30%.

In 2015, another milestone event took place when Dr Valerie Amos became the first BME (Black Minority Ethnic) female to lead a university in the United Kingdom when she was appointed as director of SOAS ( School of Oriental and African Studies). This is another indication of a race gap which is another concern on top of the gender issue.

Only 34 of the top 200 universities in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings are run by women. The US, Sweden, Netherlands and the UK are some of the countries with high numbers of female-led institutions.

In the Arab world, less than 7 percent of academic institutions



Percentage of women who are leading academic institutions

are headed by women, according to a detailed survey conducted by Al-Fanar Media and InfoTimes, an independent data analysis company.

The above figures shows only 5 Arab nations with 10 to 13.3% (the highest is Oman) where women are leading academic institutions. Currently, eight Arab countries do not have women heading their academic institutions which is very rare in other parts of the world. The gender gap in academia in the Arab world is still wide.

In the Kingdom of Bahrain the gender pay gap is smaller than that in the Western world. However, more women leaders are needed to head academic institutions.

The excellent work by the Supreme Council for Women headed by HRH Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al-Khalifah is moving Bahrain in the right direction.

More women leading academic institutions across the globe and the Arab region in particular are needed in order to help in creating sustainable universities. The gender gap has to be addressed before it is too late. Considering the progress made in

## INTERVIEW OF THE WEEK

We would like to feature the interview this week with:



Name: Prof. Ayman Al Dmour

Position: Acting Dean for Arts and Science - Acting Dean of Student Affairs

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

I was raised in Zarqa, Jordan. I obtained my BSc in Electronics – Communication Engineering in 1993 from the Jordan University of Science and Technology. I worked as a Telecom Engineer in Orange Jordan from 1996 to 2006. I pursued my MSc and PhD in 2003 and 2006, respectively, in Computer Information Systems at the Arab Academy of Banking and Financial Sciences, Jordan.

In Feb 2006, I joined the College of Information Technology at Al-Hussein Bin Talal University AHU, Jordan. At Al-Hussein Bin Talal University (AHU), I have chaired the Department of Computer Information Systems, the Computer and Information Technology Centre, and the College of Information Technology. In March 2016, I was appointed a President Consultant for Scientific Affairs (acting as Vice President for Academic Affairs) and President's Assistant for Central Bids.

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

I joined Applied Science University as Acting Dean of College of Arts and Science in September 2018. I was also appointed as an Acting Dean of Student Affairs in December 2018.

In addition to above mentioned roles, I am a faculty member in the Computer

this area in the US and Western world in general, some optimism has started to emerge.

However, these nations are still facing the gender pay gap as men are financially better off than women doing the same job. In addition, women who have made it to board levels are still in the minority and this issue will also need to be addressed and resolved.

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### INTERVIEW WITH ALUMNUS

	
Name:	Naser Saeed Sulaiman Albadi
Workplace:	Bahrain Defense Force
Academic Degree	Bachelor
Academic Major	Law
Tell us about your Experience at ASU in terms of learning environment and teaching methods.	The active student learning process was fabulous as Law Professors have been utilizing a particular form of teaching pedagogy; storytelling; to stimulate engagement for law students with emphasis on practice, procedure, and rules, students can investigate the stories behind the existence of these frameworks as part of their learning.
What did you enjoy the most about your experience at ASU?	Everyone at the faculty and administrative staff was open, helpful and supportive. They provide most valued advice to students.
Tell us a success story inspired by ASU.	Balancing my social life, work and study was such a challenge to me which I was able to go through and obtain my degree.
In your Opinion, What are the Improvement areas you would like to see at ASU in the future?	International law masters

Interviewed By: Maheera Faisal, Alumni Affairs Committee Chair; ASU Alumni Club

### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*“If you educate a man, you educate an individual. But if you educate a woman, you educate a nation.” African Proverb*

*Happy Reading!*

Science Department, the place where I can further contribute to the IT education focus at ASU, continue my IT research and provide academic and professional services on campus.

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

I am confident that ASU will become, under the wise, innovative and experienced leadership, the region's top university and the most student-centered research university. I take pride to be part of the ASU employees and community.

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

ASU inspiration leadership, multinational and multicultural employees and learners, makes it a pleasant place to work. I'm excited to share and continue to explore teaching, research and cooperate with a fantastic inspiration team to expand their potential.

### 5. Tell us about your hobbies

Breeding Birds, riding horses and MATLAB programming

### 6. Tell us about your favourite food

My favourite food is grilled lamb meat and grilled fish.

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

I enjoy reading books dealing with Arabic Language Processing using MATLAB.

### 8. Final words

First of all, thank you very much for inviting me in this issue. I also hope that ASU and our beloved Kingdom will have more prosperity and ongoing achievement. Many thanks go to Prof Waheeb and Prof Ghassan for their leadership and support.