

PRESIDENT'S NEWS DIGEST

06 OCTOBER 2019 – VOLUME 4 - ISSUE 49

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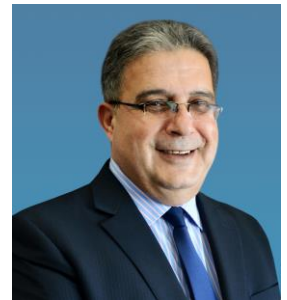
  
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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the 49th issue of the 4th volume of the President's News Digest. In this issue of the News Digest, I will address the subject of **“The History of the Educational System in Bahrain”**.



Bahrain is celebrating this year the centenary of formal education in the Kingdom highlighting the outstanding achievements of the educational sector. 100 years of formal education bring pride to an island that it is small in size but big in ideas and accomplishments. The World Economic Forum Competitiveness Reports published over the last few years demonstrate the big improvements in the Education and Higher Education and Innovation areas in Bahrain.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has the oldest public education system in the Arabian Peninsula which dates back to 1930 when the government became responsible for operating two pre-existing primary public schools for boys. Girls schools were subsequently established and universities started to appear in the second half of the 20th century. Literacy rates in Bahrain at around 96% as reported in 2015 is amongst the best in the World and the investment in education as percentage of GDP is at an average of around 2.5%.

Schools teaching the Quran were the only source of education in Bahrain prior to the 20th century. The first missionary elementary school was setup in 1892 until it was closed in 1933. The school reopened some years later under a different name which is operating until the present day.



The first public school of Bahrain, Al-Hidaya Al-Khalifia Boys school was established in Muharraq in 1919. In 1926, a second public school for boys was established in the capital city, Manama. Two years later, in 1928, the first public school for girls was established.

In 2005, His Majesty King Hamad issued a law defining the terms of reference of the Higher Education Council which was officially formed in 2006. The National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (now known as BQA) which was established in 2008 is in charge of monitoring and evaluating the performance of schools and universities in Bahrain.

The Bahrain Vision 2030 promotes a shift towards a knowledge economy. Consequently, the Kingdom has raised standards and performance in its schools, vocational institutions and universities. The Ministry of Education (MoE) is playing a major role in driving innovation in schools and academic and vocational institutions. The 2004 “King Hamad Schools of the Future” is just an example of an initiative that was set up to ensure that students in Bahrain’s public schools are familiar with electronic education by providing public schools with computers. Other measures of success include the good performance in international tests like TIMSS, PISA and PIRLS.

As mentioned earlier, the first international school was a missionary which indicates the country’s long-standing acceptance of multiculturalism and respect for freedom of religion and tolerance. The school’s syllabus primarily covered subjects like English, Mathematics and the study of Christianity. In order to deal with the issue of educating the children growing community of expatriates, St Christopher’s school was set up in 1961 as a small Church School of 39 pupils which has developed into an internationally acclaimed institution and to be one of the top 10 international schools outside of the UK in the world in 2008 as reported by the UK Guardian Newspaper.

Bahrain has a progressive and highly valued education system. While Bahrain has a number of private schools, public education in Bahrain is free. However, only 32 percent of women aged 15 and above are in the workforce, compared to 85 percent of men. This is significantly lower than the rest of the world, as globally 52 percent of women are active in the workforce.

The history of higher education in the Kingdom of Bahrain dates back to 1966 when the Teachers' Institute was established. Two years later (1968), the Gulf Technical College was established, and then a number of colleges followed: the College of Health Sciences in 1976, the University College of Science and Arts (1978). The year 1979 witnessed the emergence of the Arabian Gulf University followed by the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance in 1980. In 1986, the University of Bahrain was formed by merging the Gulf Technical College and the College of Arts, Sciences and Education and establishing some other new colleges. In 2008, the Bahrain Polytechnic College was established on the old campus of the University of Bahrain.

As a response to the high demand for higher education, the government opened to private education and granted the first license for a private higher education institution in Bahrain in 2001. The latest additions to the private higher education sector include the British University of Bahrain and the American University of Bahrain. In total there are around 12 private universities in Bahrain.

Many universities are now accredited by the Higher Education Council in association with the British Accreditation Board including University of Bahrain, Bahrain Polytechnic, Royal University for Women, Applied Science University, RCSI, and AMA. The rest of the universities are going through the process now and it is most likely they will hear about their accreditation results before the end of the year. Some universities have achieved also the BQA Institutional Review cycle 2. Both accreditation and Institutional Reviews are based on meeting high standards in areas like governance and management and mission,



administration and human resource management, library, ICT and infrastructure and resources, teaching and learning quality, students support and progression, quality systems, research, and community engagement.

The Kingdom's educational sector has a promising future and Bahrain could become a serious knowledge and educational hub because of the following: the track record of being a leading financial hub of the region for the last 40 years, exceptional quality of life, clear directions from the top leadership articulated in vision 2030, the government approach to diversifying the economy, clear higher education and research strategies developed by the Higher Education Council, 50% or more of universities are now accredited by the Higher Education Council and it is expected that most universities will be accredited by the end of the year, the BQA work in institutional and programme reviews and NQF institutional listing and placement of academic programmes, the excellent work by the Economic Development Board in identifying priority sectors, the excellent work by the education committee of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry to promote educational tourism, the performance of local universities in regional and international rankings, the rapid presence of many foreign institutions in the Kingdom, the central location of the Kingdom and its open approach to foreign investments and finally the big demand for universities courses in the Gulf Region and beyond.

In this final section, I would like to report on the achievements of our University in order to use it as a case study to demonstrate our advancements as part of the development of the Higher Education Sector:

The University was established in 2004 and the first intake of students in 2005 was few hundreds and now we have 3000 students. So far 4654 graduated from the University and the annual social and economic impact is assessed to be over 30 Million BHD.

ASU is one of the first private universities that achieved the HEC Institutional Accreditation. The HEC has developed the Institutional Accreditation framework in partnership with the British Accreditation Council BAC.

QS Arab Region Ranking: the University has achieved the 45th place in the QS Arab Region Universities Ranking (2019) which makes it the No 1 private university in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

ASU is ranked 301+ in the top 500 universities ranked by the THE World Universities Impact Rankings which address how universities respond to the UN 17 sustainable goals. This is yet another indication of our performance in international league tables.

53 of our staff members have been recognized as either associate fellow, fellow, senior fellow or principal fellow of the Higher Education Academy, now known as Advance HE. Moreover, ASU has been accredited by Advance HE as a center authorized to deliver the fellowship scheme at the University.

All our academic programmes achieved positive review outcomes from BQA: The Education & Training Quality Authority in Bahrain (BQA) is responsible for reviewing the quality of the academic programmes offered by higher education institutions in Bahrain.

ASU is certified ISO 9001:2015: ASU has successfully achieved the ISO 9001:2015 certification for its administrative provision, which gives a strong indication that it has implemented sound and robust management quality systems geared towards student satisfaction and continuous improvement.

A buzzing student life with plenty of personal growth opportunities: our students have won this year the Football tournament organised amongst all universities by the Bahrain collegiate athletic association

A state-of-the-art, award-winning campus: this year, and for the 4th year in a row, ASU has been awarded the 1st place for the best decorated building competition in the educational sector.

GreenMetric World University Ranking: 1st Private University in Bahrain and 25th in the Arab World: ASU won the 1st Place at the level of private universities locally, the 25th place at the Arab level, and 692 globally in the GreenMetric World University Ranking for the year 2018.

British Degrees offered at ASU in partnership with British Universities: ASU offers the unique opportunity for students to study here in Bahrain at its campus and get British degrees offered by our academic partners.

It is clear from the above that ASU has been a success story like many universities in the Kingdom. The next phase of the HE sector development should be based around closer collaboration with local and international universities with a particular aim to make Bahrain a truly educational/knowledge hub.

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THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE CONDUCTED STUDENTS ORIENTATION DAY FOR THE FIRST SEMESTER FROM THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2019/2020



On Tuesday 24 Sep 2019, the College of Arts and Science organized “The Orientation Day” for the newly enrolled students in the college for the first semester of the academic year 2019/2020.

The event covered two parts; the first part started with a welcome speech delivered by the Acting Dean of the College, Prof. Ayman AlDmour followed by a brief explanation by the HoD of the Department of Computer Science and the HoD of the Department of Design and Arts.

The second part was a tour around the College offices and facilities. The new students accompanied by the representative of the Student’s Council and other students from the College to take the lead and introduce the new enrolled students to all the college staff, and be more familiar with the labs and lectures halls.

Written by Dr. Moaiad Khder

FUTURE COOPERATION BETWEEN ASU AND THE CAPITAL GOVERNORATE



On Thursday 26/09/2019, the President of ASU Prof. Ghassan Aouad and the Director of Administration and Finance Mr. Abdulla AL-Khaja met with Mr. Yousif Lori the Head of Strategic Planning & Project Management at the Capital Governorate and Ms. Noora Al Haddad the Managing Director of Creo to discuss future cooperation in organising the Fifth Edition of Manama Entrepreneurship Week.

Written by Ms.Hessa AlMeraiisi

INTERVIEW WITH ALUMNUS



| | |
|---|--|
| Name: | Nadia Nabeel Abdulnoor |
| Workplace: | - |
| Academic Degree | Bachelor |
| Academic Major | Business Administration |
| Tell us about your Experience at ASU in terms of learning environment and teaching methods. | My experience was wonderful at the beginning I felt some tension and fear because it is a new stage but ASU provided me with the appropriate and comfortable environment to study. |
| What did you enjoy the most about your experience at ASU? | Challenges are the most enjoyable things and the way of linking theories to reality is the motto of the ASU |
| Tell us a success story inspired by ASU. | One of my biggest ambitions is to pursue higher education and get a master's degree in management sciences. |
| In your Opinion, What are the Improvement areas you would like to see at ASU in the future? | In fact, everything is in a stunning development. And I would like to see ASU shine in the Kingdom of Bahrain and globally. |
| Final words | I am proud to be an ASU graduate. |

Interviewed By: Mrs. Noora Musalam, Manager of Career Development & Alumni Affairs Office - Deanship Of Student Affairs

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"A country's greatest investment is building generations of educated and knowledgeable youth"

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan

Happy Reading!