



PRESIDENT'S NEWS DIGEST

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the 16th issue of the 3rd year of the President's News Digest.



In this issue, I will be addressing the topic of ethical behavior in universities. All academic and administrative staff and students and other stakeholders of any university should operate within the context of the core values and ethics of that university and should demonstrate loyalty by embracing an ethical behavior of the highest quality. Such a behavior will ensure academic integrity, respect for people, and protection of a university from any reputational damage. At our university, we have adopted the following values:

Integrity:

ASU's community values honesty, fairness and academic integrity as fundamental to its vision and mission, and will recognize, affirm and uphold this value in a responsible and committed manner.

Collaboration and Team Spirit:

ASU's community recognizes collaboration and team spirit to be at the heart of the institutional culture and will promote these values in a dedicated manner.

Loyalty:

ASU's students, faculty and staff cherish loyalty and commitment and recognize these values to be inherent in their culture of cooperation and dedication.

Social Responsiveness and Community Engagement:

ASU's students, faculty and staff value their partners, networks and communities and intend to engage with them, in a thoughtful, respectful, responsible and meaningful manner.

Quality:

ASU's community values quality as an ideal and standard that should characterize its processes, outcomes, people and partners.

Let's take some examples of how the above values system could be applied. In conducting our research, we should have the highest ethical values by ensuring academic integrity through robust and reliable research methods including data collection, analysis and validation. Any plagiarized work is not tolerated and we can use Turnitin to ensure any similarities do not exceed acceptable and permitted standards and tolerance using the proper referencing system. Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research is becoming more popular and this is in line with our value of collaboration and spirit. Loyalty should be demonstrated through research that supports our vision and that of our Kingdom's needs. Our research should also respond to our community's aspirations and needs by demonstrating social responsiveness. Finally, our research should be of the highest quality demonstrating rigor and value added to the body of knowledge.

Let's take another example and demonstrate how our values and ethics could be applied. If we recommend a book or a reference for our courses, we need to demonstrate academic integrity by reviewing the book or reference first in order to ensure that the recommended reading materials help our students achieve the learning outcomes. This is the responsibility of the academic staff delivering the course with help from colleagues in the school/college/library operating within the value of collaboration and team spirit. With regards to loyalty to the University and our Kingdom, the recommended book or reference should not contain any sensitive content, which can affect national security, or the political, cultural and traditional values of the Country and its communities. Finally, as we mentioned many times in the past, quality should be at the heart of all what we do. Any recommended book or reference should be of a high quality published by reputable authors and publishing houses.

Academic dishonesty is becoming a universal issue. We should all exert great efforts to conduct research and select appropriate reading materials that have appropriate academic content to help our students. Unfortunately some dishonest academics are using their books to promote their own agendas without any respect to academic integrity and ethical values. We only have one agenda at ASU, which is to help our students, the University and our Kingdom by promoting tolerance, co-existence and peace, which is the vision of His Majesty, the King.

INTERVIEW OF THE WEEK

We would like to feature the interview this week with:



Name: Thaer Ramini

Position: Administrator in Student Services Office

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

I was born in November 15 1980 in Zarqa Jordan. I earned my diploma in Business Administration from Zarqa College, Balqa Applied University,

I worked for 6 years (from 2004 to 2010) in educational institutions. I worked as administrator in academic division at Al Isra Private University, Jordan. I also worked as liaison officer in student registration at Petra University. After that I joined ASU in 2010 till present.

2. Tell us about your job at ASU

I worked at HR then I moved to student registration because of my past experience. I could make a big difference with students as I worked hard to solve their problems. I was asked to join Student Services, where I worked hard to make sure that students have the best university experience ever by solving their problems. Later, I started helping students and engaging them in social cultural and charity activities as part of the community service when I was made a member in the community service office and this was a turning point. We had some major achievements which include:

STAFF INDUCTION DAY



On 8 February 2018, the University welcomed 14 new academic and administrative colleagues. Many thanks go to all those new and existing staff who attended the second semester Staff Induction Day. The event started with a very warm welcome by the Chairman of the BOTs, who highlighted the strategic directions of the University and the role new staff can play in its development. Following the welcoming speech by the Chairman of the BOTs, the President presented some key facts about the University and the many opportunities that are within our grasp. The President presented the vision and mission of the University and the strategic priorities as specified in our strategic plan. He covered the three core pillars of Teaching and Learning, Research, and Community Engagement, and the four supportive pillars of Student Support, Internationalization, Quality Assurance, and Sustainable Growth.

He then spoke about institutional accreditation as a strategic investment in our future. He stated that Accreditation is a stamp of quality and should be our top priority. All staff, admin and academic, should become familiar with the accreditation handbook and its content.



Our staff, students and other stakeholders should be familiar with our strategy house, vision, mission, values, and physical and organizational charts, which are displayed on our screens and banners across various locations in the University.



The President concluded his presentation by highlighting our priorities over the next 5 years including sustainable growth, international professional accreditation and creating research capacity.



The third presentation was delivered by the VP for Academic Affairs and Development who spoke about our teaching and learning strategy emphasizing the importance of course portfolios preparation, staff development and quality of teaching delivery.

World Marshal Arts Championships, the ملتقى العمل التطوعي Asian Champion Championship for Cycling, MoUs with the parliament, in addition to the participation in other numerous community service events and the production of videos and documentaries.

3. Tell us about your aspirations for the University

My aspiration for ASU is to become a leading university in the gulf region.

4. What do you enjoy most about your job?

The positive effects of community service on student learning and student's cultural awareness in addition to sharpening the talents.

5. Tell us about your hobbies

I like to organize festivals and events and discover talents of students.

6. Tell us about your favourite food

Mansaf, Msakhan and stuffed grapes leaves.

7. Tell us about the book you are reading now

I am reading "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" by Stephen Covey. It talks how to become an effective leader.

I also like to read and learn more about how to understand body language.

Moreover, I am reading a book "Dunia Allah" by Sameer Abdulla, a talented student at ASU.

8. Final words

I wish ASU prosperity and success. I pray that ASU gets accreditation and I would like to thank Prof Ghassan for his kindness and encouragement to staff.

He emphasized the importance of peer review of teaching and class observations. Dr. Faiza Zitouni the Dean of Students Affairs then presented the deanship role in supporting students and the services they provide within the deanship.

After lunch, the staff induction event was delivered by the team of the VP of Admin, Finance and Community Engagement. The Director of Admin and Finance spoke about the various divisions that report to him including HR, procurement and logistical issues, finance and admin. The heads of these divisions presented then about HR policies and processes, the automated procurement system, the budgeting process and various functions supporting admin and finance and our excellent work on health and safety. The Director of ICT and KM presented our IT systems including SIS and web site and showed how our staff portal could be used. The Head of the Community Engagement Office summarized our key achievements over the last few years and how the University could become more engaged with community engagement activities. Finally, the Head of HR and Training presented about our staff recruitment, appraisal and support. He also practically explained the newly launched HR automated services and showed staff how they can access the services portal, the automated services includes the following:

- Hourly leave request
- Leave request
- Overtime request
- Letters request
- Work commencement
- Tickets request
- Other requests

The Head of HR & Tanning also explained some parts of the staff handbook and highlighted the importance of reading it so the new joining staff would be informed of all the processes they need to know during their career with the university.

The various presentations that were made by various senior colleagues covering various aspects of the University were very informative to our new colleagues. We have put a lot of efforts to support our new colleagues through a comprehensive induction programme.

Mr Yasser Abu Senneh, Head of HR would like to thank all colleagues who presented during the day. In addition, I would like to thank colleagues in Admin and Finance and Community Engagement led by VP Dr Mohamed Yousif for the excellent preparation and dedication.

Staff induction, is important from an accreditation point of view and it is also helpful in assisting colleagues to settle smoothly in a new environment.

CIVIL AND ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING PROGRAMMES ADVISORY BOARDS MEETINGS

After the formation of the industry advisory boards for both the Architectural Design Engineering Programme and the Civil and Construction Engineering Programme, the meetings were held respectively on 29 January 2018 and 6 February 2018 at 18:30 pm.



The meetings were attended by the Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr Assem Al-Hajj, the Dean of the College of Engineering; Dr Ashraf Hendy, the Head of the Civil and Architectural Engineering Department; Dr Islam Abohela, the Coordinator of the Architectural Design Engineering Programme; Dr Mohamed Mahgoub, the Coordinator of the Civil and Construction Engineering Programme; Dr Mohamed Assiadi,

the Director of the Foundation Year, Mr Noel Lavin and all faculty in both programmes. The external members of the Architectural Design Engineering Programme Advisory Board are Eng. Manar Sirriyeh (Founder & Managing Partner of Design Studio Architects), Dr. Mohamed Abdul Aziz (Chief Architect, IKA Associates) and Eng. Simon Dennison (Architect, Director-Partner, SSH). As for the external members of the Civil and Construction Engineering Programme Advisory Board, they are David Anthony (General Manager, Nass Contracting), John Barnes (Principal Engineer/Associate Senior Consultant, Hill International Inc.) and Reem Alotaibi (Civil Engineer at Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company). The board members elected Eng. Reem Alotaibi and Eng. Manar Sirriyeh as the chairs of both boards.



The boards discussed the main responsibilities and different ways in which they can contribute to the development of both programmes. Other agenda items included the institutional accreditation the University is going through, an overview of the programme advisory board policy, an overview of the offered academic programmes in collaboration with LSBU, discussion on the labor market and employers needs in the field of Architectural and Civil Engineering and discussion on enhancing the students' skills for better employability. The boards' members were very enthusiastic about contributing to the continuous development of the offered programmes.

LSBU VISIT

On 15 February 2018, ASU was visited by a delegation from London South Bank University: Mr Stuart Bannerman (Director, International), Professor Mandy Maidment (Academic Director for Collaborative Partnerships), Ms Aissata Edmondson (Senior International Officer for Middle East, Africa & Brazil), Ms Tanya Perez (Partnership Manager), Ms Zakirah Begum (Partnership Officer) and Mr David Kotula (Business Support Manager).



The LSBU Delegation was welcomed by Professor Waheeb Alkhaja, Chairman of ASU's Board of Trustees and Professor Ghassan Aouad, ASU's President. The ASU team consisted of the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Development (Dr Assem Al Hajj), Dean of Engineering/LSBU Link Tutor (Dr Ashraf Hendy), Dean of Student Affairs (Dr Faiza Zitouni), Dean and Assistant Dean of Admissions & Registration (Dr Isa Al Khayyat and Mr Siddiq Babakir), Director of the Foundation Programme (Mr Noel Lavin), Director of Marketing & Public Affairs (Ms Ruqaya Mohsin), Head of International Partnerships (Ms Catherine Hogan), Head of Department of Civil & Architectural (Dr Islam Abohela), various members of academic staff (Dr Raad Kadhum, Dr Mohamed Mahgoub, Dr Mohammed Assiadi and Mr Yoonusraj Kodakkadan, all from Civil & Architectural Engineering; and Ms Dagmara Pluta from General Studies).



The visit was organised as the first Management Meeting for the collaborative Engineering programmes (BEng Architectural Design Engineering and BEng Civil & Construction Engineering) which had their first intake of students this academic year.



The LSBU and ASU teams discussed institutional and national updates; strategic management of the partnership including finances; operational matters including curriculum & documentation; the role of the link tutors and external examiners; registration; management of exam & progression boards; e-resources; student and staff mobility; marketing and communications. Following the lunch break, the LSBU delegates met with Dean of Engineering/ LSBU Link tutor and discussed the quality assurance procedures as related to the Engineering Courses. Subsequent to the discussions, the LSBU delegation had a tour of labs and a demonstration of the SIS system.

Overall, the visit was highly successful and the two teams are looking forward to a mutually-beneficial future as the partnership progresses.

“TIME MANAGEMENT” TRAINING

The Training & Continuing Education Center organised a training session titled “Time Management” on the 12 February 2018. During the session, the attendees from the administrative staff learnt that time management is about managing 3 elements: managing yourself, managing your work and managing your relations. The session aimed to introduce several concepts and techniques to help the attendees regain control of their time and plan for their success.



BAHRAIN NATIONAL CHARTER DAY

On 14 February 2017, the Ministry of Education organized student’s exhibition in celebration of the 17th anniversary of the Bahrain National Charter in the Bahrain National Charter Monument for schools and universities in Bahrain.



The Deanship of Student affairs and the College of Arts and Science participated in the event that was coordinated from ASU by Mr. Thaer and Ms. Hessa, and highly supported by Dr Belal Zaqaibeh the Dean of the College of Arts and Science.



The exhibition was about displaying students’ creative and innovative projects. ASU had 5 projects from the College of Arts and Science. Samah, Reem, Fathia, Jumana, and Wafa are students from the Department of Computer Science and the Department of Design and Art who presented their projects under the supervision and guidance of Dr. Moaiad Khadr, Dr. Ahmad Hasan Dr. Yasser Abbar and Dr. Manaf Jafer. ASU stand was visited by H.E. Dr. Majid bin Ali Al Nuaimi, Minister of Education in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The students were very enthusiastic in presenting and explaining their work.

ASU SPORTS DAY

On 13 February 2018, in synchronizing with the celebration of the Kingdom of Bahrain, ASU organised a sport day in the campus from 12pm to 3pm.



The event consisted of different sports mainly walkathon, volleyball, basketball, table tennis, baby foot, chess and other activities. Staff and students participated in the event where the University President Professor Ghassan insisted that sports is a very important factor in the students and staff daily life, he added that “Healthy mind is in healthy body”.



At the end of the day, the winners of all sports activities have been honoured. Many students and staff enjoyed the sports day as it broke the daily routine.



TEACHING PHILOSOPHY – MOHAMMAD NASSAR

My teaching philosophy wasn't an idea which started with my teaching career in 2010 as a lecturer – rather it was initiated when I was a law student, eager to receiving new methods and ways of teaching. I was against the idea of treating the student as a receiver of information and not giving her/him the chance to participate in discussions. In other words, I felt that converting the traditional lecture into a more interactive learning session using a variety of methods is the right approach to encourage discussions in a course.

Most of the modules that are taught in the Faculty of Law are theoretical and require an enormous effort from the lecturer to convey legal ideas to students, so they understand and absorb the subject. Moreover, the lecturer needs to create an appropriate atmosphere within and outside the class to turn ideas into easy material for understanding. More importantly, the lecturer needs to make students understand, intellectually and emotionally, that human lives are based on law and that it is important to implement its principles in the right way so that the actions they take as individuals are recognised by others.

I recognized during my five years as a lecturer that we can summarize the result of teaching effectiveness by examining three important elements: firstly, to assist in positive learning, secondly, to motivate the student's enthusiasm for learning; finally to provide a strong foundation for lifelong learning. I trust that students have something that they can bring to their own education, so as their teacher I have to support them to express themselves and display their individuality.

The aim is not to make the student active only inside the class room and during the lecture, but also before and after. I feel that it is better for a lecturer to start the lecture with students who have a little background knowledge than to have to explain everything to students who are not familiar with the subject at all. Thus, I feel we need to use different methods, especially to encourage students to prepare and make this preparation easier. Methods of doing this would include uploading the next lecture's content on Moodle, or giving students the name of sources they can read in books, articles or on the internet.

Just as it is important to cover “before class”, it is even more important to think about “after class”. The teacher needs to ensure that lecture information is delivered in a way that helps students to remember it for a quiz, exam or any other circumstances.

One useful method is to make a group of students work on preparing a presentation on a given subject; another method is to make online games, discussions or chats. Both of these are approaches that are very different from a typical lecture format.

A significant factor that can affect the success of any module and its lectures, is the way of presenting it. The teacher (at any academic level) must understand that they are dealing with individuals whose level of understanding of the subject is not the same as their own. Consequently, in some circumstances the teacher try to think of the subject from the students' perspective and level of knowledge in order to decide how best to present the higher level knowledge in a way that will encourage students to reach the understanding and knowledge aimed for in the module's intended learning outcomes.

Teaching is a noble task, and only those who love it and understand its importance to society will be fully successful. The building and advancement of civilization cannot happen without a strong culture and this strong culture can only be based on good learners.

REMINDER OF THE WEEK

- SER Institutional Accreditation Report, End of February 2018
- Program Review Visits for Arts and Science, 11 March 2018
- Health Day: Tuesday, 20 February 2018



QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“I place an enormous premium on loyalty. If someone betrays me, I can forgive them rationally, but emotionally I have found it impossible to do so.”

Richard E. Grant

