

# PRESIDENT'S NEWS DIGEST

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CONTACT US



Office No: (+973) 16036161

Email: [tania.kashou@asu.edu.bh](mailto:tania.kashou@asu.edu.bh)

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the 26th issue of the 2nd year of the President's News Digest.



I would like to start this edition by addressing the subject of conducting good quality research which will feed into our students' learning experience through an up to date research informed curriculum. It is widely known that institutions that are research informed have better reputations and can achieve more when it comes to professional accreditation and positioning in international league tables. Producing good quality publications, especially refereed journals, will help in academic career promotions, raising the University's profile, and informing our curriculum. Research is what makes a difference in any University. It will help us to address pedagogical issues, teaching and learning approaches, and the use of technology to develop solutions that help the community at large. Every academic staff has been given a workload to conduct research and we should be using this time sensibly to carry out research that is relevant and timely.

Last week, the President attended the 4th Arab European Higher Education Conference in Rabat. Many European and Arab Universities Presidents gathered in Morocco to discuss important issues related to collaborative research and education. The President of ASU presented a paper on "Doctoral Education: Challenges and Opportunities". The presentation covered important issues related to doctoral education including the importance of methodological approaches, quality of supervision, data collection and analysis, and writing up of a thesis. The main focus of the conference was on doctoral education, creating sustainable research, impact and community engagement, and the role of universities in addressing issues related to sustainability. Publishing in open access journals was also addressed and a discussion took place about making sure that these open access journals are of high quality.



Before his visit to Rabat, the President spent the Week End preceding the conference at Alain University of Science and Technology in the UAE and met their President, Prof Ghaleb El Rifaie. The discussion centered about updating the bylaws of the Association of Arab Universities and opportunities for us to work together.



On Sunday, 23 April and under the patronage of Professor Waheeb Alkhaja, Chairman of Board of Trustees, the Deanship of Research and Graduate Studies in cooperation with the College of Law organised the Annual Distinguished Seminar (ADS). The ADS seminar series aim to increase the exposure of staff to national and international research. This year, the speaker of the ADS was a world-leading scholar who helped in defining the research agenda in his field and continued to shape its development. Being top researcher, the impact of his development and innovation can be seen in



industries and governments and policies. Professor Mohammad Hammouri is one of the Arab World leading researchers and an expert in commercial, political and constitutional law who has been nominated by the College of Law to be the ASU 2017 distinguished researcher. Professor Hammouri graduated from Cambridge University in the UK and the Federal Judicial Institute, Washington, USA. He was the founder and the Dean of the first College of Law in Jordan and held the positions of Minister of Higher Education and Minister of Culture in Jordan. The title of the seminar was “The Origins of Constitutional Thought in Contemporary Democratic Regimes”. Professor Hammouri presented the origins of democratic regimes and political parties in the UK and Europe and how a constitution is originated and established. The seminar was attended by ASU faculty members and students and invitees from other universities and organizations and included stimulating interactive discussions with the speaker. I would like to thank Prof Waheeb for his patronage and Prof Siddeeq and Dr Khaldoon and colleagues from College of Law for the excellent efforts in attracting an outstanding individual to our University.



## INTERVIEW OF THE WEEK

We would like to feature the interview this week with:



**Name:** Maryam Ali Abdulla

**Position:** Office Manager for the Quality and Accreditation Centre (QAAC)

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

I was born in Manama, but raised in Hamad Town. I have 3 siblings (1 sister and 2 brothers). I am married and have 2 amazing kids, ‘Abdulla’ who is almost 4 years old and ‘Ali’ who is 6 months old.

My parents worked hard to raise us right and enrolled us in the Indian School. Even though it was extremely tough, it turned out to be one of the best decisions they made. Because of their guidance and strong foundation, I have become the person I am today.

All through high school I was fond of numbers (when I used to tell my friends about it, they looked at me in a weird way) and thus became interested in accounting and finance. As a result I earned my Bachelor Degree in Banking and Finance from the University of Bahrain in 2011.

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

I have joined ASU in 2013 as an Admin in the Deanship of Admissions and Registration. I was then moved to work as an Admin Officer in the Vice Presidents’ Office and finally, I am the Office Manager of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Centre.

On Tuesday 25 April evening, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Professor Saad and Dr Faiza attended Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II birthday's celebration hosted by HE the British Ambassador to Bahrain.

I would like to conclude this edition by reminding academic colleagues to submit abstracts to our sustainable futures conference that will be held in November. The deadline of 10 May 2017 is very strict.

## ANNUAL MASTER-CLASS 2017

On Monday, 24 April, the Deanship of Research and Graduate Studies organised the Annual Master Class. This master class is part of the strategic objective and operational plan that



aim to increase exposure of staff to national and international research communities. The aim of these master-classes is to encourage collaboration at an international level.



The 2017 annual master class was arranged for researchers from the College of Law and the Department of Political Science to meet with the distinguished guest Professor Mohammad Hammouri whose

research interests and experiences suit the members of these faculties. The master class was also attended by Dr. Assem, the VP for Academic Affairs and Development, Professor Siddeeq Ameen, Dean of Research and Graduate Studies and the Dean of the College of Law, Dr. Khaldoun Qtaishat as well as Dr. Ziad Zurigat, Dean of the College of Administrative Sciences.

The following topics were covered:

- PhD research and practice at Cambridge University, UK. How political systems and regimes select their consultants from Cambridge PhD graduates.
- Less useful horizontal research versus efficient deep research and upwards to actual present state with a clear horizon in panorama form.
- The relationship between constitutional law research and political sciences.
- How European committee researchers benefited from Islamic Waqf.

I definitely love what I do right now, and seem to fit in just fine. I can see myself growing in this area and contributing more towards the Quality Management of ASU.

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

ASU has definitely contributed in making me the person I am today. I realised that I could do things I didn't think I could do before. ASU raised my confidence and is challenging me on a daily basis to become better in what I do. I would like to repay ASU by being part of it for a long time. I wish nothing but continuous success to ASU.

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

I enjoy that I am able to contribute to the quality management of the University. I also enjoy the fact that I have to look at what leading institutions do and think of ways to make ASU better in many departments, this helps me in attaining knowledge of best practices locally, regionally and internationally.

### 5. Tell us about your hobbies

Due to the lack of time I have right now in my life, I'm afraid my hobbies are non-existent. But I enjoy reading and researching topics that interest me.

### 6. Tell us about your favourite food.

My favourite food is pasta, which is one of the worst for one's health, I know. But what to do, it's my guilty pleasure.



- The importance of researchers, specifically in politics and law sciences to be unbiased and to avoid emotional or any form of unpleasant outcome for the country or regimes.
- Deep research in commercial law is difficult.
- The relationship between sea ports and commercial laws and the relationship between constitutional law and finance and trade. Research should be a continuous process for any faculty member and should not be halted even after the award of professorship.
- The importance of international law specialists worldwide.
- Research need to be investigated in the failure of presidential systems and the conflict between religious and political leaders.

## ASU HOLDS AN AWARENESS SESSION ABOUT ISO 9001:2015

Under the patronage of Dr. Mohammed Yousif, Vice President for Administration, Finance and Community Engagement, ASU has organised an awareness session about the ISO 9001:2015 standards delivered by RICCI (Resource Inspections Canada Incorporated). The attendees were the heads of units, directorates and deanships that will participate in the university's efforts to obtain the ISO 9001:2015 certification.



The session consisted of 2 parts: the first part was delivered by Mr. Tariq Al Hussaini, a veteran expert in quality management systems, and it focused on the concepts of the international standards. In fact, the reason behind adopting such standards is to check the SAE of the organization's system: Suitability, Adequacy and Effectiveness. Ultimately, the standards aspire to achieve 2 business objectives: consistency (of operations and quality), and customer satisfaction (students, in our case). The second part was delivered by Mr. Asem Nazir, senior consultant at RICCI, and it focused more on the requirements of the international standards. Thus, the second part was more practical and it helped the attendees better understand what would be required from them going forward.

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

The only books I read and have time for are my MBA books, which currently are International Finance, Islamic Financial Markets and Institutions and Financial Analysis and Valuation

### 8. Final words

Thank you so much for having me.

It is truly an honour to be featured in this News Digest.

### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Great people have great values and great ethics.”

**Jeffrey Gitomer**

TAKE THE  
DAY OFF!  
Happy Labor  
Day!



After the training session, Mr. Asem Nazir had a brief session with Mr. Hatem, Head of Internal Audit Unit and Mr. Yasser Abuseneh, Head of Administrative Training, to agree on a course of action for the upcoming steps of the consultancy provided by RICCI leading to the ISO 9001:2015 certification.

## THE BRITISH EMBASSY CELEBRATES THE 91ST BIRTHDAY OF HER MAJESTY

Over 500 guests joined the British Embassy in Bahrain in celebrating the 91st birthday of Queen Elizabeth II at a garden party hosted by British Ambassador Simon Martin, and his wife Sophie Martin. HH Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa was the guest of honour, representing His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. Prof Waheeb AlKhaja, President of BoT, Prof Saad Darwish and Dr Faiza Zitouni were invited for the celebration on 25 April 2017. ASU was well presented and had the chance to meet distinguished guests and colleagues from other universities.



## EXAMS MODERATION

During his visit to Jordan during the period 9-13 April 2017 to moderate the questions of the final exams of the College of Arts and Science, Dr. Moaiad Khder, Head of Computer Science Department, met with Dr. Qasim Kharma, Head of Computer Science Department and Dr. Rana Al-Matarneh, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture and Design where they praised the final exam questions moderation process and the high level of quality assurance reached by Applied Science University in the Kingdom of Bahrain.



## A LECTURE TO STUDENTS IN THE POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

On Thursday 13 April 2017, the Political Science Department received the Ambassador Sameer Al-Darabeea, the Director of the UNO Information Centre in Manama. The visitor delivered a lecture related to the UN activities in the region to the students of the International Organization course. He also explained the difficult situation in some countries that have been living under the chaos of civil wars. The visit reflected positive impact on students' academic learning and students were able to understand the relationship between theory and practice in the International Organization functions.



## “CYBER SECURITY IN THE CLOUD” WORKSHOP

Dr. Moaiad Khder, Acting Head of Computer Science Department, attended a workshop on cyber security titled: "Cyber Security in the Cloud" for three days from 25 to 27 April. The workshop was held at the Royal University for Women (RUW) in corporation with West Virginia University. The workshop was led by two professors and one associate researcher from West Virginia University where it covered the main concepts of cloud computing architecture and services, cyber security, and awareness of the security.



## PRIVATE SCHOOLS VISIT

Mr. A. Hameed and Ms. Edyta from Directorate of Marketing and Public Affairs visited 30 private and international schools for promoting the University's new Engineering Programmes with LSBU and Business Programmes with Cardiff Met. Principals and college counselors expressed their interest towards the programmes and promised to arrange meetings with their students to give a talk about those programmes.



## ASU A SILVER SPONSOR FOR YOUNG LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

On 22 April, ASU sponsored the Young Leadership Conference (YLC) at Al-Hekma International School. Mr. A. Hameed Baqi from the Directorate of Marketing and Public Affairs represented the University who talked to more than 200 students from 4 different schools about the new launched programmes with LSBU and Cardiff Met. The New British Programmes received a great feedback followed by lots of enquiries from the students. The School's event organizers were very pleased with ASU sponsorship and expressed their satisfaction about the outcome of the event.



## HONORING CEREMONY THE 3RD NATIONAL SKILLS COMPETITION

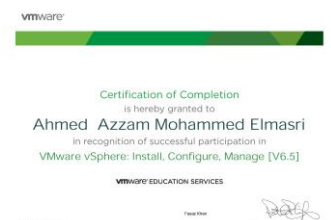
Under the patronage of the Undersecretary for General and Technical Education in Ministry of Education, Mrs. Latifa Albonodha, the National Skills Committee organised on Tuesday 25 April an Honoring Ceremony for organizers, experts and volunteers/ participants who played a major role in the success of the competition over five days. During the event, Mrs. Latifa honored a number of the University staff from Marketing and Public Affairs and students who participated in organizing the competition. She acknowledged ASU for their support and hosting the 2 day event. She also



thanked Chairman of the Board of Trustees, the President of ASU, the academic staff from the College of Arts and Science, Directorate of Marketing and Public Affairs, and members of the Volunteer Club of the University. Mrs. Ruqaya Mohsin, Director of Marketing and Public Affairs and member in the National Skills Committee honored ASU staff and students including Mr. Baha Karaimeh, Mr. Abdulhameed Baqi, and Mr. Mustafa Mohamed, from the Directorate of Marketing and Public Affairs.

## DR AHMED AZZAM RECEIVES CERTIFICATE

Dr Ahmed Azzam received a certificate in recognition of successful participation in VMware vSphere: Install, Configure, Manage (V6.5).





## POLICY OF THE WEEK

External examination is a process for ensuring the quality and standards of academic awards, and appointment and approval of External Examiners. **The purpose of External Examining is to:**

- Assist the University in **benchmarking the academic standards** of its awards across the HE sector in Bahrain, regionally and internationally
- Ensure that assessments and the criteria used are valid and reliable and are set at an appropriate level to allow students to demonstrate the knowledge, understanding, intellectual or practical skills defined in the learning outcomes for each course
- Verify that standards are appropriate for the award or courses
- Ensure that the assessments and the assessment process is equitable and fair in the marking, grading and classification of student performance, and that decisions are made in accordance with University Bylaws
- Report on standards of student achievement and identify examples good practice and areas for enhancement
- Judge the level and appropriateness of the instruments of assessment and the learning exhibited by students.
- The policy includes two roles namely: the Course External Examiner (CEE) and the Programme External Examiner (PEC). External Examiners are formally appointed by the University and must be academics who are experts within the discipline and have sufficient breadth and depth of the subjects offered on the programme.
- The role of the Course Examiner is to assure the University that the general standard of the assessment instruments and grading criteria within a particular course(s) is satisfactory and comparable to assessment methods offered at the appropriate level by other Higher Education institutions. CEE will be required to indicate whether the standards of the assessment for the courses are appropriate, commenting on learning outcomes, level descriptors, and marking criteria.
- If an external examiner requires an amendment to any assessment the course coordinator must respond to the examiner to assure him the recommendations have been implemented or provide valid reasons for not making the suggested change.
- The programme external examiner is responsible to provide a comprehensive review of the operation of the programme and in particular to comment on assessment practices and the standards of assessed work, content organisation and management of the programme, and quality assurance and enhancement arrangements.
- The programme External Examiner is required to provide a written report to assure the comparability of the University's awards. It will address the following:
  - Extent to which standards are appropriate for the qualification and comparable with similar programmes in Bahrain and other institutions, regionally and internationally;
  - The currency and relevance of the content of the programme;
  - Extent to which processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards is sound and fairly conducted;
  - Strengths and weaknesses of the programme;
  - Future enhancement in terms of curriculum, teaching, assessment and resources;
  - The appropriateness of assessing the learning outcomes of the programme, the reliability of internal marking procedures and the effectiveness of the College's moderation process;
  - Extent to which students achieve the graduate attributes which the programme seeks to develop;
  - The comparability of standards across collaborative partnerships.
- Programme and Course external examiners submit their reports to **VP Academic Affairs and QAAC**. QAAC must check and acknowledge receipt of reports and forward a copy to College Dean/Vice Dean, for onward transmission to Programme/Course Teams within 5 working days of receipt, for programme team to provide a forward action plan for the academic year to address any concerns raised and thus closing the loop.

The QAAC will report to the University Council, issues identified by the Programme External Examiners' Review Reports and in particular comment on procedural compliance, identify areas of common concern which may affect standards, and also highlight areas of good practice.

- Colleges are responsible for the organisation of visits, and for making all relevant documentation available prior and during the visit of external examiners and ensuring the availability of academic staff and QAAC contribution when needed.

## REMINER OF THE WEEK

### THE INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

#### AREA 4: Research, Scholarship and Innovation (2 Standards)



12. The institution must demonstrate a commitment to research and provide adequate and appropriate facilities to promote research (4 KIIs)

12.1. The promotion and facilitation of research must be a central feature of the institution's overall strategic aims.

12.2. The interaction between research, scholarly activity and education must be reflected in the curriculum, inform current teaching, and encourage and prepare students for engagement in research, scholarship and innovative development.

12.3. There must be policies which identify the priorities, facilities and development in research and commercialization.

12.4. Incentives must be provided for the academic staff and the departments to conduct research.

13. The institution must encourage and support its staff to undertake research and scholarly activities and to engage in other professional activities (8 KIIs)

13.1. The institution must have well-defined policies and procedures for the undertaking of academic research and these are communicated effectively to all relevant stakeholders.

13.2. The research strategy of the institution must be in line with national priorities.

13.3. Teachers must be encouraged and supported to undertake research in relevant fields and to publish their findings.

13.4. The institution must maintain a catalogue of up-to-date staff publications which are published on the website.

13.5. Academic staff contracts must require academic staff to engage in research and scholarly activities relevant to their teaching and other duties.

13.6. Appointment and promotion criteria and faculty performance evaluations must reflect the institution's expectations for faculty research and scholarly activity.

13.7. There must be a fair and transparent procedure for staff to seek financial support for their research and other professional development activities.

13.8. The institution must provide time for staff to meet regularly to share and discuss current research activities and, if appropriate, invite external speakers.





*Happy Reading*

