President's News Digest

ASU
جامعة العلوم التطبيقية
APPLIED SCIENCE UNIVERSITY
معتمدة من مجلس التعليم العالي
Accredited by the Higher Education Council

Message From the Editor

Welcome to the 6th issue of the 5th volume of the President's News Digest.

In this issue Dr. Ayman AlDmour will address the subject of "How Artificial Intelligence would shape the future of universities?".

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Mrs.Hessa Al Meraisi
Manager of President's Office

Message from a Colleague
How Artificial Intelligence would shape the future of universities?

Introduction

Amid the opening of Parliament's second session of the Fifth Legislative Term, on 13th of October 2019, HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa delivered a notable speech in which he emphasized the escalating importance of implementing Artificial Intelligence (AI) "to ensure that we are fully prepared to meet the needs of the digital economy…" (BNA, 2019). Chief Executive of Information & eGovernment Authority (iGA), Mohammed Ali AlQaed said that "His Majesty speech was a roadmap for iGA going forward…" He added that "the application of AI technologies is among the priorities of the eGovernment program in the upcoming phase and the development process is continuing." (BNA, 2019).

In the scope of such endeavors, it is worth to highlight the huge impact expected to be brought about by AI on higher education in a variety of ways in the future. Below are several ways through which AI will impact the future of Universities:

AI-Powered Tutoring

There have always been great tutors, but if there was a tutor who is error-free, does not forget and whose content is unbiased it would be even greater. In fact, scientists are already working on developing AI tutors, and prototypes are currently being tested. AI would make virtual learning more interesting, since students would be able to interact in virtual lecture sessions using AI-powered systems. Another benefit of AI regarding tutoring is the ability to multitask, which is a major feature of computing systems. This implies that an AI-powered tutor will be able to take a class collectively and offer students help in independent levels concurrently.

Enhancement of Performance Evaluation

Evaluating performance would get much better with AI. AI combines other technologies such as Machine Learning, Big Data, analytics, Deep Learning, Artificial Neural Networks, and more. Algorithms borrowed from these technologies have outstanding benefits to AI. AI could make the work of instructors much easier by conducting seamless performance evaluations automatically. Once AI-powered tutoring is combined with AI systems' automatic performance evaluation and considering the fact that AI would provide students of all stages with feedback, then the whole learning process will be automated.

Dr. Ayman Abed-Alhamid Salem Al-Dmour

Acting Dean of the college of Arts and Science

Professor Ayman Al-Dmour is the Acting Dean of the College of Arts and Science at ASU. In 2006, he received his PhD degree in Computer Information Systems from the Arab Academy for Banking and Financial Sciences, Amman, Jordan. His career milestones include; working as a Telecom Engineer at Orange Jordan (1996 – 2006), leading the Department of Computer Information Systems, the Computer and Information Technology Center and the College of Information Technology at Al-Hussein Bin Talal University (AHU) (2006 – 2016), and working as President Consultant for Scientific Affairs (acting as Vice President for Academic Affairs) and President's Assistant for Central Bids at AHU (2016 – 2018). His research interests are in Arabic language processing, data compression and computer education.

Improving Education Quality

Admittedly, the higher education business is highly competitive, where universities aim to provide best graduates with the most outstanding academic achievements. Institutions will be able to use AI to gain a competitive advantage over others. This will be facilitated by having improved ways of educating and assessing students, helping the school get in touch with students in a better way, and customizing learning experiences for all students. Customizing students' learning experiences will be supported by the fact that AI will be able to interact with students individually and collectively. An instructor can only deal with one student at a time, which consumes a lot of time to resolve issues faced by students.

Creating a Better Learning Experience

This can be achieved by creating a more comprehensive yet simple learning environment that will accommodate everybody. AI can equip academic program directors with better tools to evaluate courses and ensure that they have courses that accommodate students depending on their performances. Also, it may influence course selection for students. Technically, AI continues to advance in logical "thinking" which would give students the chance to experience more realistic and logical learning from the machines. The logic behind machines is purely based on algorithms and data, which has a minimal chance of giving biased output.

Sources:

BNA. (2019, October 13). HM King opens second session of 5th Legislative Term. *Https://Www.Bna.Bh/En/*. Retrieved from https://www.bna.bh/en/HMKingopenssecondsessionof5thLegislativeTerm.aspx?cms=q8FmFJgiscL2fwIzON1%2BDnPyGy%2FzC%2BrQlxqVtgB48bs%3D

BNA. (2019, October 15). Artificial Intelligence is among the priorities of eGovernment Program- AlQaed. *Https://Www.Bna.Bh/En/*. Retrieved from https://www.bna.bh/en/news?cms=q8FmFJgiscL2fwIzON1%2BDmmgoaP%2FN%2BqcKVaRkmeJ6jY%3D

Meeting of Dr Abdul Ghani AlShuwaikh, Secretary General of the Higher Education Council with Private Universities Presidents

On the 3rd of December, the President attended a meeting Dr Abdul Ghani AlShuwaikh, Secretary General of the HEC has held with all the Universities Presidents of private universities. The following items were discussed:

Written by
Professor Ghassan Aouad
The President of Applied Science University

1 New specialties offered by the institutions and their compatibility with the requirements of the market

It is important to develop new programmes to meet market demand and to undertake frequent reviews of academic programmes in line with marked needs. The following points were highlighted during the meeting:

- Industrial revolution, industry 4.0 and the opportunities it can offer
- Soft skills, teamwork, and leadership skills are essential for universities graduates
- Quick responses from the HEC regarding staff requirements, the 45 days new rules which can help in resourcing new and existing programmes
- Importance of STEM subjects
- Scholarships to support new subjects
- Thinking beyond Bahrain
- Postgraduate education
- National strategy
- Graduate mobility, working outside Bahrain
- Competition between universities in the region
- Humanities subject still represent the largest part, 70% and more

- Importance of institutional accreditation, 12 institutions are covered or are in the process of being accredited
- Council of Representatives addressing issues related to curriculum and skills
- Empowering students with future skills
- Entrepreneurship and its importance
- New plans for new disciplines and study plans
- 11 universities are hosting programmes from UK and USA, benefits from these universities should be beyond teaching
- Internships of 3, 6 or 9 credits
- Internships Units
- Full year internship by some universities, a degree with industrial experience
- Professional certificates
- One year industrial training
- 2 internships in some universities, 300 hours
- History of internships in universities and to make it consistent
- Bylaws for internships is being developed in order to make it consistent and to help in identifying market needs, some disciplines like medicine may need specific requirements, the bylaws will become available soon after approval by the HEC
- Work with students in high schools for new interests in academic subjects, 6 months internships but preparing the minds for the market place
- Career advice for students in high schools

2.Inclusion of AI in academic disciplines

- Report to HEC about AI in the curriculum is due (Prof Khaled already prepared a response)
- Awareness about AI in each discipline
- AI research and conferences

3.Scientific Research

- Secretarial General: many efforts related to the national strategy, workshops for research governance, embracing STEM through working with high schools, facilitating the task of 300 researchers, 400 Masters Viva, workshops for Bachelor students to understand research.
- The impact of the national strategy on the University's research
- 3% of income on research
- 2% of income on academic staff development
- Research priorities, each University champions one area.
- Postgraduate bylaws will become available soon.

Other Issues discussed

- Skills and their importance in the market place
- Human Rights Subject, compulsory for Bachelor Degrees, information was sent by the HEC, unified book and assessment
- Human rights exhibition by one university

Incorporating Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education

Artificial intelligence has been penetrating all aspects of our lives. From smart translators and internet search engines to smart solutions to administrative tasks to very sophisticated robots, AI has been and will provide more solutions that will change our lives and the way we think of our personal habits, work, shopping, communication, environment and education. In a recent speech of his majesty King Hamad bin Issa, he emphasized the importance of keeping Bahrain at the forefront of latest technologies and directed the government to explore possible AI solutions to the various aspects of life.

Therefore it has become a necessity to introduce the sciences of artificial intelligence science and applications in the curricula of higher education and enable students to have theoretical and practical knowledge in the principles and applications of artificial intelligence in order to fill the gap between education and the needs of the labor market, which will rely heavily on the applications of artificial intelligence in all areas of industry. Recent studies showed that the applications of artificial intelligence have begun to be used in administrative systems, accounting systems, health care, various engineering applications, agriculture, education, arts, literature, military and other fields.

Written by
Professor Khaled M. Gharaibeh
President's Senior Advisor for Academic Affairs and Development and Acting VP for Academic Affairs and Development

In our ICTTEE Conference this year on innovation, technology, enterprise and entrepreneurship, a number of researchers have addressed various applications of AI. One of these papers was submitted by the author of this article and focused on the applications of AI in addressing **environmental** problems in Bahrain including waste water management, detection of oil spills, protection of marine life and protection of ground water. Other papers addressed the applications of AI in building information modelling and construction management.

We at ASU and as a leading university in the Kingdom need to be up to date with what is going on in the world and also contribute to the national priorities of the kingdom. For that, ASU should plan to include AI in all our study programs and curricula, teaching method and educational management systems in order to make our graduates lead the future developments in the kingdom which has been set by his majesty and the government. Possible contributions to this initiative could be through the following:

- Direct faculty members to conduct research in the field of artificial intelligence
- Direct the Distinguished Seminar Series Program which is implanted by the Deanship of Scientific Research to topics related to artificial intelligence.
- Develop bachelor program in artificial intelligence under the Computer Science Department
- Develop and implement an obligatory course on AI to be taught to all disciplines with applications that suits each discipline. This should not be limited to scientific disciplines but should be taught to also literary disciplines such as law, management ant arts.
- Explore the possibility of using artificial intelligence in the teaching and learning processes through using systems that support Smart Content (such as CRAM 101 JUSTTHEFACT101 NETEX Learning systems), Smart Learning Systems), Virtual teacher systems and learning environments.
- Develop our IT systems to incorporate AI in Quality management system, Decision Support System, HR system, financial systems, admission and registration system and foremost our electronic student support systems.

This article tries to trigger thoughts on the subject matter and the author would like to encourage ASU staff to provide their feedback on how to introduce AI in our curricula and academic and administrative processes by a follow up article in the upcoming PND.

Quality Assurance and Accreditation Centre Conducted a Workshop Titled " Benchmarking"

Based on the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Centre operational plan and as a measure of continuous improvement and knowledge sharing , The Quality Assurance and Accreditation administrative affairs unit conducted a workshop on Benchmarking. The workshop was delivered by Dr. Nympha Joseph, Head of QAA administrative affairs unit and Mr. Salem Alateyyat, Assistant Director . A special Thanks goes to Prof Hilal AlBayati the Director, Quality Assurance and Accreditation Centre for his continuous support and guidance.

The workshop was conducted for the College of Law and College of Administrative Sciences , even though the workshop was open to all , the targeted audience were the Programme leaders, HOD's , and Vice Deans.

The QAAC is now looking forward to conduct the same workshop with the other two colleges.

Written by
Dr. Joseph Nympha Rita
Head of QAA Adminstrative Affairs Unit and Academic Staff in Department of Accounting and Finance
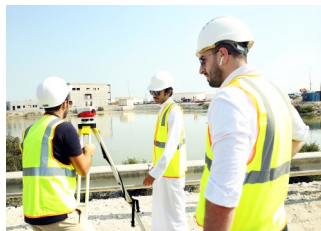

Surveying Course Work Project

On Thursday 14 November, the Civil Engineering Students enrolled in Surveying and Structures 1 subject instructed by Dr. Hamdy Mohamed, where they worked on their surveying project under the supervision of Engineer Mohammed Salameh (the engineering laboratory supervisor).

The project of the surveying subject was performed using the level machine, compass and types of meters whereby students conducted an on-site surveying for the University campus and car parking followed by an Auto Cad drawing**.**

Accordingly, the students achieved the course learning objectives by complementing the theoretical knowledge with the practical aspect.

Written by
Eng. Mohammad Salameh
Laboratory Supervisor in Department of Civil and Architectural Engineering

The Deanship of Student Affairs organized in cooperation with Injaz Bahrain the Program entitled "Heads Start: BOOSTING YOUR EMPLOYABILITY"

The Career Development and Alumni Affairs Office at the Deanship of Student Affairs organized a program entitled "Heads Start: BOOSTING YOUR EMPLOYABILITY" in coordination with Injaz Bahrain for ASU recent graduates and students who are expected to graduate.

The program was presented by the senior civil engineer at GPIC Ms. Reem Aloteabi. The program focuses on the best strategies to be followed to boost the graduates' employability. Ms. Reem presented the strategies for writing professional resumes and strong cover letters. She also emphasized on the ways to prepare for a job interview including self-presentation, handling interview questions, demonstrating appropriate behaviors, skills and relevant past experiences. Furthermore, she identified the steps involved in preparing for an internship and ways to locate and secure a suitable internship.

Written by
Ms. Rawan Bucheeri
Administrator in Student Services Office

An Introductory meeting of Student Council for its 13th cycle with ASU's Senior Management
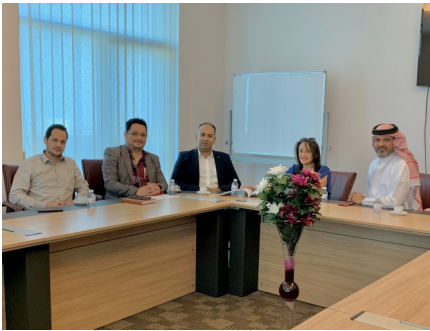
On 3rd December 2019, the newly elected student council members for its 13th cycle had the first introductory meeting with the Senior Management chaired by Professor Ghassan Aouad, the President of the university.

The meeting started by officially introducing the members of student's council to the senior management. Prof. Ghassan expressed his optimism toward the new elected student's council and their upcoming achievements. The President of the university and the other senior management members stressed on their full support to the students to fulfil their needs to assure a successful educational journey for ASU students.

Written by
Ms. Rawan Bucheeri
Administrator in Student Services Office

Royal Charity Organization Visited ASU

On Sunday the 1st of December 2019, the Community Engagement Office at Applied Science University represented by Dr. Mohammad Alaa Al-Hamami, Manager of the Office received a delegation from the Royal Charity Organisation, which included Mr. Alaa Yousef Boudlama Head of Programs and Activities and Ms. Tuqa Hani El Sayed Charity & Humanitarian Projects Specialist. A meeting was held with the presence of Dr. Mohamed Soltan Acting Head of Department of Design & Arts, Mr. Mohammad Azzam Manager of the VP Office for Administration, Finance and Community Engagement to discuss the future events that are hoped to be held and which is the culmination of the memorandum of understanding signed between Applied Science University and the Royal Charity Organization.

Written by
Dr. Mohammed Al-Hamami
Office Manager of Community Engagement

Al Eker Charitable Society Visited ASU

On Thursday the 5th of December 2019, Applied Science University hosted a delegation from Al Eker Charitable Society represented by the Chairman Mr. Ahmed Arafat, and Mr. Mohammed Al-Mughni, Head of Public Relations Committee.

The visiting delegation held a meeting to discuss ways of cooperation between the two parties in the areas of community Engagement. The meeting was attended by Mr. Abdulla Al-Khaja, Director of Administration and Finance Directorate and President Advisor for Follow-up Affairs, Dr. Mohammad Alaa Al-Hamami, Manager of the Community Engagement Office, Mr. Mohammed Al-Najjar, Manager of the Student Services Office at the Deanship of Student Affairs, Mr. Mohammad Nassar, Assistant Director of Admin and Finance Directorate, and Mr. Hood Sadiq, Administrative Staff at the Deanship of Student Affairs.

Written by
Dr. Mohammed Al-Hamami
Office Manager of Community Engagement

Visiting the Majlis of HRH the Crown Prince

On Wednesday 4 of December, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees , the President , the VP for Administration, Finance and Community Engagement , the Acting VP for Affaires and Development, and the Advisor to the President for Follow up Affairs visited the Majlis of the Crown Prince HRH Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

Written by
Mr Abdulla W. Al Khaja
Director of the Administration and Finance Directorate and the President Advisor for Follow Up Affairs

Congratulations Bahrain for Winning Khaliji 24

Alf Mabrouk Bahrain for winning Khaliji 24, the first time in 50 years, and a well deserved win.

"A dream that came true "

Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education Fourth Regional Conference

On the 12 of November to 14 of November the President attended the Fourth Regional Conference of the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education held in Rabat, Morocco. Two workshops were included in this conference: Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions and External Review: Site Visit Preparations. The Conference titled "Quality Assurance of Higher Education in the Age of Digitisation" was chaired by the late Professor Badr Abou Aloula (May God bless his soul and send him to heaven) and attended by many heads of quality assurance agencies in the Arab World. The conference addressed future directions of quality assurance systems and how ICT can help enhancing these systems. The President presented a paper on:

"A Quality Assurance and Management Information System: the Applied Science University Bahrain (ASU) Experience", written by
the President, Mr Hatem Dammak, Dr Mohammed Yousif, and Mr Abdulla Al Khaja. The Abstract of this paper is included below:

"Quality is a process of ensuring that the highest standards are achieved, and it should be embedded in the culture, values and daily practices of any university and Applied Science University (ASU) is no exception. This is measured by the satisfaction of various stakeholders including, students and their parents, staff, alumni, regulatory bodies and employers. In order to promote a quality culture, ASU is developing an information system in order to help dealing with quality issues. This paper presents the fundamentals of such a quality management information system being developed. The system documents in the form of data and process models the various quality management requirements.

It is unfortunate that Professor Badr passed away 2 weeks after the conference. Professor Waheeb Al Khaja, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and the President expressed their condolences to our colleagues at the BQA and the community at large.

Prof Badr Abou Aloula who led the recent BQA IR of ASU was a true scholar and a real asset to academia, especially in the areas of quality assurance and accreditation, in the UAE and the Arab World and beyond. May God bless his soul and send him to heaven. He will be deeply missed.

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Written by
Professor Ghassan Aouad
The President of Applied Science University

Interview with Alumnus

ASU Alumni Club

Name:	Mohamed Hasan Janahi
Workplace:	Zamil Group
Academic Degree	Bachelor
Academic Major	Bachelor in Accounting and Finance
Tell us about your Experience at ASU in terms of learning environment and teaching methods.	ASU is one of the best universities in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The educational environment at the university is suitable for all students. Advanced teaching methods are adopted that help students and encourage them to attend classes and achieve progress.
What did you enjoy the most about your experience at ASU?	The most I enjoyed at ASU is the atmosphere which encouraged me to be a member at the students' council for its 12th cycle. In order to return the favour to my university, I am now the deputy of the head of the Alumni Club Council for its 4th cycle.
Tell us a success story inspired by ASU.	The main reason for my success at the university is because I had joined the volunteers club. Through the activities of the club, I acquired many skills that enhanced my career professional development.
In your Opinion, What are the Improvement areas you would like to see at ASU in the future?	ASU is improving day after day as the developments are achieved on time.
Final words	The university provides all possible opportunities for its students to participate in events and activities. The happiest years of my life were those I spent at the university. My best appreciations and thanks to Mr. Mohamed Najjar, the manager of student activities office. We all consider him our big brother because he does not hesitate to offer all the possible guidance and help.

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

College of Law Administrative staff orgnised Bahrain National Day Celebration for their college

Today on December 8th, the Administrative staff of the college of Law organised a small scalr Bahrain National Day Celebration for its staff in presence of the President of ASU, Professor Ghassan Aouad and the top management team .

A Special thanks goes to Professor Jafar Elmughrabi , Acting Dean of the college of Law for his continuous support and all of my colleagues who helped me in organising and decorating.

Written by
Ms. Fatima Janahi
Office Manager

Quote of the Week

"The thing that's going to make artificial intelligence so powerful is its ability to learn, and the way AI learns is to look at human culture".

- Dan Brown