

President's News Digest

Message From the Editor

Welcome to the 34th issue of the 5th volume of the President's News Digest.

In this issue **Dr. Ahmad Shatat**, Head of Department of **Management Information System** will address the subject of **"The Importance of 'online mode' Take-Home Exam In times of crisis (Covid-19)"**

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Mrs. Hessa Al Meraisi
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من روائع الشعر العربي

Message from the President QS Achievement and Reflections

It is great news that we have achieved the ranking of 651-700 in the QS World Universities Rankings. This is wonderful news and congratulations to all. I have been reflecting on this achievement and identified some priorities for the future in order to sustain this success. As you are aware, the methodology of the QS WUR is based around 6 indicators:

- Academic Reputation with a weighting of 40%. This academic reputation is usually related to research, teaching, employability of graduates, and international. It is therefore important to improve our research standing, the excellence in teaching, help our students become more employable and work internationally with colleagues through partnerships and research projects.
- Employer Reputation with a weighting of 10%. It is therefore of crucial importance to ensure that our graduates are performing well in the market place and their employers are happy with their performance and will be targeting graduates from the University of the same calibre.
- Faculty/Student ratio with a weighting of 20%. We need to meet the international norms in this area and keep the ratio within the acceptable standards.
- Citations with a weighting of 20%. Only papers published in the Scopus database are considered by the QS. We should therefore target Scopus journals whenever we can and we should rely on research we undertake individually, and in collaboration with international authors. We should also publish papers from Masters Students work. Of course the name of the student should appear first on the paper. We should set up new scientific journals and organise international conferences indexed in Scopus. We should all join ResearchGate, LinkedIn, google scholars and others in order to increase our publications' citations. We are investing in a Scopus database and we need to keep checking our publications and citations in Scopus.
- International faculty with a weighting of 5%. We need to strike the right balance in recruiting local and international faculty.
- International students with a weighting of 5%. We need to target the recruitment of overseas students and increase the number of these recruited students.

I think the QS rankings in the future will take into account the 17 sustainable development goals of the United Nations. It is therefore important to undertake research aligned to these goals, develop academic programmes appropriate to these goals, and to develop a sustainability strategy and embracing good practices in the areas of energy efficiency, green issues, and many others.



Written By
Professor Ghassan Aouad
The President of Applied
Science University

It is easy to achieve success, but difficult to sustain it. However, if we start working within the context of the aforementioned 6 indicators, we would be able to sustain such success.

I personally think our achievements in institutional accreditation and institutional review, the full confidence in all our academic programmes, the quality of our staff and students, the QS stars and rankings in the THE and QS Arab Universities Rankings and green metric rankings, the HEA fellowships and centre, the ISO certification, the international conferences we organised, our international networks and participation in various conferences and forum as keynote speakers and forum chairs, our British programmes, our collaboration with LSBU, the students achievements in sports and entrepreneurship and volunteering work and exhibitions, the business incubation centre, the quality of our campus and ICT infrastructure, and our strong presence in the press have helped us to demonstrate a strong academic reputation. We should look well after these activities and initiatives and support them in order to keep such strong academic reputation.

Our message to the outside world should be consistent that we have achieved this ranking because of our sustained performance and successes in many areas. Our efforts in this area should be coordinated in a proper way. Soon I will be forming a University wide ad-hoc league tables group. I will keep you informed once this group is formed.

Let's keep up the good work and never become complacent because of our significant achievements in recent years as complacency is usually associated with failure and underperforming. It is through team working and collective efforts we will have a better chance to sustain success.

Let me conclude by congratulating once again all our staff, students and alumni for the wonderful news of the ranking in the QS WUR. This has made the University truly international and we are the only private University in Bahrain appearing in this international league table. This should help us in marketing and students recruitment.

Please keep up the good work and excel in all your jobs in order to make our University shines even more.



Message from a Colleague

The importance of 'online mode' Take-Home Exam in times of crisis (Covid-19)

Take-home exam (assignment) is an alternative to traditional sit-down (in class)/ limited-time exam with different format, it is a mix between homework and open book exam. Take home exam can be done at home with access to several resources such as lecture notes, textbooks, or any other resource materials that might be useful. Take-home exam is usually returned within a specified period of time, often after few days. It gives the opportunity to test the student's ability to find and apply knowledge that was given and discussed in class, and to make use of it in answering the take-home exam questions. The materials used in take-home exams usually can't be restricted, but can be guided by the course instructor by giving general guidelines and some tips to indicate the materials that could be useful to answer the exam questions.



Written By
Dr. Ahmad Shatat, PhD.
SFHEA
**Head of Department of
Management Information
Systems**

Take-home exams usually test more than the rote-learning technique that test the students' ability in memorization, rather it tests their analytical and intellectual abilities and skills, which are extremely needed at the University level. This technique helps students to understand, analyze, and apply the learnt knowledge to critically argue and solve the given problems and then present it in a proper format and structure. Such abilities and skills are particularly required to equip students with academic capabilities that are vital to many employers in the marketplace. Usually this type of exam is not an easy option to many students since it requires more than just copying the information straightforward from the source materials, which might lead to incorrect answers. In such type of exams, students are required to find, locate, collect, and then use the relevant information in different sources to provide a valid argument and solution and present it very well.

Probably students have to study more to answer the questions of take-home exam, they have to refer to many materials to find the needed information, study them well, understand, reproduce, interpret, and then effectively apply the solution to the given situations. Questions in take-home exam perhaps require students to apply knowledge via essay-style type of questions, problem solving, case study analysis, analyze and interpret a set of data, critically analyze a case or scenario, present a well-evidenced argument on a topic taught in the subject, analyze and evaluate an issue or problem by referring to concepts introduced in the subject etc. However, the type of questions depends on the nature of the course, in some field, the hypothetical type of questions needs several references and thorough discussion which might be preferred here.

According to Lars Bengtsson (2019), take-home exam might be the right and preferred assessment method on the higher Bloom's taxonomy levels since it provides higher-order critical thinking skills and give enough time for reproducing and interpreting the information. However, due to the risk of some academic misconduct, this type of exam is not recommended on the lowest Bloom's taxonomy level. Currently, take-home exams could be a good choice since it is with less stress that imposed on students, and turns the assessments to learning activity through reading, understanding, finding relevant information, analyzing, interpreting, presenting the outcome, etc. The major advantages of this option are reduction in the students' anxiety, and considered by many as excellent tool to measure the critical thinking skills. On the other hand, the major disadvantage of this choice and the most cited concern in the literature is the academic misconduct by some irresponsible students.

References:

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<https://students.unimelb.edu.au/academic-skills/explore-our-resources/exam-prep/take-home-exams>

A Weekly diagram/Model from the President



Written By
Professor Ghassan Aouad
The President of Applied
Science University



Virtual Classes Challenges

Supposedly, any work place that adopts the virtual teaching as its final resort due to COVID-19 should be led by qualified teaching staff. At this point, we expect lots of confusion and challenges simply because everybody is not working in the typical environment s/he is accustomed to; everyone is working either from home, from university or even from abroad. In other words, working virtually means that the only work bond between instructors and students would be through internet, with its pros and cons. Having, roughly speaking, more than 75% of academic staff teaching remotely from home definitely constitutes a major hurdle especially that they work away from the center or the place where they used to work. Although there are lots of advantages and benefits for all teams once resorting to virtual teaching, there are also some challenges that might pop up. In this article, I will address three major challenges that face instructors in general and thus negatively reflect on students' engagement.

The first challenge instructors normally face in virtual classes is the lack of students' engagement during virtual classes. A possible explanation of this is the same previous traditional yet monotonous techniques used by the instructors. In post COVID-19 virtual classes, one can notice that a prompt shift has taken place from traditional in-class teaching to virtual teaching. As an eyewitness for some virtual class observations, I have noticed that some instructors are still replicating what they had been doing during their regular classes. Here, we need to adapt rather than adopt. Otherwise, no progress is bound to occur*.

The second major challenge is the feeling of alienation, but from an educational perspective rather than a literary one. Instructors have started to feel emotionally and physically detached from their students. This created a sense of disinterestedness between both of them and reflected negatively on students' engagement. Students couldn't anymore observe their instructors' facial complexions, eye-contacts, and language physical signs that aim at motivating them, thus giving them a sense of isolation.

The third challenge lies of the back of students, students' accountability. It is a fact that students all over the world need to be responsible and accountable. Once this factor isn't obtained in a reasonable manner, levels of "support" and "control" normally practiced by instructors would decrease. That is, some students might well take it for granted not to hand in their assignments; not to engage in class discussions and not to respond to instructors' continuous distant calls for joining virtual sessions frequently. Here, a great gap would occur.

In short, to overcome these challenges, instructors need to be highly- qualified, faithful to their jobs, well-trained and, most importantly, patient.



Written By
Dr. Abdulla Shehabat
Acting Head of
Department of General
Studies

Virtual Seminar- "The Usage of Data Science/Big Data in different fields during Covid-19 as an Example

In collaboration with the Deanship of Research and Graduate Studies, the Head of Computer Science Department Dr.Moaied Khder delivered a Virtual Seminar titled: "The Usage of Data Science/Big Data in different fields during (COVID19 as an example)".

Dr. Moaiad covered 6 key points during the seminar: What is Big Data, the 5Vs of Big Data, the Data Value. The Data Science and the Data Science fields and Usage of Data Science/Big Data in different fields.

He presented the huge amount of the data that was generated every minute by different applications, especially from the social media and the different usage of Data Science/Big Data in the COVID-19 example.

The seminar was successful and attended by the President of ASU, Prof. Ghassan Aouad and some of the academic staff of ASU.



Written By
Dr. Moaied Khder
Head of the
Department of
Computer Science



A Workshop titled "Crafting Your CV"

On Tuesday 16th June 2020, The Career Development and the Alumni Affairs Office organized in cooperation with Tumoooh and supported by Tamkeen "Crafting Your CV" workshop.

The workshop was presented by Mr. Mohamed Ali where he focused on the best practices for a good CV through showing the students samples of written CVs. He also emphasized on the main areas to be addressed in the CVs including the skills, qualifications and experience. Furthermore, he guided the students to some websites to foster the CVs crafting. Large number of ASU students and Alumni attended the workshop who were very engaged with the contents. The workshop was ended by Q&A session where Mr. Mohamed answered all the raised questions.

For our next event that will be added to the map of accomplishments, the office will be organizing its Fourth Induction Meeting for the Alumni Club Board of Directors for its Fourth cycle with ASU Graduates which will be held on **Thursday 26th June, 2020**. We wish the office and Alumni Council a successful event.



Written by
Ms. Rawan
Bucheeri
Administrator In
Student Services
Office



كلية الحقوق في جامعة العلوم التطبيقية تنضم لقاء أرباب العمل السنوي عبر الغرفة الافتراضية بقلم الأستاذة فاطمة جناحي - مدير مكتب عميد كلية الحقوق



نظمت كلية الحقوق لقاء أرباب العمل والخريجين عبر الغرفة الافتراضية يوم الخميس الموافق 11 يونيو من العام 2020 والذي يقام بشكل سنوي والتي تهدف من خلاله بإتاحة الفرصة لأرباب العمل والخريجين لإبداء الرأي المتعلق بتطوير الخطط الدراسية لبرامج الكلية والحصول على التغذية الراجعة التي تساهم في تطوير مخرجات التعليم لخريجي الكلية ورفد سوق العمل المحلي والاقليمي لخريجي ذو كفاءة عالية، حيث حضر اللقاء نخبة من الإدارة العليا للجامعة و الكادر الأكاديمي للكلية وأرباب العمل وعدد من خريجي كلية الحقوق، كما ساهم مجلس إدارة نادي خريجي جامعة العلوم التطبيقية لدورته الرابعة من خلال تلاوة عطره للقران الكريم تلاها الخريج احمد دسمال كما القى كلمة خريجي كلية الحقوق الخريج صالح البوفلاح.



ASU
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APPLIED SCIENCE UNIVERSITY
مستعدة من مجلس التعليم العالي
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Interview with Alumnus

	 <p>ASU Alumni Club</p>
Name:	
Workplace:	Ministry of Interior
Academic Degree	Bachelor
Academic Major	Political Science
Tell us about your Experience at ASU in terms of learning environment and teaching methods.	Joining ASU was the best decision I have ever made due to its outstanding education and teaching methods. The University have provided us with a comfortable environment that helped the student to focus in their lectures. I was very impressed with the open door policy which allowed us to communicate with all of our lecturers.
What did you enjoy the most about your experience at ASU?	What I enjoyed the most was that the University combined the study environment with student activities as well the annual events. Also, ASU focused on developing our talents.
Tell us a success story inspired by ASU.	My success story was that the University ensured a professional communication between students and lecturers, that played a vital role to improving student communication skills.
In your Opinion, What are the Improvement areas you would like to see at ASU in the future?	Provide a program that plays a role as a virtual platform communicator between ASU departments and students for all enquiries.
Final words	I wish all the success to my beloved University and keep up the outstanding performance during these difficult times.



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



Quote of the Week

“ Noble fathers have noble children ”

- Euripides

من روائع الشعر العربي

طوى بعض نفسي إذ طواك الثرى عني وذا بعضها الثاني يفيض به جفني

أبي! خانني فيك الردى فتقوضت مقاصير أحلامي كبيت من التين

-إيليا أبو ماضي