



FOUNDATION PROGRAM

N E W S L E T T E R

WELCOME

Hi There!

Universities aren't just about imparting knowledge from textbooks and working on exams — there's a whole other world for personal and professional development outside the classroom. Teachers have a wealth of experiences to share with both colleagues and students.

In this issue, we look at some of the social activities our staff have organized throughout the academic year. Students get a chance to enhance their social skills while doing some fun and engaging activities. From field trips to simple lunchtime conversations, everyone gets a chance to benefit.

As always, research initiatives are highlighted throughout the academic year. Our Moodle platform has allowed teachers to access their training at their own pace. We also benefited from several in-house transformative training sessions.

With all of this in mind, our team is stronger — and growing — as we wrap up another busy, fulfilling, and wonderful academic year!

Editorial Staff

EDITORIAL TEAM

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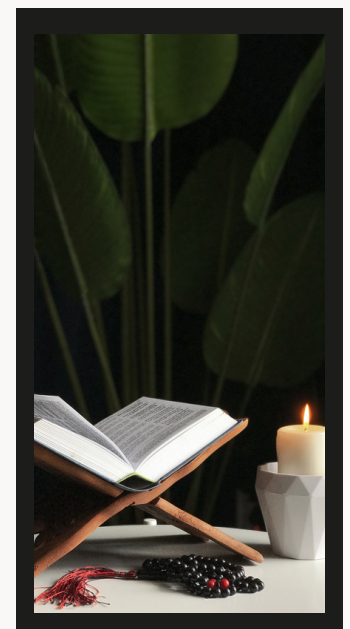
RAMADAN REFLECTIONS

We are now at the beginning of the holy month, which is closest to the hearts of all Muslims, as the month of Ramadan has a great place in every heart. It is full of meaningful memories that span across generations of a family. At prayer times, the Qur'an is recited in every house, in which good deeds ascend to heaven, in which angels descend, and in which wishes are fulfilled. How beautiful are these days that the soul longs for year to year.

Fasting was imposed during Ramadan to discipline and guide the soul. The wisdom behind fasting has always been to learn how to suppress cravings and return to God, to feel the suffering of the poor and the needy, and to achieve the social solidarity that the true religion calls for. Ramadan has always been the month of refining the soul.

Ramadan embodies the meaning of mercy, cooperation, love of goodness, charity, kindness and caring for others. Ramadan comes to erase sins, conceal the defects of the soul, and purify the heart. During the month of Ramadan, Muslims experience many happy feelings. Every night, they feel more confident that God will free their necks of their burden and forgive their sins. In the month of Ramadan, the feeling of God's mercy, satisfaction, and forgiveness increases in a way that gives more sense of security. The believer enters Ramadan with a weary and tired heart and comes out of it with a calm and healthy heart. What beautiful, blessed days and what a great ritual.

-Dr. Moosa Ahmed Bait Ali Sulaiman, FP Director



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STUDENT EXPERIENCE



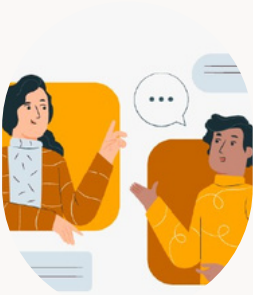
"ANYTHING YOU TEACH IN AN INDOOR CLASSROOM CAN BE TAUGHT OUTDOORS, OFTEN IN WAYS THAT ARE MORE ENJOYABLE FOR STUDENTS."

AS EDUCATORS, WE CONCUR WITH CATHY JAMES, THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK, *THE GARDEN CLASSROOM*. STUDIES HAVE PROVEN THAT EXPOSURE TO NATURE CAN REDUCE STRESS LEVELS IN STUDENTS BY 28%. AS WE GENUINELY CARE ABOUT OUR STUDENTS, WE WANT THEM TO EMERGE FROM THEIR COCOONS AND APPRECIATE THE OUTSIDE WORLD. THAT'S WHY OUTSIDE EVENTS LIKE THE AL BALEED MUSEUM VISIT AND ENGLISH EVENING AT THE HOSTEL WERE SCHEDULED. DURING THEIR VISIT TO THE AL BALEED MUSEUM, THE

STUDENTS DEVELOPED A FRESH UNDERSTANDING OF OMAN'S PAST, WHICH INSPIRED THEM TO EXPLORE MORE ABOUT THEIR HOMELAND. THE ENGLISH EVENING AT THE HOSTEL HELPED THE TEACHERS DISCOVER THE HIDDEN TALENTS IN THE STUDENTS AND ALSO HELPED THE STUDENTS EXPRESS THEIR FEELINGS IN THE QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SECTION. OVERALL, THESE STUDENT ACTIVITIES WERE ENJOYABLE FOR BOTH TEACHERS AND STUDENTS, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO MORE MEMORABLE ONES IN THE FUTURE.

WHAT WE DO

ACTIVITIES



ENGLISH LUNCHES

ENGLISH LUNCHES ARE A CHANCE FOR STUDENTS TO COME WITH SOMETHING TO EAT AND JUST PRACTICE THEIR ENGLISH IN A RELAXED ENVIRONMENT WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT THE RIGHT TOPIC OR ABOUT ASSIGNMENTS. IT GIVES STUDENTS A CHANCE TO LEARN TO BE THEMSELVES — IN ENGLISH.



AL BALEED HOSTEL TRIP

THE ENGLISH CLUB ORGANIZED FIELD TRIPS TO AL BALEED FOR STUDENTS FROM THE HOSTEL ON 7 AND 14 JANUARY. THE STUDENTS VISITED VARIOUS GALLERIES THAT EXHIBITED THE REGION'S ARCHEOLOGY, HISTORY, AND CULTURE. THE TRIP ENDED WITH BOAT RIDES AROUND THE MUSEUM. IN SHORT, THE VISIT TO THE MUSEUM WAS ILLUMINATING AS WELL AS EDUCATIONAL FOR STUDENTS.



OMANI DAY ARTS & CRAFTS

ON 6, 8 AND 10 NOVEMBER, THE FP ALONG WITH THE CAAS STUDENT PRODUCTION TEAM HELD THE OMAN NATIONAL DAY ARTS & CRAFTS WEEK. STUDENTS FROM ACROSS ALL DU COLLEGES WERE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE. OVER 100 ART PIECES WERE PRODUCED AND THEN USED TO DECORATE THE CAAS BUILDING.



ENGLISH EVENING AT THE HOSTEL

ON 12 OCTOBER, AN ENGLISH EVENING WAS CONDUCTED FOR THE FP HOSTEL STUDENTS BETWEEN 4 PM AND 7 PM IN THE HOSTEL. STUDENTS HAD A CHANCE TO SHOWCASE THEIR TALENTS IN FRONT OF THE GROUP. THEY APPRECIATED THE INITIATIVE BECAUSE OF THE JOY AND FUN THEY HAD. THE PURPOSE OF THE EVENING WAS TO MAKE THE HOSTEL STUDENTS FEEL AT HOME, AND TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR A CLOSER INTERACTION WITH THEM OUTSIDE OF CLASS.



RESEARCH INITIATIVES

UNDERSTANDING ACADEMIC RESEARCH – AN ONLINE MODULE

THE PURPOSE

In conjunction with the Teaching & Learning Enhancement committee, Dr. Amin Rasti facilitated the Foundation Program's research activities by providing an online course, which can give teachers a how-to guide on composing future papers. In each session, videos are designed to present practical and linguistic tips and tricks for specific parts of a research paper. "My main idea was to boost interest in conducting research," shares Dr. Amin. "The future of each university — and even its staff — depends on the number and the quality of produced research papers."



"First of all, I like the idea of PD tasks related to understanding the academic research and, in my opinion, it is very useful and we really need it."

—Amal Mursi

"The 'Understanding Academic Research' course is a well-structured and comprehensive program that equips instructors at DU with the necessary skills to produce high-quality academic research papers."

—Abdulfattah Dukki

"Amin's course is comprehensive, challenging, and informative. The activities are designed and curated to give the participants confidence to begin the steps toward becoming published."

—Natasha Swinney



ACTION RESEARCH



The FP organised an academic research workshop conducted by Dr. Khadija Al Balushi, Senior Consultant, MoHERI, on 2 February 2023. The workshop focused on the process and practical ways of doing action research.

Dr. Khadija provided hands-on learning and training on how to go about the process of action research. She stressed that action research belongs to teachers, not researchers. She also

gave insight into how to convert the action research into a research paper, with examples of journals that publish action research.

Overall, Dr. Khadija successfully assured the audience that action research was achievable. The workshop was objective-based, activity-oriented, inspiring and informative.

TAKEAWAYS FOR TEACHERS

- **Empowerment** – Empowers practitioners to investigate the challenges they face, explore and try out solutions to improve their practice.
- **Ownership** – Action research belongs to teachers, not researchers. It is controlled by teachers and is meaningful to teachers.
- **Focus** – Has a clear focus on the improvement of practice-lead to change in practice.
- **Structured reflection** – Enables teachers to do structured reflection on their professional action.

2022 / 2023 FP EVENTS

Take a look at what's been going on!



02/11/22
Omani Tree Day



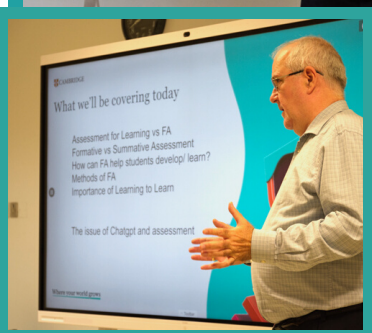
13/11/22
Campus Cleanup



18/01/23
Rubric Training



08/02 -
09/02/23
Cambridge
University Press
Workshop



25/02/23
Dahariz Beach Cleanup



Welcome!

FP New Faculty



Abdulfattah Dukki
Antalya, Türkiye



Hayoun Eun
Seoul, South Korea



Dr. Stephen Jayamani Timothy
Ooty, India



Tahir Alam Awan
Azad Kashmir,
Pakistan



Özlem İşler
Antalya, Türkiye



Amjed Ayyat
Irbid, Jordan



Amin Rasti
Helsinki, Finland



Dr. Mohammed Abugohar
Tanta, Egypt



Barbara Stasiuk
Toronto, Ontario, Canada



Asim Mohammad Khresheh
Karak, Jordan