



Dhofar  
University

# FACULTY HANDBOOK

2026-2027

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# 1. About the University

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## Introduction

Dhofar University (DU) is a private institution of higher education in Salalah, Sultanate of Oman, established by Ministerial Decree No. 5/2004 issued in January 2004. The University formally commenced its operations in September 2004. DU has a Board of Trustees that represents its highest policy-making body.

## Location and Climate

Being in Salalah, the University community enjoys the well-known geographic beauty of Dhofar region and the mild weather throughout the year particularly in the Summer, which is locally known as Khareef. The temperature remains steady in the upper twenties, with occasional rise to mid-thirties. The long and clean sandy shores of Salalah, one of the most beautiful in the world, are ideal for fishing and swimming. The nearby mountains are ideal for hiking.

## Campus Facilities

DU campus is designed to conform to local needs and cultural context while meeting both international design standards and those of the Ministry of Education (MoE). The campus includes: an administration building, three buildings for colleges and the Centre for Preparatory Studies (CPS), a common classroom building, a library building, a student activities center, a conference hall, a mosque, female student dormitories, housing for the senior administration and an engineering workshop.

## Accreditation and Ranking

DU is included in QS world university Rankings in the band 851-900 and ranked 75 in the QS Arab Region Rankings. DU is also included in THE World University Rankings in the band 601-800 and ranked 43 in THE Arab University Rankings, and in the band 201-250 in Asia Universities Ranking. Moreover, DU is included in the THE "World University Impact Ranking" in the band 601-800 announced in June 2025.

Additionally, DU has been awarded the ISO 9001/2015 certificate for its services of admission and registration in December 2024. This certificate denotes the sincere efforts the university exerts to keep improving its overall system to meet its stakeholders' expectations.

## Vision

Dhofar University aspires to occupy a distinct position among the leading institutions of higher education in the Arab Region.

## Mission

To provide quality teaching and learning, conduct research in an inspiring environment conducive to creativity and innovation, and engage with the community.

## Core Values

The core values of DU are:

- Excellence - Our commitment to excellence drives us to do better consistently.
- Integrity - We believe in honesty and coherence between our words and actions.
- Responsibility - We accept full responsibility for our actions all the time.
- Commitment - We are committed to give our best and deliver what we promise.

- Transparency - For us, transparency is the foundation of trust.
- Adaptability - We believe adaptability is the key to success in an ever-changing environment.

### **Graduate Attributes**

The graduate attributes of DU are:

- 1) Master theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the students' chosen discipline commensurate with program level and objectives.
- 2) Demonstrate capacity for effective communication, critical thinking, creativity and innovation.
- 3) Exhibit honesty, discipline and accountability.
- 4) Practice tolerance, humility, respect for differences and commitment to service.
- 5) Practice life-long learning.

### **Academic Year and Semesters**

The academic year at DU is divided into two main semesters (known as Fall Semester and Spring Semester) of sixteen weeks of instruction each, and a Summer semester of eight weeks of instruction (Summer semester delivers the same number of contact hours as in the regular semester). However, for the CPS the academic year is divided into three equal semesters of 13 weeks each.

### **DU Website**

Dhofar University has a dynamic Website which provides the necessary information necessary to all the stakeholders. Please visit the DU Website for a tour of the university. ([www.du.edu.om](http://www.du.edu.om))

### **DU Policies**

Over a period of time, DU has developed and implemented a comprehensive set of policies and procedures to guide the University in all its major activities. These policies are classified into four major categories as shown below.

- 1) Academic Policies
- 2) Administrative Policies
- 3) Human Resources Policies
- 4) Research and Consultancy Policies

All DU policies are available on DU Website. To view the policies, please [click here](#).

### **Library**

DU library is one of the main pillars of the educational process at the university. It is called Sheikh Mustheel bin Ahmed bin Ali Al-Mashani's library. It was established in 2004 and moved to the current building in 2010. DU library provides information services to students and faculty from various sources, such as books, references, periodicals and other electronic databases and Websites. The library provides the services of counselling, lending, and reserving for all eligible individuals.

The library is located in a separate building which consists of three floors with a total area of 4000 square meters equipped with a lift. The library occupies a convenient place amid university colleges and administration building. The building is divided into reading rooms, computer labs

and special shelves for books, references, and periodicals. It also has administrative departments that manage technical operations and provide services for library users.

The library seeks to ensure an appropriate environment enhanced with rich information to serve beneficiary community for all majors and research according to the university programs. The library works on qualifying and training its staff to be able to employ professional methods and modern technology in the processing and delivery of information services for the library users. The library offers its services through five departments with specific tasks as follows: Acquisition Department, Circulation Department, Reference Department, Cataloguing and Classification Department, e-Library and periodicals. The library is open on all working days from 7.30 am to 8.00 pm.

### **DU Bookstore**

The Dhofar University (DU) Bookstore has been operational since February 2017. Its aim is to provide printed and electronic textbooks for University students and relevant teaching resources to faculty members. The facility is providing convenient and easy access to textbooks and reading material at an affordable price exclusively for DU students and instructors whereas the teaching material is provided free-of-cost. Since its establishment, the bookstore has catered around 10,000+ students. It has approximately 9000+ textbooks from different disciplines in its stock.

The bookstore is located on the ground floor of Common Classroom Building (Room number 003-C). To purchase a textbook, students are required to bring a copy of course schedule and their University ID card or resident card (New students) for their identification. Bookstore working hours are from 08:00 am till 03:00 pm.

### **Computing and Networking Center**

CNC provides an integrated environment of information technology networks that support and enhance the academic activities and support services. Academic computing capability is provided by way of numerous computer laboratories, as well as by campus-wide network facilities. All laboratories are networked and have access to local and remote servers as well as the Internet. All University buildings and labs are connected with fiber optics networks. E-mail services are available to all faculty, students and staff.

### **Community Service and Continuing Education Center**

#### **Community Service**

The CSCEC at DU aspires to assist the Dhofar community in solving local issues. CSCEC aims to link the University with all of its resources and expertise with the needs of the community. The CSCEC partners with public and private organisations to support initiatives in the local community. CSCEC encourages DU students and faculty to make meaningful connections with the local community through participating in various events and programs organised by the Center.

#### **Continuing Education**

The CSCEC offers training programs to meet the ongoing professional and personal needs of Dhofar's community at large. It also provides services to applicants who aspire to enter the University but fail in the placement tests conducted by the CPS. CSCEC is dedicated to serving individuals in the private and public sectors in new and innovative ways. It offers solutions to

training needs and provides the local community with the combined support of a professional staff and the diversity of resources at DU.

CSCEC provides on-campus and off-campus offerings that include certificate programs, workshops, seminars, conferences, and customised training programs to meet the needs of individuals and organizations. All CSCEC's certificate programs, workshops, and other activities are taught by experts who bring their hands-on experience into the classroom. Programs and courses are offered in English or Arabic as reflected by the course outlines.

The programs of CSCEC are developed to create an opportunity for strengthening and updating skills and learning new techniques for achieving personal and organizational goals. CSCEC prepares participants for a world of change and their organizations for success by using an innovative approach and programs specifically developed by expert DU faculty members.

### **DU Clinic**

DU has an on-campus clinic that serves the basic health needs of its students and staff. A nurse is available on campus for 24 hours a day during which they can visit and seek consultation. The clinic provides basic medical assistance for minor physical injury and sickness. Urgent and emergency cases are transferred to the nearby Saada Medical Complex or to city hospitals. This medical assistance is also made available to female students in the DU hostel on a 24/7 basis.

For convenience, DU and non-DU emergency contact numbers are listed below:

- DU Clinic: 23237135/23237131
- Emergency (Office): 23237060
- Emergency (GSM): 99496766
- Civil Defense Centre and Ambulance: 9999
- Civil Defense Centre and Emergency Management: 23234971
- Police Station (Salalah): 23290099
- Police Station (Saada): 23234170
- Sultan Qaboos Hospital (Salalah): 23216100
- Health Centre (Saada): 23225613

### **Department of Quality Assurance**

The Department of Quality Assurance (QAD) is responsible for maintaining quality of teaching, research, and support services to students, faculty, staff, and DU community by suggesting and reviewing DU policies relating to academic, academic support and non-academic services.

The QAD develops appropriate qualitative and quantitative measures of teaching and service performance, taking into account local, regional and international recommended practices, including standards prescribed by OAQAE and other international accreditation boards. The Department consults with all stake-holders before making recommendations and reports directly to the VC.

### **Department of Public Relations and Information**

The Department of Public Relations and information (DPRI) is a service departments of Dhofar University headed by a Director and having three sections namely: Public Relations, Information & Marketing. DPRI is the frontline for the University in regards to relations with the community and the public at large. As such, (DPRI) plays a dynamic role in fulfilling the University's mission and

vision in all of its activities by creating an atmosphere of understanding, trust and appreciation within and outside the University. Its work covers a wide range of activities including reaching to the community, producing newspaper articles about various DU activities, visual media coverage, University publications, media and advertising.

## 2. University Governance and Management

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### **Introduction**

Governance of DU is the prime responsibility of the Board of Trustees (BoT) and Board of Directors (BoD), whereas the routine management is the responsibility of the Vice Chancellor (VC), with the help of the University Council (UC) and the Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC). The BoT concentrates on academic and administrative matters and overall development of the University, whereas the BoD looks after the University budget and financial matters.

The VC is the sole link between the BoT and the University. As the head of the institution, the VC reports to the BoT, the governing body of DU. At the same time, as a member of the BoT he is responsible for conveying the decisions of the BoT to the University stakeholders concerned.

### **Organisational Structure**

DU has a clear organizational structure, showing various academic and administrative units and key positions within the University, with well-defined roles and delegated responsibilities for these positions. The lines of authority and responsibility are clearly defined and reporting is done hierarchically.

The VC is the head of the University and is responsible for its day-to-day management. He is assisted by the DVC in the performance of his duties. In addition, there is a UC, which is the main decision-making body at DU, to assist the VC. The VC acts on the advice of the UC at all times, except for routine decisions.

The two main executive officials at DU (VC and DVC) have a number of academic, administrative and service units under their direct control and are responsible for their smooth functioning, in coordination with the heads of these units.

### **Board of Trustees**

The BoT is established with a decree from the founders of the University and consist of 11 members of the founders or otherwise. Its membership includes the VC and a number of experienced and qualified academics. It also has one representative from the MoHERI. The membership of the Board is for four (4) years subject to renewal.

The BoT exercises all the overseeing authority necessary in managing the affairs of the University, safeguarding its interests and in accomplishing its mission. The BoT can delegate some of its functions and responsibilities to the VC or the UC.

The main responsibilities of BoT include: approval of the Bylaws, policies and procedures to govern the affairs of University; approval of the organizational structure; appointment of the VC and the DVC; approval of the appointment of the members of the UC; approval of the future plans for developing the University; approval of the financial policies and developmental budget in coordination with the BoD.

### **Vice Chancellor**

The VC of DU is appointed by the BoT and is the Chief Executive and Academic Officer of the University. The VC represents DU in all its business with other institutions and parties.

The main responsibilities of the VC include: overseeing the academic and administrative affairs of the University; preparation of the annual budget of the University and presenting it to the BoT for approval; proposing to the BoT plans for developing university operations and facilities; forming university committees and specifying their functions; issuing the executive decisions of the BoT and

the UC; submitting periodical reports to the BoT about the ongoing work in the University and performing any other duties assigned to him/her by the BoT.

### **University Council**

The UC is established with a decree from the BoT and consists of the VC as Chair and the DVC, the Deans, the Director of Quality Assurance, CPS Director and one academic member from each College as members. The UC can also invite the Chair of the Student Advisory Council (SAC) and the Directors of the non-academic departments to attend its meetings, if the meeting agenda has any items concerning them. The UC performs the required duties to assist the BoT and the VC in carrying out their duties in a way that helps accomplish University's vision and mission.

The UC meets at least once a month during the academic year. The quorum for the meetings of the UC is equal to half of the members. Decisions are made by absolute majority of the members who are present and in the case of a tie, the VC has a mandate to break the tie.

The main responsibilities of UC include: making recommendations to the BoT on the establishment or cancellation of new Colleges, Departments, Centers, Units and Academic Programs; determining the criteria for admission to the Colleges; approving the promotion of academic staff; proposing future plans for the development of University; following up on the academic, administrative, financial and student affairs of the University.

### **Deputy Vice Chancellor**

The DVC is appointed by the BoT. He (She) assists the VC in smooth functioning of the University and also acts as an officiating VC in the temporary absence of the VC from his office. The main responsibilities of the DVC include: overseeing the functioning of academic programs in all Colleges and CPS; overseeing the matters related to the administrative and financial affairs; overseeing all Units that fall under his/her supervision as per the University's Organizational Structure; preparing periodical reports of the units that fall under his/her supervision and submitting them to the VC and performing any other duties assigned to him/her by the VC.

### **The University Academic Council**

The University Academic Council (UAC) consists of the DVC as Chair and the Deans, CPS Director and the Director of Quality Assurance as Member. The Council has a right to invite other parties to its meeting as deemed necessary. The Council meets at the beginning of every week to oversee and coordinate the work in the Colleges and CPS, follow up on quality assurance and research, and prepare the documents and policies for the UC.

### **The University Non-Academic Council**

In line with UAC, DU has established "University Non-Academic Council" (UNC) starting from the year 2019-20. It consists of the DVC as Chair and the Assistant to DVC for Administrative and Financial Affairs, the Directors of the non-academic Departments and Centers and the Director of Quality Assurance as Member. The Council has a right to invite other parties to its meeting as deemed necessary. The Council meets once every month during the first week to oversee and coordinate the work in the non-academic departments (centers), follow up on quality assurance work and make proposals to the UC.

UNC can also make suggestions about the issues concerning non-academic staff within the framework of DU Bylaws and existing policies. Any member of UNC can be invited by the UC to attend its meeting, should the meeting agenda consist of items that fall under the supervision of that non-academic department (center).

## **Management Structure**

DU is a distinct entity with its own identity. At the same time, it is composed of a number of independent yet inter-linked academic, administrative and service units, which perform a large number of activities. Considering this organisational structure, and for smooth functioning of the University and its constituent units, there is centralization, as well as adequate decentralization of management. DU has a two-tier management structure comprising of management at University level and management at constituent unit level. This allows flexibility in operations and permits prompt decision-making.

At University level, management is the responsibility of the VC, who is assisted by the UC and the DVC. All major decisions at University level are taken by the VC, in consultation with the UC. At the same time, the DVC is responsible for all academic and research-related activities.

The second tier of management is at the level of various constituent units of DU. All these units operate under the guidance and supervision of the VC and/or DVC as shown in the organisational chart and as specified in DU Bylaws.

Each College is headed by a Dean and the CPS by a Director. The Colleges also have Assistant Deans and Department Chairs to assist the Dean in the management of College affairs. Likewise, the CPS has a Deputy Director and Program/Level coordinators to assist the CPS Director.

All administrative and service Departments (Centers or Units) are headed by a Director, who is responsible for the management of the concerned Department. He/ She is assisted by other staff in the Department. For the smooth functioning of these Departments, there are a number of sections within the departments with some senior staff heading each section.

## **Committee Structure**

DU has a two-tier committee structure, which complements its two-tier management structure. These committees function either at University-level or at College (CPS) level. The composition of these committees, terms of reference and lines of reporting are given in detail in the DU Bylaws.

The most important committees at University level are: University Academic Council, University Non-Academic Council, University Advisory Board, University Risk Management Committee, University Research Committee, University Student Disciplinary Committee, University Appeals Committee, University Academic Promotion Committee, University Staff Disciplinary Committee and University Student Advisory Committee.

The important committees at College (CPS) level are - College Council, College Academic Program Development and Review Committee, College Research Committee, College Academic Support Services Committee, College Student Affairs Committee, College Academic Promotion Committee, College Industry and Community Engagement Committee.

In addition to the various standing committees specified in the DU Bylaws, there are a number of ad-hoc committees, which are established by appropriate authorities from time to time to accomplish specific tasks.

## **Internal Regulations and Operating Procedures**

DU Bylaws specify various academic and administrative units, major committees and key positions within the University, along with their responsibilities. In addition, the Bylaws lay down internal regulations and operating procedures for the smooth functioning of the University.

To supplement its Bylaws, over a period of time, DU has developed and implemented a comprehensive set of policies, procedures and guidelines. All these policies are included in "Policy

Manual” and are well publicized among internal stakeholders. This ensures that there is transparency and accountability in the application of these regulations.

Major policy and strategic decisions are taken by the BoT and UC. The decisions taken at higher levels are communicated to the stakeholders concerned by appropriate means and within a reasonable timeframe. DU E-mail is the official Channel of communication at the University. All faculty members are requested to go through their official DU E-mail daily.

### **Strategic Planning and Operational Planning**

DU Strategic Plan (SP) is a medium-term plan covering a period of ten years (2021-31). It draws inspiration from “Oman Vision 2040” and is based on University Vision Mission and Values (VMV), SWOT analysis, Horizon 2025 Document and Accomplishment Report of previous SP.

The University SP is supplemented by an Operational Plan (OP), which specifies the strategies to be used for the accomplishment of the goals and objectives set in the SP and the person(s) responsible for that. The OP has well-defined Performance Indicators (PIs) and set targets for June 2026. For monitoring the progress, QAD collects feedback from all stakeholders of DU in the month of May/June every year.

### **Ministries having Supervisory Authority over DU**

DU is subject to the supervision of Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MoHERI), which oversees all University operations; notably, approval of new faculty, licensing of new programs, review of existing programs, inspection of University facilities, monitoring of quality and providing guidelines from time to time. In addition, appointment of administrative staff is governed by the Ministry of Labour (MoL) rules and regulations. DU is also required to meet the accreditation requirements of Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance (OAAAQA).

### **Communication of Decisions Taken at a Higher Level to the Stakeholders Concerned**

At University level, major decisions are taken by the UC, the VC and/or the DVC. Likewise, at College (CPS) level, major decisions are taken by the College Dean (CPS Director), in consultation with the CC (CPSC). For administrative and service Departments, the decisions are taken by the Director concerned, in consultation with the immediate supervisory authority. The decisions taken at a higher level are communicated to the stakeholders concerned by appropriate means (DU Email, DU Website or Official Memos), within a reasonable timeframe.

### 3. College Governance and Management

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#### **Introduction**

The management structure of the College consists of College Dean, Assistant Dean, College Council and Department Chairs. In addition, there are number of committees to assist the Dean in smooth functioning of the College.

#### **Dean of the College**

The Dean of the College is appointed by a decree from the VC for three (3) years subject to renewal for one more period. The main responsibilities of the Dean include: overseeing all college affairs and ensuring that they are in line with the University Bylaws and Policies; overseeing the performance of the academic department chairs; overseeing the preparation and evaluation of the budget of the College and authorize expenses in accordance with it; proposing plans to the DVC for improvement at the College; overseeing the evaluation of the performance of academic and administrative staff at the College; nominating and recommending candidates for the academic and supporting academic positions at the College and submit the nominees' files to the DVC and performing any other duties assigned to him by the DVC.

#### **Assistant Dean**

Each college has one or more Assistant Deans appointed by the VC upon the recommendation of the Dean and the consent of the DVC for three (3) years, subject to renewal for another period.

The main responsibilities of the Assistant Dean include: assisting the Dean in managing all academic and administrative affairs of the College which are assigned to him by the Dean, especially the coordination between and development of programs and departments; overseeing the program of quality assurance in the College and in the absence of the Dean, serving as Acting Dean.

#### **College Council**

Each College has a College Council chaired by the Dean and has Assistant Dean, Academic Department Chairs, and a representative from each academic department as members where the number of faculty members is more than 10. A student representative is also invited for the meeting if the agenda includes a matter related to student affairs.

The main responsibilities of the College Council include: overseeing academic programs, study plans and development of academic work in accordance with the provisions of the MoHERI; reviewing, discussing and approving exam results; advising on the need for new academic and supporting academic staff; recommending employment of new academic staff, lab technicians and study leaves in the College; approving the academic programs equivalency; recommending renewal or severance of contracts for academic staff and lab technician on the basis of the annual evaluation; deciding upon students' academic and disciplinary cases referred by Student Affairs Committee (SAC).

#### **Department Chair**

A number of departments are established in each college upon the recommendation of the University Council. The DVC takes the recommendation of the College Dean with respect to appointing a Department Chair upon consultation with the College Council; and that is for two (2) years, subject to renewal for another period.

The main responsibilities of the Department Chair include: administering the academic and administrative affairs of the department and determine the financial and administrative needs;

making recommendations to the Dean concerning appointment of academic staff; presenting development plans for the department with regard to academic programs, teaching, student affairs, and student counseling; preparing the budget of the department and present it to the Dean; preparing the annual report of the department and submitting it to the Dean and performing other duties as instructed by the Dean.

### **College Committees**

The College Dean forms the following committees from the college academic staff members.

- 1) College Academic Program Development and Review Committee
- 2) College Research Committee
- 3) College Academic Support Service Committee
- 4) College Industry and Community Engagement Committee
- 5) College Student Affairs Committee
- 6) College Health and Safety Committee

In addition to the above-mentioned committees, the College Council has a right to form other committees as per the requirement. The terms and conditions of these ad-hoc committee will be specified by the College Council and it will cease as soon as the task entrusted is accomplished. The Dean also appoints a Chair to every committee. However, the Dean chairs the meetings of the college committees once present in them.

### **QA Coordinator**

Each College has a QA Coordinator, who is nominated by the College Dean for a period of 2 years, subject to renewal for another period, and approved by the UAC. The QA Coordinator is a member of University-level and College-level Quality Assurance Committee and serves as a link between the University and College in matters related to quality assurance.

### **Course Coordinator**

Courses with multi-sections have a coordinator appointed by the Department Chair for one semester. He/ She coordinates all academic activities related to the multi-section course with other faculty members teaching that course.

## 4. Faculty Duties and Prerogatives

### 4.1. Working Hours, Leaves and Benefits

(For more details, refer to DU Personnel Bylaws, Chapter 5, Working Hours and Leave)

#### **Working Days (Articles 21 and 23)**

Regular working days are from Sunday through Thursday. The weekend break shall be on Friday and Saturday. However, the academic staff may be required to work on weekends during exams, training periods, or for any other purpose determined by the University. In that case, they shall be compensated according to the provisions of labour law and after approval of VC or his delegate.

#### **Working Hours (Article 22)**

Working hours for academic staff shall be forty-two and a half (42.5) hours per week and may be in the morning, afternoon, or evening such that the total teaching hours shall be twelve (12) credit hours per week for the academic staff with the ranks of professor and associate professor, fifteen (15) credit hours per week for the academic staff with the rank of assistant professor, eighteen (18) credit hours per week for all other academic staff and supporting academic staff. Working hours for academic staff in the Foundation Program shall be twenty (20) hours per week.

#### **Annual Vacation (Article 24)**

The annual vacation for the Vice Chancellor, his Deputies, Deans, and academic staff shall be sixty (60) calendar days. The vacation for academic staff is granted when the work schedule permits it. Usually, the vacation is given during July and August or between the two semesters after approval of the direct supervisor.

New academic staff, who join in between the academic year are entitled for proportionate annual leave. They are advised to contact the Department of Human Resource for more details.

#### **Emergency Leave (Article 31)**

The academic staff shall be entitled to a paid emergency leave for six days every year. In case the staff member is unable to apply for a leave in advance, he/she should request for an emergency leave upon his/her return to work explaining the special circumstances.

#### **Sick Leave (Article 32 and 33)**

In accordance with the Labour Law, the academic staff who proves his illness shall be entitled to a sick leave not exceeding ten (10) weeks in all, whether continuous or separate, in any calendar year.

A sick leave is granted as follows:

- Payment of total salary for the first two weeks of absence
- Payment of three quarters (3/4) of the total salary for the third and fourth weeks of absence
- Payment of half (1/2) of the total salary for the fifth and sixth weeks of absence
- Payment of a quarter (1/4) of the total salary for the seventh through the tenth week of absence

A sick leave is to be certified by the following agencies:

- Government hospitals in the Sultanate of Oman
- Private hospitals and clinics recognized by the University
- Sickness reports from a medical authority outside Oman must be certified by the Omani embassy in the country of issuance of that report.

### **Leave for Attending Seminars and Conferences (Article 37)**

The VC, upon a recommendation from the DVC and the Dean of Postgraduate Studies and Research, may grant an academic staff, once during an academic year, a paid leave of absence to attend seminars, conferences, and professional exhibitions for a period not to exceed five calendar days.

The staff member should have a scientific or research paper and should present the invitation or acceptance letter from the host institution. He/she should also get the approval of the College Research Committee in the College concerned.

The staff member shall be entitled to one return economy class air ticket up to five hundred (500) Omani Riyals and five hundred (500) Omani Riyals for all travel expenses. The mission's entitlements shall be computed according to the type of invitation.

### **Leave for VIVA-VOCE (Article 38)**

The VC or his/her delegate may grant an academic staff a paid leave of absence, for a period not exceeding five days per semester, to attend VIVA-VOCE, defend a dissertation/thesis, or supervise examinations conducted at other Universities and educational institutions.

### **Research Leave (Article 36)**

The VC, upon a recommendation from the Dean of a College and the DVC, may grant an academic staff member a research leave once every three years with full or partial pay for a period not exceeding one (1) month.

Granting of this leave shall be in accordance with the following regulations:

- The staff should have completed at least three (3) years of continuous service at the University.
- The research topic should be within the area of specialization of the staff member.
- The staff absence should not have a negative impact on teaching at his/her college.
- The staff shall submit a report about his/her research findings to the department concerned.

### **Pilgrimage Leave (Article 41)**

The Muslim academic staff is entitled to a maximum of fifteen (15) days of pilgrimage (Haj) leave with pay only once during his/her period of service.

### **Leave Without Pay (Article 44)**

The VC or his/her delegate may, once a year, grant a leave without pay for a period not exceeding one (1) semester for the academic staff member. The leave period may be extended for another equal period if there are convincing reasons that are accepted by the VC.

### **Sabbatical Leave, Study Leave and Exam Leave (Articles 34, 39 & 40)**

The above-mentioned leave are available exclusively to Omani staff. For more details, refer the respective articles in the DU Personnel Bylaws or contact the Director of the Department of Human Resources.

### **Widowhood Leave (Article 42)**

The Muslim female academic staff is entitled to four (4) months and ten (10) days of leave with pay if her husband passes away during her period of service. The leave shall start from the date of her husband's death.

### **Maternity and Motherhood Leaves (Article 43)**

- Every working woman in the University who has completed one year of continuous service at the University is entitled to a maternity leave with pay for a period not exceeding fifty (50) days prior to or following delivery. The staff member should present a certified medical report showing the expected date of delivery.
- An Omani female staff member is entitled, upon her request, to a motherhood leave without pay for a period not exceeding one (1) year in order to take care of her baby. The leave shall start immediately after the end of the maternity leave, provided she applies for the leave during the six (6) months that follow the end of the maternity leave.

### **Leave and Absence Provisions (Article 45)**

- Vacations for academic staff and supporting academic staff shall be approved by the DVC upon a request by the staff member and recommendation of the direct supervisor.
- A sick leave that falls entirely within or at the end of the period of another approved leave shall not be counted or approved. However, if an illness occurs prior to the approved vacation date and the staff member is granted a sick leave, the vacation shall be postponed to a later date.
- The academic staff member shall resume work when his/her approved leave ends. Should he/she be unable to return to work for whatever reason, the staff member should, upon resumption of work, notify the University of the reasons for his/her delay.
- If the academic staff member is absent for more than seven days without a valid excuse, his/her direct supervisor should inform the Department of Human Resources in writing in order to freeze his/her salary. Should the period of absence exceed ten consecutive days without a valid excuse, the VC or his delegate may terminate the services of the staff member in accordance with the provisions of the Labour Law.

### **Annual Travel Allowance**

The University shall pay to the faculty member, his/her spouse and up to two of their children who are 18 years of age or younger, provided they reside with him/her in Oman, a travel allowance of up to RO 350 (Three Hundred and Fifty Omani Rials) per family member once every academic year, to cover economy class return ticket to his/her permanent residence abroad, after producing the necessary receipts. They shall also be paid one-way ticket to permanent residence upon termination of the services of the faculty.

### **Health Insurance**

The faculty, his/her spouse and up to two of their children are entitled to a private health insurance benefits which includes medical outpatient, emergency, dental coverage with a maximum limit of RO 10,000 per person.

### **Children Education Allowance**

The University shall pay to the faculty member, education allowance for two of his/her children studying in Oman in grades one to twelve and who are 18 years of age or younger. The allowance shall be up to RO 1,000 (One Thousand Omani Rials) per child per academic year against invoices from the schools, with the exception of British School, where the University shall reimburse up to RO 2,000 (Two Thousand Omani Rials) in case of one child and up to RO 3,000 (Two Thousands Omani Rials) in case of two children. Education allowance includes only tuition fees. Books and supplies are not included.

### **Concession in Tuition Fees for children studying at DU**

The faculty member shall be eligible for 50% reduction in tuition fees payable for one child studying in the University Colleges. This reduction in fees for the second child shall be 25% of the tuition fees payable.

## **4.2. Faculty Duties, Responsibilities and Prohibited Acts**

(For more details, refer to DU Internal Bylaws and Personnel Bylaws.)

### **Academic Staff and Supporting Academic Staff (DU Internal Bylaws Article 1)**

The Academic Staff is comprised of:

- 1) Professors
- 2) Associate Professors
- 3) Assistant Professors
- 4) Lecturers
- 5) Instructors
- 6) Visiting Professors

The Supporting Academic Staff is comprised of:

- 1) Associate Researchers
- 2) Assistant Researchers
- 3) Lab Instructors
- 4) Lab Technicians

**(Hereafter, Academic Staff and Supporting Academic Staff are referred to as Faculty.)**

### **Duties of Faculty**

The duties of a faculty member include but not limited to :

- 1) Ensuring that all theoretical and practical teaching activities lead to measurable learning achievements by students according to previously specified learning outcome.
- 2) Preparing and presenting a Course Syllabus to the students and to the administration at the beginning of the semester describing the course and clearly demonstrating the course plan, objectives, the expected learning outcomes, schedule of study, assignments, methods of study, method of learning evaluation and reading material.
- 3) The course syllabus should clearly include the assessment criteria that will be used for evaluating learning by students and the weighting of each component of students' output in determining the final grade in the course.
- 4) Producing materials such as handouts and computerized/traditional presentations to organize the learning activities.
- 5) Providing adequate time slots for office hours during which they should be able to meet students in their office throughout the semester in addition to the regular class time. The office hours should be included in the syllabus, posted outside the office of the academic staff member, and in a central place in the department.
- 6) Selecting the appropriate method of discussing the subject being taught with care to avoid controversial matters that have no relation to that subject.
- 7) Using multi-media materials, computerized and traditional, to demonstrate concepts and procedures whenever needed.

- 8) Making it known to students at the beginning of each term that students are expected to attend all class sessions and missed class sessions will be recorded.
- 9) Evaluating students' work in relation to the course learning outcomes and on the basis of evidence of independent learning, mastery of course material, and ability to think and communicate clearly.
- 10) Clarifying students' doubts, if any, about assessment and giving feedback to them when the answer sheets are shown in class or during their office hours. Also, posting on LOGSIS the cumulative grade of course assessment and mid-term examinations secured by each student in every course they teach.
- 11) Advising the students allotted to him/her as advisees. The Chair of the department concerned is responsible for assigning student advisors so that the number of advisees per academic staff member is evenly distributed in the department. Student advising should encompass all aspects of academic advising, including selection of electives, counselling on any academic difficulties or problems and monitoring the academic progress of advisee.
- 12) Guiding the students with poor performance to take advantage of the Learning Support centre to improve their performance.
- 13) Conducting scientific/scholarly work in own field that would lead to publishing in refereed academic journals or refereed professional conferences.
- 14) Engaging in scientific and professional consultancy, giving lectures, and participating in seminars, within the University rules and regulations pertaining to outside consulting activities.

#### **Responsibilities of Faculty (DU Internal Bylaws Article 56)**

The faculty members shall have the following responsibilities:

- 1) Respect the rules and regulations of Dhofar University.
- 2) Perform the responsibilities related to teaching and research duties assigned.
- 3) Perform the academic advising duties to help, advise and inform students and also supervise students' research and training.
- 4) Observe official working hours.
- 5) Attend the department council meetings and participate in committees, academic and administrative affairs if required of them.
- 6) Respect the teachings of Islam, other religions and beliefs and reflect this in one's conduct on and off campus.
- 7) Respect work ethics and maintain the traditions of the University.
- 8) Work towards promoting collegiality.
- 9) Do not engage in any disclosure of confidential information or give a statement related to university affairs except with prior consent of the respective authority in Dhofar University.
- 10) Contribute to the development of the local community.

#### **Other Responsibilities of Faculty (DU Internal Bylaws Article 57)**

In addition to performing the above-mentioned responsibilities, the faculty members shall be committed to doing the following:

- 1) Carry out field, evaluative and statistical studies within the areas of their specializations on condition that the study is granted approval from the respective authorities.

- 2) Give lectures and supervise postgraduate theses, research and exams in universities, schools and other educational institutes upon the approval of the Vice-Chancellor and the recommendations of the Deputy Vice Chancellor provided that this does not conflict with their work duties.
- 3) Do research and provide academic consultation pursuant to the rules and regulations of the University.
- 4) Hold conferences and symposia in their area of specializations pursuant to the rules and regulations of the University.

### **Missed Classes**

Faculty members are not permitted to miss classes, except in case of official or emergency leave, without the prior written approval of the Department Chair and the College Dean. However, in both the cases, the faculty member is required to make up for the classes missed by them.

### **Prohibited Acts (DU Personnel Bylaws Article 55)**

It is strictly forbidden for the Academic Staff member to undertake any of the following:

- 1) Engagement or provision of his/her services to any public or private party or institution unless requested by the University to temporarily render professional services relating to another position after approval of the Vice Chancellor or his/her delegate and of the relevant official authorities;
- 2) Laxity or negligence that results in financial loss to the University;
- 3) Divulgence of confidential information known to the staff member by virtue of his/her position, unless summoned to testify in an official investigation or court;
- 4) Exploitation of the staff member's position to gain favours for self and/or others;
- 5) Acceptance of any gift from an individual or party if that would impact his/her work;
- 6) Spreading rumours that could damage the University interest, public interest, or the interest of others;
- 7) Interruption of work without an authorized leave of absence;
- 8) Smoking on campus;
- 9) Violating academic regulations of the University.

### **Dress Code and Local Considerations**

For most of the year light, loose-fitting clothes, preferably cotton, are best suited for the Omani climate. From December to March, a slightly warmer garment may be required during the evenings. Clothing must be decent and professional and any tattoos must be covered.

Please adhere to the following rules and regulations regarding dress and appearance to avoid complaints and criticism from students.

#### **For Men:**

Non-Omani men do not have to wear a suit or a jacket but must wear a dress shirt and a tie. The shirt must be tucked into the trousers or pants and a belt must be worn. Short-sleeved shirts can be worn, but all shirts must be dress shirts, not T-shirts or polo shirts. Clothing must be loose-fitting, not tight. Non-Omani men must not wear sandals. No denim is allowed, i.e. no jeans of any color, nor denim shirts or jackets. No sportswear, e.g. track-suits or training shoes, no beachwear, e.g. shorts, Bermudas, espadrilles, thongs, flip-flops or Crocs are allowed. Wedding rings and watches are fine, but other jewelry, such as ear-rings, bracelets, chains and necklaces, is not allowed. Hair must be short, with no ponytails, etc. allowed.

### **For Women:**

Dress must be decent, i.e. not tight, not transparent and not revealing in any way. The female form must not be accentuated. Sleeves must not be too short; the back and the midriff must not be displayed. No denim is allowed: no jeans of any color, no denim skirts, blouses or dresses. Short skirts/dresses are not allowed: they should be at least mid-calf though ankle-length or even longer ones are preferable. Women can wear trousers or pants, but they must wear a long top, shirt, blouse or tunic. No low-necked blouses or dresses are allowed. Short-sleeved blouses or dresses are allowed, but sleeveless ones are not. No sportswear of any kind, i.e. training shoes, gym shoes, track-suits, beach-wear, e.g. shorts, Bermudas, espadrilles, flip-flops or Crocs is allowed. Leggings and pyjamas are strictly forbidden.

### **Cultural Sensitivity and Conduct**

In their day-to-day classroom interaction and contact with students, academic staff members must observe cultural sensitivity and show respect for the Omani traditions and values. Staff members need to be aware of societal norms, values and linguistic factors that determine, shape and affect student involvement and attitude. Misunderstood cultural assumptions can cause frustration, disappointment, lack of motivation, anger and even disputes with students and the local community.

Thus, the staff members must avoid:

- Speaking or acting in a manner that impinges upon religious beliefs or smears the reputation of Dhofar University or that of the Sultanate of Oman.
- Expressing cultural disrespect when discussing ideas and concepts inside and outside the classroom.
- Possessing or showing pictures, movies or other communication media that violate the Islamic morals and/or those of the Omani society.

## **4.3. Disciplinary System**

**(For more details, refer to DU Personnel Bylaws, Chapter 9, Disciplinary System)**

### **General Information About Penalties (Articles 56, 57, 58, 60 and 61)**

The faculty member who does not observe the duties of his/her position or commit prohibited acts stated in the Bylaws, shall be subjected to appropriate disciplinary action as provided in DU Bylaws and decided by the Staff Disciplinary Committee.

- 1) The Staff Disciplinary Committee submits its recommendations to the VC within two weeks from the date of receiving the violation file to issue a decision.
- 2) The staff member has the right to appeal to the University Appeals Committee about a disciplinary decision made against him/her within one week from the date of that decision.
- 3) There shall be no more than one penalty for the same violation.
- 4) The staff member shall not be acquitted of a penalty for a violation based on an order from his/her supervisor unless the order was given in writing and the staff member alerted the supervisor about the violation. In that case, the supervisor shall bear the full responsibility for the said violation.
- 5) No penalty shall be inflicted until the staff member has been informed in writing of the accusations against him/her and a hearing session is held. Minutes of the session shall be placed in the staff member's personal file.

- 6) No penalty shall be inflicted for a transgression committed by the staff member outside the workplace unless there is an established relation between his/her work and the said transgression.

#### **Types of Penalties (Article 58)**

Various penalties stated in the Bylaws are:

- 1) Verbal or written warning
- 2) Salary deduction
- 3) Suspension
- 4) Termination of contract

#### **Staff Disciplinary Committee (Article 57)**

The Staff Disciplinary Committee is headed by Assistant DVC for Administrative and Financial Affairs and has Director of Quality Assurance, Director of the Department of Human Resources, Legal Advisor and one representative from each College (who is also a member of the University Council) as members.

The committee may also seek the services of any one it deems fit for the task. The main responsibility of the Committee is considering all staff violations reported to it during work or because of it.

#### **Termination of Contract without Prior Warning and Gratuity: (Article 59)**

The University may terminate the services of any staff member without a prior notice or warning, and without paying him/her a gratuity in the following cases:

- 1) If the staff member, with intent to defraud, assumes a false identity or resorts to forgery to obtain employment.
- 2) If the staff member commits an error causing substantial financial loss to the University. In this case the University is required to notify the concerned department in the Ministry of Manpower of the error within three (3) days from its occurrence.
- 3) If the staff member fails to comply with instructions relating to safety of the staff and safety at the workplace in spite of having been warned in writing, provided the violation of these instructions, which should have been written and hung in a visible place, is bound to cause serious harm to the workplace or staff.
- 4) If the staff member is absent for more than ten (10) days in any one year without a valid excuse in spite of having been warned in writing, or for more than seven (7) consecutive days. In the first case, dismissal requires a written warning from the University after the fifth day of absence.
- 5) If the staff member divulges confidential information about the University.
- 6) If the staff member has a final verdict rendered against him/her for a misdemeanour or a crime involving a breach of trust or honour, or a misdemeanour committed while working or at the workplace.
- 7) If the staff member is found during working hours in an obvious state of drunkenness or under the influence of a narcotic substance or stimulant.
- 8) If the staff member commits a grievous assault against any of his/her superiors during work or because of it; or if he/she physically assaults a fellow staff member at the place of work causing illness or forced absence from work for more than ten (10) days.

- 9) If the staff member commits a gross breach of his/her obligations that are stated in the contract or job description

#### **4.4. Complaints, Grievances and End of Employment**

(For more details, refer to DU Personnel Bylaws, Chapter 10)

##### **Complaints and Grievances (Article 62)**

The staff member has a right to complain (appeal) to the University Appeals Committee about a disciplinary decision made against him/her within one (1) week from the date of that decision.

In case the staff member fails to get an answer within two (2) weeks from the date of submitting his/her complaint, or in case the committee's decision is not convincing to him/her, the staff member has the right to submit his/her complaint (appeal) to the Department of Labour Disputes' Resolution at the Ministry of Manpower.

##### **End of Employment (Article 63)**

The employment of a staff member shall end due to any of the following reasons:

- 1) Death of the staff member
- 2) Resignation or dismissal from work
- 3) Reaching the age of retirement in accordance with the provisions of the Labour Law
- 4) Inability of the staff member to perform his/her job for health or other reasons in accordance with the provisions of the Labour Law

##### **End of Service Gratuity for Non-Omani Staff (Article 64)**

At the end of employment, the non-Omani staff member shall be entitled to a gratuity of one (1) month basic salary for each year of service with the University, calculated on his/her last basic salary, for each completed year of service, and pro-rated for any period less than twelve (12) months, provided that:

- 1) The staff member has completed a minimum of one year of service with the University.
- 2) His/her employment has not ended in accordance with Article (59) of DU Personnel Bylaws.

##### **End of Service Gratuity for Omani Staff (Article 65)**

At the end of employment, the Omani staff member who is registered with the Public Agency of Social Insurance shall receive an end of service gratuity from that agency in accordance with the Social Insurance Law of Oman as amended.

The Omani staff member, who is not registered with the Public Agency of Social Insurance, shall be entitled to gratuity at the end of his/her employment with the University on the same terms as the gratuity of non-Omani staff.

##### **Death of Staff member (Article 66)**

In the event of the death of a non-Omani staff member, the University shall assume the responsibility for repatriation of the body to the country of origin or place of residence according to the wishes of his/her family.

## 5. Teaching

### 5.1. Teaching Load

#### Normal Teaching Load

Teaching assignments are made by the Chairperson of the Department concerned in consultation with the members of department. However, the teaching loads are based on academic rank as follows:

- 1) A full-time faculty member with a professorial rank normally has a teaching load of 12 credit hours per semester.
- 2) A full-time faculty member with an associate professorial rank normally has a teaching load of 12 credit hours per semester.
- 3) A full-time faculty member with an assistant professorial rank normally has a teaching load of 15 credit hours per semester.
- 4) A full-time faculty member with a lecturer rank normally has a teaching load of 18 credit hours per semester.

Faculty members who have administrative responsibilities assigned to them get load reduction as specified in Academic Staff Teaching Load Policy.

For summer term, the maximum teaching load for all faculty members is set at 6 credit hours irrespective of their ranks. Under special circumstances, and with the approval of the College Dean and the DVC, this load may be extended to 9 credit hours.

#### Teaching Overload

As a matter of policy, teaching overload is discouraged as it affects the quality of teaching and puts additional burden on the faculty member. However, in exceptional circumstances, and as a last resort, the uncovered teaching load shall be assigned to the existing full time faculty member within the department equitably.

The faculty member is expected to teach the extra course(s) in the same manner as he/she teaches the courses in his/her normal load. The faculty member shall be paid for this extra work as per "Academic Staff Teaching Load Policy".

**(For more details, refer to DU Academic Staff Teaching Load Policy available on DU Website)**

### 5.2. Academic Advising and Office Hours

#### Academic Advising

Academic advising is an important academic support service at DU, which allows the student to have regular interaction with their advisor to discuss issues relating to their academic progress and other problems related to their studies. It is an integral part of the academic duties of every faculty member. The Chairperson of the Department concerned is responsible for assigning an academic advisor for each student. As far as possible, it is ensured that the number of advisees is evenly distributed among advisors. All academic advisors are provided with appropriate access to their advisee's record in "LOGSIS", in order to undertake their advisor role efficiently. LOGSIS is an online IT-based system used by DU for students' registration and data management.

#### Responsibilities of the Academic Advisors

Responsibilities of the Academic Advisors include but not limited to :

- 1) Assist the advisee in understanding the curriculum and their academic responsibilities.

- 2) Inspire the advisee to uphold the highest ethical and professional standards.
- 3) Help mitigate advisee students' concerns and resolve relevant issues as they occur.
- 4) Encourage advisee to know, understand and abide by University rules and regulations.
- 5) Ensure that advisee is aware of DU MVV, Students' Code of Conduct and Student Grievance Policy.
- 6) Monitor advisee progress throughout their academic studies, from day one to graduation.
- 7) Discuss occurring problems with advisee and recommend ways to remedy them.
- 8) Provide advice on course selection and related curricular matters.
- 9) Ensure that course prerequisites have been taken and that student repeats failed courses when next offered.
- 10) Recognize trouble signs such as excessive absence and refer the students to the proper University bodies that could help them, such as Learning Support Centre (LSC) and the Student Counseling Office.
- 11) Discuss future plans and career choices with the advisee.
- 12) Provide extra care to the advisee who are at risk.
- 13) Give special attention to the advisee who are graduating within one or two semesters.
- 14) Be available for advising during the period of registration and also throughout the semester at the time specified in the advisor's schedule.
- 15) Respond promptly to emails from the advisees.
- 16) Maintain a record of key advising activities to their advisees in the LOGSIS

#### **Office Hours**

Faculty members are required to have office hours during which they are available to meet with students in their offices. The number of office hours should be at least two slots per week, of minimum one hour each, distributed over weekdays. Faculty members should also be available to meet with students by appointment during this time. The office hours should be posted outside the office of the faculty member.

**(For more details, refer to DU Academic Advising Policy available on DU Website)**

### **5.3. Students at Risk and Learning Support Center**

#### **Students at Risk**

Academic ability differs from student to student. There will always be some students whose academic ability is below the expected level and who need additional support to cope with the situation. These are the students who are at a risk of being dismissed from the Program/ College/ University. They need to be motivated and guided to come up to the expected level. DU has a well-defined policy, procedure and guidelines to deal with such students. Through this policy it is ensured that necessary academic support is provided to students at risk so as to help them progress in their programs of study.

**(For more details, refer to DU Students at Academic Risk Policy available on DU Website)**

#### **Learning Support Center**

DU has a Learning Support Center (LSC), which is responsible for providing students, especially the students at risk (under academic probation), and also the students with special learning needs with a personalised assistance, in a supportive atmosphere, through a peer-assisted learning scheme.

DU students can benefit from the services provided by LSC either by appointment, walk-in, or referral by faculty members.

The academic advisors encourage all students and especially students at risk to attend peer tutoring sessions provided by the LSC.

Peer-assisted learning uses the services of senior-level students to support their peers. Faculty-members recommend outstanding students to serve as peer tutors.

There is monetary incentive for peer tutors. This also provides valuable training and learning experience for the peer tutors and helps them in developing professional, academic and English language skills, under competent supervision.

The LSC provides its services free of charge to all DU underperforming students. It is open on all working days from 8 am to 3 pm so as to provide maximum benefit to the students. LSC services include tutoring, mentoring, supplemental instruction and computer-aided instruction, delivered through one-to-one tutoring or small study groups. However, LSC is not meant to replace classroom instruction or any other means of instruction offered by faculty-members.

**(For more details, refer to DU Learning Support Center Policy available on DU Website)**

## **5.4. About the Course**

### **Course Syllabus**

A Course Syllabus is prepared every semester for every course offered by the department. There is only one Course Syllabus for each course, which is prepared by the Course Coordinator (CC) or in case only one instructor is teaching the course, then by the Course Instructor (CI). The course syllabus has to be prepared according to the template circulated by the Department of Quality Assurance. A copy of the course syllabus has to be given to the students during the first week of teaching every semester and also kept in the Course File.

The course syllabus gives comprehensive information about teaching schedule for the semester, course instructor and course coordinator, course learning outcomes, program learning outcomes, graduate attributes, reading materials, references and resources, teaching/ learning strategies, use of technology, research teaching nexus, weekly course content outline, assessment methods and schedule and any other important information, if any, for students.

### **Course Coordination**

The Chairperson of the Department appoints course coordinators for the courses with multiple sections in order to coordinate between the various faculty members teaching the same courses.

The responsibilities of the course coordinator are, but not limited to, the following:

- 1) Develop and update the course syllabus and course content with the help of, and in consultation with, other instructor(s) of the course.
- 2) The course syllabus has to be prepared in the standard template provided by the Department of Quality Assurance. It should be approved by the Department Chair.
- 3) Monitor the course delivery during the semester.
- 4) Monitor the assessment of the students as per the plan mentioned in the syllabus.
- 5) Prepare summary of results of the course.
- 6) Prepare a coordinator's report at the end of the semester summarizing your observations over the content and delivery of the course with suggestions for further improvements.

### **Load Reduction for Course Coordinator**

The course Coordinator is entitled to load reduction for doing the course coordination task as per “Academic Staff Teaching Load Policy”. Course Coordination starts with a minimum of two different instructors and a minimum of three sections. The present load reduction is:

- 1) 3-5 Sections - 1 Credit Hour
- 2) 6-10 Sections - 2 Credit Hours
- 3) More than 10 Sections - 3 Credit Hours

### **Course File**

A course file is maintained in the department for every course offered. There is only one Course File for each course. Usually the Course File is maintained by the CC; and in case only one instructor is teaching the course then by the CI. The File is maintained for each year (Fall + Spring + Summer) separately in the prescribed format. It is preserved for six (6) years in case of Bachelor Program and for four (4) years in case of Diploma and Master Program in a place designated by the College Dean.

The Department Chairperson checks the course file once during the semester and specifies the discrepancy, if any, on the course file cover page. The responsibility of getting the course file verified by the Dept. Chair lies with the CI/CC. The Course File is also checked by the College Dean or the Department of Quality Assurance (QAD) or the DVC once every semester on a sample basis.

### **Course Requirements for Academic Programs**

The course requirements for an academic program consists of four different categories of courses. These course requirements are stated in the student’s plan of study (PoS). Even though the PoS of one program is different from another, still all these PoS for undergraduate programs share a same structure of the course distribution as given below.

#### **1) University Requirements**

This includes courses that are common for all programs across DU Colleges. These courses aim to provide essential knowledge and skills that are required to be acquired by all DU students. The courses of this category must be completed by all students of DU.

The total number of “University Requirements” for bachelor’s program is up to 30 credits and for diploma program up to 21 credits. The English and Mathematics courses are designed separately for the needs of the students based on their colleges/majors. The other courses are common for all students across the university.

#### **2) College Requirements**

This includes courses that are common among the students of the same college only. The number of credit hours differ based on the level of the degree and the nature of the program. The courses of this category must be completed by all students who belong to the same college. These are mentioned under the particular program and college in this catalogue.

#### **3) Major Requirements**

Students of the same major have to study a specific group of courses that differ according to the major and level of the degree. The courses of this category must be completed by all students who belong to the same major. These are mentioned under the particular program and college in this catalogue.

#### 4) **Elective Requirements**

This category is only available at the bachelor level where students have the freedom to select from a number of courses within the required number of credits allotted for this category. Under this category there are sub categories which are: general electives, social electives, college electives and major electives. These are mentioned under the particular program and college in the DU catalogue.

### **5.5. Student Attendance and Absence Warning**

#### **Student Attendance and Dismissal**

A faculty member has to take attendance of the students in each of his/her courses and upload the same on the SIS system. The SIS system will automatically generate the warnings to the respective students as soon as his/her absence reaches a certain level. The SIS system will also generate an email informing the instructor of the same. It is advisable to again mention the warning verbally to the students after the lecture by the instructor if he happens to meet him/her.

The maximum absences allowed for a student is 25% of the total number of sessions of a particular course. If the absence crosses 25%, the student is dismissed from the course and a dismissal letter is sent to his DU email account.

#### **Absence Warning**

Before reaching the withdrawal stage, DU system warns the students by way of three warnings sent to their DU email account by the DAR. These email messages to students are a formal communication of the university with its students.

The warnings of absences are as follows:

- 1) **First warning:** This is when a student's absence reaches 7% of the total number of sessions of a particular course.
- 2) **Second warning:** This is when a student's absence reaches 14% of the total number of sessions of a particular course.
- 3) **Third (Final) warning:** This is when a student's absence reaches 21% of the total number of sessions of a particular course.

### **Student Assessment**

#### **Assessment Framework**

A student's academic performance is assessed throughout the semester using various assessment instruments, which include: homework, assignments, exams, research papers, projects, practical work, research, etc. The course instructor/ course coordinator shall clearly specify the assessment tools, allocated marks and the tentative dates in the course syllabus given to the students. As far as possible, the coursework assessment shall be evenly spread throughout the semester.

The student has a right to receive continuous feedback about his/her performance. The course instructor must complete a midterm performance assessment to give students chance to withdraw from the course before the end of the withdrawal period and to help academic advisors better advice students during the pre-registration period.

#### **Assessment Method**

The assessment of coursework in all programs of DU shall take place in three parts, unless otherwise specified by the Department:

- 1) Continuous Assessment
- 2) Mid-Term Examination
- 3) Final Examination

### **Weighting of Various Assignment Methods**

The weighting assigned to various methods of assessment shall be as follows:

- |                                    |           |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1) Continuous assessment - - - - - | 10% - 30% |
| 2) Mid-term examination - - - - -  | 20% - 40% |
| 3) Final examination - - - - -     | 40% - 60% |

### **Forms of Continuous Assessment**

Continuous assessment may take one or more of the following forms:

- |                  |                                                     |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Quizzes       | 6) Portfolio                                        |
| 2) Assignments   | 7) Fieldwork                                        |
| 3) Homework      | 8) Lab work                                         |
| 4) Presentations | 9) Any other forms approved by the Department Chair |
| 5) Projects      |                                                     |

### **Feedback on Assessment to Students**

Clarifying students' doubts, if any, about assessment and giving feedback to them when the answer sheets are shown in class or during their office hours is an integral part of academic responsibility of a faculty member. This includes the following.

- 1) The course instructors shall clarify students' doubts, if any, about assessment and give their feedback when the answer sheets are shown to them in class or during their office hours.
- 2) All original marked assessments, except the final exam, shall be given by the course instructor to the students, after ensuring that a photocopy of the answer sheets with highest, lowest and average marks are kept in course file.
- 3) If the students are not satisfied with their grade, they have the right to submit a petition of their grievance, as per the procedure laid down in " Student Grievance Policy".
- 4) A student, who has submitted a petition for change of grade within the stipulated time limit (one week of announcing of result), has a right to see the answer sheet of the final exam within one working week of the announcing of result of his/her petition.
- 5) The students with poor performance shall be guided by the course instructors to take advantage of the Learning Support Center to improve their performance.
- 6) The course instructors shall post on LOGSIS the cumulative grade of course assessment and mid-term examinations, which was secured by each student in every course they teach.

**(For more details, refer to DU Assessment Policy available on DU Website)**

## **5.6. Moderation**

### **Moderation Meaning**

Moderation is a quality assurance process and is an integral part of the assessment system at DU. It ensures that students receive fair treatment in assessment. Moderation include: moderation of assessment tools and moderation of marked answer sheets. This is to ensure that assessment is valid, reliable, fair and transparent and there is consistency across the University.

### **Moderation Committee and Moderator**

Each Department within the College has a Moderation Committee consisting of Chairperson of the Department as head and at least two more faculty members in the department as members. At the beginning of each semester, the Moderation Committee assigns one instructor (other than the course instructor) for each course taught in the department as moderator of that course for the semester. The moderator is responsible for the moderation of all assessment tools (For mid-term and final examinations only) and marked answer sheets (final examination only) of that particular course.

### **Moderation of Assessment Tools**

The assessment tools and course syllabus showing course learning outcomes are given by the course instructor to the assigned moderator at least two (2) weeks before the final exam and one (1) week before other assessments. The moderator shall use the moderation form for giving his/her suggestions to the course instructor. (For mid-term and final examinations only). The course instructor, in consultation with the moderation committee, shall make the appropriate changes suggested by the moderator on the question paper before it is administered to the students.

### **Moderation of Marked Answer Sheets**

The moderation of the answer sheets of the final exam only shall be carried out using sampling techniques. The moderation committee will decide on the percentage of marked answer sheets that should be moderated for each course, based on the size of the class, the content of the course, etc. The moderator shall ensure that marking is in accordance with the allotted weight for the question, all the answers have been marked and that there are no totaling mistakes. If a major discrepancy is noticed by the moderator, it will be reported by him/her to the moderation committee immediately. The course instructor shall be asked by the moderation committee to go through all the answer sheets to ensure that the discrepancies indicated are corrected. Simultaneously, the College Dean shall be informed by the moderation committee of the lapses on the part of the course

### **Responsibilities of Moderator**

The moderator of assessment should ensure that:

- 1) the examination is valid in terms of its content, balance and duration;
- 2) the assessment tools cover the outcomes prescribed for the assessment and are evenly distributed over these outcomes;
- 3) all questions are from within the prescribed learning outcomes;
- 4) the questions are clear and unambiguous;
- 5) marks allotted for each question are clearly mentioned.

The moderator of marked answer sheets should ensure that:

- 1) the marking is in accordance with the allotted weight for the question;
- 2) all the questions have been marked;
- 3) there are no totaling mistakes;
- 4) if the student has answered more than the required number of questions, the examiner has to evaluate all the questions attempted by the student and then exclude the lowest scored answer from the aggregate.

**(For more details, refer to DU Moderation Policy available on DU Website)**

## 5.7. Examination

### Examination Administration

All Colleges and the Foundation Program at DU have an Examination Committee (EC), which is constituted every two years. The EC is constituted by the College Dean (FP Director) and consists of at least two members. One of the members is designated as Controller of Examinations (CEX). The EC will oversee the examination proceedings and maintain the attendance of proctors and head proctors. These committees are responsible for overseeing the examination proceedings and ensuring smooth conduct of examinations in their respective Colleges and FP.

### Examination Schedule

- 1) **Final Exam** - The Department of Admission and Registration (DAR) announces the schedule of "Final Examinations" based on the student registration for that semester at least two (2) weeks before the commencement of the examinations. While preparing the schedule, the DAR ensures that a student does not have more than two examinations on the same day.
- 1) **Mid-term Exam** - In Colleges, CIs/CCs are responsible for scheduling and conducting midterm examinations for the courses taught by them. However, in case of multiple sections, the EC can be approached for conducting mid-term examinations. Wherever possible, for multi-section courses, mid-term exam shall be conducted at the same time and the question papers will be the same for all sections.
- 2) **Continuous Assessment** - CIs are responsible for scheduling and conducting continuous assessment for the courses they teach. If the course is taught by more than one CI, he/she should consult the CC in this regard. The CIs are also responsible for preparing the continuous assessment material, if any, in consultation with the CC.

### Preparation of Examination Question Papers

- 1) In Colleges, the Course Instructor (CI) will prepare the question paper for all examinations. However, if the course is taught by more than one CI, the Course Coordinator (CC) will be responsible for preparation of the question paper in coordination with other CIs.
- 2) For the final examination, the CI/CC will ensure that the required number of photocopied question papers and answer sheets are ready at least two (2) days before the final exam date and are handed over to the CEX in a sealed envelope. He/she should also ensure that the attendance sheet and relevant forms are put in the envelope.
- 3) All sealed envelopes containing photocopied question papers will be stored by the CEX in a secure place designated by the College Dean.

### Make-up Examination for Absence in Mid-term or Final Examinations

- 1) A make-up examination is an examination given to those students who are absent during regular mid-term or final examinations and who have submitted a valid excuse within the stipulated time.
- 2) A student who is absent or falls ill during the exam has to submit a valid excuse in the prescribed form to the CI within one (1) week from the date of mid-term examination and within two (2) weeks from the last day of final examination. The excuse has to be approved by the Department Chair (In case of FP by the Level Coordinator).
- 3) No student is allowed to take the make-up exam without completing these formalities. If the student does not produce a valid excuse or does not report for the make-up exam, he/she will be given zero marks for that exam.

- 4) Make-up exam is conducted only once. In case of final examination, it is conducted within two weeks of the beginning of the following semester. In case of mid-term examination, it is conducted within two weeks of the scheduled mid-term exam.
- 5) In Colleges, the date of make-up exam is announced by the CI in consultation with the Department Chair. (In case of FP, the dates for make-up exams is announced by FP Director.)
- 6) The make-up exam is conducted on the same day and at the same time for all the absentees in the same course. If a student is absent in more than one course, he/she is given one exam every day.

**(For more details, refer to DU Examination Policy available on DU Website)**

## **5.8. Proctoring and Reporting of Academic Misconduct**

### **Proctoring (Invigilation)**

Proctoring of examinations is a part of the academic duties of every faculty member. Proctors are expected to spend proctoring time strictly supervising the students throughout the duration of the quiz or examination. Various rules and regulations about proctoring are as follow.

- 1) The EC of the College, in consultation with the Asst. Dean, will assign the duties of proctors and head proctors for the final examination. As far as possible, these duties should be equitably distributed.
- 2) All proctors should be in the examination hall at least 15 minutes before the commencement of the final examination. The head proctor should collect the envelopes containing the question papers from the CEX 30 minutes before the commencement of the examinations.
- 3) Students should not be allowed to enter the exam hall 30 minutes after the commencement of the final examination. No extra time is to be allowed for late-comers. Likewise, students should not be allowed to leave the examination hall within the first 30 minutes of the examinations.
- 4) Proctors must verify the identity of the students taking the exam. Only DU ID will be considered as sufficient evidence. The proctor must also ensure that all students in the examination hall keep their ID on the examination desk for the entire duration of examination.
- 5) A student who fails to show his/her DU ID, must be sent by the proctor to the Department of Student Affairs (DSA) to bring a temporary ID. The student shall be permitted to appear for the examination only after that.
- 6) In case a student is found without DU ID in the examination hall, the responsibility shall be on the proctor.
- 7) Proctors should put their mobile phones in silent mode to avoid disturbance. In addition, they should ensure that mobile phones of students are switched off and not in silent mode. Mobiles must not be kept by the students on the examination desks.
- 8) Proctors should make the students aware of the exam rules and regulations before the commencement of the examinations and also ensure that they read the examination instructions given on the cover page of the answer sheet and sign the pledge given there.
- 9) Proctors should ensure that the examination commences and ends at the time specified in the examination schedule and lasts for the duration indicated.

### **Forms of Academic Misconduct**

Various forms in which student can violate academic integrity are:

- 1) **Cheating** - Cheating is defined as “employing or seeking to employ any unfair means in the examination or in any other form of work submitted for assessment as part of any university course”. It is a deliberate attempt to gain academic credit dishonestly or to help others to do this.
- 2) **Collusion** - Collusion is defined as ‘Unauthorized collaboration on assessable work with another person or persons’. It is a form of cheating which occurs when students work together in a deceitful way to produce work for an assessment which is restricted to individual effort.
- 3) **Plagiarism** - Plagiarism is defined as the unauthorized use of the work of another person as one’s own, whether or not such work has been published. It is considered as academic theft. Plagiarism occurs when someone uses words, ideas or work attributable to another identifiable person or source, without attributing the work to the source from which it was obtained, in a situation in which there is a legitimate expectation of original work, in order to obtain some benefit.
- 4) **Impersonation** - Impersonation takes place when a student or outsider assumes the identity of another student with the intent of providing an unlawful advantage in any course assessment for that student.

### **Reporting of Academic Misconduct Cases**

The procedure to be followed for reporting academic misconduct cases is as follows

- 1) If any student is found using unfair means during the examination, extraneous material, if any, found with the student should be confiscated by the proctor. However, the student should be permitted to continue the examination. At the same time, a “Student’s Academic Misconduct Report” should be submitted by the proctor to the CEX.
- 2) Any student involved in verbal cheating should be warned in the first instance. If he/she repeats the offence second time, he/she will be accused of cheating.
- 3) For the final examination, a “Student’s Academic Misconduct Report”, signed by at least two proctors, should be submitted to the CEX on the same day. There should be a separate report for each academic misconduct case. All reported academic misconduct cases shall be forwarded by the CEX to the Chairperson of the College/FP Student Affairs Committee (SAC) within one working day.
- 4) For mid-term examinations in colleges, the cheating cases will be reported by the Course Instructor (CI) to the Department Chair, who will forward all such cases to the Chairperson of College SAC.
- 5) For mid-term examinations in FP, the cheating cases will be reported by the proctors to the CEX, who will forward them to the Chairperson of FP SAC.
- 6) All cheating cases will be investigated by the SAC and the outcome of investigation will be communicated within one (1) week to both, the student accused of cheating and the CI through DU email and/or any other appropriate means.

**(For more details, refer to DU Examination Policy available on DU Website)**

## **5.9. Student Grades**

### **Submission of Final Grades**

The final grades of the student shall be discussed by the Department Chair with the course instructor and, after approval, they are submitted to the College Council (CC) for final approval. Once the grades are discussed and approved by the CC, the course instructor is informed by the Department Chair to confirm the grades in the system and a hard copy of the grades approved by the CC shall be sent to the DAR by the College Dean (FP Director) by the predefined deadline.

Course Instructors shall also submit a “Course Result Analysis” of the final grades for all the courses taught by them to the Department Chair. This includes classification of final grades, mean, median, SD, minimum grades and maximum grades. The anomalies, if any, shall be investigated by the Department Chair and need to be justified by the course instructors before approval of grades. This shall be preserved in the course file.

### **Class Grade Average**

It is expected that the average of all student grades in any class shall be within the following ranges:

- Undergraduate courses: 65% to 80%.
- Graduate courses: 65% to 80%.

Class grade averages outside the above ranges need to be justified to the Department Chair and justification shall be minuted in the department meeting held for the discussion and approval of final grades.

### **Final Grade Range**

Final grades range between numeral 40 and 100 and are reported in actual numeral grades with the exception of a grade below 40 which is reported as 40.

### **Entering the Grades in LOGSIS**

The following steps explain “How to enter student grades in LOGSIS system”.

- 1) Open DU Website: [www.du.edu.om](http://www.du.edu.om)
- 2) Click on DU SIS then click on Employee button, and finally enter your instructor ID and password.
- 3) Click on "Functions" link in "Assign Grades." menu.
- 4) Click on Fill Grade to enter student grades.
- 5) Enter student grade in “Total” block.
- 6) Click on “Submit”.
- 7) Click on “Confirm” to save your records.
- 8) Click on “Accept” button for final saving.

### **Appeal for the Final Course Grade**

The course instructor is the authority that decides on the student’s grade. However, if a student feels that the grading was unfair or a mistake has been committed, he/she must promptly discuss the matter with the course instructor. If the student and the instructor are unable to arrive at a solution, the student can submit a “Grade Appeal” through Students’ Request Handler that can be accessed from his DU SIS account up to the first one week of the beginning of classes of the following semester.

### **Change of Grades**

Normally, grades cannot be changed after the submission of the final grades to the DAR. Under exceptional circumstances, when a demonstrable mistake was made in the correction of the final examination or in the calculation of the grade, the supporting evidence for the changes of grade must be presented to the Department Chair and the College Dean.

The Course Instructor shall submit electronically an approved “Change-of-Grade Form” to the DAR stating the reasons for the change and endorsed by the Department Chairperson and the Dean of the College. The DAR should receive the approved “Change of Grade form” up to two (2) weeks from the beginning of the following semester.

### Course Learning Outcome Assessment

At the end of each semester the instructor shall conduct a survey among the students of the course using the “Course Learning Outcome Assessment Questionnaire” for each course. The result from the survey shall give the instructor feedback on whether the courses he/she is teaching are really achieving the outcomes envisaged for the courses.

DU also conducts at the end of each semester a student’s online survey for each course to know students’ assessment of the course and its instructor. The results thus obtained, are discussed by the department chair with the concerned faculty members and necessary changes in the course content or delivery if necessary are incorporated in course delivery for the ensuing semester.

### Grading System

At DU, the grading system used and its equivalence to the Letter Grade system and the Grade Points Average (GPA) system are shown below:

Numerical Grade	Grade Type	Equivalent Letter Grade	Equivalent Grade Points
95-100	Excellent	A	4
90-94		A-	3.7
87-89	Very Good	B+	3.3
83-86		B	3
80 -82		B-	2.7
77-79	Good	C+	2.3
73-76		C	2
70-72		C-	1.7
65-69	Pass	D+	1.3
60-64		D	1
Below 60	Fail	F	0.0

## 5.10. E-support for Faculty

To support learning by its students and provide better communication by its faculty, DU provides two helpful e-platforms, DU SIS and Moodle, both of which are accessible through the DU Website ([www.du.edu.om](http://www.du.edu.om)).

### DU SIS

Student Information System (SIS) is an online application to enable instructors to view their teaching schedule, access the overall course timetable offered by DU, access and communicate with the students and upload their attendance as well as assessment grades. It also provides, among others, access to all advisees’ list. This application allows faculty to send direct messages to their students and advisees on their academic status and progress. New faculty get their new DU SIS accounts once their joining formalities are complete.

**Moodle:**

The learning environment at DU is supported and enhanced by using technology. One such initiative is “Moodle”, a web-learning interface and an interactive platform for faculty and students for course management. Moodle allows faculty to create an online home page for the course. It includes: teaching schedule, study material, glossaries of terms, subject references, links to other Web resources, class discussions, forums where students can post comments and ask questions, quizzes, assignments, student grades and also class announcements.

## **6. Center for Teaching and Learning**

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DU has a Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), which is responsible for conducting all in-house professional development activities for academic staff. CTL prepares an annual schedule for professional development activities, based on the areas for professional development identified and communicated to it by the College Deans and the CPS Director.

CTL was established in 2008 to provide a variety of teaching and research resources and services for faculty throughout the university. The Center organizes and conducts professional development workshops; organizes research and book discussion groups and forums; and provides electronic resources and useful tips on conducting effective teaching, research, and community service activities.

## 7. Students with Disabilities Unit

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Students with Disabilities Unit (SWDU) at Dhofar University strives to provide comprehensive academic and non-academic support services to all persons with disabilities for their holistic growth and development in a way that helps them to adapt to their various environments, and empower them in the Omani society for positive changes in their life and their communities. The unit is headed by CAAS Dean and supported by a dedicated academic team consisting of faculty members drawn from all Colleges and CPS. There is a coordinator for managing the activities of the unit.

### **Services Provided by SWDU**

- **Built-in Accessibility Computer Systems for Visually Impaired Students:**

SWDU, in collaboration with the Computing and Networking Center (CNC), has acquired a licensed version of Windows and Microsoft 365, which has built-in disability's friendly accessibility features such as: screen magnifier, contrast ratios, and full feature screen reader.

SWDU also has installed NVDA (Non-visual Desktop Access) screen reader into computer labs for students with visual disabilities. SWDU plans to acquire licensed software Super-Nova for enhanced screen reading, which also Supports a wide range of braille displays.

In addition, DU's website has all accessibility features including text-reader to enable students with disabilities to have easy access to the available information.

- **Sign Language Interpreters and Note-takers**

SWDU provides sign language interpreters during classes for students with hearing disabilities and note-takers for students with visual disabilities. Sign Language interpreters are qualified and they also support students in their extra-curricular activities as well as registration and other tasks on campus.

SWDU regularly conducts workshops on sign language for academic and non-academic staff at DU.

SWDU also provides note takers to accommodate the learning needs of students with visual impairment. There is a team of trained and dedicated volunteers who are available for this purpose. These volunteers work under the guidance of SWDU.

- **Academic Advising**

Academic advising is an integral part of the academic duties of the faculty member at DU. Each student at DU has an assigned Academic Advisor. However, in case of students with disabilities, academic advising is perceived both as a social responsibility and academic duty.

SWDU works closely with the designated Academic Advisors of students with disabilities. These students receive one-to-one personalized academic advising during registration, course of study, and exams period. All the academic advising and support services are facilitated by the Academic Support Team, which includes a faculty member from each college and CPS.

- **Peer Tutoring**

In coordination with "Learning Support Center" (LSC). SWDU provides peer tutoring facility to students with disabilities. Peer tutors deliver the requested coaching on one-to-one sessions at a convenient time slot for students with disabilities.

- **Scribes**

SWDU, through its teams of peer tutors and volunteers, provides assistance to students with disabilities in note-taking and writing exams. SWDU ensures that the scribes are neutral assistance providers, with no conflict of interest, to maintain academic integrity.

- **Extra-curricular Activities**

Students with disabilities are actively involved in organizing and conducting extra-curricular activities in coordination with similar organizations in the local community.

## 8. Research and Consultancy

### 8.1 Introduction

Research is an integral part of any academician's career growth and one has to make continuous endeavour to 'create knowledge' i.e. to do research. The faculty is expected to make such endeavours to keep a balance between teaching and the research.

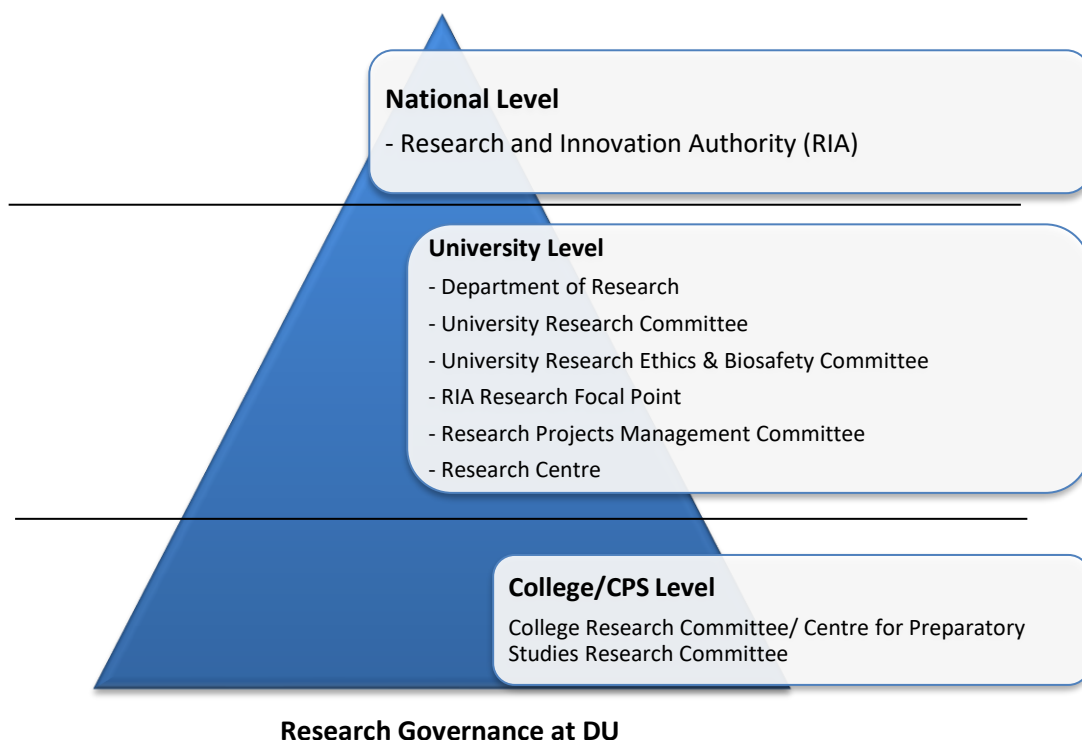
Dhofar University (DU) was established in 2004 and since then it is serving the community through exemplary education, research and community outreach. DU recognizes research as one of the main pillars of academic excellence as explicitly mentioned in its mission statement. All efforts are being made to encourage research among its faculty members, staff and students and to create a conducive environment for credible research.

In its strategic plan DU has envisaged to create a hub of research activity beneficial to the region. To achieve this, DU established a Department of Research (DR) that works under direct supervision of the Deputy Vice Chancellor. It strives to create a favourable research environment within DU by encouraging, facilitating and promoting all research activities across the University. The DR works on three major principles i.e. engagement, innovation and impact.

The University also has a University Research Committee (URC) and the University Research Ethics & Biosafety Committee (UREBC) that are tasked to help DR foster and improve the conducive research within DU while maintaining ethical research standards.

Dhofar University Research Center focuses on niche areas of Research of regional importance, dealt with in different Research units and develop strategically important local and national topics. For more details, please refer to [www.du.edu.om/research](http://www.du.edu.om/research)

### 8.2 Research Structure of DU



### 8.3 National Level: Research and Innovation Authority

The Research and Innovation Authority (RIA) is the governmental body in the Sultanate of Oman responsible for supervising Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), the development of high education policies, research & innovation in the Sultanate. It's vision is to create an innovation ecology that is responsive to local needs and international trends, fosters social harmony, and leads to creativity and excellence. The research & Innovation wing at RIA serves as a focal point and hub dedicated to promoting and supporting research, scientific enquiry, and innovation in the Sultanate of Oman. RIA provides research funds for faculty and students through various research grants. It manages the funded projects externally only. The Department of Research manages the grant internally at DU and ensures that the faculty and the students who receive research funds abide by RIA's policies, rules, and regulations for that particular research grant. Following are the research programs set by RIA in light of Oman Vision 2040, the national plans and strategies of various sectors in the country, and an understanding of the successful experiences witnessed across the globe:

- 1) Block Funding Program (BFP): Includes Research Grant (RG), Graduate Research Grant (GRG) and Undergraduate Research Grant (URG)
- 2) Strategic Research Grant Program (SRG)
- 3) The Publication Support Program
- 4) The Institute of Advanced Technology Integration (IATI)
- 5) Oman Animal and Plant Genetic Resources Center (Mawarid)
- 6) Research Collaboration with Sultan Qaboos Scientific Chairs
- 7) Capacity Building Programs:
  - i. The National Research Award
  - ii. The Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings
  - iii. London International Youth Science Forum (LIYSF)
  - iv. Upgrade Program
  - v. The Falling Walls Lab Competition

( For more details on RIA Research Programs please visit the website:

<https://orp.trc.gov.om/?lang=en>)

(Source: Oman Research Portal website)

#### **Block Funding Program**

As per its mission to promote quality research in Oman, RIA recently initiated "Block Funding Program", wherein at the beginning of an academic year, a fund will be allocated for each Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the Sultanate depending on their research performance during the previous year. BFP Includes Research Grant (RG), Graduate Research Grant (GRG) and Undergraduate Grant (UG).

The RG is for academic staff with a PhD degree, having a maximum cap of 20,000 R.O. For GRG Post graduate students, academic and non-academic staff with post graduate degree or Bachelor's degree with three years of experience, can apply for a maximum of 3,000 R.O. UG is for undergraduate students who have completed at least 3 semesters of their bachelor's degree with a maximum cap of 1500 OMR.

The applications for RG, GRG or UG can be submitted in one of the following research areas:

- Energy and Industry
- Information and Communications Technologies
- Environmental and Biological Resources
- Health and Social Services
- Education and Human Resources
- Culture, Basic and Social Sciences

The call for the applications begins at the start of each academic year. After going through a strict evaluation process as set by RIA, the applications are submitted from each institution for RIA's review by the 30<sup>th</sup> May each year. The interested faculty members should follow the call deadlines as announced by the Department of Research each year.

### **Strategic Research Grant Program**

The Strategic Research Projects Program is a national program directed at the government sector, based on the strategic directions of government institutions, by focusing on national priorities in various scientific, social, economic and cultural fields, in line with Oman Vision 2040.

#### **Objectives:**

- Finding scientific and applied solutions to the priorities and challenges facing government institutions through proposals for competitive research projects.
- Contributing to achieving the goals of sustainable development.
- Promoting research excellence and building national capabilities in research and innovation fields.
- Enhancing constructive cooperation between the parties to the research system (governmental, academic and private sectors) in order to transfer knowledge.
- Contributing to building a strong knowledge-based economy, which leads to strengthening and diversifying sources of income, and creating job opportunities.

#### **General conditions of the program:**

- The competent authority should have a strong desire to manage strategic research projects and adopt their outputs.
- The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation undertakes the contribution of a maximum of 50% of the cost of one project, and in an amount not exceeding OMR 50,000 for each research project approved.
- The main partner (the concerned ministry) and the research entities that implement the research projects are responsible for covering the remaining cost of the project and providing the necessary support.
- A management committee of the program is formed, and it includes at least five members, who are competent in scientific, practical and professional fields.
- An institutional research contact point is appointed to organize and follow up the work implementation with the Ministry.
- Financial and technical contact points are assigned.

#### **Entities implementing the studies and research:**

- Governmental institutions

- Universities, colleges and research centers (governmental and private)
- International research institutions participating as research associates or consultants only) provided that there is cooperation with a local entity within the Sultanate.

### **The Publication Support Program**

The Publication Support Program is a program concerned with supporting the publication of research papers in the best classified journals, most prestigious peer-reviewed periodicals and highest-rated specialized databases. The program aims to:

- Increasing the number of outstanding research in classified and peer-reviewed journals.
- Supporting local and global cooperation and partnerships between research institutions.
- Improving the quality of research and its outputs.
- Advancing the Sultanate of Oman's position in the Global Innovation Index.
- Raising the global ranking of universities in the Sultanate.
- Contributing to building a knowledge-based economy.

The program provides a maximum of OMR 700 for the publishing fees per research paper.

### **The Institute of Advanced Technology Integration - EJAAD**

The Institute of Advanced Technology Integration (IATI), represented by EJAAD, is based on bridging the gap between the industrial and academic sectors, with the aim of forming an effective research and development partnership and creating a stimulating research environment for research experts and academics, in order to build an Omani knowledge-based economy. EJAAD focuses on applied research and commercializing research outputs (at technology readiness levels from 4-9) by conducting applied research in priority sectors for economic development in the Sultanate and developing research into new technologies and innovative products that lead to meeting market needs and address current and future challenges. EJAAD continues to grow and prosper with the support of the participating members of the academic and industrial institutions and the members of the steering and administrative committee. EJAAD aims to help in raising the Sultanate of Oman's ranking in the Global Innovation Index and the Global Competitiveness Index, and develop research into new technologies and innovative product. EJAAD also works as an intermediary between the industry and business sector on one hand, and the academic sector on the other hand. (For more information please visit Ejaad website at <https://orp.moheri.gov.om/ejaad/>)

### **Oman Animal and Plant Genetic Resources Center**

Oman Animal and Plant Genetic Resources Center (Mawarid) was established in 2012 to promote sustainable use and awareness of the importance of the genetic diversity inherent in animals, plants and microorganisms in Oman as a natural and heritage resource through education, research and innovation. Mawarid seeks to be a cooperative regional center and reference for all activities of animal and plant genetic resources. The center carries out many activities in the field of preserving genetic resources, whether through studying and inventorying Omani genetic resources, restoring and developing Omani seeds, establishing gene banks, conducting research studies, and establishing databases related to genetic resources. The center also works to spread awareness through many activities, such as the Science Café, the Treasures of Oman exhibition, and through various media. Innovation category: Includes innovations and Young innovators

### **Research Collaboration Program with Sultan Qaboos Scientific Chairs**

The Research Collaboration Program with Sultan Qaboos Scientific Chairs was launched by the Ministry to enhance the value and impact of these chairs in supporting research teams and innovators. The program offers dedicated research grants for project implementation through joint funding between the Ministry and the researchers' home institutions, with additional financial or in-kind contributions from the Sultan Qaboos Scientific Chairs.

#### **Program Objectives:**

- Promote Omani culture and highlight its civilizational role in advancing human knowledge.
- Strengthen partnerships and collaboration with cultural and scientific institutions worldwide.
- Foster scientific and cultural exchange, enhancing cooperation among international institutions.
- Consolidate shared principles and values, while promoting understanding, coexistence, and global peace.
- Support diverse studies and research across multiple disciplines.

#### **Program Fields:**

- International relations, Middle Eastern studies, and shared values.
- Arabic and Islamic studies.
- Mathematics
- Information Technology, Communication and AI.
- Water and desert aquaculture.

#### **Eligibility Criteria:**

- The Principal Investigator (PI) must be affiliated with the applying institution at the time of submission and remain so until the contract is signed.
- The PI must hold a PhD (or equivalent) and have expertise relevant to the collaborating scientific chair.
- The PI must not be a member of the research committee or serve as an institutional liaison.
- The PI may only apply for another grant under this program after successfully completing any previously funded project.

### **Capacity Building Programs - The National Research Award**

The Annual Research Forum is an annual gathering for scientists, researchers, academics, decision makers, officials and others. The forum provides an opportunity for researchers and those interested in the same disciplines to see the latest developments and exchange knowledge and experiences. The Annual Research Forum includes simultaneous scientific sessions and an accompanying exhibition of scientific posters of the winning research projects of the National Research Award funded by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation. The winners of the National Research Award are announced during the forum. The National Research Award aims to encourage researchers to conduct research of high quality and national importance, and to qualify national cadres capable of competing in the research field. The National Research Award is divided into two categories:

- Category I: Best published research led by a PhD holder or equivalent (Senior Specialist or higher in the medical field)
- Category II: Best published research led by a young researcher (a non-PhD holder)

The National Research Award has six research fields, including:

- Education and Human Resources
- Information and Communication Technologies
- Health and Social Services
- Cultural, Social, and Basic Sciences
- Energy and Industry
- Environmental and Biological Resources

#### **Capacity Building Programs - The Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings**

The Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings is an international forum held annually in Germany in which young researchers from various countries of the world participate. The theme of the Lindau Meetings generally focus on one of the following fields: medicine and physiology, chemistry or physics. The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation annually provides opportunities for emerging researchers to participate in the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings, which are held in the first half of each year in Lindau, Germany. The Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings aims to build the capabilities of Omani researchers, transfer knowledge and exchange experiences, and refine the scientific and research skills of the Omani youth. It also provides the Omani youth the opportunity to get acquainted with Nobel Laureates closely and to know the latest scientific developments, as well as creating partnerships and links with scientists from different countries of the world. (For more information, please visit the LIYSF Website at <https://www.lindau-nobel.org/>)

#### **Capacity Building Programs - London International Youth Science Forum**

The London International Youth Science Forum includes the participation of a large group of students in scientific disciplines from various countries of the world annually at Imperial College in London. This forum includes scientific lectures from leading scientists around the world, in addition to organizing visits to scientific areas, research institutions and industrial areas, and visits to prestigious research institutions in London, such as the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge. (For more information, please visit the LIYSF Website at <https://www.liysf.org.uk/>)

#### **Capacity Building Programs - Upgrade Program**

Upgrade Program is considered as one of the most important capacity-building programs directed to students in higher education institutions. The program seeks to transform graduation projects of undergraduate students in the final year into emerging companies based on innovation, capable of growing at a sustainable pace through a series of financial, advisory, and technical support from the program partners. (For more details on RIA Research Programs please visit RIA Website: <https://orp.moheri.gov.om/>)

#### **Capacity Building Programs - The Falling Walls Lab Competition**

The Falling Walls Lab Competition in the Sultanate of Oman is a local version of the international Falling Walls Lab competition in which students, entrepreneurs, early-career researchers and

academics of all disciplines present their ideas in front of a jury to solve problems and eliminate barriers. The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation organizes this competition in cooperation with the German non-profit Falling Walls Foundation. The winners of this competition qualify to participate in the international version of the competition, which is held in Berlin, Germany every year. For more details regarding the program visit <https://falling-walls.com/science-summit>

### **8.3 University Level: Department of Research**

The Department of Research (DR) strives to create a favorable research environment within DU which encourages, facilitates and promotes Research activities across the University. As per its mission, the DR under the leadership of the VC and the DVC shall promote, facilitate and foster the Research environment at DU. Its aim is to contribute to the development of the quality Research work at DU and to help establish it as a leading Research institution in the region. In the capacity of a principal Research agency of the University, the main role of the DR is to provide Research leadership to the University, which entails the following responsibilities:

In the capacity of a principal Research agency, the main role of the DR is to provide Research leadership and support to the University, which entails the following responsibilities:

- Promoting and facilitating independent, collaborative, interdisciplinary & multidisciplinary Research & innovation in the University.
- Identifying niche areas of interest important to Dhofar region in particular and Oman in general.
- Building and provide adequate support to develop a community of innovative researchers at the University.
- Fostering and stimulating Research efforts and creative projects by providing internal research grants, incentives & awards.
- Acting as a focal point between the University and MoHERI.
- Implementing and revising the Operational Plan for Research.
- Establishing and reviewing research policies.
- Managing the University's Research budget.
- To encourage and mentor the faculty members and students to obtain various Research grants from DU, MoHERI or other external funding agencies.
- Preparing the annual report and any other reports related to the Research.
- Guiding and facilitating University/College/FP Research Committees in their operations.
- Ensuring objective, ethical and responsible conduct of Research in the University.
- Promoting the strategic goal of DU being a hub of Research in Dhofar region by supporting impactful and innovative research activities.
- Developing networks between DU researchers, industry and the community with respect to Research initiatives of mutual benefit.

#### **Promoting Strategic Topics of Interest to Oman:**

In order to focus on the strategic topics of interest to Oman, the DR is responsible to:

- Encourage DU faculty in each department to participate Research interest groups that may also involve DU students.

- Provide literature and necessary guidance to each Research group related to funding strategic Research through MoHERI's Strategic Research program (SRP) or internal grants & incentives.

### **Linking Omani Researchers to International Researchers**

Research is essential to nation building as it underpins progress, economic growth and prosperity. It also helps us better equip and train the workforce and encourages creativity and innovations as it leads to greater entrepreneurship and helps industry grow. In short, Research makes the nation more competitive in the global economy. As per the National Research Strategy for Oman, the government has been actively taking steps to promote quality Research among young Omani researchers. In order to support the government to achieve its goals, the DR at DU is responsible to:

- Encourage collaborative Research through joint papers and Research projects with Omani researchers.
- Encourage young Omani researchers to Participate in international conferences, workshops and seminars.
- Encourage young Omani researchers to apply for membership in academic and professional international associations.
- Encourage Omani Master students to publish their Research work.
- Develop a database of active Omani researchers in Omani institutions of higher education and invite them for Research-oriented lectures and seminars.
- Sign collaborative Research MoUs with other national/international universities to focus on joint Research of interests and ensure maximum involvement of Omani researchers.
- Publish research activities and achievements of young Omani researchers annually.

(For more information please visit [www.du.edu.om/research](http://www.du.edu.om/research))

### **8.4 University Level: University Research Committee**

The URC acts in an advisory capacity to the Department of Research to help foster and improve the research environment at DU. It consists of two representatives from each College and a representative from the Centre for Preparatory Studies (CPS) nominated by the College council or CPS Director for a term of two years, renewable for a similar term. The Chairperson, his/her assistant and any additional members are appointed by the DVC. Its main tasks are to advise DR in:

- Formulating research policies and guidelines to ensure research impact and excellence.
- Approving applications for internal grants & incentives, conducting research or other works in DU that involved data collection, interviews with DU community, and filling questionnaires to ensure ethics and biosafety.
- Editing and publishing the research activities report of the University every year.
- Facilitate collaboration with other universities.
- Help the Colleges/CPS organize international conferences at DU.

### **8.5 University Level: University Research Ethics & Biosafety Committee**

Dhofar University has a strong commitment to maintain high ethical standards in all spheres and the domain of research in particular. Research activities have to take into account the various factors including but not limited to plagiarism, environment and biosafety. Dhofar University has a well-defined Research Ethics & Code of Conduct Policy that applies to all employees, students and visiting researchers. The DU Ethics & Biosafety Committee is chaired by the Chair of the University

Research Committee and the members are the Chairs of the respective College Research Committee from each of the College and the CPS. Additional member can be invited with expertise in the relevant disciplines when and where required.

### **8.6 University Level: RIA Research Focal Point & Research Projects Management Committee (RPMC)**

As per the requirement by RIA; DU has nominated a Research Focal Point (RFP) and the Research Projects Management Committee (RPMC) Chair. The RFP assists and guides the faculty members in applying for and managing different RIA funded grants whereas the RPMCC is tasked to evaluate and rank the submitted proposals. This committee also follows up and evaluate research projects progress and final reports. manage the entire internal and external evaluation process of proposals submitted to RIA for funding.

### **8.7 University Level: Dhofar University Research Centre**

As a part of its mission to promote quality Research and to become the hub of all Research activities in the region, DU has setup a Research centre. The center focuses on few niche areas of Research of regional importance, dealt with in different Research units. The clusters support and develop strategically important local and national topics such as Conservation of biodiversity, frankincense and medicinal plants, sustainable development of Dhofar mountains and coastal areas, issues related to livestock and agriculture, computer and information security, enhanced oil recovery, youth issues, languages, cultural heritage and society, improved traffic system, e-society in Oman, cancer detection and classification, remote sensing, Entrepreneurship and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) etc. For 'Frankincense, Medicinal plants & Biodiversity', a fully operational Research lab has already been set up and is operational.

### **8.8 College(CPS) level: College (CPS) Research Committee**

The CRC /CPSRC comprises of senior faculty members chosen from all the departments/ units of the College/CPS who are entrusted with the task of fostering a good research environment in the college. All members are appointed by the Dean of the college/Director of CPS and serve for a period of two academic years. The members are responsible for advising, formulating recommendations, and providing information to the URC on University's Research operational and strategic plan, Research-education, policies, guidelines, procedures and evaluating internal grants.

### **8.9 Research Grant & Incentives**

DU faculty members can receive following research incentives and grants after the approval from CRC/CPSRC Chair, Department of Research and the DVC/ VC. The grant and budget management has been done by DR.

#### **Conference Grants**

- For attending national and international conferences

#### **Research Publication Incentives**

- For publishing research papers in Web of Science, Scopus and TRC approved list of Arabic Journals

#### **DU Research Grants**

- Grant for supporting innovative research ideas and projects of national and regional importance

### **Conference Grant (CG)**

The faculty members at Dhofar University can apply for three types of conference grants: Traditional Conference Grant (TCG) (In person attendance), Online Conference Grant (OCG) and the Conference Attendance Grant for Invited Keynote Speaker (KCG). Moreover, to promote research culture at DU, the Department of Research also offers the Grant for Organizing Conferences (ORCG) to Colleges/CPS/Research Centres.

#### **Traditional Conference Grant**

The TCG is awarded to the faculty members who intend to present their research work in national and international conferences. The faculty members can claim a maximum of 1000 R.O.

#### **Online Conference grant (OCG)**

Taking into consideration the prevalence of COVID-19 pandemic around the globe in 2020, numerous precautionary measures were taken by many countries including closure or restricted air travel. In view of the same, various international societies and universities had resorted to online conferences to continue with the research initiative of academics across the world. This initiative will help support our faculty to continue their research activities by attending such scientific forums by exchanging research experiences and building research networks.

#### **Conference Attendance Grant for Invited Keynote Speaker (KCG)**

The faculty members who are invited as keynote speaker in prestigious conferences due to their research expertise and reputation to present research paper will be provided ticket to attend the conference provided the conference organizers are not facilitating travel. The faculty member has to submit proof of payment of airline ticket to the Department of Finance upon return.

#### **Grant for Organizing Conference (ORCG)**

Academic events are essential for fostering research and knowledge exchange across academic institutions. One of the objective of DR and URC is to encourage a research culture at university through such events. To assist, the DR grants 1500 R.O. as ORCG to Colleges/CPS/Research Centers for one conference per year. The grant is intended to create a conducive environment of research knowledge-sharing between the researchers as well as to establish linkages and research networks with relevant organizations and industrial sectors. The complete application including details of conference as per template, application form and necessary required documents must be submitted to CRC/CPSRC. The approved application will then follow the similar procedure as TCG/OCG Clause 2.1.3(f-i). For Research centres, the application should be forwarded directly to DR after approval of the respective Director of Research Centre. The application must be submitted at least four months before the conference.

#### **Availing and Claiming Conference Grants**

During the academic year, faculty members cannot avail both types of conference grants (TCG & OCG). Once the OCG grant is approved and availed, it will automatically make the applicant ineligible for the TCG grant. Both OCG and TCG grants shall be subject to the availability of the research budget and the last date could be preponed or extended based on the budget availability. DR shall send out an intimation about the same to all academic in DU. It is possible that the applicant receives the funds before he/she travels if, along with the Leave form and the TCG approval, the applicant submits:

- a) Proof of payment of registration fee
- b) Proof of payment of airline ticket

In either case (receiving payment before or after the event), it is the applicant's responsibility to call/e-mail/follow up with the Department of Finance to receive his/her payment.

### **Dhofar University Research Grant (DURG)**

Dhofar University Research Grant (DURG) is intended to support the academic research work of the DU faculty that is expected to yield innovative results or findings consistent with the university research and educational objectives. DURG are awarded to support collaborative/group research projects. The project budget should not exceed 1500 R.O. The number of funded projects will depend on the total allocated budget for DURG each year, however, it is expected that each College and FP succeeds in getting one grant each.

### **Research Incentives (RI)**

DU strongly believes that faculty should be rewarded for their research productivity. Following are different type of incentives a faculty member can apply for:

#### **Incentives for Publishing Papers (IPP)**

The faculty members who publish a paper in a journal indexed in Web of Science (with or without impact factor), Scopus or DU list A of Refereed Arabic Journals (RAJ-A) during the academic year will be eligible for a monetary incentive for each paper (subject to budget availability).

#### **Incentives for Book and Book Chapter (IBB)**

Similar to IPP, DU recognizes the importance of book (should be textbook having coverage of curriculum in entire Oman or GCC) and book chapter publication and believes that faculty members should be rewarded for publishing them.

#### **Incentives for Patents**

A faculty in whose name a patent is registered (either nationally or internationally) while in the service of the University and with University affiliation shall be eligible for a cash reward of R.O. 500 and a Letter of Appreciation to be awarded on Annual research day.

#### **Incentives for Engaging in Consultancy Activity**

A faculty engaged in Consultancy Activity while in the service of the University (R.O. 2,000 and above) and with University affiliation shall be eligible for a cash reward of R.O. 300 and a Letter of Appreciation to be awarded on Annual research day.

#### **Incentive for Researchers having approved External Grant**

The full-time faculty members, non-academic staff and students can claim for incentive for securing external grant. The research team shall be eligible for an incentive of 15% of the total amount spent by the research team from the approved budget of externally funded research grant project.

## **8.10 List of Journals Not Accepted in DU**

With the intent of ensuring quality publications by DU faculty members, the Department of Research, through URC, shall publish a list of journals NOT accepted by DU by 30<sup>th</sup> June each year (Beall's List). This list shall be applicable for the entire ensuing academic year. If any faculty member published a research paper in any journal mentioned in the list, **it will not be** considered as publications acceptable to DU. Additionally, such faculty may be subject to disciplinary action as per Academic Integrity Policy and DU Bylaws. The journals are categorized into three main categories:

- a) Blacklisted Journals List
- b) Predatory Journals List

### c) Hijacked Journals List

However, if a journal is appearing in the above blacklisted journal list or predatory list but is also indexed in Scopus or Web of Science database, then in that case DU will accept the publications in that journal.

However, if the journal is in hijacked journal list it will NOT be accepted under any circumstances. The list shall be revised, updated and circulated by 30 June of each academic year and will be applicable from 1<sup>st</sup> September up till 31<sup>st</sup> August of each academic year. Similarly, the Arabic List A and B of refereed Arabic journals shall be revised each year and published by 30<sup>th</sup> June of the year and will be applicable from 1<sup>st</sup> September up till 31<sup>st</sup> August of each academic year.

### **8.11 Research Leave to attend conference without requesting Funding**

The faculty member who wish to attend the Conferences or any other research event approved by A faculty member wishing to attend a conference or any other research-related event on a self-financed basis, without requesting University funding, must submit a Research Leave request through the Research Management System (RMS), accompanied by all required supporting documents, including the research paper, conference details, and acceptance letter. The application shall be submitted to the Department Chair for review. Upon review, the Department Chair shall forward the approved application to the College Dean within two working days of receipt. Following approval by the College Dean, the application shall be forwarded to the Department of Research (DR). The Department of Research shall issue the official approval letter and communicate it to the faculty member. The Department of Research shall also notify the Human Resources Department of the approved research leave for record and administrative purposes.

### **8.12 Research Ethics Approval**

In accordance with the University Research Ethics Policy, all research activities involving human participants, animals, genetic materials, or other ethical considerations must be conducted in a manner that ensures the protection of the rights, dignity, welfare, and privacy of all living organisms and individuals involved in research. The University requires that such research be properly managed and controlled through clear procedures and guidelines governing ethical review and approval. Researchers must also ensure full compliance with the Sultanate of Oman's laws and regulations relating to human rights, privacy, modern slavery, and human trafficking. Furthermore, all social science research involving surveys, interviews, observations, focus groups, or any form of interaction with human research subjects or the general public must undergo appropriate ethical review to safeguard participants' rights and interests. Therefore, prior ethical approval must be obtained through the University's Research Management System (RMS) by submitting the relevant application to the University Research Ethics and Biosafety Committee before commencing any research activities involving such ethical considerations.

### **8.13 DU Research Policies**

DU has established policies for the implementation of various aspects of research and consultancy. These include:

#### **Consultancy Policy**

DU has a large pool of qualified and research-oriented faculty with a rich experience in consultancy and on the other hand, the Sultanate of Oman, and especially the Dhofar Region, is witnessing a rapid development in various sectors, which provides a huge scope for consultancy. In view of this, DU aims to provide a favourable atmosphere for its faculty and staff to embark on consultancy activities. The University considers consultancy as an essential professional activity related to the

faculty's area of expertise, skills and research and a tool for providing solutions to various challenges in business, social, economic and technical areas. It is perceived as an activity that is mutually beneficial to the faculty, university, industry and society in general. DU considers consultancy work as an important contribution from the University to society, through the transfer of knowledge and expertise to businesses, industry and community.

### **Intellectual Property Policy**

DU encourages and supports its students, faculty and staff members in bringing the results of their research, consultancy and other similar activities in diverse fields of knowledge to public use and benefit, and encourages their commercial development, subject to protecting the University's rights. The main aim behind developing the Intellectual Property (IP) Policy is to encourage advancement of technology and its transfer for public benefit. The policy defines the ownership and rights of the inventor(s)/creator(s) and the University and provides procedures, guidelines and a governing mechanism.

### **Ethics Policy**

All living beings (human and non-human) have been bestowed with certain fundamental rights around the world. The purpose of DU Ethics policy is to respect the moral rights of living beings and also lay down fundamental ethical principles for all research activities conducted on them at University. DU also reserves the rights to protect non-human living beings and ensure that the experiments involving them are conducted in a safe and socially responsible manner. This policy applies to all leading investigators, staff members, students and researchers engaged in approved research projects on University premises which involve human, animal or genetic ethical considerations. The policy also applies to all DU contractors, suppliers and business partners, wherever appropriate.

### **Bio-safety Policy**

The research activities carried out by DU staff members may involve the use of bio-hazardous materials or may result in the generation of bio-hazardous waste. The biosafety policy is to ensure that all research activities involving bio-hazardous materials are well managed and controlled by providing comprehensible procedures and guidelines for approval of such research projects and for safe handling, storage, use and disposal of bio hazardous material. It is also ensured that the staff, students and researchers involved in these projects are aware of the risks associated with the handling of bio-hazardous materials and take the necessary precautions.

### **Research Ethics and Code of Conduct Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to establish fundamental principles of research ethics and code of conduct which will serve as the foundation for research conducted at DU. The University expects all those conducting research to honor these principles and adopt them as standard practice, irrespective of whether they are employees, students or visiting researchers and irrespective of the source of their funding or the field in which they conduct their research or the site where the research is conducted. However, there are bound to be instances of violations of research ethics and code of conduct. Therefore, it is necessary to provide a well-defined procedure for ensuring adherence to research ethics and code of conduct.

## **8.14 Professional Development for Research**

DU provides well-defined and organized professional development opportunities to its academic staff to ensure that they have the appropriate skills and expertise to achieve DU's strategic objectives for research. The University provides both in-house and external professional development opportunities. Staff development needs are linked to annual appraisal results and

contemporary developments in the field of teaching, learning and research, which help the staff in maintaining their academic currency and support their scholarly activities.

### **8.15 Research and Scholarly Activities as a Criterion for Appraisal and Promotion**

“Research and Scholarly Achievements” is one of the three criteria used in the “Annual Appraisal” of academic staff and carries a weight of 50% while teaching & learning holds 40% weightage and the community service has 10% weight. The staff-members with average performance in this criterion are identified for research training activities. It is also one of the three criteria used for “Academic promotion”.

### **8.16 Research-teaching Nexus**

The research Teaching Nexus provides the opportunity for faculty to integrate research in their teaching and produce the successful scholarly outcomes. DU encourages staff to incorporate their research activities and the contemporary researches in the field into curricula to foster student interest in research and for understanding its benefits. This helps in motivating and encouraging more student’s participation in research projects.

### **8.17 Collaborative Research with Students**

DU encourages collaborative research with students, especially under Graduate Research Grant and Undergraduate Grant. The faculty member involved in MoHERI funded student research projects receives a certificate of appreciation and cash reward on Annual Research Day. They also score an additional rating in Research and Scholarly Activities in AFAR for collaborative research with students. Likewise, there are incentives for publication of Research Papers in Collaboration with DU’s Student(s) and research conducted at DU.

### **8.18 Research Groups**

Considering the research expertise and the research facilities available in each College and the Research centre, DU has formed Research groups considering the topics of research of regional and national importance. This is done to facilitate the research collaboration with other HEIs and relevant Industries.

(For Details, Refer to DU website at: <http://mydu.du.edu.om/du-icons/research/>)

**This Faculty Handbook provides basic and brief information necessary for all faculty. Due precautions have been taken to ensure its accuracy. However, in case of any contradiction with DU Bylaws or DU Policies, the facts given in DU Bylaws and Policies will be treated as authentic and final. As such the faculty is requested to refer to these Bylaws and policies for more details.**