



جامعة قطر
QATAR UNIVERSITY

OFID

NEWSLETTER

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Collaboration, Creativity, Commitment



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A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome to the first newsletter of the Office of Faculty and Instructional Development at Qatar University.

In accordance with QU vision and mission, OFID has relentlessly supported faculty members in their quest for high quality education through different services provided as training programs, consultations, educational events, and numerous resources.

This newsletter will reflect Qatar University's continuous efforts to build a community of learners who share experiences on innovation in teaching and learning, technology and assessment, and promote collaboration among faculty members from all colleges and programs as well as with partners from various regional and international universities.

In the past few years, OFID has given the full meaning of its mission, supporting faculty members with all possible services such as offering workshops and seminars on teaching strategies, class management, student evaluation, integrated technology, communication skills, instructional development focusing on course design and student learning outcomes.

In this first newsletter, the reader will have a brief overview of the history of OFID because this is how we pay tribute to the pioneers who initiated and institutionalized faculty development in 2005; we will go over some of the many events organized in collaboration with QU colleges, programs and academic offices. A list of resources will be also proposed to faculty members as another way to stay engaged and in a constant constructive reflection about best practices in the field of teaching and learning.

I invite you to go through OFID first newsletter that shows the productive and enjoyable academic environment at Qatar University.

Dr. Dalal Moukarzel
Director
Office of Faculty & Instructional Development

LAUNCH OF A VISIONARY JOURNEY

A Tribute to the Founders

The Office of Faculty and Instructional Development was launched in the academic year 2005-2004, as an initiative of QU Former Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, **Dr. Shaikha Bint Jabor Al Thani**, with a broad responsibility to support faculty staff through the provision of an ample variety of pedagogical and professional development programs.

Professor Ali Abdel Moneim, former Dean of the College of Education and actual Director of the Core Curriculum Program, was appointed as first Director for faculty and instructional development. The joint organizational efforts underlined the vitality to invest in a systematic platform for an added value in both education and training.

In light of QU's vision of quality education and excellence in teaching and learning, the launch of OFID highlights the strategic directions towards advancing instruction practices based on the latest research and technology; it has been a major step forward in implementing innovative approaches to teaching in a collaborative working environment through workshops and seminars on curriculum enhancement and innovations.

OFID's Mission

The mission of the Office of Faculty and Instructional Development (OFID) is to support QU academic staff with ongoing professional development programs and resources that meets faculty needs for high-quality education and research. OFID aims at facilitating and supporting faculty research endeavors and the implementation of best teaching practices in a collaborative working environment through workshops and seminars on curriculum enhancement and innovations.

Strategic Directions

The Office of Faculty & Instructional Development believes, since its inception, that a shared culture of teaching for better learning, and assessment for improvement brings faculty members to enhance the quality of students results and development. From the strategic plan 2010-2013 to the new strategic plan 2013-2016, OFID will continuously provide the best services to enhance the quality of teaching and learning based on the latest trends in technology and research in education.

OFID will continue to

- Enhance and promote excellence in teaching and learning.
- Disseminate examples of the best teaching and learning practices university-wide.
- Assess and respond to immediate and long range professional development needs related to new academic programs.
- Maintain a quality workforce and work environment. Provide offerings and services to help faculty, teaching assistants, and supportive staff integrate e-learning strategies and related technology into teaching.
- Develop online delivery of OFID's miscellaneous programs.



“In whatever we do, in whatever project we embark on, we think in what way it will help us meet the mission of QU.” Shaikha Bint Jabor Al Thani (2011)

and we continue the journey...



YA-HALA ACADEMIC ORIENTATION 2012 WELCOMING NEW FACULTY AT QATAR UNIVERSITY

“YaHala”, means a warm welcome in English. It is a special gathering that provides the new faculty members with valuable information about the strategic vision of Qatar University, the programs offered and the numerous resources available that they would need to always enhance the quality of their work and life in Qatar.

The academic orientation for the new faculty members coming to Qatar University for the academic year 13-2012 was held over 2 days in September 2012 and was attended by more than 70 new faculties.

Professor Sheikha Al Misnad, President of Qatar University welcomed the new faculty members with an important speech related to QU vision and strategic directions. She talked about the support the university will provide the new colleagues to have them as part of the big family, contributing to the growth of students and the university.

Prof. Sheikha Al Misnad stated that “The YaHala Academic Orientation Days is an important traditional event to welcome new faculties in the best possible way by all levels of the university.”

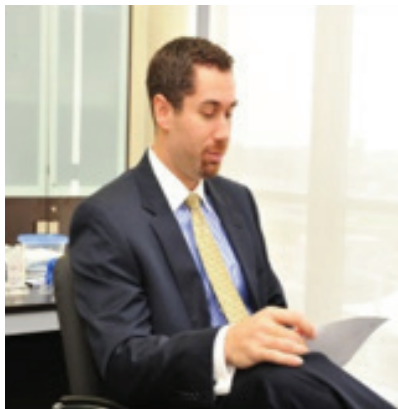
Prof. Sheikha elaborated on the 2 - day program put forth by OFID and invited faculty members to browse the website of different offices at QU mainly the VPCAO website to know more about the policies and opportunities offered. To gather insights from different partners at QU, OFID Newsletter Team interviewed colleagues as facilitators, mentors and new comers.



Professor Nitham Hindi, Dean of the College of Business and Economics mentioned that the academic orientation days play an important role in providing the new faculty with useful information regarding the institution and the Faculty Review System, assisting the faculty performance in various areas, including teaching, research and services. He considers that the sessions offered during the academic orientation event are important for them and they need to go through the follow-up process later on during the semester to get familiar with the system and collect the documentation needed.

As OFID offers different sessions on the Teaching Portfolio and the Faculty Performance review and Development System, new faculty will need to attend as often as possible over the 2 semesters.

Another very unique and interesting aspect of the faculty orientation at Qatar University is the Mentorship Program. Each new faculty is given a contact name, who will be his or her mentor for the semester. Mentors also need to have an informal and social role with the mentees. OFID interviewed Dr. Conrad Strum as a mentor and Dr. Brenda Tofte as a mentee from the College of Law.



For the AY 13-2012, Dr. Conrad was invited to mentor two new faculty members at the College of law. When asked about what was a support for him, he said “I found the Mentorship Guidelines from OFID very helpful”. He stated that mentors are responsible to attend and participate in activities that can support new colleagues be better integrated in the life of the college and the university. He also explained how the mentor-mentee relationship stretches beyond the university campus with regards to suggesting schools for kids, housing, places to visit, and much more.



As a Mentee, Dr. Brenda Tofte, Lecturer of Legal Writing and Advocacy Skills, explained that she found the experience very interesting as she met and discussed areas of interest in teaching and learning with colleagues from different departments at the university. She stated that her mentor was very helpful in different ways and she could easily connect with him since they were from the same department and believed in his role as a mentor.



From the College of Arts and Science, two new colleagues commented on the Academic Orientation Days. According to Dr. Ahmad Haji Safar, Assistant Professor in the Department of Arabic Languages & Literature “the academic orientation is not only important because it helps new faculty members take the right path”. During his interview with us, Dr. Ahmad described how the academic orientation days were

beneficial to him in different ways, as they did not only provide him with adequate information needed as a new comer, but also with instant service of providing prompt information in different areas of interest. He mentioned the workshops offered by the OFID, stating that, “the way these workshops were presented was very much interesting and appealing, to engage the participating faculty members in the work he/she will be offering throughout their stay at Qatar University”, in the sense that presentations are helpful especially that they are made available to new faculty members online afterwards.



“It is the first time I attend an academic orientation event in an Arabic university”- Dr. Imtenan Smadi

Dr. Imtenan Al Smadi, Associate Professor of Arabic Language at the College of Arts and Sciences, explained that it was the first time she attended an academic orientation event in an Arabic university. Dr. Imtenan added: “the Academic Orientation Days introduced new faculty members to the university in general, and to different teaching and learning methods, including technology like Blackboard, and it also gave them the chance to meet and mingle with other members from different departments and educational backgrounds”. Dr. Imtenan added that “the first day was very much a way of breaking the ice between new faculty members, making them feel more comfortable, whereas the second day was more practical and engaging”. She explained that without the orientation days she would have felt lost in the new environment. Dr. Imtenan stressed the fact that OFID is of great importance, constantly keeping in touch with new faculty, and looking at ways to support them.



The new Director of the Sports Sciences Program, Dr. Khalid Bibi, was also among the colleagues who were interviewed. Dr. Bibi said that his experience was enjoyable and interesting. He especially appreciated bringing together people facing the same concerns such as settling children in schools, the driving license, house allowance and being able to discuss these along with what is academically expected from new comers. He was pleased that the main objective is to support new colleagues, suggesting bringing mentors and mentees in sub-sessions to improve the relationship and be better able to respond to QU's requests in terms of academics and assessment of faculty performance.



Last but not least, Professor Ramzi Taha, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the College of Engineering, explained that the academic orientation event is very helpful and serves as a facilitative experience, which he believes must continue. He also indicated that the faculty member goes through a lot of pressure when he /she first arrive to a new place, and it is essential to have a good orientation program. Such a program helps them learn the university context, rules and regulations, policies, code of conduct and what is expected of them. Dr. Taha strongly suggested that there must be a proper systematic process of bringing in and settling the new faculty into their new jobs and into the new country as a whole. The University will also aim at being more focused on issues of making the new faculty members comfortable, as these aids in solving half the problems that new faculty members face, upon their arrival in Doha. With the new academic year coming in September 2013, OFID is already setting plans to welcome more than 200 faculty members who will join us for the Fall semester.





Faculty and Instructional Development with the Core Curriculum Program (CCP): a Joint Collaboration with OFID

“The Core Curriculum Program (CCP) is considered as a corner stone in reputable universities; it is also known as the General Education Program in other universities”, this is how Dr. Ali Abdul Monem, Director of the Core Curriculum Program at Qatar University began the conversation with us. While we had chosen very carefully our questions to grasp the purpose and importance of CCP, Dr. Ali offered us a comprehensive overview of the program, all said with a visible passion for student education.

“Our mission is to provide high quality core education”

Dr. Ali Abdul Monem Ali, director of the CCP, ardently said, “Our mission is to provide high quality core education”. The main idea for a Core Curriculum Program is not about just offering major courses, but also achieving specific learning outcomes besides activities. This is why courses are selected carefully from an approved study plan. The Core Curriculum Program, as designed by QU, is meant to equip students with specific competences, general skills, and to broaden their knowledge outside their majors; it also bolsters their positive attitudes towards civic engagement and civic responsibilities. Dr. Ali further elaborated, insisting on the CCP action plan for the implementation and monitoring of all courses to be in conformity with the Major University Learning Outcomes.

CCP and Accreditation

As most accreditation agencies in higher education indicate, it would not be enough to have graduates only focusing on their major courses. With this in mind, CCP offers 130 courses, which are approved by academic study plans. There is a common package all students should take, including Arabic I, Arabic II, Islamic Culture, and History; whereas there are other packages that differ from one major to another. The overall rationale is to expose students to some fields outside their majors.

The valuable fruitions of CCP become evident in the study period at QU, in the market place, and in one’s personal life. This program goes hand in hand with majors, so as to foster students’ communication, critical thinking, and research skills, besides boosting better career opportunities after graduation.

The majority of regional and international universities have a Core Curriculum Program. For any university to be accredited, it should have at least 30 credit hours in the general education program. Thus, CCP should equal to one third of the total credit hours, meaning that each student has to take 11 courses. According to the previous study plan, the average was 34, since there were some courses that offered 1 or 2 credit hours. Subsequent to the reform, all courses are standardized to 3 credit hours.

CCP and Professional Development

Going deeper into his explanation, Dr. Ali added “Active learning strategies involve students in the teaching process, from both inside and outside the classroom environment, as well as applying the student centered concept in teaching and learning. In the new action plan, professional development is meant to cope with large classes, and how to deal with growing numbers of students in class, and how to provide faculty members with advice in maintaining high quality education”.

To strengthen the faculty’s gamut of effective teaching approaches that center on learner-centered practices, the Core Curriculum Program and the Office of Faculty and Instructional Development work closely on designing training programs to be compatible with the needs of faculty members.



COLLABORATION FOR A CULTURE OF ASSESSMENT THROUGH THE ASSESSMENT WEEK AT THE PROGRAM LEVEL

The Assessment Week is an annual event organized by the office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer in collaboration with the office of Academic Program and Learning Outcome Assessment and the Office of Faculty and Instructional Development. Since the AY 2009-2010, the Assessment Week event brings together the academic staff to review the assessment process within their units in collaboration with an external consultant. In doing so, the university has further enhanced the culture of assessment among QU constituencies and continuously worked on improving such process at the program level.

In September 2011, Dr. Shaikha Bint Jabor Al Thani, former QU Vice President and Chief Academic Officer (from 2005 to 2012) stressed the importance of assessment to enhance the quality of QU outcomes as she said:

“We need to look back on whatever we do and ensure that we tie it with the mission and the strategic plan of the university. We have to take some time to look back and assess and evaluate whatever we do, and then come back for an enhancement plan. This is the main intention of the assessment exercise. The core business of the university is to assess the academic programs. We need to be ambitious and to raise the bar and the expectations, and to make sure that we always have the power and intention to develop ourselves and our unit.”

In September 2012, QU held the 3rd Assessment Week based on different programs' needs at the university, mainly on 19 programs, as reported by Dr. Adel Cherif, Director of APLOA. The training program for the week was offered by Dr. Mary Allen, consultant from the USA in assessment and accreditation in higher education and former Director of the Institute for Teaching and Learning, at California State University. Therein, Dr. Allen supported faculty development and assessment for a 23 - campus university system, enrolling over 400,000 students. Her expertise in the field of assessment has been greatly appreciated by QU faculty members during the past 2 years.



The Assessment Week in Action

The program for the Assessment Week in September 2012 included 4 days of close collaboration at several levels. During the first two days, participants from all colleges as well as from the Post Foundation program were engaged in hands-on workshops on validity, inter-rater reliability and closing the loop. In the subsequent two days, numerous group meetings took place with different colleges and departments for targeted consultations.

In collaboration with APLOA, OFID organized the Assessment Week activities, as the office concerned with faculty development at QU.



In the interview with Dr. Adel Cherif, Director of Academic Program and Learning Outcomes (APLOA), he stated that his aim is to increase the level of the university's accreditation, and to ensure that quality and assessments are equal to one of the best in the international arena of education institutes. He asserts that the main aims of the assessment weeks and workshops at our university are to create a culture of assessment between different colleges, to create awareness among different programs and to provide opportunities where faculty can discuss their expertise with each other.

Testimonies: OFID's Role in Assessment



As one of the Assessment Week organizers, OFID interviewed four faculty members, including the program and the college heads for assessment, to gather information, perceptions and different views of the assessment week. Dr. Abdou Ndoye, the assessment coordinator of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), believed that the assessment week was very helpful as it benefits every program and the faculties within them. He believes that the assessment of the courses and the learning outcomes are essential in order to keep up the standard of quality of education and the two essential types of accreditations (professional and institutional). He also mentioned that it is very difficult to assess the reliability and validity of the assessment methods and tests, which QU strives to attain and is successfully working towards assessing them.



Dr. Lina Kassem, Assessment Coordinator of the Department of International Affairs, conceives that assessment is crucial for the quality of an educational institute to be maintained. She stated that faculty play a key role in ensuring the fruitfulness of the whole process. It is understood that not all faculty members might agree to their requisite remit in assessment, as they may focus more on teaching and student learning.



As for Dr. Amit Das, Associate Professor and Assessment Coordinator of the College of Business and Economics (CBE), he stated that assessment is a fundament, yet also an extra workload on the faculty, as they are always busy with their teaching and research. This reality puts the responsibility to raise their awareness of the value and benefits of assessment workshops and sessions. Assessment, as he said, is very important and requires a lot of cooperation between programs and faculty members.

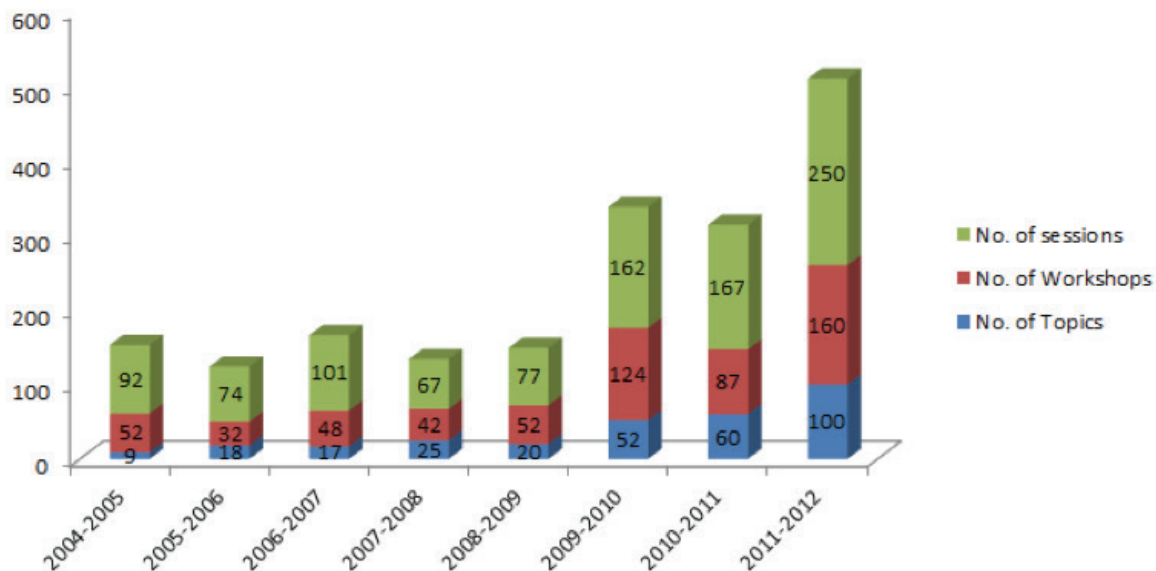
The external reviewer, Dr. Mary Allen, was a source of motivation and information in the process of assessment. The colleagues interviewed believe they benefited from her experience as an external reviewer. Dr. Adel Cherif, Director of APLOA, explained that the workshops were not lecture-based, but hands-on where faculty members discussed, commented, analyzed and understood the processes adopted in different sections and colleges. The Assessment Week ended with the idea of continuous improvement, which is essential in instructional development. The follow-up on this event has been scheduled with OFID, as a means to always improve the quality of education and student learning - the main goal of Qatar University.

OFID MILESTONES

By Manal Al Agrabi

Undertaking progressive initiatives in the year 2005, the future accreditation of Qatar University as a torch-bearer of quality education necessitated a systematic bedrock upon which all institutional units should proactively set up their action plans. Being an integral devotee to the Faculty members' future development, OFID deemed the ongoing facilitation of the processes of teaching and learning a rudimentary step towards promoting a culture of excellence, involving colleagues from all colleges and programs in its training as facilitators and/or participants who share experiences.

In this light, a comparative study of the number of sessions, workshops, and topics between the year 2005 and 2012, showcased a boom in the opportunities for leveraging Campus training resources.



An increase of Faculty Awareness and Participation

A chief corollary of OFID's action plans was to adequately address the variegated needs of faculty and academic staff by means of devising a kaleidoscope of services and programs. In order to encourage the faculty members to make the utmost benefit from their professional development activities, OFID initiated a wide range of systematic support programs with a focus on interactive learning, effective teaching strategies, technology, assessment both at program and course levels, as well as research.

What is noticeable is the faculty's ongoing involvement in OFID's training programs which bespeaks a remarkable awareness of the necessity of PD, an unremitting effort to enhance their teaching skills and add value to the learning outcomes at QU. By and large, more and more faculty staff are becoming conscious of the key role that instructional development can play in individual and institutional success. In addition to positively nurturing the individual's capacity, training has a substantial institutional impact. Factors such as professional development, educational outcomes, and job retention are all affected by the quality of training.

A MISCELLANY OF SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Through the years, the role of OFID has been burgeoning since its inception in the AY 2005-2004 with a raise since the AY 2010-2009. The cognizance of the various impediments that might hinder effective teaching and learning practices has necessitated the alleviation of these hurdles by immediately responding to all faculty professional needs, whilst supporting faculty become life-long learners. With this in mind, OFID has designed holistic training programs that run throughout the academic year. These ample support offerings encompass plenteous hands-on workshops, lectures, seminars, consultations, and mentoring services; besides the office's regular departmental visits which aim at catalyzing inter-disciplinary initiatives and at bolstering QU collegial community. All these center on a composite of topics related to active learning strategies, the integration of technology, and assessment, in addition to the focus on the latest innovations in curriculum enhancement.



OFID DAYS

The OFID DAYS is the main event of OFID for sharing experiences meant for collective improvement.

Faculty members are well involved in the OFID DAYS since its inception in January 2010. This event is meant to bring colleagues together from all colleges and from other academic institutions in Qatar to share successful experiences in innovative teaching strategies and assessment means in the form of workshops, seminars, panel sessions or round-table discussions. The faculty member attendance grew over the past four years which shows the importance given to the event. While in January 2010 more than 570 participants attended 17 sessions, in February 2012 more participants, 829, attended 33 sessions.

This year, the 4th OFID Days also draw 526 participants who showed their interest in 25 professional development sessions despite the pressure of the last week of exams and the high number of students who joined QU in the Fall semester. This is a good sign of vitality and interest for student engagement in learning as was meant by the theme of the event “Student Engagement Strategies : Excellence in Teaching and Learning.”



EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY NEWS FROM OFID

By: Jumana Samara, OFID



Education technology training and support is one of the key services that OFID continues to offer and develop in order to support QU objective in enhancing teaching and learning with more emphasis on the integration of technology.

QU is leading in the use of lecture Capture

Qatar university is leading other universities in the country in the use and integration of technology in the classroom. An example of this is the implementation of lecture captures using echo 360 at the faculty development level at OFID and at the course level at the College of Pharmacy. Several other colleges started to use the echo 360 system this semester as well. OFID and the College of Pharmacy represented Qatar University in THE “Technology in Higher Education” conference in April 2013 to demonstrate how QU is using echo 360 efficiently for blended learning and faculty development. Faculty members can access recorded OFID sessions through BB Faculty Community.

AY 2012 - 2013 Technology Training

This year was a very busy year for the Educational Technology team at OFID. It started by training the new faculty members on how to best use Blackboard (BB) in their classes in the fall semester. Then we expanded our workshops to all faculty members and included other topics such as Creating and managing online exams using Respondus and BB, Socrative response system, Screenr Recorder, etc. Between September 2012 and May 2013, OFID offered 82 workshops on education technology that were attended by 515 participants.



Blackboard Release 9.1 is coming to Qatar University

In the Spring 2013 semester, OFID started to train faculty members on the new release of Blackboard as part of QU's process to fully migrate to BB 9.1 in Fall 2013. We ran two Arabic and 3 English training programs of BB 9.1. Each program had four sessions that allowed faculty members to grasp the differences between the old and the new release of BB9. OFID will continue with these programs in Fall 2013 to cover the largest number of QU faculty members. BB 9.1 has several enhanced features over 9.0 including Mashups (integrating rich media learning content using Web 2.0 resources from YouTube, SlideShare and Flickr), a new Wikis tool, a new navigation window for an increased accessibility and several features that supports educator efficiency such as a customized grading view and many more.

One-to-One Consultations

OFID believes that individual learning through one-to-one consultations is a powerful way to help faculty members overcome technology obstacles and apply technology efficiently in their courses. Thus OFID continues to offer Technology consultations through office appointments, phone and email. This year we had offered more than 170 consultations so far.

Online Professional Development

In order to give all faculty members the opportunity to participate in professional development activities regardless of their tight schedules, OFID had piloted its first online workshops as part of the blended program “Partners for Improved Teaching & Learning” in Fall 2012. The first online workshops were “Socratic Teaching” by Prof. Michael Romanowski and “Learning Outcomes” by Dr. Abdou Ndoeye. Eight faculty members completed the online sessions and expressed interest in taking more online sessions with OFID. Another two online courses will be released in June 2013, one in Arabic with Dr. Ahmed Safar and another one in English with Prof. Michael Romanowski, just before the summer holiday for faculty members to work on.



OFID Online Faculty Development

Second OFID EduTech Day

Following the success of the first OFID EduTech Days event, which was held last year in January 2012 and was attended by 545 participants from all QU colleges, OFID organized its second annual education technology event to take place on June 2013, offering 15 different workshops with the theme “Technology-Enhanced Learning”. We hope to see many of QU faculty members participate and benefit from the interesting topics of the Second OFID EduTech Day.



Second OFID EduTech Day Technology-Enhanced Learning June 12, 2013

Organized by The Office of Faculty & Instructional Development



Venue: College of Business & Economics
Male Building - Zone D

COLLABORATION BETWEEN OFID AND DIFFERENT UNIVERSITIES IN QATAR FOR THE GREAT TEACHERS RETREAT

In 2011, OFID began its collaboration with Weill Cornell Medical College -Qatar, University of Calgary - Qatar, Northwestern University in Qatar, Georgetown University, School of Foreign Service, College of the North Atlantic and Texas A&M on a joint retreat for faculty members in different academic institutions in Qatar to share experiences on the ART of teaching and creativity. The main facilitator of the three-day retreat is a colleague from USA, Dr. David Gottshall, who is the founder of the movement.

During the 3rd OFID days in 2012 , VPCAO Dr. Shaikha Bint Jabor Al Thani offered the opportunity to attend and share their experiences to five colleagues (Mr. Alaeddin Halawani, Mr. Geoffrey Miller, Mr. Zeyad Ali, Mr. Muhammed Shabeer, and Dr. Dalia Sayed from different colleges , who applied to the Outstanding teaching Award and their files were ranked as effective. After coming back from the GTR, these colleagues met with the Director of OFID, Dr. Dalal Moukarzel and decided to have a follow-up session on the GTR as a whole morning where they could apply the skills they learned under the supervision of Professor Bassem Uthman , Weill Cornell Medical College at Qatar , who is also the chairman of the GTR committee.

During the Fourth OFID Days in January 2013, the VPCAO, Dr. Mazen Hasna, continued with the tradition of sharing the best experiences in teaching and learning. He awarded participants (Ms. Alla El-Awaisi (CPH), Dr. Ghassan Hani Mardini (CBE), Ms. Shaima Al-Gharaibeh (CPH), Dr. Khaled Salah Shaaban (CENG)) who completed the program “Partners for improved Teaching and Learning” launched by OFID in September 2012 and colleagues (Dr. Maher Bu Munsar (CAS), Dr. Ali Eid (CAS), Mr. Ismael Fayed (FP)) whose files were ranked effective when applying for the Outstanding Teaching Award.

“The main aim of this retreat is to collaborate, share ideas, come up with analysis, learn from others and also create new and innovative approaches”. Prof. Basim Uthman

The Great Teachers Retreat (GTR 2012) is a movement, where teachers from various colleges and universities gather for a 3 day session to discuss innovations and challenges in Teaching and Learning. In GTR 2012, teachers from various universities and colleges in Qatar, who were interested in enhancing their teaching and achieving more effective learning for their students, joined to meet their peers, share valuable experiences and build friendships as well. The retreat was interdisciplinary in nature, hosted in a relaxed positive environment for participants to discuss challenges and celebrate their success.

The Office of Faculty and Instructional Development (OFID) organized a workshop at Qatar University in June 2012 entitled, “Share your Experience and Innovations in Teaching and Learning”, where Dr. Bassem Uthman was the main facilitator. It was a one day session, mainly focusing on GTR follow-up, which also served as a chance for QU faculty members to learn from the experience of other colleagues, who took part in GTR 2012.



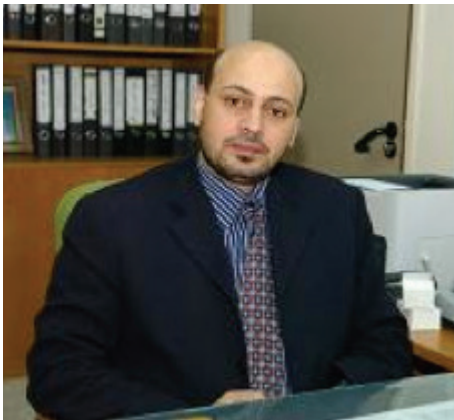
Professor Basim Uthman, Director of Neurology Clerkship, from Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, was also one of the organizers of GTR 2012 and a main facilitator at the QU workshop. Professor Uthman perceives the main aim of this retreat as a way to collaborate, share ideas, come up with analysis, learn from others and also create new and innovative approaches. Enjoying learning and inculcating the art of learning, is also one of the aspects of the GTR retreat. He also suggests in-classroom observation of faculty, as it's even mutually beneficial. Dr. Basim believes it is highly effective to use this method and what has been learnt can definitely be brought about in everyday life, as well as in classroom. He strongly recommends the GTR follow up because, in his view, the most important aspect of learning and teaching students is the process of continuous learning with the available resources.



Mr. Alaeddin Halwani, English lecturer at the Foundation Department - Qatar University and one of the participants in the GTR 2012, really appreciated the step taken by OFID and learnt a lot of new ideas and approaches that he was not aware of. He indicated that it was really a unique experience to share challenges and celebrate successes with faculty from various colleges and to learn how a doctor in pharmacy coped with the challenges he/she faced in the classroom, (e.g. video capture and saving all lectures on website). Also, when asked if this three day workshops really helped him bring all that he learnt into the classroom boundaries, he said, "I learnt that using technology in the classroom, unless well-prepared in advance could be time-wasting and counter-productive. I also learnt that the most successful classes are those that are task-based and student-oriented". Also, according to Mr. Alaeddin, the importance of this follow up was the presence of QU faculty from various disciplines, which helped stimulate exchange of information and ideas between faculty members at Qatar University by building an expanding network of communication.



Mr. Geoffrey, who is an English lecturer at the Foundation Department and also one of the participants from QU at GTR 2012, considered the retreat as beneficial for all faculty members, as they were able to understand and exchange ideas from other faculty members and departments. The process of breaking the participants into small groups and exchanging challenges they faced in the previous semester, was very interesting and different, he explained. Mr. Geoffrey added that, the most amazing part was that most of the professors faced many similar challenges with their students, despite the difference between their courses and departments. He also mentioned that this initiative by OFID showed the importance of how quality-oriented processes and the development of our teachers on a regular basis are so essential for the existence of this great institution.



Dr. Hamouda, Associate Dean for Research at the College of Engineering (CENG) and one of the participants in the follow up session at QU, explained that the main role of the Great Teachers Retreat is to create an environment for teachers to show and discuss their challenges and achievements, in the teaching and learning process. He stated that “It was an enriching experience and that the brainstorming session was very helpful”. Therefore, this step taken by OFID to mimic this essential part of the GTR was a huge success and all the interviewed officials of the University were satisfied and now look forward to more workshops and follow-ups such as these. The follow-up session, as he explained, was a very refining experience for our teachers to learn, teach and discuss various ways that would help all of them in their ways and methods of learning and in return, teaching it back to their students. As we all know, learning and teaching go hand in hand for a successful teacher.



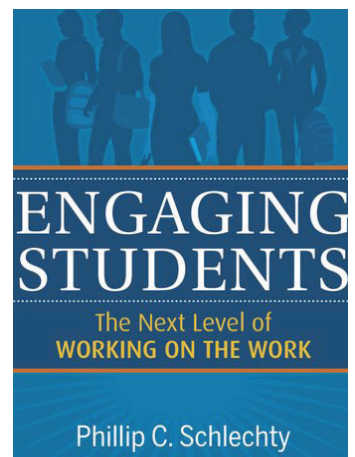
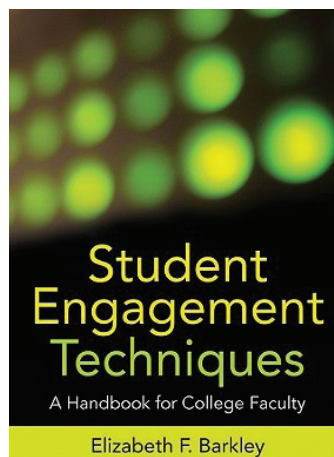
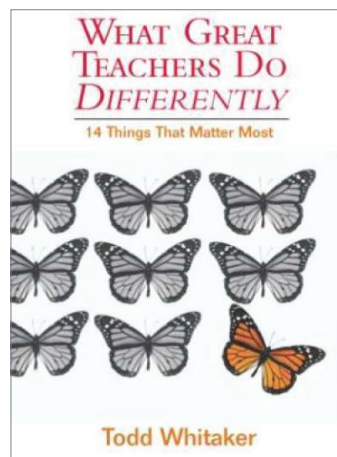
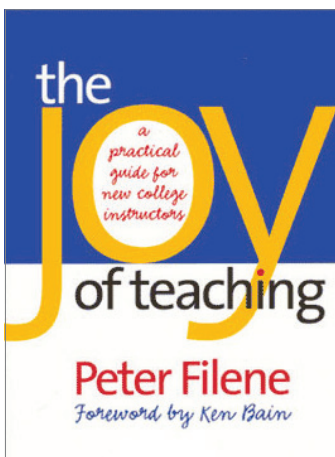
“This retreat was a wonderful experience for all participants who represented their colleges and shared their expertise with others. Many of these participants are now connected or planned for further joint research initiatives based on research and teaching fields.” - Mr. Ismael Fayed, Foundation Program.

**“I really enjoyed attending the GTR 2013. It was highly productive and many questions were answered”
- Dr. Khaled Salah Shaaban, CENG**

RESOURCES FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

OFID has been continuously updating its Website with resources as Blogs, Links to useful websites and Books for teaching and learning strategies, faculty development, assessment and technology-based teaching. You can look at these resources on OFID website: <http://www.qu.edu.qa/offices/ofid/Resources.php>

Some of the good books OFID requested from the Library:



Some Catalogs available at OFID to refer to, for more resources:

Titles

- **2012 Publications Catalog** by Association of American Colleges and Universities
- **Higher Adult Education** by Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Brand
- **Higher Education 2013** by Stylus Publishing ,INC.
- **Research Methods, Statistics & Evaluation Spring 2013**
- **Professional Development Resources on Teacher Effectiveness** by Corwin

