

FP Jareeda

Welcome to Issue 23

James Scotland, Chair of the Foundation Program's Newsletter Committee, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

Welcome to issue 23 of the Foundation Program's quarterly newsletter, FP Jareeda.

After over a year of teaching online, the students and faculty of Qatar University (QU) have returned to their classrooms. A full campus experience is now available to QU students.

One future event that the Foundation Program (FP) is very excited about is the *Qatar University 6th Annual Virtual International Conference on English Language Teaching*,

which will take place in November. You can read all about it and other future events in the upcoming editions of FP Jareeda.

Within this issue, however, you can learn about the volunteer service of one FP faculty member, meet the new faculty members of the FP, and read about a life coaching service offered by an existing FP faculty member.

I hope that you enjoy reading issue 23.



James Scotland: Photograph courtesy of Ahmad Hazratzad

FP Excellence in Teaching Awards 2021

Susan Saafan, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

The Foundation Program Excellence in Teaching Awards honor teachers who demonstrate best instructional practices using strategies, tools, and techniques that enable their students to realize and achieve their academic potential in the classroom.

The Foundation Program (FP) welcomes award applications from all teaching faculty, with the proviso that they are full-time members of staff

who have taught at least one full year at QU. Applicants can either be nominated by themselves, colleagues, or by students. Once approved, successful nominees get the chance to showcase their expertise in areas such as interactive teaching materials or mentorship of colleagues. The two recipients of this year's award were Dr. Diana Malabanan and Ms. Nisreen Karhili.

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Dr. Diana Malabanan: Photograph courtesy of Diana Malabanan

Dr. Diana Malabanan was nominated by the Foundation Program Department of Math (FPDM) leadership team, who were impressed by her taking the initiative for various departmental projects, as well as her leading role in supporting her department's transition to teaching online. A life-long learner herself, Dr. Malabanan sees her role as one of supporting her students to become life-long learners through

mastering various strategies. This is summed up by her favorite quote, 'Never stop learning because life never stops teaching'. The portfolio afforded Dr. Malabanan the opportunity to highlight and demonstrate her application of digital technology, which she has always enjoyed exploring and utilizing in a professional capacity.

The Foundation Program De-

partment of English (FPDE) leadership team nominated Ms. Nisreen Karhili as a candidate because of her initiative in creating and delivering writing support materials to support students' progress, and to acknowledge her ongoing role in supporting colleagues. Ms. Karhili used her portfolio to showcase a range of innovative and effective teaching applications and tools. Working on her portfolio also afforded Ms. Karhili the chance to reflect on her strengths as an educator. Working towards the award, as well as delivering quality service at work, under-

pins Ms. Karhili's favorite quote by Steve Jobs, 'I think if you do something and it turns out pretty good, then you should go do something else wonderful, not dwell on it for too long. Just figure out what's next'.

Both Dr. Malabanan and Ms. Karhili appreciated the Foundation Program's (FP) acknowledgement of all their hard work and recommended that colleagues go ahead, take the plunge, and apply for the upcoming award in 2022.



Nisreen Karhili : Photograph courtesy of Nisreen Karhili



Qatar University 6th Annual International Conference (Virtual) on English Language Teaching

Changing Roles and Expanding Responsibilities of ELT Teachers in Post-Covid Era

6 - 8 November 2021

Organized by the QU Foundation Department of English, Deanship of General Studies

Plenary Speaker



Prof. Scott Thornbury
ELT Author, Cambridge University Press

Featured Speakers



Dr. Gabriella Kleckova
TESOL President
University of West Bohemia,
Czech Republic



Dr. Christine Coombe
Dubai Men's College, UAE



Dr. Mick Kin
Community College of
Qatar



Mr. Kashif Reza
Qatar University, Qatar



Dr. Ayman Shelkh
Texas A&M University,
Qatar



Ms. Amira
President of Africa ELTA
Nile University, Egypt

To register and access the conference program, check out the conference website:
<https://bit.ly/3AppCwi>



Attendees will earn a free digital certificate.

Faculty Focus: Dr. Diana Malabanan, FPDM

Michele Downie, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

Interviewer: Tell us about your professional background before joining the Qatar University Foundation Program Department of Mathematics (FPDM).

Dr. Malabanan: I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics, a Master's degree in Mathematics, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Mathematics. I taught in the Philippines for nine years and in Saudi Arabia for seven years.

I taught at Jubail University College in Saudi Arabia. I was always assigned additional administrative tasks. I chaired the Committee of Academic Advising for five years and also chaired the E-Learning Committee.

My last position was at Asia Pacific College where I taught for seven years, five years as head of mathematics and two years as college registrar.

Aside from my passion for teaching and learning, exploring technology is another interest. I always make sure that I maximize and explore new technological opportunities, which may be of benefit to students and teachers. I love to learning on my own from scratch, without a seminar or workshop. I learn better by doing, not by watching or reading, just like learning mathematics.

Interviewer: When did you join Qatar University (QU)?

Dr. Malabanan: I started in the FPDM right before the pandemic in the Fall of 2019. In the Spring 2020 semester, I was given the administration task of Course Co-lead.

Interviewer: How did you come to work at QU?

Dr. Malabanan: I have a 13-year-old daughter, and I wanted her to have the opportunity to explore the world. Qatar seemed like the perfect place to get that experience. I searched for the best university here and Qatar University was it. Their mission and vision statement align with my passions of teaching, learning, and technology. I was thrilled at how technologically innovative QU is.

Interviewer: What has your experience been like teaching math online?



Dr. Diana Malabanan: Photograph courtesy of Diana Malabanan

Dr. Malabanan: I was already familiar with using many other online applications, like Microsoft Teams and OneNote, which I first used in QU in Fall, 2019. So, even before the pandemic, I was ready. I enjoyed teaching online because it gave me a chance to further explore which technology is best for students. For me, choosing appropriate applications for educational technology use in the classroom should go through a rigorous yet simple screening process. Students have different learning styles and interests, so ideally using various types of technology in the classroom can provide them new ways of learning.



Departing FPDM Faculty: Kinan Taleb

Paul Ames, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

At the end of last semester, we sadly saw two of our valued Foundation Program Department of Math (FPDM) colleagues leave for pastures new. We caught up with Mr. Kinan Taleb for his reflections on his experiences at Qatar University (QU) and in Qatar.

Interviewer: When did you join QU?

Mr. Kinan: September, 2009.

Interviewer: What do you think has been your main achievement/accomplishment during your time at QU?

Mr. Kinan: Working at QU has helped me to expand my teaching experience and develop my knowledge of different fields, such as technology and communication. Over my 12 years at QU, I was an active member in the FPDM, and I helped in its development over this long period.

Interviewer: What have you enjoyed the most about working at QU?

Mr. Kinan: Working as one team, being like a family, and enjoying the supportive spirit between QU members.

Interviewer: What has been your most memorable moment while working at QU?

Mr. Kinan: My first day at QU, when I met my colleagues for the first time.

Interviewer: What will you miss the most about working at QU?

Mr. Kinan: I will definitely miss my colleagues.

Interviewer: How has the FPDM and/or the university changed during your time at QU?

Mr. Kinan: Many developments have occurred in all fields, especially in technology and technical teaching tools.

Interviewer: What advice would you give to any new faculty joining FPDM?

Mr. Kinan: Be patient and positive; you will always find good people around you. In addition, the FP management always provides high levels of support to its faculty.

Interviewer: If you are leaving Qatar, what will you miss the most about it?

Mr. Kinan: I will miss my good friends and the places where I spent great times with my family.



Kinan Taleb: Photograph courtesy of Ahmad Hazratzad

Interviewer: What is your favorite thing to do in Qatar?

Mr. Kinan: Drinking coffee with friends, enjoying the winter season, and going on family picnics.

Interviewer: Did you visit any interesting places during your time in the region?

Mr. Kinan: I often went to different stadiums in Doha to watch official and friendly football matches between teams from all over the world. I hope that I can visit Qatar and enjoy the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

Interviewer: What are you planning to do next?

Mr. Kinan: I plan to continue my studies in mathematics and extend my research skills.

New Faculty: FPDM

Sabahat Malik

I joined Qatar University (QU) in September 2021 as a Math Lecturer in the Foundation Program Department of Math (FPDM).

Prior to this, I taught in a number of positions in China, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates. My previous experience includes teaching undergraduate and foundation mathematics courses to first-year university students from various specializations, including engineering, technology, applied sciences, and business studies. My previous duties have included training and helping students to develop basic math skills to progress in their academic studies as well as function effectively in an international work environment.

I completed a Master's degree in Mathematics Education in 2018. As part of the degree, I completed a dissertation on the application of flipped learning in undergraduate mathematics education. My dissertation investigated how student learning is shaped in a blended learning environment, and its impact on student autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In this study, I found that the majority of undergraduate students perceived flipped classroom approaches as a positive step towards employing digital resources for teaching mathematics as well as engagement in active learning activities during in-class time.

My research interests include blended learning techniques in undergraduate mathematics education, with a focus on flipped classroom approaches and e-assessment in mathematical sciences.



Sabahat Malik: Photograph courtesy of Sabahat Malik



Dr. Houssam El-Kasti: Photograph courtesy of Dr. Houssam El-Kasti

Dr. Houssam El-Kasti

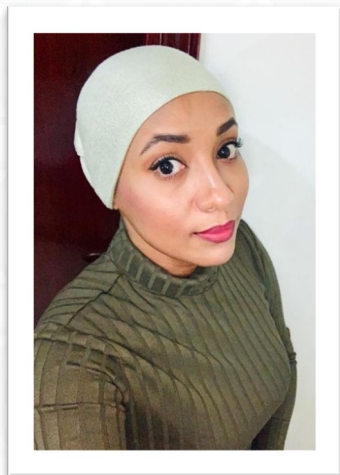
Dr. El-Kasti is a professional in mathematics education with a specialty in preparing teachers to teach conceptual mathematics using technology. He has experience in teaching mathematics in schools and universities such as the American University of Beirut and the Lebanese University. He is also experienced in teaching undergraduate and graduate mathematics education courses.

In the past 10 years, Dr. El-Kasti has attended and presented at more than ten international conferences on mathematics education and teaching mathematics with technology. One of his greatest achievements was receiving an invitation to present at the 14th International Congress on Mathematics Education in Shanghai.

Dr. El-Kasti's teaching philosophy stems from a humanistic philosophy. He likes to use innovative theories and educational research concepts which can best serve educational practitioners. Dr. El-Kasti strives to make mathematics more loved and appreciated by students.

His latest international collaboration is with Johannes Kepler University Linz, Germany, with whom he is working on projects related to mathematics education theories, design, and training.

New Faculty: FPDE



Abeer Mohammed: Photograph courtesy of Abeer Mohammed

Abeer Mohammed

Abeer is a highly passionate English teacher with fifteen years of experience. Starting at a young age, her voluntary work in rural areas of her native Sudan nurtured her interest in teaching. She was awarded a scholarship to Brighton, UK, where she completed her Master's degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) in 2010. Seeking further career advancement, Abeer obtained her Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA) from Cambridge University, and then a Diploma in TESOL from Trinity College London. Abeer moved to Doha in December, 2018.

Abeer has worked as a teacher, TV news presenter, course coordinator, teacher trainer, and examiner. She enjoys imparting her knowledge and skills to students and teachers. She has taught students of all levels and ages, but excels at supporting learners who are preparing to take the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam. She also loves working with teachers as a coach and mentor.

In the classroom, Abeer is committed to creating a learning environment that is both stimulating and encouraging. She empowers students by acknowledging their background knowledge and individual interests, which enables her to deliver learner-centered lessons that help students achieve their goals. She firmly believes in having fun while learning.

Outside the classroom, Abeer loves art and can get lost in a piece that speaks to her. She spends her free time painting, making handcrafts, and hanging out with friends. Her twin culinary loves are good coffee and cheese.

Csilla Szabo

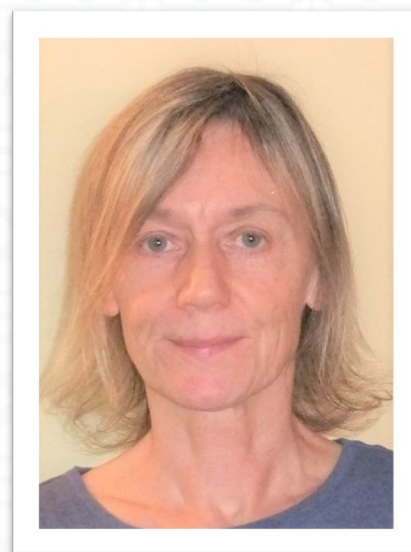
The pronunciation of my name is like 'chilly' or 'children'. The 'cs' sound becomes a 'ch' sound.

I spent my early years in Hungary, Germany and Austria, and moved to Canada as a young adult. My professional career started over 20 years ago in South Korea and continued in Japan, Canada, the United Arab Emirates, and most recently in Qatar.

My volunteer experience includes teaching children in rural areas of Myanmar, East Timor, and China. During the pandemic lockdown, I led virtual conversation circles for refugees and new immigrants in Vancouver, Canada.

I have always liked languages, books, and sports, so it is no surprise that I have completed undergraduate degrees in English and Library Studies and a Masters in English Education. My number one love is travelling and experiencing different cultures. Our tiny globe is a magnificent place offering incredible beauty and diversity. Exercise is an integral part of my daily routine, especially outdoor activities like swimming, kayaking, hiking and skiing (if there are mountains and snow, of course).

I enjoy discovering the linguistic and cross-cultural challenges my students face, whether they are children or adults learning General English or English for Academic Purposes. By being friendly, patient and approachable, I encourage my students to try new avenues and enjoy the learning process. In my classroom, making mistakes is okay as it is a natural part of language learning. I am excited about returning to face-to-face instruction as I believe languages are best utilized in real life communication.



Csilla Szabo: Photo courtesy of Csilla Szabo

Kenneth Downes

I come from the far-off land of New Zealand or Aotearoa, 'The land of the Long White Cloud'. In New Zealand parlance, that makes me a 'Kiwi', named after the flightless indigenous bird there. Twenty-five years ago, I arrived at the chalk face to begin my teaching journey. In New Zealand, my teaching experience centered on assisting refugees and migrants to gain a grasp of English and local culture so as to better integrate into the community. Further, I managed learners in voluntary work experience that enabled them a speedier entry into the workforce to re-establish their lives. My overseas teaching experience has been in Japan, Korea, and for the last nine years in Oman.

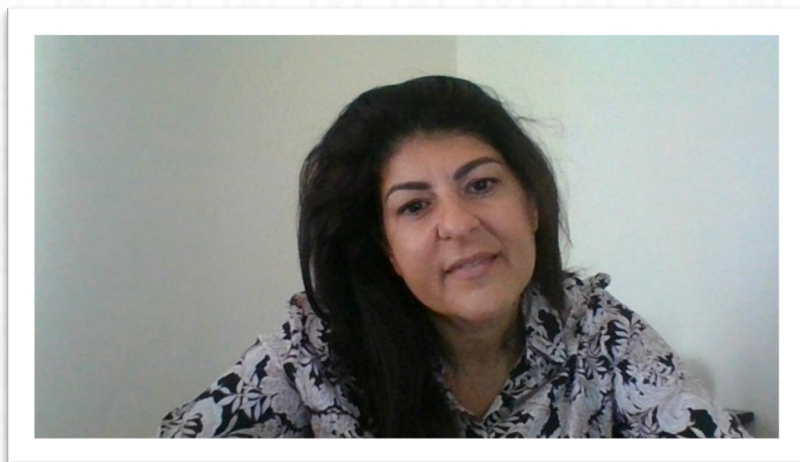
Both at high school and during my travels, I have cultivated an interest in foreign languages, and I have picked up French, Japanese, Spanish and a smattering of other languages. As a teacher, I bear in mind the challenges I faced in language learning to best fill the learner toolbox with effective teaching and learning strategies.

Generally, when I am not evading the heat with a good read or some great foreign shows on Netflix, I enjoy going for a swim, cycle, or a walk, often taking snaps along the way.

I look forward to participating in the exciting advancement of Qatar and the part we as educators can play to enhance that. Most of all, I am eager to get back into the classroom. I enjoy the back and forth of student interaction, along with the character and energy they bring. I am pleased to join Qatar University and look forward to contributing to the Foundation Program (FP).



Kenneth Downes: Photograph courtesy of Kenneth Downes



Marcella Kogos: Photograph courtesy of Marcella Kogos

Marcella Kogos

Hello to all!

Thank you for the warm welcome to Qatar University. I am honored to be part of this university's faculty. My name is Marcella Kogos, but official communication shows me as Maria. I am Australian-born with Greek heritage. I graduated from the University of Sydney with a Master of Education in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages).

I am very passionate about teaching and helping learners to acquire language. Throughout my 20 years in the field of TESOL, I strive to keep up with the latest developments. Previously, I spent five years in Kuwait as an English instructor, and here I am now being welcomed by my new family, the Foundation Program.

In my free time, I like to explore new places and take photos. A happy semester to all!

Sana Salam

Sana Salam graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Honors) from the University of Toronto, Canada, in 2008, and then moved to Pakistan to start her teaching career. After completing a Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) in 2010, she worked as an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructor in Riyadh and Dammam in Saudi Arabia. In 2016, Sana received her Master of Arts degree in Teaching English as a Second Language from the University of Nottingham, United Kingdom. Sana then moved to Ankara, Turkey to live and work until March 2020. Last year, she worked as an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) lecturer at Habib University, Pakistan's first liberal arts and sciences university.

Sana's master's dissertation focused on the grammar beliefs of teachers and their written corrective feedback practices. She has since continued her investigation into the most effective methods of delivering corrective feedback in second language writing. In Turkey, she conducted a study exploring the difference between direct and indirect feedback on students' texts.

Sana believes it is essential to build rapport and establish trust with students in a learner-centered classroom environment. Her teaching style includes getting to know her students, understanding their goals, and then addressing their challenges in learning English.

When Sana is not busy running around after her twins, she enjoys reading, traveling, learning new languages, and drinking coffee.



Sana Salam: Photograph courtesy of Sana Salam



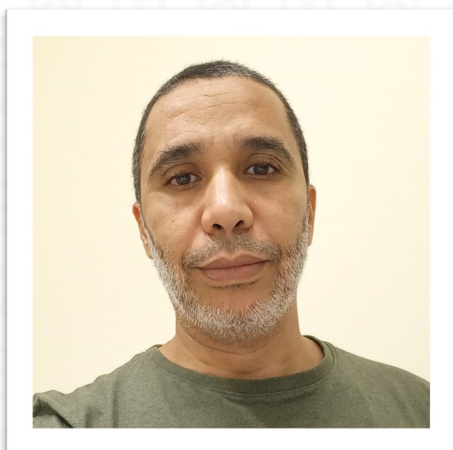
Secil Baran: Photograph courtesy of Secil Baran

Secil Baran

I am truly honored to join the faculty of the Foundation Program (FP). I am originally from Turkey, and I have a Bachelors of Arts in English Language Teaching (ELT). Upon being awarded a Fulbright Grant, I moved to Seattle, USA, to study at the University of Washington, where I received my Master's in TESOL (Teaching English to Students of Other Languages). As part of my program, I had the opportunity to observe and teach English language skills classes at the Intensive Language Program (ILP) to a diverse international student population.

For the last 12 years, I have taught English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in Istanbul at one of the leading universities in Turkey. I taught advanced level reading, listening, and speaking classes to university students as well as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to adults. I mentored countless students to help them achieve their career goals. My teaching philosophy revolves around being creative, positive, and all-inclusive. When students feel comfortable in their learning environment, they accomplish more.

My interests in the field of TESOL include drama in language education and world Englishes. In my free time, I love doing yoga and I have experience teaching classical yoga as well. I also love travelling, tasting world cuisines, and singing.



Smail Bezzazi: Photograph courtesy of Smail Bezzazi

Smail Bezzazi

I graduated from Durham University in the UK with a Masters in Applied Linguistics. In my master's program, I was particularly interested in materials development and second language acquisition. I seek to motivate students by nurturing students' collaborative skills and promoting autonomous learning. I have experience teaching in the United Kingdom, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. I am happy to join Qatar University Foundation Program and hope to add value to the amazing, incredibly talented, and unceasingly supportive team. Throughout the years, I have developed a passion for sports, and some of my hobbies include swimming and playing squash.

Yuri Vedrashko

Yuri graduated in 2000 with a Master of Arts in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). In his Master's program, Yuri was keen on developing and validating different forms of assessment for English learners in different contexts, and exploring the potential of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) through communicative tasks, along with computer-assisted language learning (CALL).

Yuri has taught English in different educational and cultural settings in Ukraine, the United States, Taiwan, and the United Arab Emirates. He also contributed his materials and ideas to curriculum, materials development, assessment and e-learning committees. He has been developing a bank of his interactive instructional materials with multimedia input for both collective and individual completion. His favorite authoring tools are BookWidgets, SoftChalk Lessons, Blackboard Learn tests, Moodle tasks, and tests with Certainty-Based Marking (CBM).

At present, Yuri is interested in experimenting with and applying certain principles from sociocultural theory in his language teaching practice and validating them from the semiotic perspective on language acquisition. In his classroom, he has his students work with shared input in groups, focusing on one thing at a time and agreeing on the same answers. He measures the effectiveness of his activities by learner's actions, which are set to be goal-directed, context-embedded, socially constructed, and language-mediated.

In his free time, Yuri enjoys different sports activities, table games, role-plays, or a free-flowing conversation over a cup of coffee, sprinkled with banter and jokes.



Yuri Vedrashko: Photograph courtesy of Yuri Vedrashko

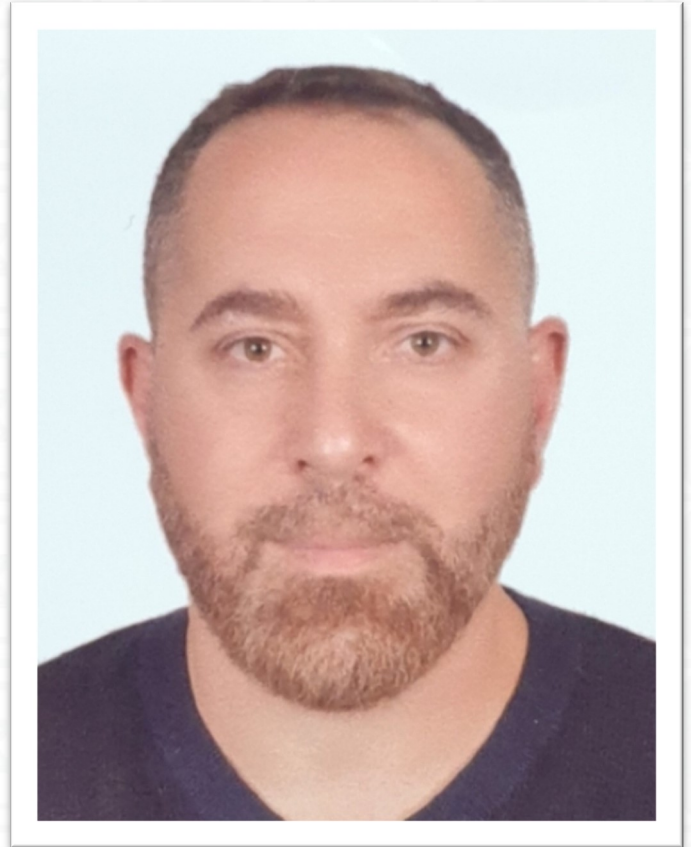
Ziad Hadla

I am a Canadian of Lebanese origin. I have an Educational Doctorate from the University of Exeter in England, and I have been teaching English at the university level for twenty years now, three of which were in the United Arab Emirates, and two in Saudi Arabia. I believe that effective teachers not only interact with students, but also possess personal qualities that allow them to develop authentic relationships with students, parents, and colleagues, and to create democratic, socially-just environments in their classrooms.

The ultimate purpose of teaching is to assist students to become independent and self-regulated learners. This purpose stems from two basic assumptions. The first is that knowledge is not entirely fixed and transmittable, but something that all individuals, students and adults alike, actively construct through personal and social experiences. The second is the perspective that the most important thing that students should learn is how to learn.

Effective teaching requires, at its baseline, individuals who are academically able, who have command of the subjects they are required to teach and who care about the well-being of young learners. It also requires individuals who can produce results, namely those of student academic achievement and social learning.

I hope my knowledge and experience will be an added value to Qatar University in general, and the Foundation Program specifically. I am looking forward to developing critically thinking students who are ready not only for work but also for life.



Ziad Hadla: Photograph courtesy of Ziad Hadla



Faculty Volunteer Service with the Qatar University Office of Public Relations

Tiffany Dyson, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

Mohammad Hosam Al Nahas is no newcomer to volunteer work. With over ten years of volunteering experience, the writers of FP Jareeda Magazine could not miss the opportunity to interview him about his contributions to Qatar University.

Interviewer: Thank you for joining me today.

Mr. Al Nahas: Thank you for the opportunity.

Interviewer: You wrote several articles for Qatar University about life during the pandemic. *The Face Unseen of COVID 19* shed light on some positive aspects of the pandemic. You invited several Qatar University (QU) students to share their experiences and artwork in your articles. What inspired your contributions?

Mr. Al Nahas: I wanted to spread positive vibes within the community. I am an avid supporter of community service. I believe we all are supposed to do something to make a difference in people's lives whenever we can, especially during difficult times.

Interviewer: That's great and very true.

Mr. Al Nahas: Regarding the articles that I wrote, it started while I was watching Al Jazeera. I kept hearing the term 'social distancing', and this triggered the thought of writing an article to analyze the term. I submitted it to the newspaper through the Qatar University Office of Public Relations. The positive feedback from people encouraged me to continue to write articles that raised public awareness.



The Basmalah, an Arabic phrase which translates into, 'In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful', designed and written by Mr. Al Nahas in the thuluth calligraphy style, and dedicated to Al Salam mosque in Georgia in April, 2021: Visual courtesy of Mohammad Hosam Al Nahas

Interviewer: These were very thought-provoking and timely articles. I hear that you are also an artist. Could you share with us a little about how being an artist

has allowed you to further service the QU community?

Mr. Al Nahas: Yes, I do Arabic calligraphy. While passing by the QU stand at the book fair, I had the idea of having a space where we could write visitors' names in Arabic calligraphy and offer these as a gift. Everyone loved the idea. I participate every year, along with students who provide painting demonstrations for visitors. Four years ago, I was asked by the QU Student Art Club management to be their supervisor. We organize art events and create opportunities for QU students who

practice or appreciate art to showcase their talents and skills.

Interviewer: Do you undertake any activities outside QU?

Mr. Al Nahas: Yes, sometimes. I am currently preparing to deliver a calligraphy course for patients at the Al Amal Oncology Hospital; an art center in Lusail will host the classes.

Interviewer: Before we go, would you like

to leave us with a final thought?

Mr. Al Nahas: Well, I always ask myself: What are we doing for others? I think promoting a spirit of volunteerism can help to build stronger communities. When you volunteer, you not only make a difference in people's lives, but you also benefit personally: to me, happiness lies in giving. The beautiful sense of achievement you get in the end will inspire you to continue!



Putting student paintings inside at the end of QU Doha Book Fair: Photo courtesy of Mr Ali Emad, Public Relations Office, Qatar University

Providing Feedback to FPDM Students

Ahmed Abdelaziz, Teaching Assistant of Math, Foundation Program

Instructors in the Foundation Program Department of Math (FPDM) share a strong belief that feedback is the key that adds both confidence and enthusiasm to students' learning and assessment performance. Here are some reflective questions regarding the feedback provided by FPDM; What types of feedback are provided? Do instructors provide too much, too little, and is it clear and timely? What is expected from students once they have received feedback?

Although there is no clear answer to what kind of feedback works best for students, FPDM instructors try their utmost from the outset of the semester to increase motivation levels, and help students build on their prior knowledge.

In FPDM, feedback covers self-assessment, peer assessment, oral, written, formal and informal feedback. Instructors usually start right after the first week to make sure students benefit from the feedback provided. To help students move their learning forward, instructors' methods may vary. For instance, instructors may ask stronger students to compare and test concepts by themselves and compare their re-

sults against the rubric and answers they have received within their feedback. Students at this level usually use every piece of information they receive in their feedback, which enhances their understanding and helps them to master of the materials covered.

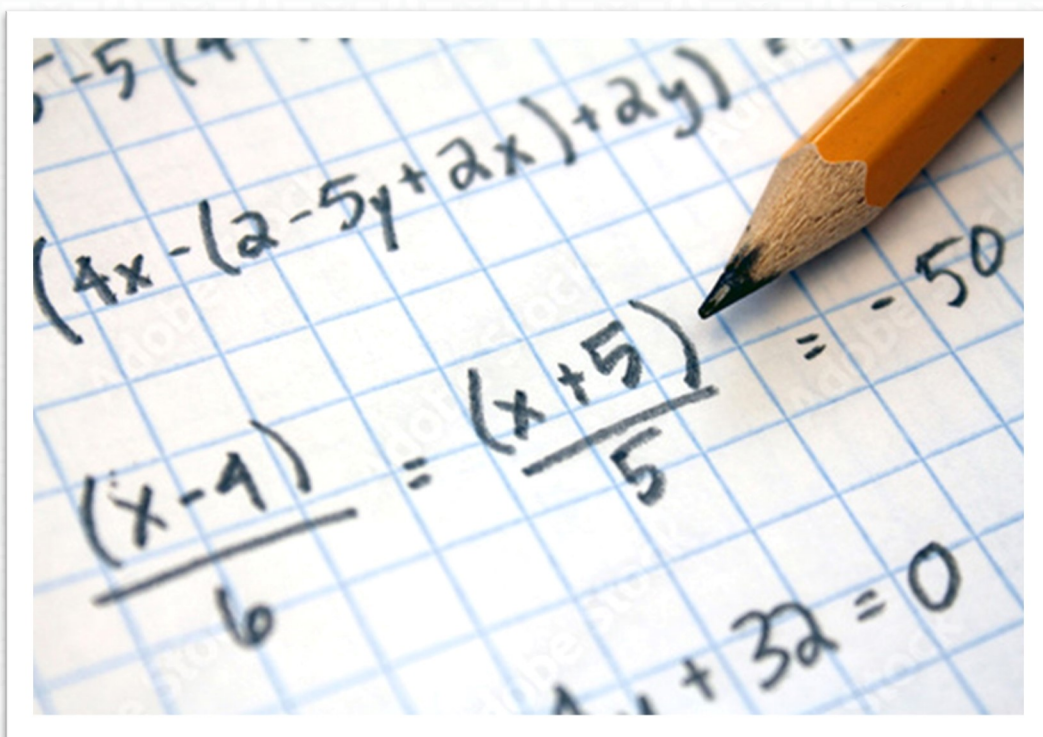
With other students, instructors in FPDM allocate time in class to teach them how to utilize feedback properly. Instructors may use a sample of students' work to help students improve their learning. Students enjoy these types of activities because they can relate to having made some of

the same mistakes and learn strategies on how to try to avoid them in the future.

FPDM instructors use both self and peer assessment to help students maximize their learning. Students enjoy being involved in feedback activities and usually show great interest in checking their partner's work. Peer and self-assessment also help students when they measure their partner's work against the criteria and rubric distributed by their instructors. Checking other students' work and work done by themselves helps to instill more confidence and provides

a constructive learning environment for both study partners.

In FPDM, instructors work hard to show students how to use feedback effectively so they can come to class with an attitude of 'I can do this'. Instructors in FPDM boost students' competence levels and increase their confidence. Instructors also use a wide variety of methods to provide immediate feedback to students so they can see their learning experience in a positive way.



Visual courtesy of Pikwizard.com

Participating as an Invited Lecturer

Houssam Elkasti, Lecturer of Math, Foundation Program

The International Congress on Mathematics Education (ICME) is the largest gathering of mathematics educators from all over the globe. The aim of the conference is to discuss the latest research results in the field of mathematics education. This congress is held every four years.

I was honored to be invited to present at the 14th ICME. My presentation was titled, *The Ladder and Slide: A Framework for Visualizing the Integration of Technology by Mathematics Teachers in Their Classes*. The framework describes the complexity of the phases teachers go through when they decide to use certain types of technology in their classes. The ladder and slide framework was influenced by three theories (Prediger, Bikner-Ahsbahs, & Arzarello, 2008), namely:

- Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge (TPACK) (Koehler & Mishra, 2008; Niess et al., 2009),
- The Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) (Rogers, 1995)
- The Zone Theory (Goos, 2005; Goos, 2013; Goos & Bennison, 2008; Goos, Dole, & Makar, 2007; Goos et al., 2010)

TPACK describes the types of knowledge teachers need to integrate technology effectively into their teaching practices. IDT describes the developmental processes that individuals go through when they are adopting or rejecting a technological innovation. Finally, the Zone Theory identifies the factors, both limiting and assisting teachers, when they integrate technology into their lessons. This framework was developed as a result of a design-based research project (Wang & Hannafin, 2005) conducted over a period of six years. A pilot phase was done with four in-service secondary mathematics teachers using GeoGebra (Hohenwarter, 2002; Hohenwarter & Jones, 2007) in their teaching with the new framework to identify the phases. The presentation was very well received and appreciated by conference attendees.

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History of English Language Teaching at QU: 2007-2009, The Kennedy Years Part 2

Elisabeth Szewczyk-Méziane, Former Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

Fall 2007 kicked off with a warm welcome from Dr. Khalid Al Ali, the Director of the Foundation Program. He noted that the faculty continued to grow and become more diverse with over twenty-three nationalities represented in all three departments. He also mentioned the fast-paced and challenging Qatar University (QU) educational reform project, which would provide additional infrastructure to support the Foundation Program (FP).

New developments were taking place fast. Eileen Plumb, Alaeddin Halwani and Anna Romano joined the newsletter team as sub-editors and for the first time the newsletter had a new website address. A welcome addition to the FP Newsletter was the Student Essay section. Teachers encouraged students to write short stories, essays, or poems for publication in the Student Section part of the newsletter. Student feedback was very positive as they enjoyed seeing their writing in print. Faculty also wrote short stories, scholarly articles or reports for the newsletter issues.

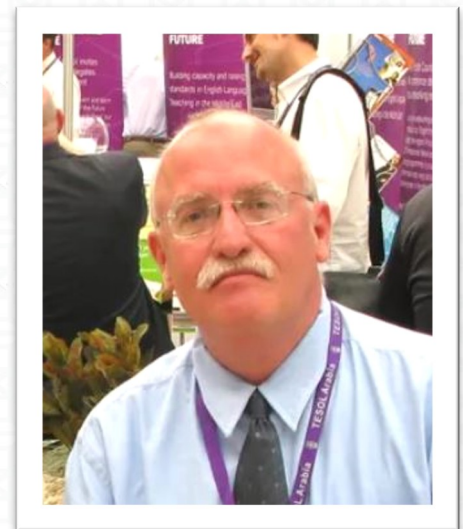
The next few years were busy ones for professional development, with workshops offered by Foundation Program Department of English (FPDE) faculty members. The presenters were Jane Hoelker, Dinos Demetriades, Khalid Al Noman, Alicia Cundell, Lyra Ingels, Koroush Lachini, Ben Crace, Hardie Cooper, Ridha Ben Rejeb, Dr. Muawia Abdulmajeed, Dr. Fatima Zumrawi, Mohammed Bakri, Dr. Simone Evans, Ozgur Pala, Stephanie Pinnacle, and Peter McFarquar, among others, Patrick Murphy and David Coupland gave an interesting presentation on working with student

writers. The Foundation Program Department of Math (FPDM) was equally active in professional development workshops, seminars and events.

The FPDE Testing Coordinator, Amr Saleh, arranged for the FP to host a number of testing specialists, including Dr. Janna Fox from Carleton University, Canada. Dr. Fox ran a five-day Testing and Assessment Workshop for FP instructors. Her informative and useful sessions on trends and issues in teaching, testing, curricular design, needs analysis, test specifications, test items, test development and marking were well received. In December 2008, Dr. Deena Boraie from AUC (American University in Cairo) gave a two-day workshop on developing and administering quality classroom tests.

Dr. Teresa O'Donnell, Executive Director of the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA), also paid a five-day site visit in November, 2008. She gave a talk on the CEA mission and explained how the requisite standards would apply to the FPDE evaluation. Dr. O'Donnell held several workshops based on addressing and applying CEA standards. The site visit proved very beneficial to the CEA accreditation team who were working extremely hard to ensure that the FPDE would meet the standards within the allocated time-frame.

The FP Student Clubs were very popular, particularly Shehab Majud's Scrabble Club, the Debate Club coordinated by Leslie Butler, and the Movie Lab run by film buff Mary Lanaghan, and later by Ozgur Pala. David Pearson ran the Photography Club. The Japanese Club, start-



Robert Kennedy: Photograph courtesy of Ahmad Hazratzad

ed by Dr. Simone Evans, proved to be the most popular club on the female campus. Dr. Evans helped organize various activities in collaboration with the Japanese Embassy and Japan Foundation. Female students were delighted to be invited to a Tea Ceremony and Doll Festival in the gardens of the Japanese Embassy in Dafna. Club members were also treated to a kimono show at the embassy on another occasion. Lawrence Metzger ran the Men's Japanese Club on the Men's campus where they were taught rudimentary Japanese. All men's club activities were held in a designated room, the Student Learning Center, in A06, while the female Student Learning Center had two rooms, plus a computer room, in the Women's Activity Building (C05). Teachers could take their students to the student centers during class time for extended reading, debates, discussion or IT sessions.

Some students also went on class field trips to Aspire Zone, Villagio Mall, the Equestrian Club, Souq Waqef and the Shaikh Faisal Museum. One class even went to a plant nursery! Several instructors took their students to lively sessions of the Doha Debates, a Qatar Foundation-BBC collaboration. Debate attendees were asked to write reports of their impressions of the debates, which were then published in the FP Newsletter. Another popular trip was to the Al Jazeera Studios. Students had a firsthand experience of seeing the busy and hectic environment of an international newsroom. They were also given the opportunity to speak to some of the broadcasters.

The Student Services Coordinator, Allyson Young, launched the Foundation English Peer Tutor Program for student volunteers. Sessions were held in the Student Learning Centers. The carefully selected student tutors were given tutor training sessions by Ania Sempek to enable them to provide language assistance and support on a weekly basis. The QU Student Activities Department was so impressed with the success of this initiative that they decided to launch a similar student peer-tutoring program for other courses.

The FPDE also offered a series of the Test



Elisabeth Szewczyk-Méziane: Photograph courtesy of Elisabeth Szewczyk-Méziane

English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) tutorials. In order to gain exemption from the Foundation courses, students had to score 5.5 on IELTS or 520 on the paper-based TOEFL. TOEFL and IELTS practice tasks were also included in the language lab sessions as well as foundation courses. In addition to these tutoring sessions, students were also offered TOEFL and IELTS practice exam sessions run by various instructors such as Zain Al Moumen and Kevin Rooney. These practice sessions always had a high turnout of students anxious to avoid taking FPDE courses. Instructors like Ra'ed Ghalib, Matthew Carey, Ameer Yacoub, Heshmi Hamadi and Ania Sempek ran IELTS Writing and Speaking Tutorials under the auspices of the FP Student Services. Other instructors held weekly TOEFL tutorials. Like the practice exams, these exam tutorials were extremely popular. Fall 2009 also saw the launch of Accuplacer ESL as a mandatory placement test of English language competency for intake students. Bino Paul continued to do a splendid job as Standardized Tests Administrator along with Mr. Ramesh, the ever helpful language lab technician.

Another first for the FP was the recycling bins initiative promoted by Jay Trimiar, who persuaded QU administration to provide recycling bins on campus in an effort to create environmental awareness amongst students and staff. In Spring 2008, thanks to Jay's efforts, the Environmental Club at QU was inaugurated as a co-operative project with Doha Municipality. Dr. Khalid Al Ali also signed an agreement of cooperation with UNESCO-Qatar and Qatar Friends of the Environment Centre.

One of the highlights of Spring 2009 was the *For You Gaza* fundraising initiative proposed by Rula Momani and Jay Trimiar, ably assisted by Hardie Cooper. This extraordinary event, held on 29th

April, was organized by the FP and the External Affairs Department in conjunction with the Student Activities Department to raise money for projects in strife-torn Gaza. The event included a bake sale on the women's campus, student debates (both male and female) on the topic of Gaza, and a sponsored five-kilometer on-campus run. FP faculty and male students participated in the run held on a Thursday afternoon. Female students and FP faculty provided the delicious baked goods and treats, and sales were brisk. Thousands of riyals were raised and then handed over to a charity organization to disburse for educational projects in Gaza. This was truly an event to be proud of!

In Fall 2009, the FP published its mission statement for the first time:

The Foundation Program is committed to developing students' English language proficiency to a level that will allow them to gain entry to, and success in, the academic programs offered by the colleges at Qatar University. The program also aims to help students achieve academic readiness by equipping them with skills such as independent learning, critical thinking and the appropriate use of information and communication technology as a learning tool.

The academic year 2007-2008 ended with a big splash at an exciting and lavish end-of year gathering held at the Intercontinental Hotel. There was even entertainment on offer arranged by the Master of Ceremonies, Ridha Ben Rejeb. The end-of-year gathering for 2008-2009 was a much more modest affair, held in Ibn Khaldoun Hall. Nevertheless, both events were superb occasions for colleagues and friends to greet, meet, eat and chat in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere before setting off for summer holidays.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Mrs. Fatma Alyan and Mr. David Ingels for sharing their memories.

A Life Coaching Service for FP Faculty

Susan Saafan, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

Interviewer: What started your interest in life coaching? Did you attend any particular training course?

Mr. Finfrock: I was always interested in the field of self-development and was curious to see where it would lead me in the long term. I have always found self-help books like *How to Win Friends and Influence People* fascinating too. I decided to combine my love of connecting with people and positively impacting their lives to train as a life coach. Training courses can be quite lengthy, so I attended an excellent local course called Empower World, which covered case studies, practical work, and theory. I finally received the Associate Certified Coach (ACC) certification awarded by the Global International Coaching Federation, an internationally accredited examining board.

Interviewer: What specific areas do you focus on?

Mr. Finfrock: Working as a life coach does not make me an 'expert' who dishes out advice; rather, I facilitate a process in which I help people find out for themselves how to identify and manage their individual situations. I see myself more as a 'sounding board' for people to voice their thoughts and explore the actual issues that are troubling them, and, as a result, explore ways on how to get a grip on the issues that best suit themselves. I do not specialize in any particular area. However, I do enjoy helping people with such issues as dealing with work-related

pressure. It is satisfying when people realize how they can deal with factors at work that are actually within their sphere of control. Diverse issues can come up in sessions, including developing resiliency, how to react productively to challenges at work or unwelcome news, managing change, developing parenting skills, weight loss, time management, and developing self-awareness,

Interviewer: Can colleagues request coaching sessions with you?

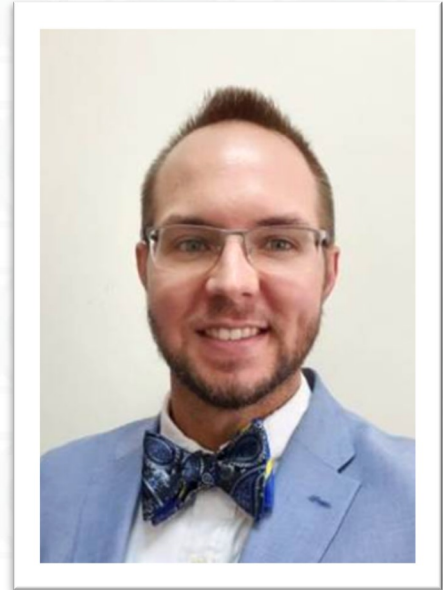
Mr. Finfrock: Yes, any colleague can have confidential coaching sessions free of charge. These sessions have often turned out to be enjoyable and beneficial for colleagues as well as myself. Interested faculty can just send me an email.

Interviewer: What do you love about coaching the most?

Mr. Finfrock: I love being of service to people and observing how people use coaching sessions to reach their full potential.

Interviewer: In light of the present COVID-19 situation, what are the most significant challenges teachers face when teaching online?

Mr. Finfrock: Building rapport online with students is challenging and, personally speaking, I have felt more drained than usual at the end of semesters because I have missed the personal face-to-face interaction with students and colleagues.



David Finfrock: Photograph courtesy of David Finfrock

This missing social and interpersonal connection is like a steady withdrawal on the 'emotional bank account' until people find themselves in a state of psychological distress.

Interviewer: Is there one piece of advice you could share with colleagues to reduce the stress of isolation and working online?

Mr. Finfrock: There is no 'one size fits all' solution, but we can all decide on what actually re-energizes us, like getting outside regularly. It is critical to prioritize free time in our schedules for these activities.

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