



The 'For You Gaza' Day

Teaching Tips

A Fundamental Concept of Language Teaching ..

* *“Good Teaching practice is based on good theoretical understanding.”*

(Stern, 1983)

* *“There is indeed nothing so practical as a good theory.”*

(Wardhaugh, 1969)

Student Services PowerPoint Presentations
(Thursday, 12th Feb, 2009) - Aisha Hall)



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Foundation Program Newsletter

Issue No. 10 - Spring 2009

{Knowledge that is known only to a few can be used only by a few.}

(Gloria Steinem - Issues Across the Curriculum, 1997)

{A piece of information that is shared can go a long way} bbc.com

Editor's Note

"There's nothing you can't have if you try hard enough, work hard enough, and strive towards a goal. And indeed ... there's no pearl without first there being grit in the oyster." (Barbara Taylor Bradford – Act of Will)

Hats off!

On behalf of the Newsletter team, I'd like to extend our warmest greetings to the readers of the Newsletter on the occasion of our most impressionable moments: **the production of the 10th issue of the Newsletter**. It is hardly possible to visualize that five years have elapsed since we started up and launched the first issue. The story of producing the first issue, the cornerstone in the legacy of the Newsletter, in the Fall of 2004, was both splendid and disconcerting, and an exciting experience that is worth recollecting. My co-editor at the time, Ms Bino Sara Paul, and myself had to strive hard to design and print it; we employed an external designer and painstakingly printed it at the University College of Technology, where the printing machines were not efficient enough to deal with a 52-colour-page newsletter, and we had to do the binding elsewhere, at the University Binding Section in the former College of Technology, in 'Madinat Khalifa' in Doha. We could barely produce 90 copies in more than a month. Nevertheless, it had been a task accomplished with enthusiasm and purpose, and as something believed in and desired. Then the director of the Foundation Program came to our rescue and approved a budget for the outsourcing of its design and printing. Now we can safely say that we have a full-fledged Newsletter, a truly professional enterprise. We are not making a mountain out of a molehill, but many people say it's really good. Well, that's fine. We're very flattered, and couldn't be happier. However, people come and go, ideas ebb and flow. In this respect, I should like to acknowledge the much-appreciated efforts of all faculty who have worked, at different times, on the Newsletter team since it was still in the pipeline: Bino Sarah Paul,



Ala Halwani, MuMu Winn, Anthony Heron, Mary Lanaghan, Eileen Plumb, Anna Romano, Sylvie Raymond, Mary Williams, Dr. Sahbi Ayari, Othman Bashir, James FitzGibbon, Lulwa Al-Mansoori, and the photographers: Mustafa Omira (QU photographer), and our colleague, Ahmed Hazratzad. And I'd be remiss in not thanking all the people who contributed to the various issues produced, especially Allyson Young (former Student Services Coordinator), and all those behind the scenes, especially the staff of the FP office. The collaborative efforts of all these people, over the five years, have clearly paved the way, every time an issue was produced, for a new cycle of growth and development. Among the highlights of this development have been the outsourcing of the Newsletter design and printing, and the enthusiastic cooperation of our colleagues in the Math & Computer Department, who have become part and parcel of the Newsletter starting from the 8th issue. We believe that our cooperation will continue and flourish, and that our accumulated experience would enable us to venture forward

Ramadan Mubarak (Happy Ramadan)

into more areas of innovation and creativity. This will wrap up our plans for the Fall Semester, and we hope to mark the occasion by preparing a Newsletter photo exhibition and throwing a small party. Cross your fingers!

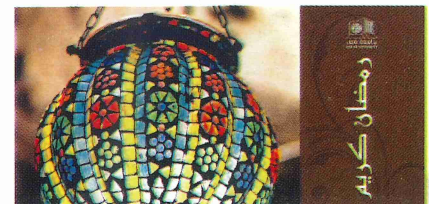
The World Financial Crisis

Good news! According to the world media, the global economic climate has stopped worsening and the beginnings of a recovery are eminent; Germany, France and Japan have exited the recession, the US economy is leveling out, and the boom cycle in the Gulf countries has started to pick up. This is, no doubt, a sign of good omen, and when we think of it in the context of our University, we can confidently envisage a better future ahead. On this crisis, the President of the University said to the *Observer*: "As QU President, I am concerned but it is manageable. It will not affect student admission or the quality of our programs. We are not at a critical stage, but like universities around the world, we have to prioritize."

Welcome back

It's so great to see you back. We hope you all have had a perfect holiday that flooded your brains with endorphins - those wonderful, feel-good chemicals that banish the blues. I bet you are now feeling fresh and wonderful for a new academic year. A warm welcome to our new colleagues. And beware of the pig! The swine flu (H1N1) is still around.

Abdul Moniem



University News

[From "Campus Life" - published by QU External Relations Department]

QU in the UK press

Beyond oil: a Switzerland in the Sands

Remarks by QU President were featured in the June 7 issue of UK-based newspaper *The Observer* as part of a big-picture story on Qatar and its development entitled "Beyond oil: a Switzerland in the Sands".

Prof Al-Misnad shared her thoughts on QU and its role in the development of Qatar, education reform, the status of women in the Qatar education system and professional life, and the effect



The President with Ruth Sunderland

of the current economic crisis on education at QU during an interview on June 1 with *Observer Business and Media Editor Ruth Sunderland*.

To the question on the number of female students at QU, Prof Al-Misnad responded that currently, women make up 75% of the student population. She pointed out that unlike universities in the west which date back hundreds of years, **QU did not have taboos or historical baggage on the issue of female student admission.** "When QU started, there was open admission for male and female students from the outset", Prof Al-Misnad said.

She expressed her admiration of the motivation and drive for personal and professional success of female students in entering higher education and achieving at the highest levels. On explaining why QU female students outnumber male students she noted that after high school, a large proportion of male students opt to enter the labour



market or tend to leave university before completing a degree.

Prof Al-Misnad stressed that it was not due to socio-economic factors and cited loss of interest in pursuing higher education by male students at middle- and high school level, as well as readier opportunities for men to enter mid-level jobs in the police and military forces. "The women in Qatar are more ambitious - also, they are expected, in terms of choosing employment, to work towards professional high-status jobs", she said.

the country's economic progress", she said.

Prof Al-Misnad noted that while Qatar is an oil and gas-based economy, strategies are being put in place to build up other sectors with the view to diversifying the economy. As a result, the labour market is constantly changing, she said, adding that the structure of **the teaching/learning system would have to emphasise not only the academic development of students but also their abilities to learn and adapt to new situations and environments, and especially, to change.** "It is about responding to and meeting the fast changing needs of the labor market and society".

Education reform also brought the establishment of Education City as a center of excellence for education and research in the country, Prof Al-Misnad said. "Having branch campuses of elite universities in Qatar has had a positive effect on education in the country. At QU, we were the first to see the positive impact in terms of collaboration and competition", she said.

Prof Al-Misnad pointed to the Emir's emphasis on education and health as a national priority and a plan to set up an endowment for education and health which she said would secure the future for Qatar's next generations in times of financial and other crises.

On the current global financial crisis, Prof Al-Misnad stated that the effects have been felt at QU, but stressed: **"As QU President, I am concerned but it is manageable. It will not affect student admission or the quality of our programs. We are not at a critical stage but like universities around the world, we have to prioritise"**. She also said she hoped that the crisis will have some positive impact on society by reducing materialism and exuberance and strengthening focus on family, social and other values.

On general education level in Qatar, Prof Al-Misnad stated that **more than 15 years ago, the country achieved universal education level for primary education.** This means that all school-aged children are in school. "In 1995 education reform was initiated to strengthen the schools and higher education institutions which will ultimately contribute to advancing

Why Qatar University?

There are countless reasons why students choose to spend their undergraduate careers at Qatar University. QU is the largest and oldest university in Qatar offering the broadest selection of undergraduate majors and minors from 7 well-respected colleges. A Foundation Program is also available to prepare high school graduates to meet the minimum entrance requirements as set by the various University colleges.



VIDEOTRY FEST at QU

'Who Are We When East Meets West'

(A report by Ahmed Selim)

After a year of workshops and imaging the improbable, we were able to bring to Qatar the first ever student film festival. Vidoetry Fest 2009, received 80 submissions from over 120 individuals, 28 students from the College of the North Atlantic.

The festival was "Who Are We When East Meets West?" This theme attracted award winning video journalist to becoming the final judge in the five-minute video competition. Based at the American University in Washington



DC, Bill Gentile's work regularly appears on PBS NOW, Discovery Channel, and CSPAN. He judged the competition via the internet and recorded a message for the festival highlighting the new initiative by President Obama to reach out to the Muslim world as a key indication of the importance of respectful cross-cultural communication in the "visual language that needs no translation".

With this pilot festival came the "Golden Rababa Award." The rababa is a traditional middle eastern instrument made from the tail of a horse, goat leather and wood. It was chosen as the branding theme for the festival because of its solitary string being symbolic of the individual student voices that the

festival aimed to discover—one string; many sounds. Rooted in the history and the identity of the region, **Shady Fauzi** dazzled the audience with his rababa playing performance that combined the tradition of the middle east with the western impromptu rhythm of Jazz. The rababa was introduced as the second keynote speaker at the festival speaking for itself.

The **Golden Rababa** award was designed and donated by Gulf Crafts. The first place trophy was a gracious gift to support our event.

The productions included a wide variety of interpretations of the theme of the festival. Submissions ranged from photo essays combining poetry, to animations, reflections on gender issues, spirituality, conflict, art and culture.

The best film award went to **Osama bin Majid** for "Qatar Race Club: The Dream" subtly depicting the union of East and West through the Qatari youth's embrace of the racing cars. Other category winners included **Ali Karami** for Best Critical Thinking, **Shaikha Al-Marri** for Most Creative, **Maha Youssef** for Best Storytelling, **Huda Hamza** for Best Cinematography, and **Shyma Al-Hormuzi** for Most Humorous.

Teachers also participated in the competition. Best Teacher Video award went to **Ben Crace** for "The Art of Fire". Other teacher videos included **David Bartsh's** "The Art and the Artist" and **Ahmed Selim's** "We Know God is Love."

Vidoetry Fest was organized by the vidoetry digital filmmakers. The videos can be viewed at www.Vidoetry.ning.com

The process leading to this festival and competition included 16 workshops that challenged students to make 5-minute videos in five days. These workshops were lead by Ahmed Selim and employed techniques known as "Backpack Journalism".

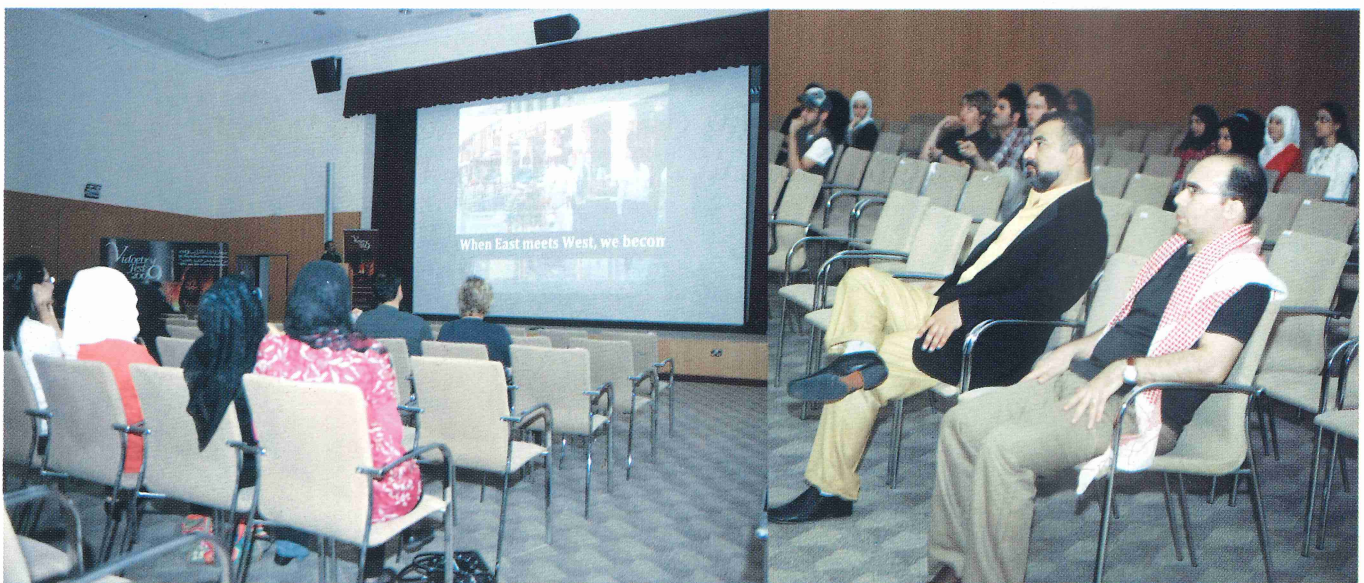


Ultimately the design of the projects stemmed from a collaborative effort with Anita Ghajar-Selim that focused on video production as a new standard for literacy in the age of new media. Drawing parallels between the writing process and video production projects were designed to get students more enthusiastically involved in the writing process and help them understand the purpose and impact on an audience about what they write.

By reshaping materials, manipulating organizational and transition patterns and considering how visual and auditory material can enhance text, students were able to fulfill learning outcomes present in the Foundation and Post Foundation.

For those students who could not translate their work, a Vidoetry Translation Team was put together to add subtitles. This team consisted of the following bilingual teachers: Dr. Ali Hussein, Dr Muawaia, Abdul Moniem, Mohammed Bakri, Ridha Ben Rejeb, Zain Momin, Hala Gharani, Maha Al-Masri, Khaled Numan and Reem Khalid. Preliminary judges for student videos included : Anita Ghajar-Selim, Eileen Plumb, Ben Crace, Ahmad Hazratzad and critical thinking professor Dr. Omar Moad. A big thanks goes to all these teachers who made this event possible and the External Relations and Foundation Department.

We hope to build on this success and make Vidoetry Fest an annual event.



ACCUPLACER at Qatar University - Set to Launch

(Submitted by : Bino Sarah Paul, FP External Exams Coordinator)

Qatar University Foundation Program is launching the new English Placement test, ACCUPLACER ESL (APL) from Fall 2009. The test will be administered at QU, from 19th August to 16th September 2009. Students seeking admission to the English Foundation Courses must have an APL score at the time of registration.

Test- Overview

APL, developed by the College Board, is a computer-adaptive battery of tests designed to place English learners in appropriate language courses.

Reading Skills The Reading Skills test evaluates comprehension of short passages. There are 20 multiple-choice questions to this test. The passages deal with a variety of subjects including arts, human relationships, physical science, history, social sciences, and practical situations.

Language Use The Language Use test measures grammar and usage. There are 20 multiple-choice questions to this test. It contains questions in two formats: completing a sentence by filling in a blank with a word or phrase from the choices given, and choosing a sentence that best combines two given discrete sentences.

Sentence Meaning Sentence Meaning assesses understanding of word meanings in one or two-sentence contexts. There are 20 multiple-choice questions to this test. The sentences draw from the content areas of natural science, arts/humanities, human relationships, history, social sciences, and practical situations.

Listening The Listening test evaluates understanding of listening material.. There are 20 multiple-choice questions to this test. The conversations take place in a variety of settings, for example, a computer lab, the library, shopping, in a restaurant, reading the newspaper, and performing tasks at work.

WritePlacer ESL

This is to assess accurately fundamental writing skills. This test measures the ability to write effectively, which is critical to academic success, on a scale of 0-6.

Determining the Cut -Off Scores

The Foundation English Department administered pilot exams to faculty and students during Fall 2008 and Spring 2009, in order to determine appropriate cut-off scores.

The first piloting was done with a group of faculty on June 10, 11 and 12, 2008. They evaluated the components and checked whether the test is suitable for placing QU students in various levels of English courses. They analyzed scores and discussed the WritePlacer rubric, with a focus on how the writing is auto-marked.

The next step was to do the piloting for groups of students in the program. After administering the test to groups from Levels 1-4, Amr Salah (Testing Co-ordinator) hypothesized cut-off scores for various levels.

Amr, in collaboration with the Testing Committee, decided to run more pilots in Spring 2009. Results were collected, scaled and averaged. A histogram analysis was applied and graphs were generated.

The last stage was to verify the results and finalize the scores. Another piloting was carried out after the mid-semester exams of Spring 2009. Classes with the biggest number of students scoring 65-85% were targeted. The logic behind the selection was that students obtaining the scores mentioned above would most probably be representative of the level they study. After the piloting, the results were studied, graphs generated and conclusions reached.



Cut- off Scores out of 600	
L1	0-250
L2	251-327
L3	328-400
L4	401-600

L1 Remedial Scores

A cut-off score for the remedial L1 students was decided upon. The lower third of all L1 scores was identified. This pointed out that these are the weakest students in L1 and they should be placed in remedial classes. Again, an average score was targeted and decided on.

L1 Remedial Scores	0-165
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Analysis of Cut off Scores

According to the College Board, more analyses should be conducted after one or two semesters of using the cut-off scores, in order to verify the results and check whether adjustments are needed. This will be done through a correlation study between the set cut-off scores and students' scores on the achievement tests at the end of each semester.

Sources- Accuplacer Test Report/ AmrSalah/ June 2009, **HYPERLINK** "<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/accuplacer/accuplacer-esl-tests.html>" <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/accuplacer/accuplacer-esl-tests.html>

Hardie Cooper Jr.s' Poetry (Lecturer in the English Foundation Program)



Chess Match

Queen Checks the King
 In a battle of wit
 Check this, check that
 This is the Chess Match
 Bishop takes Pawn
 Castle is surrounded by Knights
 Pawns come forth to battle knights
 Giving Castle the chance for flight
 This is a battle of epic proportion
 And it all comes down to one thing
 "Save the King"

The Old Mans' Last Memory

When I was sick, I needed a doctors' help
 So, I sought it
 When I was tired, my body needed rest
 So, I rested it
 When I was not famous, few people knew me
 Thus, I lived a life that was quiet
 This is my last memory

Description

Describe the epitome of perfection or the invisible
 I bet you can not
 Describe the time you spent in your mothers' womb
 I bet you can not
 Describe the circumference of the universe
 Or how air was created
 Or the creation of time and space
 Or your first thought
 Or word you spoke
 Or smile you smiled
 Or step you took
 Describe your first time touching someone or something
 You can try
 But you can not
 I bet you can not

The Foundation English Department at the Childhood Cultural Center

(Report by Abdul Moniem)



In conformity with Qatar University educational policy to reach out to the wider community in Qatar and beyond, the Foundation English Department ran two English courses for the staff of the Childhood Cultural Center: Elementary & Pre-intermediate, from 12 April to 28 May, 2009. The courses were taught respectively by Abdul Moniem M Hussein and June Arber. The CCC participants showed great interest in pursuing the courses taught to them and were highly motivated by the materials they studied. To our joy and pride, they more than often reiterated their interest in taking more English courses to be offered by QU.

On the last day of the course, the Center organized a small party to celebrate the end of the courses and to honor the participants for their achievement. Dr. Mohammed Fawzi, QU English Department UR & Adjunct Courses Coordinator, Dr. Ahmed Al-Marzouki, CCC HR Director, and Mr. Mohammed Eskander, CCC Assistant Director, addressed the party. They all stressed the importance of continuous professional development, and congratulated the participants on their successful completion of the courses. Dr. Al-Marzouki handed the participants certificates issued by QU.

We would like here to express our sincere gratitude to Mr. Al-Jumaily, the Director of the Center, Mr. Eskander, Assistant Director, and their staff for making our job at their Center fruitful, enjoyable and interesting, and for their unfailing hospitality.

The Childhood Cultural Center was established in 2003. Its main objective, as stated in its manual, is to build up the cultural personality of the Qatari children; to protect their identity as embodied in their culture and language, as well as to develop their skills and potentials, so that they become capable of dealing with a changing world around them.



Citizen project
مشروع المواطنة



News & Events in the Math & Computer Department

Math and Computer faculty won the gold at the QU football tournament



The Department of Math and Computer won the gold medal (first place) during the football tournament organized by the sports activities and entertainment section, Student Activities, at Qatar University. Seven teams participated in the tournament including the English department, who won the bronze medal for third place.



The photo above shows the Foundation Program director Dr Khalid Al Ali and the Department Head, Dr. Maha Nabhan, with some of the Math & Computer Department Football team players.



The Math and Computer faculty team celebrating the gold medal

Preparing for the forthcoming Digital Native Student

By: Dr Arslan Ayari

Computer Program Coordinator



The reform of Qatar University a few years ago is still making an impact within the halls of the Foundation Program and beyond. With a definite commitment toward excellence by Qatar University leadership at all levels, a thoughtful action plan is in place. With a vibrant team of faculty members and increasingly technology-savvy students, the Foundation Program is earning a reputation as a leading technology-oriented entity.

Many technology-based tools have been piloted, implemented, or reevaluated in order to explore their benefits and efficacy to support teaching and learning. The initiatives that have brought these new tools to light are either faculty member's personal initiatives or Department implementations. The beneficiaries not only include our Foundation students but also other students and faculty members in other QU institutions.

These tools have impacted directly upon our methods of teaching and, through these, student learning. It even affects how we collect students' opinions. A couple of weeks ago, two Math instructors surveyed more than 1700 students by email. They designed a 20 question survey using an online commercial survey

tool. By combining a multitude of technologies, they were able to collect the opinion of large samples of students in a very short period of time. The final phase of the project is to process and analyze the collected data. The survey explores students' opinions about using technology to learn Math.

In order to improve students' interaction in class and to gather immediate feedback, a new product called "Clickers" has been purchased by the Department of Math and Computer. Commonly called Classroom Response Systems or Student Response Systems, Clickers facilitate the instructor's task to ask students questions during a lecture and to gather their responses in real time. The Department acquired 50 Clickers that can be used for two different classes. Several faculty members are interested in piloting this new product, which is gaining ground in many Universities around the world. Additional use of this tool can be to gather immediate feedback during large staff meetings.

To improve student-instructor interaction outside the classroom, the Department looked at "Elluminate" which is a real-time online learning and collaboration tool that allows teachers and students to interact online by accessing each other's application. In fact, with Elluminate, teachers can perform computer tasks such as offering solutions to an Excel application problem online even if they are thousands of miles away. According to the company, this product is used by over 7 million teachers and students located in over 170 different countries. The Department is studying its benefits and weighing up the possibility of piloting this product.

Video material is an efficient way to encourage independent studies and an opportunity for students to study more in-depth class material. The computer Department is studying the possibility of acquiring online commercial videos for MS Office courses and IC3 test preparation. Meanwhile, many faculty members are using the video tool "Camtasia" to prepare in-house course material for their students.

Finally, the department acquired the latest version (4.0) of the simulation tool Adobe Captivate. This software has emerged as the market-leader in rapid authoring tools to create professional eLearning content with advanced interactivity. The program comprises software and scenario simulations — all without programming knowledge or multimedia skills. This product can help our students learn complicated computer skills and help instructors to monitor and evaluate their progress.

The list of hardware and software under consideration or being evaluated is thus long; in addition it contains new technologies such as PC tablets, smart classes (by robotel or NetOp), and Carnegie Learning to name a few.

The Digital Native Students will soon show up in our classrooms and labs and they will certainly impact our perception to education and the way to approach it. This is just the beginning! More is yet to come!

CBE using Blackboard

By: Dr Sahbi Ayari



The Department of Math and Computer handed the task of examinations to the Computer-Based Mini exam committee (CBE) to transform the Math3 and Math4 papers to the randomly-generated Computer Based Exam system using Blackboard. CBE has reached its first objectives, and delivered mini exams to Math3 students. So far the exam has run six times (both try1 and try2) successfully and great feedback was taken from students and faculty members. The CBE committee continues to work on the second objective to get the same results for the Math 4 course.

The CBE committee comprises: Dr Sahbi Ayari, chair. Dr Abdullah Sammani and Mr. Muhammed Shaikh.

CBE by numbers: This is a follow-up to the CBE committee and is in charge of automating Mini exams. Since its first meeting on 26 October 2008, the committee has created more than 90 pools of questions and around 1000 questions. These pools are made up of a variety of question-types: True/False, Multiple choice questions/ Matching/Multiple answers questions/ Hot Spot/Fill in the blanks, etc.



Blackboard

Educational Technology: Workshops

By: Mr. Hamud Abdulkadir

Getting started with Questionmark™ Perception™ Software



The Questionmark™ Perception™ assessment management system enables educators and trainers to author, schedule, deliver, and report on surveys, quizzes, tests and exams. It allows us to easily create, modify and delete 22 different types of questions including the ability to use audio, video, Adobe Flash and Adobe Captivate simulations in questions. Adobe Captivate software provides an industry-leading screen recording and video-capture software platform to help to create professional-looking video tutorials and engaging eLearning experiences, interactive simulations, and powerful skill assessments. The Questionmark™ program will be gradually implemented in Foundation Math and Computer assessments.



Personal Response System - "Clickers"

By: Mr. Mohammed Shabeer



The Personal Response System (PRS) is an instructional technology tool composed of a proprietary software application that is installed on the facilitator's computer, a wireless receiver, and hand-held infrared transmitters that have been assigned to students to record their responses to multiple-choice or yes/no questions.

The student transmitter resembles a television remote control (see photo). When the facilitator (such as a teacher or lecturer) asks a multiple-choice or yes/no question, the student presses a button on the handheld device that corresponds to the intended answer. All student answers are recorded and analyzed, and can be displayed on the facilitator's computer screen as an easy-to-read histogram. The system can also be programmed to display the identity of the respondent who is the first to hit the button corresponding to the correct answer after a question is asked. And so on.



How we can use the PRS in Math classes, and the general benefits of using this system in lectures, were discussed in the presentation. Some results of a survey done in a math class, in which PRS was used for the first time, were presented and discussed.

Qatari student from Manchester University seeks help from the Department of Math and Computer

Ms. Noora Al Kaabi is a first year engineering student at Manchester University, UK. She visited the Math & Computer Program during the spring break seeking help in mathematics and computer sciences. This she received on techniques on solving differential equations applied to Engineering problems and finding successively better approximations to the zeroes (or roots) of a real-valued function. To this end she received multiple tutoring sessions from Dr. Ali Ayari and Dr. Arslan Ayari in Math and Computing techniques, such as the Newton-Raphson technique and implementation of these methods using the FORTRAN programming tool.

After the break, Ms. Noora got the opportunity to present a seminar to Foundation students entitled: "My experience as an engineering student in UK", where she talked about her experience as a Qatari student in the UK, and the difficulties that she faced when moving from one culture to another.



Ms. Noora Al-Kaabi



In-house Math and Computer Professional Development Reports 2009

Compiled by Judith MacKinnon

"Using Instructional Technology in Teaching Mathematics: Advantages and Disadvantages - A case study"

By Ahmed Taleb

In recent years, colleges and universities have put increasing pressure on their faculty members to use instructional technology in teaching. College administrators believe that using technology will make instructors more productive and the students more motivated. The instructors concerned have a right to ask if their investment in terms of time and effort in learning how to use the technology will produce significant benefits for their students.



In addition, they also have the right to ask the question:

Which is better in teaching, the traditional method of using a board or making use of the new technology in teaching?

To answer this question, students from the Foundation Program were asked their opinion through a questionnaire, which contained 23 questions. The data was collected and analyzed using "survey monkey" software. The questionnaire helps to know the advantages and disadvantages of using instructional technology in teaching mathematics.

"Alternative Learning Activities for Mathematics"

By Ms. Namrata Das



Have you tried: Partner Self-checking warm-ups, Group Problems, I Check, you check, I Have, you have, Vocabulary Foldable, Cube Foiling, Slope matching, or Station Review?

These learning activities for Mathematics are innovative techniques and are very useful during long lecture days.

With Ms Namrata Das, we looked at these activities, which can be adapted to many levels for consistency. We explored when to use small activities vs. big activities and how the use of partnering students in the classroom can be beneficial. Ms Das also discussed how to explain games, how to take cultural awareness into consideration with these specific activities and how to keep students on task during activities.

"Cryptography – An overview of My Master Thesis"

By: Mr. Wolfgang Baltes



The Data Encryption Standard (DES) is a symmetric 64 Bit block-cipher [like 'Enigma' or the DaVinci code]. It is also the topic of many hours of investigation by Mr. Wolfgang Baltes who answered basic questions that one might be curious about. For example: How does the DES work internally? How balanced does the DES work per round and also in total for small input-changes? What are S-Boxes and why are they important? What DES-weaknesses are known and how can we evaluate x such that $DES(x) = x$?

Mr. Wolfgang did state, however, that this cipher is now reaching the end of its lifetime, since it is only secure as "triple-DES" but not in its original form due to its short 56-Bit Master-Key.

"E-Communication: Ways to communicate with students electronically."

By: Mr. Muhammad Arshad Shaikh



We, sometimes, get complaints from our students that they did not know or they were not informed about a certain event/material whereas they actually were! Sometimes the students are right; we think we have provided the information but actually we did not.

An example of this is putting something in eLearning 'ANNOUNCEMENT' for a particular group of students but some students use (or are only familiar with) email and consider it as the only source of information!

In this workshop Mr Arshad presented this communication anomaly and demonstrated how to explore: 1) The available platforms for both faculty and students to communicate electronically with each other, 2) Methods of online communication between faculty and students. 3) mini-exams online registration and ways to view mini-exam's results

"Investigation of the effect of the online assessment on students' Performance"

By: Mr. Mohamed Chabi



The math department is beginning to offer department-wide assessment in an on-line format. In light of this, Mr Chabi's seminar presented the task of determining whether the online math assessment, based on multiple choice, is a suitable tool for assessment or not. He did this by comparing the performance of his students on a traditional paper-based test and their performance on the same test on-line.

The conclusion drawn by Mr Chabi was that the online assessment is a very good tool for self-assessment and for testing knowledge and facts. But when it comes to skills, the multiple choice tests are poor tools for measuring the ability to apply knowledge to complex math problems.

Effective Lecturing Skills

By: Mrs. Maysoon Swailem



In her first seminar in the Fall semester, Mrs. Maysoon suggested some lecturing skills needed to produce an effective lecture. She concluded "lecturing" refers to both planning and delivering a classroom presentation. While the lecture has certain elements in common with a formal speech, a classroom lecture places greater emphasis on the importance of presenter-audience (instructor-student) interaction.

During the semester, Mrs. Maysoon conducted a questionnaire-based survey among students to explore a major question: "Do the instructors apply the basic skills in teaching in order to reach an effective lecture?"

Also, in this seminar, Mrs. Maysoon viewed the results obtained: 1) The analysis of the mentioned questionnaire. 2) The results of the study. 3) The opinions of students about an effective lecture.

Education Technology

By: Mr. Hamud Abdulkadir



The goal of Mr Hamud's brainstorming seminar was to discuss and share ideas on how to use the available technology in the Department of Math and Computer to enhance teaching and learning.

The central theme of the discussion is attributable to Bates, "Good teaching matters".

He noted that clear objectives, good structuring of learning materials, relevance to learners' needs, etc., apply to the use of any technology for teaching, and if these principles are ignored, then the teaching will fail, even if the unique characteristics of the medium are stylishly exploited. Good teaching may overcome a poor choice in the use of technology, but technology will never save bad teaching; usually it makes it worse".

Bates, A. (1995). Technology, Open Learning and distance education. London: Routledge

"Preparing an electronic lecture through the use of both Microsoft word and Acrobat Reader that can be used both by the instructor and student"

By: Mr. Salim Salim

Preparing an electronic copy of a lecture is a widely used method that helps in managing the lecture and cuts out wasted time of students taking notes. More significantly, it simplifies a student's participation in class work and provides the opportunity to practice the lesson's objective skills directly. Furthermore, it is also considered a useful reference for the student, to be used hand-in-hand with the textbook.



Using Acrobat reading/writing software, Mr Salim clearly demonstrated how to prepare an e-lecture while the hands-on workshop participants learned how to: 1) Prepare an electronic-based lecture through the use of Microsoft. 2) Use Word, Acrobat read/write software and the electronic copy of the text book. 3) Publish the lecture on Black board and/or a web site. 4) Use the e-lecture in different ways using the available technology in class. Participants left the seminar quite satisfied with their next e-lecture on their flash memories!

Web 2.0 Tools in Education

By: Mrs. Lijy Jose



Mrs. Lijy introduced Web 2.0 Tools as interactive web-based tools which enable groups of people to socialize, collaborate and work together. She suggested that we use Web 2.0 Tools to allow students to be active participants while using the internet.

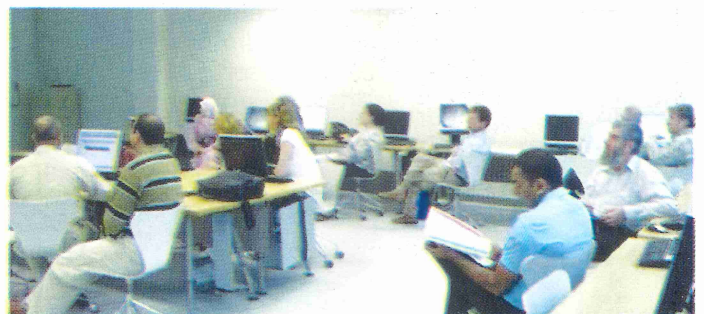
Finally, Mrs Lijy considered Web 2.0 technologies and their use in the classroom and in professional development saying that Web 2.0 Tools provide new opportunities for teachers to enhance learning in the classroom and for students to add meaningful technology experiences to their educational process. These tools have made the internet a more customizable and user-friendly classroom utility than ever before!

Conference in Qatar

Exploring ICT in Education

The College of the North Atlantic-Qatar (CNA-Q) and the Supreme Council of Information and Communication Technology (ictQATAR) are co-hosting the second annual ICT in Education Conference, March 7-8 2009. Math and computer faculty from foundation took part of the event.

The conference objective was to 1) create an opportunity for educators and school administrators to learn about the latest trends in ICT education. 2) Provide hands-on workshops for teachers to learn more about technology in the classroom and 3) Increase participant's awareness of the influence and impact of technology.



A group picture of faculty from the math and computer department attending the second annual ICT conference at the College of the North Atlantic. International conference:

International Conferences

Next Generation Internet through Next Generation Networks

By: Mr. Hamid Azani

I took part in the Sixth International Conference on Wireless and Optical communications Networks (WOCOM2009). The IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) attended the conference, which was held in Cairo, Egypt from April 28 to 30, 2009.

The Goal of this international conference was to bring together scientists and engineers who work in these fields around the world. Recent findings made coming out of advanced research carried by several teams around the world were presented in the areas of Mobile and Wireless Communications, optical and networking, and Information Technology.



From right to left: Mr. Jangsu Kim (Chungbuk University - Korea), Professor Heung-Gyoon Ryu (Chungbuk University - Korea), Ms. Mehdiya Ajana (Alakhawayn University - Morocco), Mr. Hamid Azani (Qatar University - Qatar)

I had the opportunity to discuss with many presenters their research findings; in particular in the areas of interest to Qatar University Foundation Program, such as the implications on e-learning coming from switching to the Next Generation Network (NGN) and Next Generation Internet (NGI).

I recommend reading a tutorial about 'Next Generation Internet through Next Generation Networks', presented by Professor Asoke K. Taukder from the Department of Computer Science & Engineering in the National Institute of Technology in Warangal India.

Conference on Mobile Computer Aided Learning, IMCL 2009 Jordan

By Mohamed Soliman



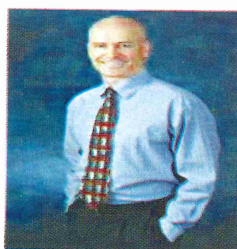
Mr. Mohamed Soliman presented a research paper to the International Conference on Mobile Computer-Aided Learning, IMCL 2009. The theme of the conference was e-learning with focus on mobile learning. Mr. Soliman says, "While we should try to employ interesting technological tools available nowadays for teaching, we should never put the educational side as a second priority; education is the main objective. We need to ensure a compensation for learning by the machine". He also called for an evaluation measure (metric) for e-learning methods to test how far they can provide effective educational scenarios by referencing established educational theories.

New Colleagues in the English Department

A warm welcome to our new colleagues who joined the English Department for the Spring Semester, 2009.



Miriam Sciala



Robert Goy



Bruce McCollaum

(The couple, Miriam and Robert, are not new to the English Department. They had taught for a few years in the former English Language Unit before the Foundation Program was started in 2004.

English Department News & Events

Visiting Lecturers in the English Department

Blended Learning through New Technologies Workshop

On 25 & 26 February, 2009, Dr. Bothaina Al Othman of Kuwait University, conducted a workshop on how to create a community learners and/or students as part of a blended general EFL program, integrating some of the web 2.0 tools and sms technology (Blended Learning through new Technologies). The workshop was held in Aisha Hall.



Mumu, Allyson and Dr. Buthaina

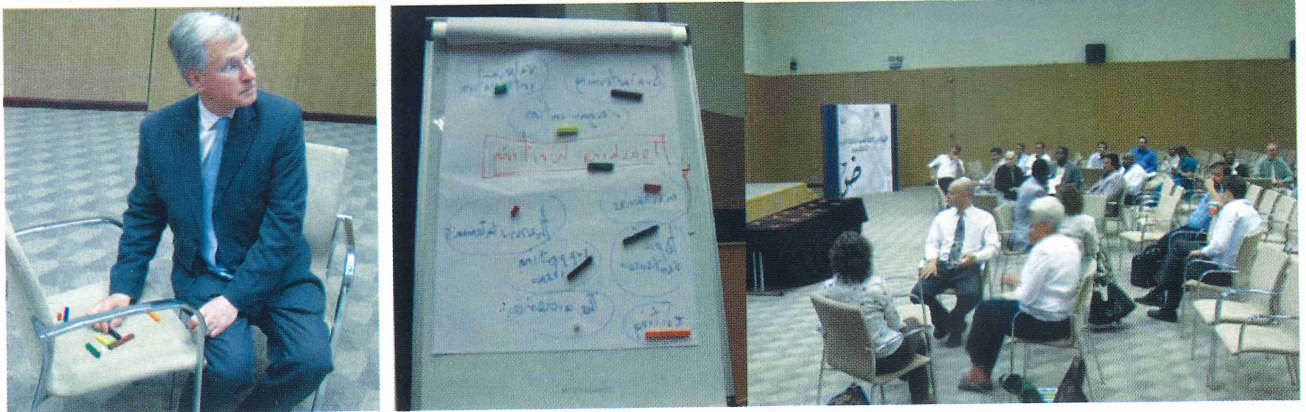
Task-based Learning & Activities Workshop

Dave and Jane Willis, visiting speakers from Oman University, gave a workshop on two consecutive days, 15 & 16 March, 2009 in Ibn Khaldoon Hall, QU. Visit Dave & Jane's website (www.willis-elt.co.uk).



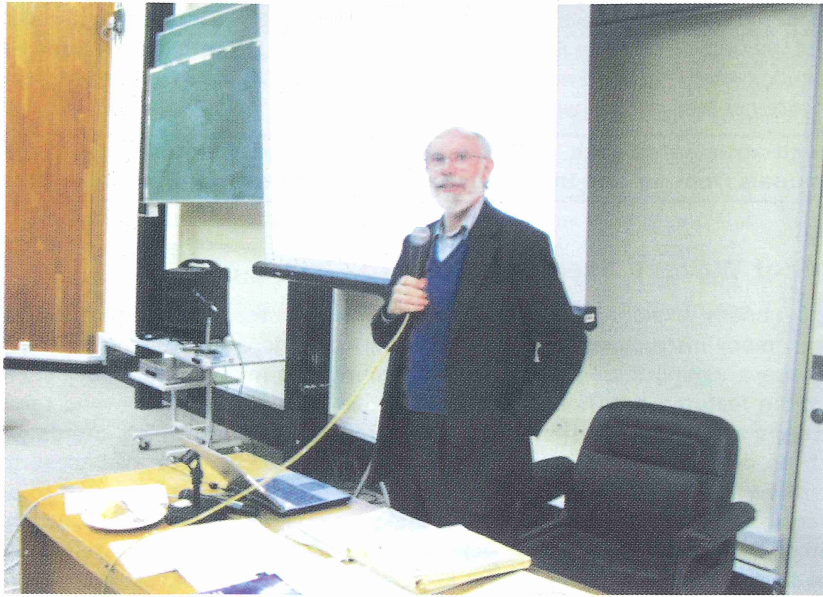
Writing in English – Expectations and Possibilities

Mr. Peter Grundy of Cambridge University conducted two workshops on 'Writing in English: Expectations and Possibilities' on 26 & 27 April, 2009, in Ibn Khaldoon Hall, QU.



On 3rd & 4th March, 2009, Mr. Kip Cates from Tokyo University gave a Workshop on Peace Education:

Becoming a Global Teacher: Ten Steps to an International Classroom



Action Research

On May 7th 2009, Salah Troudi from the University of Exeter, UK, gave a Workshop in Ibn Khadoon Hall on Action Research.



QUPPED Participation in International Conferences

(Prepared by Eileen Plumb)



One of the most exciting elements of our profession as ESL/ EFL professionals is the opportunity to attend or participate in professional events related to our field. TESOL, Inc. has organized conferences all over the world, and the Qatar University Foundation Program English Department has been well-represented in several of them, thanks to these hard-working (and well-traveled) faculty members. Note: some presenting faculty members are not featured below (by their own choice).

The much-anticipated 15th TESOL Arabia International Exhibition & Conference welcomed ELT professionals from around the world to the JW Marriott Hotel in Dubai, UAE from March 12 – 14.

Jane Hoelker: Student Writers Need Someone to Listen

The presentation begins by briefly exploring the various approaches to teaching writing and their consequences. For instance, many instructors spend hours writing corrections on student papers, but this approach seems to make a writing lesson a lesson in grammar, and might even hinder student development. My presentation featured a different approach: active listening by a peer who records the writer-student's reflections on his or her writing during the process of writing which affords great support and benefit, such as developing confidence, autonomy, and meta-cognitive awareness to a student writing an essay in the L2. The notable consequence of this active listening approach to peer writing is that the role of critic shifts from the teacher to the student writer with the teacher functioning as resource and coach rather than critic. The three checklists that I have developed based on Graves' work were discussed as well as student reflections on the approach and writing samples which support my observations of student success.



The presentation was very well received, and I was happy that Mario Rinvulucchi and Jane Willis both expressed interest in what I have been doing in my writing classroom. I had also presented on this approach to EFL writing at TESOL, Inc. the previous year. Since then, I have received e-mails from educators in the U.S. (and this year from the Gulf) about how other educators have witnessed greater student involvement in their writing and greater improvement in their writing after implementing this approach in their classrooms.

Mark Maby: Guessing Vocabulary Meaning through Core Senses



My paper examined how second language learners acquire polysemous words. These are words which have a several interrelated meanings. For example, a student might know the meaning of 'deep' when talking about swimming pools, but may not know that we can also use the word when we talk about 'deep traditions' or 'deep understanding'. My research, conducted with students in the Post-Foundation English classes, looked at how well students could guess one meaning of a word if they knew a different but related meaning of the word.

Because I felt that the topic might be too specialized for the audience at TESOL Arabia, in my talk I included a discussion on acquiring vocabulary when learning a second language. I discussed how important it was for students to know the most frequent words in English. I also talked about how to know a word involves much more than just knowing a definition and a translation into the students' first language. It also involves knowing about collocations and grammatical restrictions, knowing whether it is used in writing or in speaking and also whether it is polite or impolite. I gave my talk in a small room but more people showed up than there were chairs to seat them. I was pleased with the way it went, and happy to see that people were more interested in the talk than I had expected.

Maha Cherif: How do Wikis Enhance EFL Learner Autonomy?

The positive role that educational technology plays in making language learning/ teaching more effective is now irrevocable and unquestionable. So much so that ELT professionals are making different and various uses of technology to promote language learning. However, a top-down process has always been used where teachers design and/or select websites/online activities for students to practice and use. To my knowledge, very little opportunity is offered to students to generate or build their own learning websites. In an attempt to give students greater control over their learning process, I encouraged my class to develop a Wiki that has become their forum as well as resource.

The aim of the presentation was to show how using a student-generated Wiki has paved the way to promoting autonomous learning and increasing student motivation in an EFL context. The presentation focused on the steps involved in engaging students to contribute to the Wiki, the students' contributions to the Wiki, and the teacher's and learners' roles in the process. It ended with the students' views of the importance of using a student-generated Wiki, and how it helped them become more responsible for their own learning.



Dr. Ali A. Hussein & Dr. Mohammed Fawzi: Classroom Management Impact on ESL Learner Motivation

The significance of this study emanates from the fact that classroom management and motivation are two key areas in ESL/EFL. In this study, these two areas were brought together to reflect the belief that classroom management is one of the major factors impacting ESL learners' motivation in the classroom. The impact of each of these aspects on motivation was assessed separately and collectively as perceived by 30 teachers of the QUFPEP, through completion of a questionnaire in Fall, 2008. The questionnaire was piloted and validated by three external reviewers, and included 23 items distributed as follows: physical management (5 items), instructional management (6 items), and behavior management (12 items). The presentation was intended to present and discuss the results of the study, and to propose some preventative strategies.

The presentation was given on the morning of Friday, March 13. On the whole the topic of the presentation turned out to be very interesting and popular to all EFL/ESL teachers and educators as it affects everyone in the profession. As a result, the presentation was well-attended: the room was full – some standing, others sitting on the floor. The workshop part of the presentation was very interesting and it generated heated discussions among participants on classroom management issues.



Patrick Murphy & David Coupland: Coaching Writing in the L2 Classroom

Recently Patrick and David continued the "Teaching and Coaching Writing" World Tour with a stop in Dubai presenting at TESOL Arabia 2009. There was a slight twist, though (this being the fourth or fifth time presenting on this topic) in that the workshop investigated additional alternatives in responding to student writers. One key aspect of the presentation was using technology to respond to writing via voice recording. Applications such as Audacity and the "insert sound" feature of Microsoft Word greatly enhance the teacher's ability to coach writing.



Another twist for us this time was the size of the room; it seated 300. We followed the excellent lead of David Bartsch and Ozgur Pala - literally, as they presented in the same room prior to us. Comments made at the conference by attendees suggested that QU presenters were doing an excellent job and that the applied nature of their presentations was quite useful. Finally, on a sad note, this was the farewell concert (so-to-speak) for this particular World Tour; stay tuned though, as there may be a

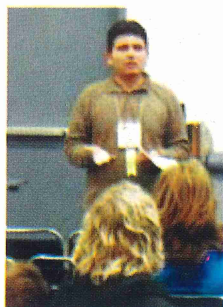


"Pedagogical Shock – Qatari Students moving from High School to Foundation" tour in the works.

The 43rd Annual TESOL Convention & Exhibits took place this year in the mountains of Denver, Colorado (complete with a surprise snowstorm), from March 26 – 28.

Dave Bartsch & Ozgur Pala: Attaining New Heights in Writing: Using YouTube Videos

There are a number of ways that youtube videos can be used in the classroom. However, one initial significant thought is that videos, seemingly, are in the vast majority of instances used for listening and speaking purposes; as a result, writing teachers need to be a little more creative in their implementation of them. In a broad sense, the content can be used as a model, for example as direct learning from a recorded lecture or a process description. Used directly, students can be asked to describe characters, plot or setting. Used indirectly, videos can be used as points of departure for further exploration and development. Clearly, technical challenges are present when using YouTube in the classroom (for example, the content is not always available when you need it) but these can be overcome.



We initially presented this workshop for a 45-minute session at the TESOL Arabia conference in Dubai (with a dynamic audience of 175-200 people). The presentation was divided into three main sections: pedagogical and practical rationale, examples of videos with accompanying worksheets and activities, finishing with practical and technical considerations. For the TESOL Denver presentation, we had the advantage of a longer time slot: 1 hour and 45 minutes. The main difference was that we included more example videos and worksheets or activities. A freak spring snowstorm shutting down the city and an early start time did not dull the enthusiasm and participation of approximately 50-75 attendees. Our videos, worksheets and presentation slides are all accessible at

<http://youtubeforwriting.blogspot.com>.



Also in Denver, we (Dave Bartsch & Ozgur Pala) moderated a round-table session entitled Climbing the Mountain of Teaching EFL in the Persian Gulf. We were joined by Rob Clément, a colleague working at Madares al-Ghad in Ajman, UAE. The intent of the discussion was to answer practical questions that people interested in moving to the Gulf might have (safety and security, general living and working conditions, etc.). Finally, we gave a paper presentation called Developing Critical Thinking Through Asking Questions, in which we presented the audience with sample discussions and invited them to identify the fallacies in the arguments. We concluded with specific suggestions of ways to encourage critical thinking in our students.

The eagerly awaited Qatar TESOL 4th International Conference went forward this year on April 10 – 11, 2009 at the College of the North Atlantic in Doha, Qatar.

Stephanie Pinnacle: How to Develop a Content-Based Unit



Creating materials for content-based courses is no easy task! Through these courses, students acquire language and build content knowledge. A content-based unit must be structured, sequential and integrated. The presenter will outline the steps in developing a unit, present a wide variety of activities, and show samples units.

The presenter explained that it takes careful planning to find suitable materials and develop constructive lessons for a content-based unit. She then described the five steps in creating a unit: selecting sub-topics, identifying objectives, gathering materials, creating lesson plans and activities, and evaluating students' progress. Although teachers should consider the parameters of the general content area and course objectives when developing a unit, they have considerable freedom and flexibility in terms of sub-topics and teaching styles.

Kira Litvin: Evaluating Materials for Content-Based Learning

The focus of this workshop was to outline a set of criteria to use for building and examining content-based instruction (CBI) units for use in academic English programs. Participants engaged in discussion and tasks to learn how to consider the effectiveness and usefulness of content-based materials for their specific learning context. Presented within the workshop was a framework for CBI based on Patrick Moran's Cultural Knowings model. The framework has four stages: Knowing About, Knowing How, Knowing Why and Knowing Oneself. In each stage teachers need to consider the materials they use, the tasks and the desired outcomes.



The workshop had a small group of QU Foundation English teachers, two Ministry of Education teachers from a Qatar Primary school, and one consultant working at the British Council who is active training Qatar teachers to use CBI in maths and science instruction. Most participants seemed engaged and interested in discussing how CBI can be more effective and aimed at lower-level English learners.

Aladdin Halwani: Creating and Deploying Online tests using Blackboard Academic Suite



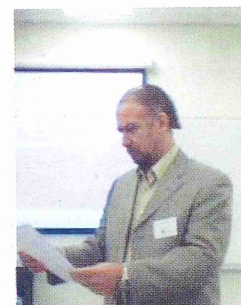
Participants in the workshop were treated to a highly informative, hands-on workshop for creating and deploying online tests. They were introduced to the Blackboard Academic Suite as an online teaching tool. They were shown the steps involved in creating an online test: establishing the test framework and options, adding questions to the test, and customizing the questions with feedback, images and metadata.

The workshop was divided into two stages: stage one showed the ESL teachers the steps of creating an online test. They viewed the test in both a teacher's and a student's preview, and then the second hands-on stage followed, during which the audience applied the steps to create their own online tests. Various test items were explored, namely true/ false, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, ordering, and matching.

Khalid Mahmoud Noaman: Error Tolerance and Intelligibility in Writing

The primary objective of the presentation is to convey the idea that learning a second language involves developing communicative ability in writing and speaking. Errors that happen in the process of learning are natural, necessary and valuable. Some types of errors can be tolerated while others cannot, due to the objectives of language learning. There should be certain criteria for error evaluation; the most important ones are the intelligibility and comprehensibility of the message.

The audience members, though few, were quite interested in the type of information and classification of error evaluation. The only thing that might have influenced the effectiveness and quality of the presentation was its time slot on the conference schedule. Even scheduled for the last time slot as it were, the presentation received highly positive feedback from those present.



Other Events: Some of our intrepid instructors ventured even farther afield to represent the QUPPED. Here are a few of them.

Amr Salah: If Technology is the Food of Writing Motivation, Click On!

TESOL-Italy's 33rd Nat'l Convention ((November, 2008 in Centro Congressi SGM in Rome, Italy)

This workshop objective is to create a university writing model. Whenever skill integration is discussed, teachers think of integrating reading and writing. However, integrating two production skills, viz. writing and speaking can be surprisingly beneficial. This model shows how students create recordings using software such as Audacity, post their sound captions online, discuss them in forums, and end up writing about the topics discussed. This shows how critical thinking emphasizes the role of students' autonomy and the ability to reach targets via multiple avenues. Technology is a very effective tool to breed creative thinking; a skill much needed for writing. The workshop provides practical examples of how Technological Critical Thinking can be implemented in a language class with checklists for problem checking and solution finding. The rest of the presentation shows how to create, implement, and evaluate writing. All elements are woven into one model.



The main theme of the conference was "Crossing Borders", focusing on creating learning pathways, maximizing resources, and enhancing cultural awareness. The conference was located in the Centro Congressi SGM outside the center of Rome. One aspect of this conference that I especially appreciated was this: the organizers asked all the presenters to send their PowerPoint files and all relevant materials to them by email before the conference, which were then made available to the presenters before they presented. My presentation was attended by more than 50 attendees. After I finished my talk, there were many questions and discussions based on my description of our QU situation. The audience was very impressed, both with our department's achievements and with our facilities.

Ahmad Hazratzad: EFL Learner's Voices! These are Suitable Materials

9th Oman Int'l EFL Conference (April, 2009 at Sultan Qaboos University in Muscat, Oman)



Last April I went to Muscat (Oman) for the 9th Oman International Conference held at the Sultan Qaboos University. This conference was much better than the one held in the previous year. David Nunan, Jarvis, and Brown were the featured speakers at the last Muscat conference. The conference I attended in 2008 was very good, and this last conference (2009) was even better, and showed the hard work the organizers had put into the conference. To my surprise there were about 90 people in the audience, who all showed a lot of interest. Many members of the audience asked questions, and several came up to me after the presentation to talk about the research I reported. On the final day, Mr. Mahmoud al-Saidi, the chairman of the conference, announced that next year, in celebration of the anniversary of the university's 10th EFL conference, there would be

some more extensive events.

Ahmad Hazratzad: The Attitudes of EFL Teachers towards Post-Method Pedagogy & their Students' Achievements

10th Int'l METU EFL Convention (May, 2009 at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara)

In contrast to Qatar, which is normally very hot and dry in May, the weather in Ankara was cold and wet. I really enjoyed the change. I was also very impressed by the beautiful setting of the university, which is surrounded by immense trees and colorful gardens. Geoffrey Leech and Scot Thornbury were the plenary speakers of the conference. My presentation created a lot of discussion, and Mr. Thornbury came up to me at the end and suggested that he and I work on a mutual project in the post-method pedagogy field.



Ridha Ben Rejeb: Class Motivation and Attendance: the Survival Kit

Asia Pacific Higher Education Conference (April, 2009 at Renmin University in Beijing, China)



This round table session highlights a crucial theme in many international universities: class motivation and attendance. Through the lens of a stop/ start/ continue motivation template, participants collaboratively evaluate and contribute to an Attendance Survival Kit that was created according to action research and includes academic and social do's and don'ts. The presenter examines each reason (social - academic - physical environment) based on classroom research conducted in the QU FPED, discusses socio-academic challenges in the implementation stage, and suggests remedies to the problems of low motivation and poor attendance. Light is shed on these alarming issues, and the drafting of the Survival Kit will help to maintain high attendance records and more successful student retention across the region.

The theme of this conference was "Developing Leadership and Enhancing Harmony", and the presentation was well-attended by various presenters and participants who were curious to learn about students' motivation in the Middle East. Some of them were thinking to teach in this part of the world; others came from Western universities hosting a large number of Gulf-region students and wanted to learn tips on how to motivate their Arab students. Several asked that I send them the presentation along with the questionnaire so that they could conduct similar action research on their own university students, wondering if they would have the same findings. They promised to share the results with me. Overall, it was my first experience presenting overseas, and with appreciation and gratitude I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the QUPPED for all the support I received.

Farewell to Jenny Beadon



Jenny (of South Africa) retired this year in February after working for several years as an administrative assistant in the FP English Department. We do appreciate all the good work she has done for us.

Best wishes and a happy long life, Jenny.

Welcoming Jenny to the Party.



Mr. Kennedy, Dr. Khalid and Jenny



Jenny and Maryam Abdul Gader, FP Finance & Admin. Coordinator



Student Services



Student Activities



University is not only about academic lessons; it's also about learning in different ways.

Here are some of the clubs established by English Foundation

Students' Trip to Aljazeera Festival



By Amer Yacoub

Aljazeera Documentary Film Festival has become an international event, where every year documentary and news producers compete to produce their best work. Aljazeera News Channel and its other channels are considered one of the leading channels by many people in the Arab world.

The documentaries were diverse in nature and expressed global issues from around the world; the aim is to promote a better understanding and cooperation amongst people and cultures.



Female students were enthusiastic about visiting the festival and turned up in great numbers. The students seemed more interested in documentaries that concerned the Middle East, probably due to the crucial and rapid changes in the area.

Teachers and students also took a tour around the festival's exhibition and talked to some members of satellite channels about their recent work. We also talked to some representatives of audio visual companies that used their up to date technologies. At the end we had an amazing lunch in the hotel's dining hall and had a chance to discuss some of the issues related to the documentary.



Report on the 2009 Al Jazeera International Documentary Film Festival Student Trip

By Carmel Underwood

Our student trip to the 5th Al Jazeera International Documentary Film Festival, hosted by the Sheraton Hotel, took place on Wednesday morning, 15 April, 2009.

Over 40 female students boarded two buses for the trip to the Festival at the Sheraton Hotel. Upon arrival, students had the option of choosing among a wide variety of documentary films produced and directed by filmmakers from all corners of the globe representing countries such as Cuba, Japan, China, Belgium, and, of course, many countries of the Middle East. Students had the opportunity to see several short films of ten to twenty minutes or longer films of 60 to 100 minutes in length.

The documentary films shown on the third day of the Festival, the day of our trip, were screened in four large conference rooms. What follows is a sampling of the films that were available to the students and the four teacher chaperones who also attended.

"I am Zeinab," directed by Salwa Saab from Lebanon.

A story of a ten-year-old girl called Zeinab who lives in a southern suburb of Beirut. It tells of the suffering of the Lebanese people during the 2006 war launched by Israel as well as of their hopes for a better future.

Length: 7 minutes

"The Indissoluble Bond between Seijii Ozawa and Beijing" directed by Wei Wu from China.

In this film, the director describes his strong connection to Beijing because of loved ones whose ashes are buried under a cherry blossom tree there.

Length: 24 minutes

"Al Nakba – The Catastrophe" directed by Rawan Al-Damin from Qatar.

This is a documentary film in two parts: the first part is about the Palestinian cause during the period between 1799 and 1936 and the second part covers the period that led up to Al Nakba in 1948.

Length: 100 minutes

“I Will Be Back and We Will Be Millions” directed by Jorge Fuentes from Cuba.

This film focuses on Evo Morales, the president of Bolivia. It examines the political process that led to Morales to power.

Length: 55 minutes

“Weaving Words by Hand” directed by Ryota Rokumoto of Japan.

This film tells the story of the lives of six children with their teacher over a six-month period in a school for the deaf that uses Japanese sign language.

Length: 59 minutes

Students were exposed to views of different worlds beyond their own personal experiences in these films, and were provided an exceptional learning experience we hope to repeat at next year’s 6th Annual Al Jazeera International Documentary Film Festival.

The Calligraphy Club

by Heshmi Hamadi

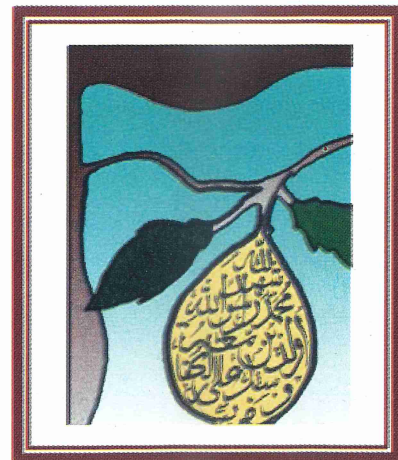
It was not easy to eventually have this little ‘dream’ come true. But –Yeah, we did it! Even the students who joined were a bit amazed. “We can finally practice the art of beautiful handwriting”, they said. Yet, as has sadly always been the case for any new student activity, we had to endure a few more hardships. The first and foremost of these was the problem of getting information out to students regarding activities. Another problem was the activity room (222) itself. There is a very poor cooling system.

Despite these minor problems, we had regular attendees. There were some students who learnt a lot very quickly. Not only that, some students showed great creativity. To demonstrate this, please find the work of Dana Al Sada below.

Firstly, I would like to thank Mr. Heshmi Hamadi very much for running the “Arabic Calligraphic Club” which gave me the opportunity to improve my hobby. In this club, I’ve learned a lot about Arabic calligraphic writing.

I’ve learned the types of writing, tools and of course how to use them. Mr. Heshmi was so patient with us and he encouraged us to believe that we can really improve and be professional in the future. I’ve done two paintings, using Photoshop Cs3 software to make the background. I really do hope that this club continues for the next years and we end up with an exhibition.

Dana Al Sada / 200762974

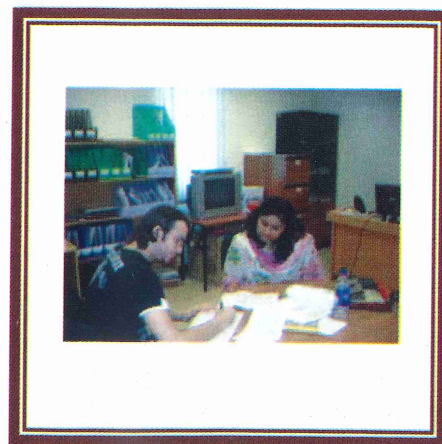


We are keeping our fingers crossed that next semester we can create enough good work to have a little exhibition. Till then, I’d like to thank everybody who has contributed to this new and flourishing activity.

IELTS and TOEFL Exam Practice

by Allyson Young

Last semester, Student Services offered students weekly tutorials in IELTS Speaking, IELTS Writing, TOEFL paper and TOEFL iBT. These tutorials were held in both the afternoon and the morning; and on both the male and the female campuses. A variety of times were offered for students to attend. Weekly tutorials were also offered for three weeks after classes had finished. These tutorials were run on a student drop-in basis. There was high student attendance.



Practice exams were given on a regular basis in IELTS Reading and Listening,

TOEFL Paper and TOEFL iBT. These were run both in the morning and the afternoon and also on both campuses.

After June, Foundation English will no longer run the TOEFL Paper exam.

Consequently, we should see an increase in the number of students who wish to prepare for the TOEFL iBT exam. There were 'open lab' days in the Women's Al Bidda Building and in the Men's Foundation Building. Between certain hours, students could drop in

and use the exam self-access materials.

However, while many students attended the IELTS and TOEFL Paper sessions, only a handful of students attended the TOEFL iBT exams.

More and more students have been doing the IELTS exam. This exam, no doubt, will become even more popular in the coming semester.

The Japanese Club

By Matthew Vitriani

The Japanese Club has had an incredible year! First and foremost of our achievements this year was to be recognized as an official Qatar University club. Our other accomplishments this year were the hosting of Yamaguchi University School of Fashion students, hosting the Doha-Chita City Sister City delegation, participating in Qatar University's Culture Day and holding weekly Japanese language activities.



In addition to these accomplishments, we also attended some campus events, such as, a Kimono fashion show and an Ikebana (Japanese Flower Arranging) at the Japanese embassy, and the Sado Island photo exhibition at the Qatar Photo Society.

Qatar University Debate Club

By Club Co-Advisor, Patrick Murphy

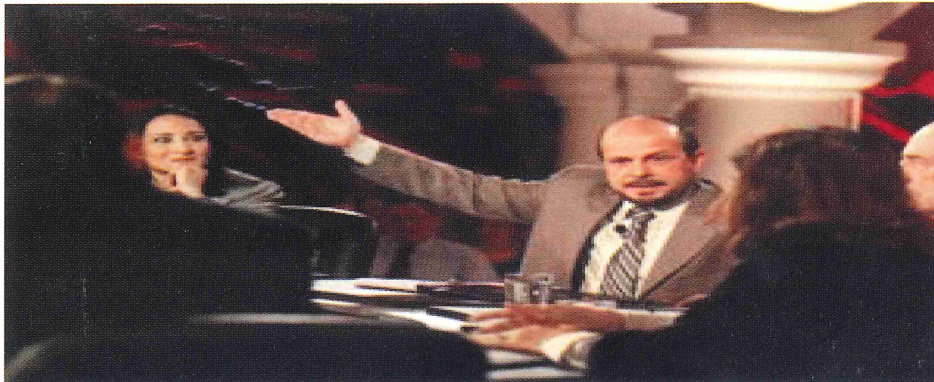
In 2009 the Qatar University Debate Club took its first steps towards becoming an official QU club. After returning from their successful trip to Ireland for the World Universities Debating Championship, QU debaters wanted to continue to develop their skills and give other students a chance to get involved. So they created the QU Debate Club with a mission to “create an open and educational opportunity for QU students to learn how to express informed opinions outside the classroom on current events,” and to “create a team that can represent the knowledge of QU students both nationally and internationally” (from QUDC mission statement).

With these worthy goals in mind, the QU Debate club has been all about action. They have created a group of officers that led the club to compete in the 2009 Qatar National Universities Competition, where the two QU Debate teams took silver and bronze medals respectively. After that, they organized the first teacher vs. students debate, on the motion “Arabic should be the primary language of instruction at Qatar University”.

The QU Debate club has big plans for the Fall, including workshops with Qatar Debate, competitions (local, national, international), and public “show” debates on topics of concern to students. We hope you will join the debate club and debate with us!

The Doha Debates

By Salman Al-Atassi



Another year has passed and we come to the fifth series of The Doha Debates. We have seen discussions on democracy, Palestine, the US elections, political Islam, Arab unity, Sudan, and recently Muslim marriage. Each episode had a full audience, with up to 35 students from Qatar University participating.

Next year I hope to see new faces from QU to the debates, so help from all faculty is appreciated. Please direct students to the address fepstudents@qu.edu.qa asking to be added to the Doha Debates mailing list. If anyone would like to view past debates, you can do so online: www.thedohadebates.com. Faculty can also sign up online to attend the next debate this October.



The Doha Debates: My First Experience

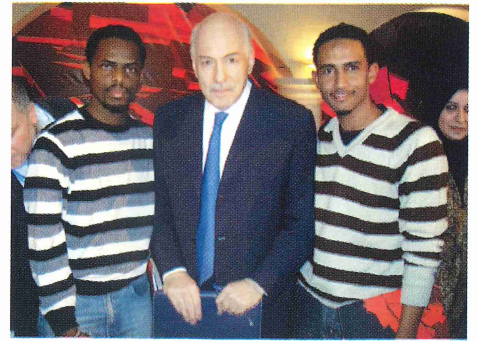
By Adel Adem (Post-Foundation, English 1) + Ahmed Ishaq Left

I have had the desire of attending public debates since I was in secondary school, which is because I have the desire to be a debater one day. I have seen many debates since that time, and participated in few. The concept that I had about a "debate" totally changed when I attended for the first time the Doha Debates that took place on November 17, 2008.

I was thinking that to debate on a motion you have to be a "talkative", but I found this not to be the case. I came to know that, to be considered a good debater, you have to have the ability to convince the judge and the audience that the arguments you propose or oppose with the motion are true and at the same time to prove that the arguments raised by the other party are wrong. Actually, the Doha Debates have a different format than the school debates and college debates we used to run. We have the moderator that rocks the proposition and opposition with questions and that is Tim Sebastian at the Doha Debates. He is best known for his BBC TV program "Hard Talk", and, indeed, this man talks hard!

The debate that I attended on November 17 of last year was about the motion: "This house believes that Gulf Arabs value profit over people". Dr. Najeeb al-Nauimi (former Qatari Justice Minister and Lead Counsel to former Iraqi President Saddam Hussain) spoke for the motion with Dr. Mansoor al-Jamri (Editor in Chief of the al-Wasat newspaper in Bahrain). On the other hand, Sheikh Mohamed al-Thani (former Qatari Minister for Economy and Commerce) spoke against the motion with Dr. Tarik Yousef (an economist specializing in Arab world issues and the founding dean of the Dubai School of Government).

The audience vote went for the proposition with 75% to 25%. The opposition couldn't convince the audience that the Gulf Arabs don't value people over profit, and their arguments were not strong as the arguments given by the proposition team. They were even unable to answer some of the audience questions, which made their position weaker. I personally had the chance to ask a question of the opposition team, replying to a statement that their first speaker had given: "Unskilled employees are enjoying the opportunities in the Gulf." My question was "Well, why would Gulf Arabs bring unskilled employees if they valued people over profit?" His answer was, "This question should be addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs." This was very convincing!!!



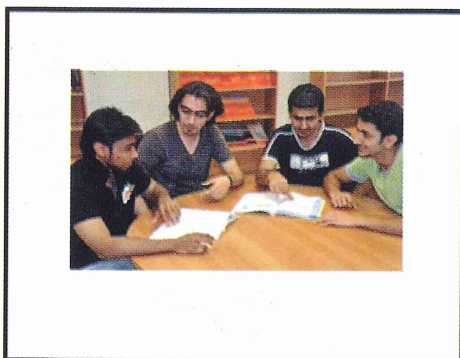
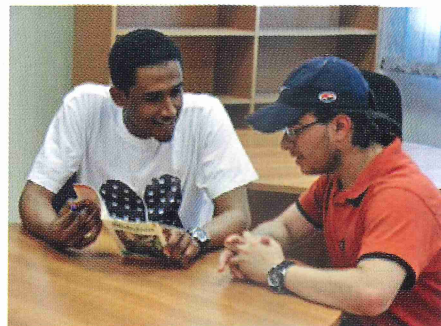
Report on the Men's Peer Tutor Program

By Carmel Underwood, Peer Tutor Advisor

The Men's Peer Tutor program, which opened its doors for the first time in October of 2008 in the Student Learning Center in the Men's Foundation Building, completed its pilot year on May 28th, 2009 with great success.

In the Spring semester, three peer tutors, Bappy Ahsan, Bisher Al Homsy, and Adel Adem, the newest peer tutor to join the program, met with QU Foundations and Post Foundations English students up to three times per week to assist them in improving their

English skills, particularly in speaking and writing, as well as in developing IELTS and TOEFL strategies. These accomplished tutors developed materials and tailored lessons to meet their tutees' language learning needs as well as serving as role models by sharing their experiences as students at Qatar University. Peer tutors not only assisted students in improving their English skills, they also enhanced their tutees' overall confidence as learners and helped to reduce test anxiety before TOEFL, IELTS and other exams. As a result, students returned again and again for tutoring help and encouragement from their peer tutors.



The peer tutors themselves have also benefited from their experiences working with their tutees. Bisher remarks, "I love tutoring, and I love being with the tutees and motivating them to do their best. Also, I have had a chance to improve my English a lot, which I enjoy." Bappy adds, "I hope next semester to have the opportunity to do more tutoring hours." We are all looking forward to continuing the Peer Tutor Program services in the new academic year.

The Photography Club Trips

by Ahmad Hazratzad

Last semester, The Foundation English Photographic Society went on morning and afternoon trips to Pearl Island and The Islamic Museum. Many of the students had never been to The Pearl before, and were quite amazed at the architecture and the huge billboards everywhere. As the weather was rather hot, we were lucky at the Pearl to be able to walk quite a distance under archways.

The Islamic Museum also offered great architectural shots, and was a popular trip with our students

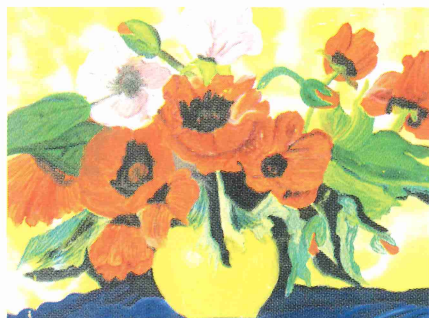
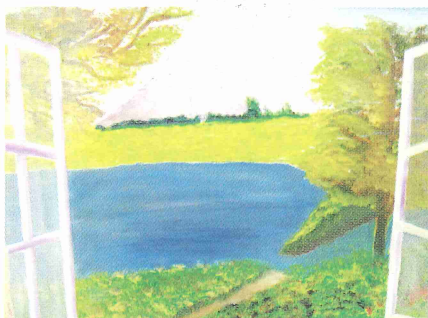
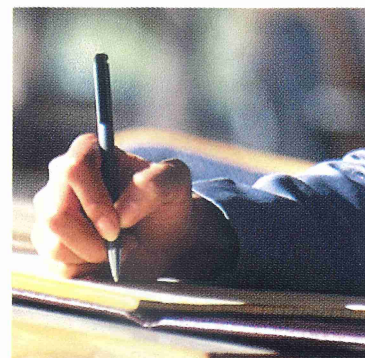
Next semester, The Foundation Photography Society is planning to hold a photo competition, in which we will ask that the photo entries be accompanied by a caption that expresses the mood of the photo.



Big Changes Afoot in the Post-Foundation Department

Beginning in the Fall Semester of 2009, students enrolled in Post-Foundation courses will experience some important changes in the syllabi from previous semesters. While these courses have always had the development of writing skills as their primary objective, from now on that focus will be even more pronounced.

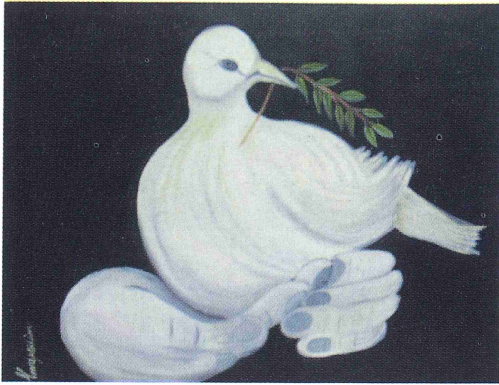
In the English I course, students will be studying from a new textbook, Refining Composition Skills (Heinle & Heinle), to aid them in learning a variety of different essay-writing skills and genres. Speaking activities (such as discussions and debates) will be used as a starting point to inform the writing process, and to emphasize the relationship between oral and written communication. In English II, these writing skills will be put to use as the students learn to organize and compose a more advanced term paper. The textbook will be Sourcework: Academic Writing from Sources (Thomson Heinle), and over the course of the semester two complete term papers will be developed. Emphasis will be given to the drafting process and to individual feedback and conferencing between instructor and student.



{More Art, Less
Trash}

**PAINTINGS FROM
THE ART CONTEST
FOR THE ENVI-
RONMENT**

For You Gaza



'For You Gaza', a fundraising event, took place on Wednesday, 29 April. It was organized by the Foundation Program and the External Relations Department in conjunction with the Student Activities Department. The program included a debate, bake & sale, and 5-kilometer race. It was meant to help build schools in the Gaza Strip. Level 3 female students of the Foundation English Department organized the debate and prepared the sale & bake event: cakes, cookies, and pastries. Level 3 male students organized the 5-kilometer race. First place in the women's race was won by Anna Romano (FPED), and second place was won by Eileen Plumb (FPED). We are proud of you.



The Press Conference



The Sale & Bake



The Debate



The 5 - Kilometer Race

A Report on the "For You Gaza" Day

(by Jay Trimar)

This year has been all about empowering students to be leaders. Really, isn't that what education is all about? Motivating and equipping students to be the best they can be as global citizens has been my goal this semester.



In January, we put together a "Service Learning" project based on NorthStar's Curriculum which had a focus on Philanthropy. "Service learning is a teaching tool that ties academic curriculum to a service project that reinforces and expands students' learning. Service learning helps young people connect their education to their own lives and the "real world." (Facing the Future)

Based on the theme of giving, Foundation English Level Three male students led the way and organized a 5k race and the Foundation English Level female student's organized a debate which held the motion that "This house believes that volunteering should be part of the requirements to graduate at QU", as well as hosting a bake sale in order to raise money to build schools in Gaza. The response was nothing more than amazing! So far, the students have raised approximately 13, 000QR.

After the event I was curious to find out what impact if any the "For You Gaza" event had on students' lives. Here is one response that I received from John Tribuna's level three students who debated and volunteered during the event.

Noor Ahmad Ali: a journal entry

"Dear Diary,

29/4/2009

"For You Gaza" was the most exciting day. I was a debater and a volunteer. In the beginning I wasn't interested about doing the debate, because I'm afraid of taking risks, but in the end I went to the meeting and started practicing for the debate. I said to myself: 'I am happy here and I do not feel bored'. It was easy for me and there was nothing to be scared about.

On "For You Gaza" day, when we started [debating], I wasn't worried so much and I felt relaxed. It was like it was meant to be and I was not in the wrong place and time.

Next, it was the bake sale. It was so fun and I had a really great time. I saw a lot of my friends from high school and I met new friends.

After that day, I went home and was so tired, but I was extremely happy. I was smiling all that day, thinking of what happened and that made me realize that only one day of volunteer work made me that happy. How about a week or a month? So, I decided that I would volunteer for my summer holiday, besides doing regular things that I do every day, because volunteering and helping people makes me feel so alive."

It has also been great to be one of the teacher advisors for Qatar University's main campus Environmental Club alongside Dr. Noora AL-Thani and Dr. Mariam A. Al-Maadeed. Over the last semester, the Environmental Club organized several events including the re-introduction of the recycling project, an art contest for the environment entitled "More Art, Less Trash", and most recently clubs entry into the British Councils International Climate Champions (ICC) Contest here in Doha. I am proud to announce that Muzna Al-Habsi the Environmental Club's President was chosen to be one of the British Council's ICC champions. The International Climate Champions in the Middle East region offers young people aged 18-25 years opportunities to devise and implement projects that address climate change and equips young people with the skills to communicate the issue to their peers and communities, as well as providing them with opportunities to 'be heard' at a high profile in local, regional and international climate change forums.

As one of the teacher advisors for the Environmental Club on QU's main campus, I have the pleasure of watching students develop their leadership skills, while making an impact on the environment and in the lives of people in the community in which they live. When I reach a student and observe them becoming

a positive part of change in the world around them, then I know that my job has as a teacher advisor has been accomplished. I would encourage Foundation English Students to join the environmental club here on campus so that they, like Muzna Al-Habsi and Noor Ahmad Ali, can also be a part of the change occurring in the world around them.



New Arrivals at The Foundation English Department



khalifa

Khalifa Mohammed Awadh Nasser al-Saadi arrived to Samah & Mohamed al-Saadi on July 7, 2008, in Hamad Hospital. He weighed approximately 3 kilograms.



Mohammed Ebrahim al-Nasser was welcomed by Jumaia al-Abdullah and Ebrahim Tarar Nassar on August 18, 2008 at 10:00 in the morning in Hamad Hospital in Doha.



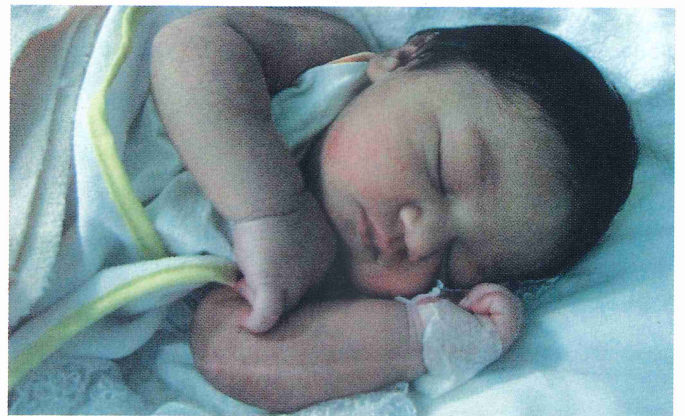
Alicia Cundell & Mohamed Jamal welcomed Sophia Jamal, born 2.7 kg at 10:30 PM on November 17th, 2008.



Daniela Tzenkova & Pavel Tzenkov became the proud parents (and Nikola the proud brother) of Slavena Tzenkov, weighing 3.05 kgs, on March 5, 2009 in Hamad Hospital.



Nadim Maalouly, 2.73 kgs, was welcomed by Hayat el-Samad & Kamal Maalouly in Beirut, Lebanon on March 24, 2009.



Azlifa Ahmed & Ahmed Shiham became the happy parents of Nadha Ahmed Shiham, 3.25 kgs, on April 16, 2009 at IGM Hospital in the Maldives.

Quotes on Living and Learning

Compiled by Mu Mu Winn

The following quotes have been selected to reflect on the life-long process of learning which begins the moment we come into this world. Humanity has been served well by the innate desire to know, to learn and to understand, despite the fact that knowledge is inexhaustible and there are often no answers.



9. "Not perfection as a final goal, but the ever-enduring process of perfecting, maturing, refining is the aim of living." *John Dewey*

10. "Everything in the universe is a pitcher brimming with wisdom and beauty." *Mevlana Rumi*

11. "Nothing in this world is a gift. Whatever must be learned must be learned the hard way." *Carlos Castenada*

1. "The intuitive, the expressive, the un-measurable, the intensely personal have never found a satisfactory place in the curriculum, in assessment, in the public's esteem." *Hedley Beare, Prof. of Education, Melbourne*

2. "Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood." *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

3. "Don't go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail." *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

4. "Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning." *Albert Einstein*

5. "To develop a complete mind: study the science of art; study the art of science. Learn how to see. Realize that everything connects to everything else." *Leonardo da Vinci*

6. "The eye sees only what the mind is prepared to comprehend." *Henri Bergson*

7. "Real knowledge is to know the extent of one's ignorance." *Confucius*

8. "Life is like a game of chess, in which there are an infinite number of complex moves possible. The choice is open, but the move contains within itself all future moves. One is free to choose, but what follows is the result of one's choice. From the consequences of one's action there is never any escape." *Shelley Smith in The Ballad of the Running Man*

12. "The learning and knowledge that we have, is, at the most, but little compared with that of which we are ignorant." *Plato*

13. "Knowledge of what is possible is the beginning of happiness." *George Santayana*

14. "The seat of knowledge is in the head; of wisdom, in the heart. We are sure to judge wrong, if we do not feel right." *William Hazlitt*

15. "Where is the Life we have lost in living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?" *T. S. Eliot*

16. "Life belongs to the living, and he who lives must be prepared for changes." *Johan Wolfgang von Goethe*

Sources:

HYPERLINK "<http://www.leading-learning.co.nz>"
www.leading-learning.co.nz; HYPERLINK "<http://www.wisdomquotes.com>"
www.wisdomquotes.com; HYPERLINK "<http://www.amongthefirst.com>"
www.amongthefirst.com; HYPERLINK "<http://www.ntlf.com>"
www.ntlf.com; HYPERLINK "<http://www.kmafrica.com>"
www.kmafrica.com; HYPERLINK "<http://www.thinkexist.com>"
www.thinkexist.com;

New Appointments in the English Department for the Fall Semester, 2009

Congratulations to



Dinos Dimitraides
Curriculum Co-ordinator



Kira Litvin
Student Services Co-ordinator



Patrick Murphy
Level 2 Supervisor



Reem Khalid
Senate Representative

12:00-02:00 PM

Foundation Program

Annual Ceremony

Sunday 29/06/2009

12:00-02:00 PM

Ibn Khaldoun

Welcome



Dr. Maha, Math & Computer Head

Mr. Kennedy, English Department Head



Dr. Khalid, Director of the FP, gave in a PowerPoint presentation an elaborate account of the program's performance in the Academic year 2008-2009 and outlined the program's future plans.



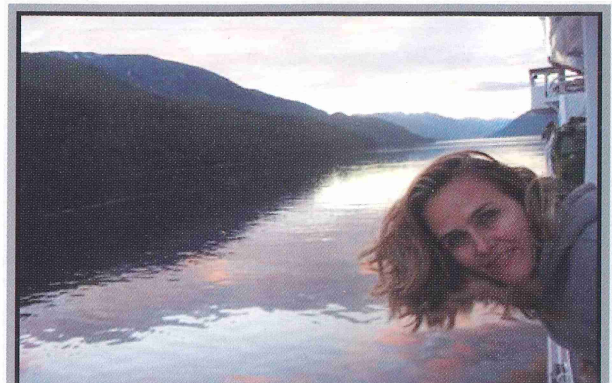
Reem Khalid, Program presenter



Dream Vacation Destinations



Igaçu Falls - Brazil - Anna Sempek



Alaska Ferry - Alaska - Eileen Plumb



Kassab - Syria - Hala Hadba



Toledo - Spain - Ana Didovic



Lake Bratan Temple - Bali - Sylvie Raymond



The Blue Mosque, Mazar Sherif, Afghanistan - June Arber



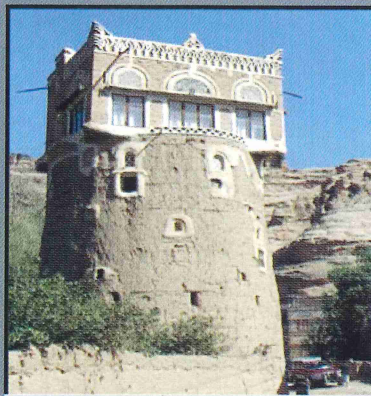
Sintra Castle - Portugal - Ana Didovic



Glacier & Piece - Alaska - Eileen Plumb

Compiled by Sylvie Raymond

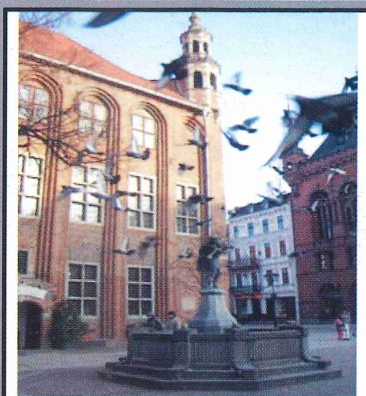
Dream Vacation Destinations



Wadi Dhar - Yemen -
Sylvie Raymond



Al Hamida - Syria - Hala Hadba



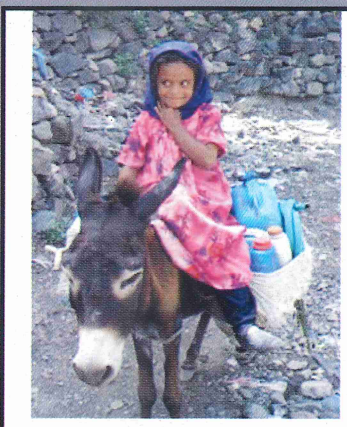
Toru - Poland
Anna Sempek



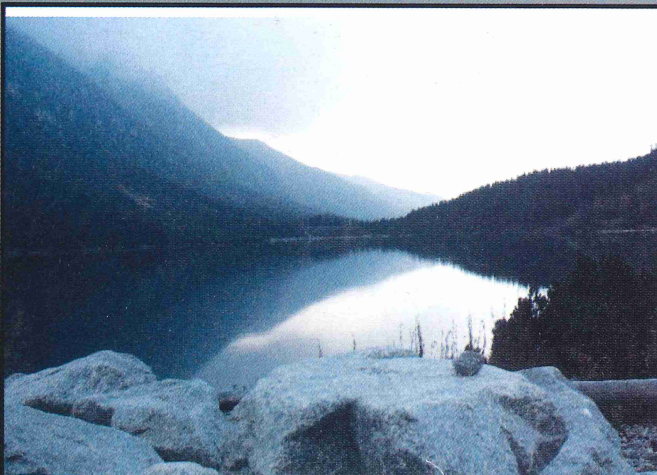
Polish Poppies
Anna Sempek



Munduk - Bali - Sylvie Raymond



Water Fetcher - Jiblah -
Yemen - Sylvie Raymond



Tatra Mountains - Poland - Anna Sempek



Berbera, Somaliland
June Arber



QU Clothes Collection
for the Swat Valley,
Pakistan - June Arber