

PMU COLLEGE OF SCIENCES & HUMAN STUDIES

CORE CORNER



Creative Minds Transform the World



Photo courtesy of:
Dr. Laura Strachan



IN THIS ISSUE

1. Feature Article:
Beyond Borders
2. From the Dean's
Desk
3. A Word from the
Chairs
4. Undergraduate
Research Society
5. Co-operative
Learning
6. On Campus
7. In the Field
8. Scholarly
Activities

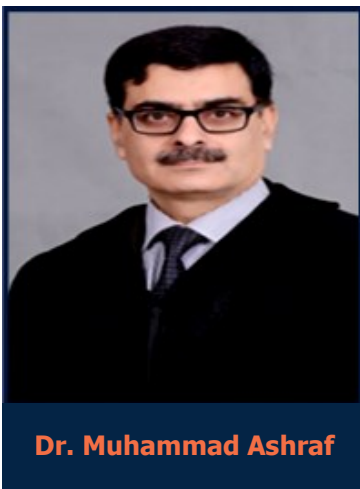
BEYOND BORDERS: CONNECTING GLOBALLY THROUGH LANGUAGE & CULTURE

This spring marked the inauguration of the CORE Program's "Introduction to French Language" course. The 3.0 credit hour, social science elective, offered students the opportunity to lay the foundation of the four basic skills of language learning: speaking, listening, writing and reading. At semester's end, students could announce in an understandable, near-native capacity. They also participated in basic conversation – being able to listen and respond appropriately. Lastly, students wrote basic sentences and short paragraphs, as well as read small passages. No small feat!

Along with learning vocabulary, grammar and syntax, CORE Program students also acquired knowledge and understanding of the cultural practices of French speaking countries. With over 220 million native speakers, and 72 million partial speakers worldwide, French culture and traditions transcend borders. Several students shared their motivations for taking this course, many of whom highlighted their desire for "global connectedness."

Two students stated "we chose to take this French course because we want to work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During our interview at the Ministry we were told that the most desired language, outside of English, was French." Another student described its significance in relation to their major of Interior Design. They said "French is important because it is the language of fashion. Also, as an Interior Design major I am constantly researching French design works, so this course helps me with that research."

May this course, as artist Edmund de Waal quoted "with languages, you are at home anywhere," afford its participants home beyond their borders.



Dr. Muhammad Ashraf

FROM THE DEAN'S DESK



Times Higher Education (THE), the UK based publisher, which issues an annual World University Rankings, announced recently its intention to publish the world's first "university impact ranking" in April of this year. The new system measures universities' contributions according to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These 17 goals – which include providing inclusive and equitable quality education, achieving gender equality and fostering innovation – were adopted by the UN in 2016 and provide a framework for developing the world in a sustainable way.

These new rankings emphasize a shift from relying mostly on **inputs** (such as university income, student-staff ratios, etc...) and **outputs** (like research productivity), to **impact** (e.g., contributions to local communities).

For the new "impact ranking", universities just need to be accredited by their national accreditation bodies (such as NCAAA), which means more participating universities. This will encourage, especially teaching universities, to take advantage of the opportunity for increased visibility. Universities may apply by submitting data pertinent to the SDGs. But, this data must address a minimum of 4 SDGs and include SDG 17, which seeks to strengthen global partnerships.

This seems to be a positive step by THE as higher education institutions play a serious role, by virtue of their unique position, within society as the principal mechanism of social mobility, knowledge production, and dissemination. Also, the SDGs have a strong relation

to higher education. Furthermore, there is a strong interest in the UN SDGs by Saudi government, as they are embedded in its Vision 2030. Linking universities to the SDGs, may therefore, increase universities' impact because of improved organizational effectiveness. This in turn may lead to the development of new funding opportunities for higher education in the near future.

Our CORE Program has already started planning its future activities to be linked with SDGs. Some of these activities include our course on Sustainability, a workshop on the "Frontiers of Sustainable Development" and a Sustainability Week. All of which create awareness and increase our role in the community.





Dr. Nidal Abu-Libdeh
Male Campus

A WORD FROM THE CHAIRS

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Spring 2019 issue of the CORE Program Newsletter. We have incredible news to share with you.

This semester, we offered a brand new course “Introduction to French language,” on both Male and Female campuses, as an elective course. Students taking this course are very happy and enthusiastic to be learning the basics of a foreign language. Currently, we are working on building a course syllabus and preparing material for another language course, namely “Introduction to Spanish Language”.

To keep abreast with the economic developments in the Kingdom and to align with Saudi Vision 2030, a committee from the Humanities and Social Science (HSS) faculty is working on preparing a degree plan for a new Department of World Languages and Culture. A humanities education reminds us of our own humanity, and teaches us to view the world empathically, creatively, expansively, and to bring ideas of being a better human to the workplace and the community. It also teaches us to be

better local and global citizens. Together, through reading the literature of other times, other cultures, other nations, we learn how to imagine the world of another. Studies in language and culture not only prepare students for the workforce but, also prepare students for life.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have or if you wish to visit the department. I can be reached at nabulibdeh@pmu.edu.sa. I look forward to hearing from you.

Welcome to the latest edition of *CORE Corner*.

This semester, CORE was proud to be associated with the opening of the Prince Turki Bin Mohammad Bin Fahd Center for Creativity and Entrepreneurship on the Female Campus. The inaugural event, a four-day workshop with the theme *What is Research*, was organized by students of the Undergraduate Research Society and opened by the Associate Vice Rector for Academic Affairs, Dr. Faisal Al Anezi. The National Transformation Program of Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 has as one of its strategic objectives to improve the learning environment to stimulate creativity and innovation. Student-led activities such as this workshop serve to motivate and inspire other students, while creating an atmosphere of excitement in learning. Thank you to faculty members who encouraged and supported students, and who participated in this event.

Goal 4 of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals focuses on inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. In CORE, the expertise and experience of a diverse faculty are harnessed to create an environment that celebrates lifelong learning. The new *Applied Mathematics and Sciences Research Group* showcases faculty research and encourages collaboration across different fields of research. The group’s First Seminar Series begins this month with four presentations spread over the coming weeks.

This semester we warmly welcome Dr. Patricia Davies from the United Kingdom. We look forward to a long collaboration together.



Dr. Lucia Ganendran
Female Campus



“Student research enhances the university. I feel the energy and enthusiasm in the room. Now that you are researching, you are working with us to better PMU.”

-Dr. Faisal Al Anezi, Associate Vice Rector of Academic Affairs



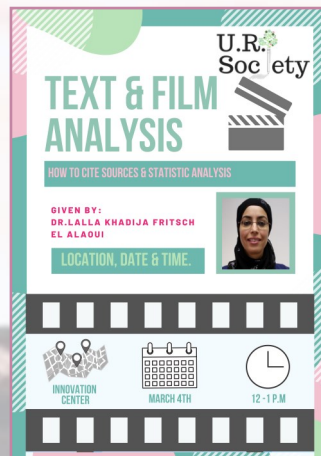
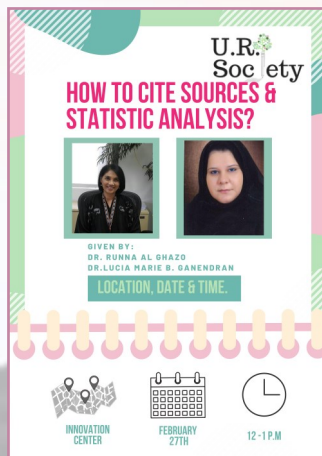
Club President: Eman Abdulhadi **Vice President:** Khadijah Aldabbagh
Treasurer: Jood Alhawaish **Secretary:** Alkwother Alhammad

Faculty Advisors
 Dr. Lucia Ganendran, Associate Chair—CORE Program, Female Campus
 Dr. Huda Almulhem, Assistant Professor—CORE Program
 Dr. Maura Pilotti, Assistant Professor—CORE Program
 Dr. Runna Al Ghazo, Assistant Professor—CORE Program

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SOCIETY

The Undergraduate Research Society (U.R. Society) focuses on expanding students’ knowledge about research, its importance, and the benefits of conducting it. Another purpose of the U.R. Society is to assist students in their major’s research by doing seminars and workshops. These events allow students to ask well published, PMU professors their questions and address concerns. Additionally, the society provides opportunities to write research in many fields, such as psychology, as well as gain invaluable experience by participating in international conferences.

Established in the fall of 2018/19, the U.R. Society has been actively gathering data and writing papers. On February 25, 2019 it hosted its first event, organized by club president, Eman Abdulhadi. Dr. Faisal Al Anezi, Vice Rector of Academic Affairs, made history by being the first vice rector to grace the female campus. He shared his opening remarks to an eager crowd, which filled the Prince Turki B.M.B.F Centre for Creativity and Entrepreneurship. A discussion panel, moderated by club vice-president Khadijah Aldabbagh, followed soon thereafter. This panel launched a series of seminars presented over four days, and involved seven speakers.





MOVING AHEAD WITH CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

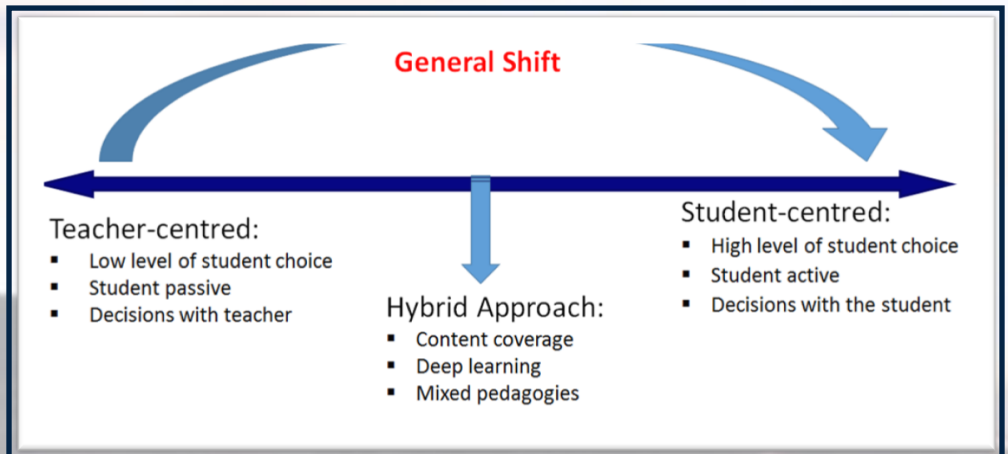
To enhance student performance and achieve better outcome The CORE Program, held its first meeting to put forward a plan to introduce 'co-operative' learning in teaching.

The co-operative pedagogical approach to teaching and learning is showing to be very effective in student engagement and participation. It provides an overall immersive learning to fit the 21st Century education mod-

el. This model also provides relief to the lecturer by encouraging students to take greater responsibility of their education. By using modern day pedagogies such as flip classroom, group based learning, evidence based teaching, peer instruction and so forth, students are being prepared for lifelong learning.

A lively and thorough discussion took place. The faculty members provided

some interesting ideas regarding implementation plans. Also, a short presentation was given by Dr. Izharul Haq on the challenges of co-operative teaching and learning. Main issues identified were the tracking and monitoring of enormous amounts of data generated from these approaches. It was postulated that the use of Artificial Intelligence could provide an answer to the challenge of data management.





On Sunday, February 24, the CORE Program, in collaboration with the Department of Campus Life and the Traffic Safety Club, organized two training sessions of defensive driving for PMU students.

The primary focus, during the afternoon and evening seminars, was to educate attendees about the merits of becoming defensive drivers.

Mr. Daniel Murteza, CORE Program Lecturer and certified international defensive driving instructor, facilitated the training. He employed self-surveys and questionnaires which enabled participants to evaluate their current level of understanding. Additionally, slide presentations, videos and role playing were utilized to better equip the students for the roads.

As a final activity, participants signed a pledge to follow the 10 Rules of Defensive Driving.

Further sessions are planned for the summer and fall. These will also include female students.

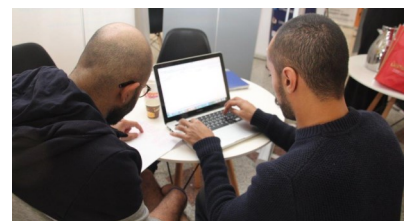
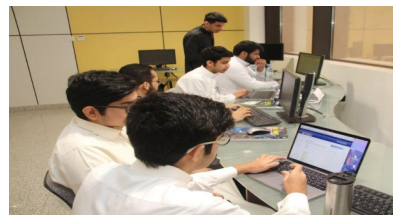


ON CAMPUS

Under the supervision of their Instructor and with the support of the Department of Campus Life, the students enrolled in psychology courses, within the CORE Program, organized a Testing Evaluation Event.

Two sessions were made available to PMU students. The first was held on March 4, and the second on March 6. Topics covered reaction time and speed, mental age, color blindness, and stress levels. Each participant was rated according to his performance. All agreed the tests were interesting and the results useful.

Conclusions and statistics will be shared with the PMU community in upcoming months.





Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University Exploratory Collaborative Research Visit

Dr. Ashraf, Dr. Ali Chamkha, and Dr. Maura travelled to Orlando, Florida, USA to take part in an exploratory, collaborative research visit at the University of Central Florida (UCF) between February, 26 and March 5, 2019.

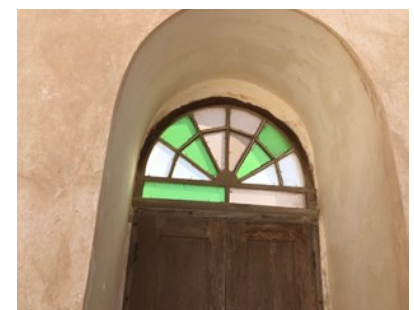
During this time, the delegates were able to meet with Saudi international students earning their MSc or PhD in engineering programs. They also visited UCF's NanoScience Technology Center, as well as the Learning Research Lab, Chemistry Lab, and Materials Lab. Over the course of the week, there were fruitful discussions regarding developing collaboration between both universities.

IN THE FIELD

World Regional Geography Class Field Trip

On January 19, 2019, twelve current and former World Regional Geography students joined Dr. Laura Strachan, Ms. Ella Osorio, and Ms. Eman Alaskar, Manager of Student Affairs, on an all-day field trip to explore several Saudi Arabian sites steeped in history. The trip exposed students to human and environmental interactions in the Ash Sharqiya region in addition to diverse methods of sustainability. Included were visits to Half Moon Beach, Al-Uqair Seaport, Al-Hasa and Gara Caves.

At Half Moon Beach, students explored the coastline and discussed the rocks, shells, and sand. The group next drove to Al-Uqair Seaport to investigate the ancient castle/fortress and market area connecting its history to Al-Hasa. Finally, they travelled to the Gara Caves in Al-Hasa to roam through the cavern while learning about weathering and erosion. This was followed by dinner at a local farm, Old Times Restaurant, in Banimaan, Al-Hofuf.



Scholarly Activities

FIRST SEMINAR SERIES

TIME: 12:15 PM –12:55 PM

VENUE: PRINCE TURKI CENTER FOR CREATIVITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP



SPEAKER	SESSION TITLE	DATE
Dr. Najma Saleem	Peristaltic Flow	March 13, 2019 (Wednesday)
Dr. Hanadi AbdelSalam & Dr. Ibtisam Daqqa	A Longitudinal Study of Students Performance in Preparatory Algebra Courses	March 20, 2019 (Wednesday)
Ms. Lina Alzayer	Awareness Of PMU Students Towards the Correct Use of Antibiotics	March 27, 2019 (Wednesday)
Dr. Saira Waheed	Modified Gravitational Theories: Accelerating Universe and Dark Energy Mystery	April 10, 2019 (Wednesday)

International Conference of Endocrinology and Diabetes

The Ministry of Health, Saudi Commission for Health, and the Saudi Society of Endocrinology and Diabetes held the 6th, International Conference of Endocrinology and Diabetes (6th ICED) from February 7–9th, 2019 in Riyadh. The purpose of the 6th ICED was to promote the delivery of quality health care in providing education, training services, and state of the art research. The attendees were medical and public health professionals, as well as researchers from all over the Kingdom, and the Gulf region.

International presenters were from the Royal Hospital For Sick Children, Glasgow, UK; Geneva University, Switzerland; University of Michigan, USA; Boston Medical Center, USA; and the University of Rome, Italy.

“Obesity Among Male Employees at Saudi Aramco: Trends, Factors, and Johns Hopkins Aramco Healthcare Recommendations” article by Dr. Nizar Jaoua and Mr. Alexander Woodman, under the auspices of the College of Science and Human Studies, Dean Dr. Ashraf was presented during the conference and received special recognition.

The following articles have been accepted and are in press for 2019:

Al Kuhayli, H. A., Abdulhadi, E. J., El Alaoui, K., Pilotti, M. A. E., Aldabbagh, K., & Al Ghazo, R. (in press). Projecting a clean(er) conscience unto others. *The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies*.

Aamir, S., Al Ghazo, R., Pilotti, M. A. E., & Al Khuhayli, H. A. (in press). Explicit conditional reasoning performance: An examination of educational past, processing load, and self-efficacy. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning Higher Education*.

Ashraf, M. W., Abulibdeh, N., (in press). Adsorption studies of textile dye (chrysoidine) from aqueous solutions using activated sawdust. *International Journal of Chemical Engineering*.

Areas of current research within *The Applied Mathematics and Sciences Research Group*:

-Math Education -STEM Education -Fluid Mechanics -General Relativity and Cosmology -Thermodynamics/Energy Storage