Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning at Yarmouk University

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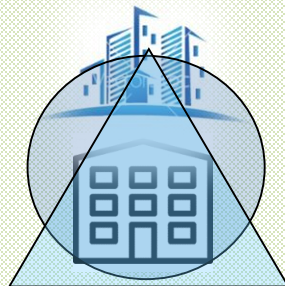Dec. 1st, 2016, AUB, Lebanon

Yarmouk University Overview

- Founded in 1976 with a mission to provide quality education
    - The second oldest and largest university in Jordan
- Located in the Northern part of Jordan (at the center of the City of Irbid)
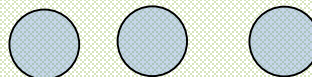
Yarmouk University
Overview

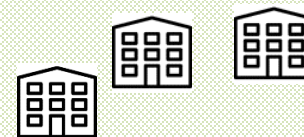| Deanships	Faculties	Centers	Administrative Departments
Include: 2 Deanships	Include: 15 Faculties	Include: 18 Centers	Include: 15 Departments

These faculties that offer **68 bachelor**, **64 master**, and **18 PhD degree** programs – has also **18 centers for research and career development**

- **Has ~30,000 undergraduate students and ~4,000 post-graduate students**

- **~3500 are international (~10%)**

- **~1041 academic staff, and**

- **~1580 administrative and technical staff**

Strategic Plan
2016-2020

- Yarmouk University prepared a five-years strategic plan 2016-2020 that translates its vision: **Towards Quality, Excellence, and Internationalization**.

- This plan will determine future work tendencies; it will be a key reference & a roadmap to the university.

Strategic Plan

2016-2020

Vision

Leadership and excellence in the fields of education and scientific research that contribute to community service, which will put Yarmouk University at the forefront of Jordanian universities, and have a prominent position regionally and globally.

Mission

Preparation of scientific competencies in various fields of science and knowledge by providing distinguished education, and producing creative scientific research that will serve the community and contribute to building knowledge-based economy through creating an environment that stimulates creativity, freedom of thought and expression, and to respond to the requirements of society and scientific development.

- **We will provide an enriching teaching and learning environment where students are at the heart of what we do.**

- **A comprehensive review of the study plans for all undergraduate academic programs offered by the university has been done, taking into account the real needs of the local and regional market, the recent trends in higher education and the rapid technological and technical development – to meet quality assurance standards and national & international accreditation.**

Evaluation of teaching and learning at the University

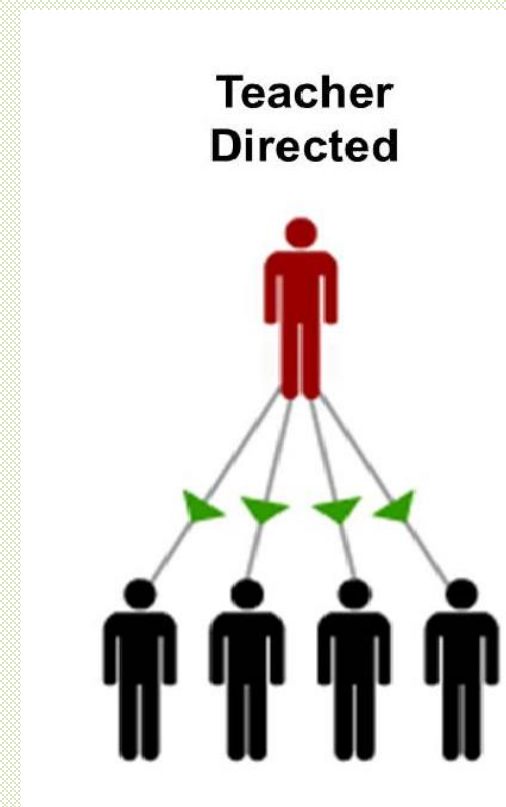o **Student Assessment**
o **Teaching Assessment**
o **Program Assessment**
  – Within Major
  – Service Courses
o **Institutional Status**
  – Accreditation
  – Reputation
o **Post-Graduation**
  – Response to Employer Demand
  – Alumni Satisfaction

Teacher Centered

- **Teachers' Centered approach is the adopted approach**

- **Teachers are in the active role and students are in a passive, receptive role**

- **Students are listeners NOT learners**

Teacher Directed

The BIG class ....

- Teaching in classroom using chalk and talk is "one way flow" of information.

- Teachers often continuously talk for an hour without knowing students response and feedback.

- The material presented is only based on lecturer notes and textbooks.

- Teaching and learning are concentrated on "plug and play" method rather than practical aspects.

- The handwriting of the lecturer decides the fate of the subject.

- There is insufficient interaction with students in classroom.

- More emphasis has been given on theory without any practical and real life time situations.

- Learning from memorization but not understanding.

- Marks rather than result oriented.

Aims based programs and courses

- Aims are the broad intentions and orientation of the course or program of study. In other words they express what the program/course offers students.

- They are the intentions of the teachers.

- **Provides students with a learning environment with little attention to whether or not students ever learn the material.**
- **Students are given grades and rankings compared to each other – students become exam oriented or CGPA driven.**

Major Deficiencies of Traditional Education Adopted by The University

- **Graduates are not completely prepared for the workforce.**

- **Lack of emphasis on soft skills needed in jobs e.g. communication skills, interpersonal skills, analytical skills, working attitude etc.**

Paradigm Shift

Principles that guide this change

-Student centered rather than teacher centered approach.

-**We have moved from an instruction paradigm, in which an instructor transfers knowledge to students, to a learning paradigm, in which a teacher's role is that of coach.**

Learner Directed

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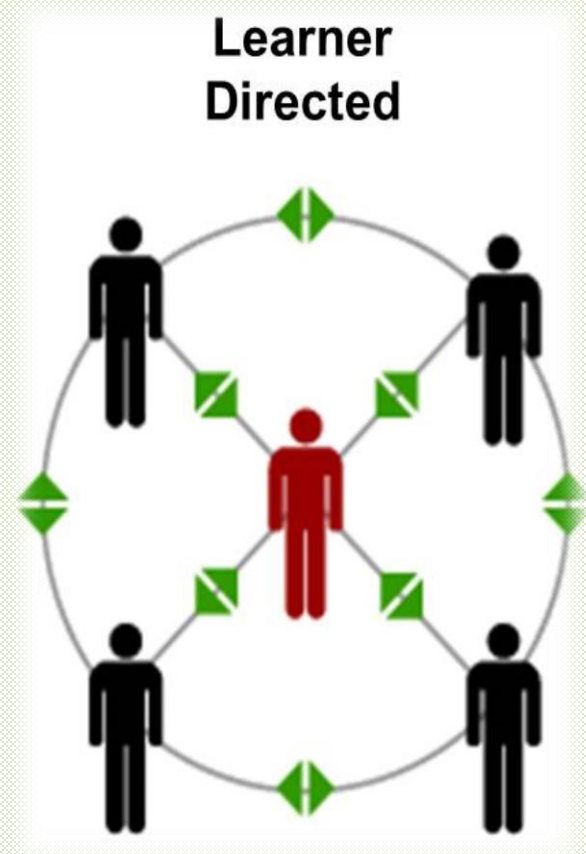
Paradigm Shift

- Outcomes Based Learning and Teaching Rather than Aims Based Teaching

- **Education is no longer defined in terms of what a teacher will teach but rather in terms of what a student will be able to demonstrate**.

- The basic premise of OBTL is that the **teaching and learning activities (TLAs)** and **assessment methods (AMs)** are *constructively aligned* with the **intended learning outcomes (ILOs)**

Features of the Adopted Model

- ¨ **It is needs-driven**.
- Curricula are designed in terms of the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected from graduates and aim to equip students for lifelong learning.
- ¨ **It is outcomes-driven**.
- The model has a line that runs from taking cognizance of training needs to setting an aim (purpose) for the program, goals for syllabus themes, learning outcomes, and finally assessing the learning outcomes in terms of the set learning objectives.

Features of the Adopted Model

- ¨ **It has a design-down approach.**

- Linked to needs and the purpose of the program, learning content is only selected after the desired outcomes have been specified. Content becomes a vehicle to achieve the desired learning outcomes which are aimed at inculcating a basis for life-long learning.

- ¨ **It specifies outcomes and levels of outcomes**.

- Learning objectives are described in terms of Bloom's (1956) cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains and set according to Mager's (1984) guidelines for formulating objectives.

- **The focus shifts from teaching to learning**.

- The model has a student-centered learning approach where lecturers act as facilitators. Study guides help the learners to organize their learning activities, and group work, continuous assessment and self-assessment are major features. ¨

- **The framework is holistic in its outcomes focus.** Although the learning objectives are aimed at learning at grass-roots level, they are linked to goals and aims at higher levels. Attaining learning objectives is therefore not an end in itself; it provides building blocks for achieving higher-level outcomes.

Self-managed learning

- Develop students capacity for self learning.

- Perhaps the most important learning outcome is that students learn how to learn for themselves.

- When they graduate there will be many new topics they will need to learn, and so it is important that their university education develops their capacity to do so.

* Critical thinking,
* Problem-solving,
* Adaptability,
* Communication skills,
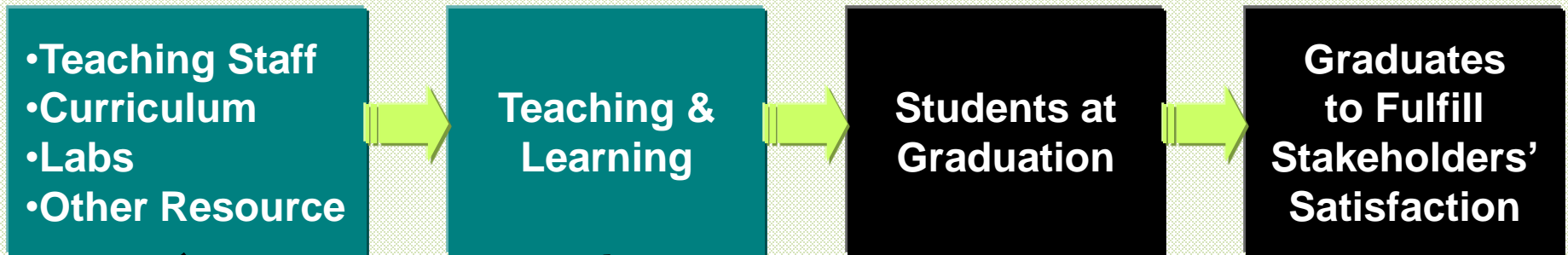*** Interpersonal skills.**

Self-managed learning

- Students are expected to be able to do more challenging tasks other than memorize and reproduce what was taught.

- Students should be able to: write project proposals, complete projects, analyze case studies, give case presentations, show their abilities to think, question, research, and make decisions based on the findings.

- Be more creative, able to analyze and synthesize information.

- Able to plan and organize tasks, able to work in a team as a community or in entrepreneurial service teams to propose solutions to problems and market their solutions.

Outcome-Based Education Versus Traditional Education Process

- OBE shifts from measuring input and process to **include measuring the output (outcome)**

(Short-term)

(Long-term)

Input → **Process** → **Program & Subject Outcomes** → **Program Education Outcomes**

Input	Process	Program & Subject Outcomes	Program Education Outcomes
•Teaching Staff •Curriculum •Labs •Other Resource	Teaching & Learning	Students at Graduation	Graduates to Fulfill Stakeholders' Satisfaction
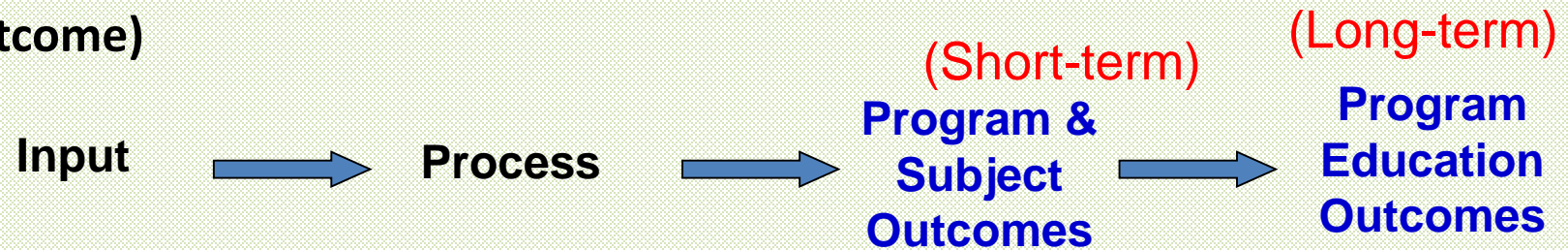
- Assessment by exam, test and assignments.
- Assessment of teaching staff, lecture material & flow, results and student 'capabilities' (Short & long-term outcomes), lab interview, exit survey etc.
- More 'thinking' projects, with analysis.
- Feedback from industry, alumni and other stakeholders.
- Clear continuous improvement step.

Stakeholders:
EAC
Employers
Industry Advisors
Academic Staff
Public and Parents
Students
Alumni

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Programs Revision Process

– Surveyed the experiences of other universities, both local and global

– Studied the market needs to see to which extent a program is needed by the market

– Determined the vision and mission of the program with objectives and learning outcomes

– Developed the course/program alignment matrix

– Designed the modified program study plans for each programs, accordingly

Programs Revision Process

– Sent the revised program study plans for external referees

– Prepared the final design of the study plan, accordingly

– Approved the program study plans from the Department/College

– Sent program study plans to the Quality Center to make sure they meet accreditation requirements

– Discussed the program study plans by the study plan commission in the university

– Approved the program study plans by the Council of Deans

Upgrade Teaching Facilities

- **Keep pace with the technological development in the world in the area of university teaching and the provision of modern techniques and methods of teaching:**

  - Renovated teaching classrooms/halls and provided them with modern technological tools
  - Established a smart-room in every college of the university equipped with smart-boards and Internet and interactive learning
  - Established and updated teaching laboratories
  - Working on establishing book and instructional materials stores at the university

Revision of Assessment & Evaluation Methodology

- **Develop students' performance evaluation system to ensure the quality of the program outputs to achieve accreditation and to prepare students for university exam efficiency standards:**

  - Re-developed the system of exams and marks in the university
  - Developed instructions to assess student learning outcomes at the program level

Postgraduate Programs Reforms

- **The expansion and upgrading of graduate programs and ensuring the quality of their outcomes:**

  - Established standards to ensure the quality of Masters and PhDs
  - Working on establishing joint programs with international universities
  - Working on directing master's and doctoral dissertations towards addressing the issues and problems of the society
  - Working on increasing the number of international graduate students

Postgraduate Programs Reforms

– Developed rules for award for Best Master Thesis and for the Best Doctoral Dissertation every year

– Working on promoting the dissemination of excellent theses/ dissertations in a special program

– Working on increasing the number of research incubators in the university and establish an incubator for small enterprises

– Working on establishing an office and marketing of technology transfer

– Signing research partnership agreements with industry and business sectors

– Activating partnership with the private sector to secure scholarships for distinguished students

Postgraduate Programs Reforms

- **Improve the quality of the research done by graduate students and direct it towards addressing issues of society and the needs of the national development:**

    - Working on modifying graduate studies regulations to achieve the development of the process of assessing theses and dissertations

Degree-Level Learning Outcomes

In order to be awarded a Bachelor's degree, a student shall:	In order to be awarded a Master's degree, a student shall:	In order to be awarded a Doctoral degree, a student shall:
- Have a systematic overview of the basic concepts, theoretical principles, and research methods of the field of study; - Recognize theoretical schools, development trends and current problems of the field of study; - Be able to identify interdisciplinary relationships; - Understand the scope of application of different specialties of the field of study;	- Have a systematic overview and broad knowledge of the concepts, theories, and research methods of the field of study; - Recognize theoretical development trends, current problems and potential applications of the specialty; - Have in depth knowledge in a narrower research field of the specialty; - Be able to identify and create interdisciplinary connections;	- Have broad knowledge and a systematic overview within his or her field of research and in-depth and up-to-date knowledge within a narrower sphere of the field of research; - Understand the meaning and scope of the existing knowledge and research methods of the field of research and between fields so as to extend, revaluate, and formulate them as necessary;
- Be able to formulate problems relating to the specialty and to analyze and evaluate different solutions;	- Be able to independently and creatively identify and formulate problems and / or research questions related to the specialty and be able to solve them with appropriate measures within given timeframes and within limited information, taking advantage of the knowledge of other fields as necessary;	- Be able to independently and critically analyze, synthesize, and evaluate new and complex ideas relating to the specialty, and creatively and with scientific accuracy identify and formulate research questions;

Degree-Level Learning Outcomes

In order to be awarded a Bachelor's degree, a student shall:	In order to be awarded a Master's degree, a student shall:	In order to be awarded a Doctoral degree, a student shall:
- Be able to gather information independently by using appropriate methods and means and to interpret it critically and creatively; - Be able to select and use appropriate technologies and methods when solving problems of the specialty;	- Be able to select and use appropriate technologies and methods when solving the problems of the specialty, and to model and/or assess the potential results; - Be able to critically evaluate his or her activities when solving problems and/or research questions of the specialty;	- Have command of research methods of his or her research field; - Be able to conceive, design, implement, and critically evaluate research and development projects that lead to new knowledge and new procedural solutions;
- Be willing to participate in teamwork and lead;	- Be prepared to work in an area of activity that requires occupational qualification, showing initiative, responsibility, leadership, and teamwork skills;	- Be able to independently act in a complex, including international work and study environment, including in research which requires leadership and team work skills, innovative thinking and the ability of making strategic decisions;
- Have command of the communication skills and information and communication technologies necessary for work;	- Be able to hand down with competence his or her knowledge by teaching, instruction, or in another manner;	- Be able to hand down with competence his or her knowledge by teaching, instruction, or in another manner;

Degree-Level Learning Outcomes

In order to be awarded a Bachelor's degree, a student shall:	In order to be awarded a Master's degree, a student shall:	In order to be awarded a Doctoral degree, a student shall:
- Be able to explain orally or in written form in the language of instruction and at least one foreign language problems relating to the specialty and to participate in professional discussions;	- Be able to present and reason orally or in written form in the language of instruction and a foreign language essential for his or her specialty the problems relating to the specialty, conclusions, and the underlying theories, and to participate in relevant discussions of both specialists and non-specialists;	- Be able to present orally or in written form the problems and conclusions relating to the branch of science and his or her research, and the underlying theories, both to specialist audiences and in communication with non-specialists, and to present reasons and participate in relevant discussions in the language of instruction and a foreign language essential for his or her specialty, as well as to publish original scientific results in internationally pre-reviewed academic publications or, in art specialties, creative works for international audience;
- Be willing to actively participate in civil society and demonstrate tolerance towards the diversity of attitudes and values;	- Be willing to actively participate in civil society and demonstrate tolerance towards the diversity of attitudes and values;	- Be able to analyze social norms and relationships, comply therewith, and act to change them as necessary;

Degree-Level
Learning Outcomes

In order to be awarded a Bachelor's degree, a student shall:	In order to be awarded a Master's degree, a student shall:	In order to be awarded a Doctoral degree, a student shall:
- Be able to evaluate the role of knowledge and the role and consequences of his or her professional activities in the community, with consideration to scientific, social and ethical aspects;	- Be able to act ethically in complex situations, be aware of the ethical aspects, possibilities, restrictions and social role of his or her activities and be able to provide reasoned assessment in issues concerning his or her specialty;	- Be able to provide scientific ethical assessments, show insight into the possibilities and limitations with science, the social role of science, and the responsibility of people in the use of scientific achievements;
- Be able to apply the acquired knowledge and skills in work;	- Be able to continue studies or participate in research, act as a specialist or developer in his or her field, including internationally;	
- Be able to continue studies and to undertake continuous independent professional development;	- Be able to evaluate his or her need, and the needs of others for continuing training and professional development, and have command of effective methods necessary for independent study;	- Have the ability to identify his or her need for further knowledge or skills and support the studies of others both in the context of education and science as well as on a wider social level;

Thank you!

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