TEACHING AND LEARNING AT A MIDDLE EASTERN UNIVERSITY: SCHOLARSHIP, CONSTRUCTIVISM, EDUCATIVE LEADERSHIP AND AUTOCRACY

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Abstract: *This chapter reviews teaching and learning at a Middle Eastern University (MEU) through the eyes of a participant-as-observer. It provides the national, instructional and cultural context of teaching and learning in a private university that is in its early years of operations and has just moved into custom-built facilities. It details changes made to the original teaching and learning policy, the early provision of professional development and engagement by teachers. Three unusual features are given focussed attention; the blending of ownership, trusteeship, governance and management roles, the delayed launch of research infrastructure and the high turnover of expatriate academic staff. Three conclusions are drawn. The introduction of the constructivist pedagogy, as an indispensable component of scholarship, highlights the absence of the other components essential to the growth of knowledge; the discovery, integration and application of knowledge. The short-term nature of academic engagements at the MEU is traced to discomfort with the university being governed and managed as an autocracy, which in turn suggests the need to consider more liberal-democratic forms of governance and management with a separation of powers. Finally, a national review of higher education policy is recommended to improve access, quality and productivity of public and private institutions, to help reconcile the long-term interests of Nationals and expatriates in terms of the common good, and to create a social contract between government and its many peoples that is appropriate for a modern and multicultural knowledge society.*

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees and Governors of the MEU was chaired by the University Patron, a senior Sheikh. This Board of Trustees mandated the MEU to become one of the premier higher education institutions locally, regionally and internationally. This vision was further focused during collaborative strategic planning in 2005 and 2006 to ensure that MEU became a premier regional university in the Greater Gulf area. At the same time the MEU's stakeholders were defined as the Board of Trustees and Governors, the Executive Board of Governors (EBG, comprising the Chairman, the Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, the Provost, and the Vice Chancellor of Financial and Administrative Affairs), the Federal Ministries of Education and Higher Education, the national academic accreditation agency, leaders in higher education, government and private sectors, international partners, MEU staff members and the media. Clients were defined as the Chairman of EBG, MEU students, parents and sponsors of MEU's students, and potential employers of MEU graduates.

Participation in governance was limited. Most stakeholders and all clients did not have

representation on the Board of Trustees and Governors. Places were limited to the Patron, the investors and a small number of stakeholders as advisers. Executive power was channelled through the Chairman. There was no contact between employees and Trustees. The MEU was therefore, technically, an autocracy; a form of "absolute government where power was held by an individual or small group and supported by control of critical resources, property or ownership rights, tradition, charisma, and other claims to personal privilege" (Morgan, 1986, p.145). Autocracy is a tribal tradition in the country. When the country was formed by the federation of emirates, the places on the new Supreme Council were limited to the emirs. The Supreme Council retained governance and executive powers by nominating leading Nationals as the Prime Minister and Ministers, and by limiting land ownership and citizenship to Nationals. These structures were replicated when each Emirate developed its own government, and when the ownership, governance and management of private enterprises were devised. Autocracy is a cultural and organisational norm.

The lead investor, also Chairman of the EBG and a member of the Board of Trustees, was the champion of the MEU project. He is a highly intelligent, deeply caring and driven 30-something National with an MBA from an American university. To help ameliorate some of the limits of a participant-as-observer methodology used, he was provided with a draft of this chapter, invited to correct matters of fact and offered an opportunity to comment on my interpretation. He was not given veto rights but invited to identify any material that could be construed as defamatory or as requiring continued confidentiality. All of his requests in these two regards were complied with and all institutional and national identifiers and references were removed. The editors of this volume saw the original draft and comprehensive referencing in strict confidence so they were able to verify the authenticity of the case study prior to it being rendered anonymous. While this approach did not resolve all of the limitations of this methodology, and other participants will each have their own perspectives on events in the period, the report drew on documented and triangulated agency. Most importantly, it should be stressed that the overall purpose was not to allocate blame but to encourage understanding of the MEU in context to help inform futures.

BEING A CHANCELLOR AND CEO

I was given a residency permit and a contract without term to serve as Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer from July 2005 in order to provide strategic leadership to MEU. A job description was negotiated with performance measures and targets. When the targets were close to completion in March 2007, a no-fault separation was agreed to take effect from the end of June 2007. The Chairman of the EBG then formally took over as CEO while I expended all accumulated leave and completed market analyses prior to departure. Why my disengagement? The short answer is that the stimulus of the 'start up' had evaporated. Where there was desert, there were now magnificent buildings housing an operating university. The number of students and programmes had been doubled in the two years and the institution was, in financial terms, clearly sustainable. On the other hand, independent of my disengagement, all but two of the executive, academic and support unit leaders had decided to leave MEU at end of the 2006-2007 academic year. The longer and more complex answer is therefore that my departure was part of a wider pattern of short-term engagements by academic staff members that needs to be clarified. The turnover issue is therefore a key problem addressed by this chapter. It, therefore, offers reflections on an extraordinary experience with three purposes in mind; to further

advance the quality of teaching and learning at MEU, to add to international scholarship on teaching, learning and leadership in higher education, and to offer advice to the MEU and the Federal Government.

The first issue to address is 'university as autocracy'. In the historical and cultural context, it was not surprising that most stakeholders and all clients of the MEU had not been given representation in governance. Further, the Chairman explained that, as an expatriate, I would never be trusted and that I would be accounting to him alone without recourse to the Patron and Trustees. As directed by the Chairman, my service focussed on four areas:

- Internal strategic leadership in planning, continuous improvement, budgeting and evaluation in academic, administrative and financial systems, most especially the development of human resources, budgeting, curriculum development, and institutional evaluation policies and processes;
- External liaison with the national quality assurance and accreditation agency;
- Line management and coordination of the Provost, Vice Chancellor, Institutional Research (IR), the Document Office, and the Chancellor's Office; and
- Entrepreneurial initiatives, as approved by the Chairman.

The methods I used to deliver strategic leadership included participation in governorship (on the EBG), initiating a collaborative strategic planning process, establishing and chairing MEU's University Council of all academic and support unit leaders, line managing senior executives, managing improvement projects, establishing working parties for short-term policy and action research tasks, and sustaining external and international liaison, all at the immediate direction of the Chairman. My six performance objectives were:

1. To establish effective strategic planning and strategic leadership in the University;
2. To further develop the scope, quality and productivity of the University's academic programme;
3. To further develop appropriate, effective and efficient service and support systems;
4. To initiate a University community engagement strategy involving higher education, government and private sectors, community, staff and students;
5. To initiate a University internationalisation strategy; and
6. To coordinate University development with the holding company's initiatives.

Seven university strategies were identified by the early workshops of stakeholders and academic and support staff, much in common with strategies experienced and found effective elsewhere: [2]

1. An environment where excellent people thrive with innovative and flexible methods used to recruit and retain the best faculty, staff, and students;
2. A centre of excellence in teaching and learning, providing outstanding students with a curriculum and learning environment of the highest standard;
3. Resourced and organised for quality, with resource management delivering sustainability, financial management delivering appropriate returns on revenue, and leadership services compliant with the University's vision, mission and values;

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[2] These themes cohere with the author's personal experience of broadly effective strategic plans at Monash University, the University of New England, the University of Tasmania, and especially, the University of Auckland.

4. International standing as a premier, mission-driven and values-compliant University;
5. Responsive engagement with our communities, ensuring MEU is a valued contributor in the life of the nation, the region and the world;
6. A national leader in research and creative works, demonstrating commitment to innovation, discovery, and wealth creation; and
7. A financial success that delivers appropriate returns on equity and reinvestment in the University through the management of its financial resources, product development and marketing.

The collaborative development of these seven strategies disturbed the prior working assumption, and cultural and organizational norm, that strategic planning happened top-down, and highlighted the differences between two political philosophies; autocracy and liberal democracy, that will now be defined.

AUTOCRACY AND LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Western universities tend to be governed and managed as quasi liberal-democracies. Finer's (1970) comparative analysis of governments shows that liberal-democratic regimes typically justify the legitimacy of their policies and day-to-day decisions by relying on the critical awareness of members, rather than relying on their ignorance, indifference or mute compliance. Leadership is expected to create informed consent and to use persuasion rather than coercion. In university communities, leaders are expected to not interfere in academic discretion in teaching and research or to challenge 'academic freedom' and 'institutional autonomy'. It is assumed that governance will be derived from, and accountable to, community stakeholders, academic opinion may be openly and freely expressed without sanction, and the majority of representative opinion will prevail when policies are in dispute.

In particular, liberal-democratic governance is expected to operate at the margin of university life, not to be omnipresent. Interventions by university governance into the largely self-managing, self-creating and voluntary nature of academic engagement are regarded as the exception, not the norm, and need to be justified. The academic community is assumed to be pluralistic in its views, values and interests, not delimited. University governance is expected to protect minorities and promote reconciliation as it governs with a 'light touch' in the 'common interest' and with respect for the 'social contract' that is presumed to exist between the community and wider society, and not be limited to corporate management. The governance of universities as liberal-democracies is also expected to prevent the imposition of any creed, philosophy, religion or ideology on the community, such as entrepreneurial capitalism. It is also assumed that governance will tolerate pluralism, accommodate interests without compromising the 'common interest' or the 'social contract', facilitate change through orderly and systematic policy making processes managed by expert administrators to and champion 'due process' rather than rapid corporate decision making.

Finer (1970, p.73) also highlighted four general characteristics of a liberal-democracy intended to deliberately "bring friction, delay and the necessity for consultation and compromise into the operation of government". Transposed into university governance, this would include:

1. Democratic representation of stakeholder opinion with accountability to the university community;
2. An expert executive separate from governance that implements policy and provides advice on its formulation;
3. Social and economic checks and balances on governance, such as decision making in consultation with professional associations and businesses, and integrated academic and business case analyses in curriculum proposals; and
4. Political checks and balances, such as providing stakeholder representation and separating ownership, trusteeship, governance and management.

Having clarified the two political philosophies largely evident in the MEU community, as a most significant contextual issue to teaching and learning, I turn to the central purposes of this chapter.

THE CONTEXT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING AT MEU

Teaching and learning at MEU was originally defined in its licensure submission to the national accreditation agency in three ways. It was regarded as an important contribution to the scope, quality and productivity of academic programmes. Second, it was seen as a means of providing human capital for human, social and economic development in the region. The MEU's mission statement revised in 2006 emphasised vocational ends over creative, ideological and aesthetic purposes. Third, it was defined as a means of giving substance to the MEU's key values; respect for people, productive environment, quality and excellence, leadership, international standing, customer-centric, scholarship, sustainability, equity, integrity and teamwork. These key values legitimated teaching and learning that traverses Islamic and Western understandings. In sum, teaching and learning was initially expected to 'add value' to MEU's academic programmes, contribute directly to development in the Greater Gulf Region and give carriage to a blend of universal Islamic and Western knowledge and values. It was to occur in wider contexts that now need to be clarified.

The MEU was a self-funded and self-managed university, that is, a private enterprise. There was some but limited reason for it to be publicly accountable. The MEU met the standards for financial accountability in the private sector by submitting audited accounts annually. Regarding accountability for its academic standards, the MEU successfully completed the nation's institutional re-licensure process which addressed students' and society's interests. In sum, the requirements for pubic accountability are met by the national processes of institutional licensure, programme accreditation and standard annual reports, with audits in exceptional circumstances. The problem was that the MEU was also held publicly accountable for its operational arrangements by the national accreditation agency along the lines that it uses to hold the public universities accountable. This situation reflected the wider context in higher education where there was inconsistent application of the law, the general absence of stakeholder representation and, doubt in the legitimacy of governance, as now explained. The key implication was that higher education policy was in urgent need of review and reform.

When the country was founded, as a monarchic federation of tribal emirates, education was deemed to be a Federal responsibility and higher education policy was to be implemented by a Ministry. In turn, the Ministry established the accreditation agency to assure the quality of higher education institutions, which, at the outset, were all public

institutions solely for National students. The two primary mechanisms used by the agency, institutional licensure/ re-licensure and programme accreditation, were copied from the United States of America. There was, however, an inconsistency in the letter and application of law, in that the agency did not appear to have the authority to expect legal compliance from the institutions in the various 'Free Zones' set up in some emirates or from the branches of 'prestigious' universities that had had their establishment sponsored by Royal families. Other 'start ups' had evaded national licensure and accreditation by being 'sponsored' by a 'shell' university established by a two-year post-secondary college. The agency also appeared to have no formal authority to conduct audits or to investigate complaints about public and private higher education institutions, despite its regular interventions, and had a marginal role in funding. Public universities were allocated places, funds per place, and funds for research by other branches of the Ministry. One branch actually managed placements and admissions to the three public tertiary education institutions.

It was clear that the Government was deeply involved in the blended governance and management of public higher education. Its agencies imposed the same degree of accountability and micromanagement in the private sector as they did in the public sector. It might therefore be timely to establish a University Grants Council or some other policy and funding 'buffer' body between government and institutions, and to expect the institutions to accept responsibility for the management of their productivity. A secondary role for the 'buffer' unit could be to introduce public-private partnerships, to help lift efficiencies in public institutions, and to encourage further switching by patrons to private sector solutions to assist in avoiding conflicts of interests and legal ambiguities.

This transformational agenda in higher education could be added to the other major privatisation initiatives that are proving successful at boosting economic development (Anon, 2006). The trigger for review and reform could be the growing crisis in the funding, quality and legitimacy of public higher education. A Ministry study had demonstrated that the expenditure per 'public higher education student place' had been falling for some years, that demand by Nationals had been rising in the same period, with measured falls in proportionate access, quality and satisfaction. While the annual allocation of additional places appeared to dampen concerns over the crisis, it was not an effective long-term strategy.

A related and strategically critical issue for higher education in the country was that Ministry policy made no reference to the needs of the vast majority of the population that did not have rights as citizens; the 'expatriates'. Expatriates did not pay income tax (as with Nationals) and yet were expected to accept full responsibility for educating their children at all levels. Ironically, this had given them an advantage, through the working of market forces. The quality of private kindergarten, primary, and secondary schools' curricula and pedagogy tend to compare favourably with international standards. Indeed, they attracted many National children from professional families. National schools were recently found, by courageous research commissioned by the Minister of Education, to be obsolete in terms of their management, buildings and infrastructure, teaching methods, curriculum, assessment and outcomes. A sophisticated reform programme had since been planned and massive funds allocated by his equally determined successor. However, with their falling funding per student, and pressed to take even more students, albeit with generous capital investment, there was little reason to believe that the public tertiary institutions would be able to respond quickly or effectively to the outcomes of National

schooling or to the broader strategic needs of all of the people living in the country. It was therefore timely, on both strategic and equity grounds, to comprehensively review the quality, funding and role of the public tertiary institutions, for both National and expatriate students, including the potential role of public-private partnerships to reform the public institutions and encourage the private sector. Such a review would also need to address fundamental questions about the future of the country as a knowledge society, just as the review of National schooling did with such penetrating insight. With the national policy context clarified, we now turn to the organisation and nature of teaching and learning in the Middle Eastern University.

THE ORGANISATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING AT MEU

The MEU uses traditional American university administrative and curriculum structures. The Chancellery was responsible for strategic leadership, the colleges for the development and delivery of teaching and research services, and the Support Units for support services. Each of these three sets of units analysed the internal challenges facing MEU from different perspectives during strategic planning in 2006. Many of the challenges identified were related to the start up, the move or to rapid growth, and were attended to with improvement projects. Other challenges were becoming more deeply embedded in the University's culture and needed to be improved progressively through planned organisational learning. The most outstanding challenge was leadership turnover.

In the interim, institutional performance data provide evidence of steady growth and rising quality. The doubled student headcount from 2005 to 2007 did not include the considerable number of mature-aged students enrolled in bridging education courses, nor those enrolled in transition or English short courses. Including these students would near double the 2007 head count again, and show that the MEU's student profile was broadly similar to those in Australian TAFE colleges, British business colleges, and American community colleges. This profile would change and more closely approximate the profile of an international comprehensive university as programmes in engineering, design, law, medical and health sciences opened in September 2007, along with approved masters and soon-to-be-developed doctoral programmes.

Four other interesting indicators of steady improvements to academic quality over recent years, in the public domain, were that the MEU has sustained participation by National students at over twice their proportion of the population, the average class size remained in the low 20s, the retention rate had climbed steadily from about 70 percent to over 80 percent, and the percentage of new students with high school grade point averages over 80 percent had risen steadily from about 30 percent to over 40 percent.

The culture of teaching at MEU was partly determined by the nature of teachers employed. The general characteristics of teachers were clarified by the IRP in late 2006. 12 percent of faculty and staff had come from Jordan, 12 percent from Egypt, 11 percent from India, 11 percent from Canada, 10 percent from the USA, 10 percent from the Lebanon, 9 percent from the Philippines, 8 percent from the UK, 8 percent from Syria, 5 percent from the Sudan, 4 percent from Australia, and others. In total, they were found to be from 35 different nations, the majority from Middle Eastern countries or associated ethnic groups, and tended to exhibit cosmopolitan attitudes. Nearly 50 percent claimed fluency in Arabic and to be Moslems. Over 90 percent had been educated in a Western university. The 82 percent holding doctorates were teaching only in their area of expertise

and most had published research. The remaining 18 percent held masters degrees and were employed either as English instructors or as instructors teaching in their subject area to First Year students taking the common University Requirements courses. Since 30 percent of academic staff members were less than 35 years old, with just over 50 percent aged between 36 and 50, only 18 percent were over fifty. Very few of those surveyed had any teaching qualifications. The majority were in their first academic appointment and therefore new to university teaching. Most of those in programme leadership positions had little prior experience of academic leadership. Most tellingly, the majority of academic staff expected to continue with their research, with or without MEU support, and saw their time at MEU as a career 'stepping stone' prior to going 'home' to a leading regional or national research university. This tension must be regarded as a driver of turnover.

The MEU was licensed to teach with an official pedagogy of teacher-centred instruction. The original 'Teaching Manual' accepted by the national accreditation agency in December 2003, prescribed a 'Teaching System Methodology' comprising a course syllabus and methods of instruction. It stated that "A common sequence is to: Construct lesson plans and discussions to cover material; teach it; and create an exam or term project to assess whether students learned what instructors taught" (p.3). Much of the policy was aphoristic, for example "Keep on task; Evaluate student learning in accord with stated intentions and disclosure" (p.4). The 'principles' of instruction provided stressed (a) the relevance and coverage of 'the material', (b) the scope, structure and sequence of instruction, (c) the comprehensiveness of explanations, and (d) testing the acquisition of the material presented. This policy, and the didactic instruction it encouraged, embedded an academic culture at MEU that defined teaching as systematic instruction in four phases: providing knowledge by expert exposition, reiterating the telling by answering questions, reinforcing understanding by stipulating follow-up readings and setting relevant assignments, and then validating the learning of knowledge by testing the acquisition of the material. When I asked what 'the material' was, teachers invariably told me in various ways that it comprised the 'material facts' of the discipline.

Academic organisation then reinforced this view of teaching as 'instruction by an individual' by allocating responsibility for teaching each course to an academic staff member, and then holding them personally responsible through anonymous student feedback through IR and the relevant dean. Teachers also answered to deans who monitored and sometimes moderated the grades awarded to students without consultation; a not uncontroversial practice. Since students were familiar with, and broadly accepting of teacher-centred instruction, the relatively few complaints focused on unusual teacher behaviour, such as the absence or poor quality of handouts or teachers using highly accented English.

INITIATING A MOVE TO STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING

The embedded culture of 'instruction by experts' had to be challenged with great care. An alternative way of thinking about teaching and learning was articulated at University Council that deliberately co-opted 'instruction' and redefined it as 'one important aid to student learning'. 'Effective teaching' was redefined as 'the extent to which students learn'. In line with this shift in focus, teaching activities in support of learning were defined as elsewhere as a complex set of activities including: "one-to-one consultations, postgraduate supervision, classroom teaching, supervising students in labs, clinics,

schools and industry, supervising projects, advising students, assessing students' work, preparing teaching and course materials, liaison with librarians to support learning, preparing teaching and course materials for on-campus and off-campus students, and contributing to course design and curriculum development" (University of Auckland, 1999b, p.1). It followed that a one-dimensional measure of the quality of teaching was inappropriate. Instead, 'good' university teaching was defined as being responsive to, and *varying* in relation to:

- *the context* in which particular components of the course are offered, e.g. co-operative education, clinical teaching, laboratory teaching, skills training, and/or distance education;
- *the disciplines*, their particular concerns and modes of access to information,
- *the students*, e.g. school-leavers, special admission, mature-age, part-time, overseas, with disabilities, from non-English speaking backgrounds; and
- *the level and standards commonly agreed to*, e.g. first year undergraduate, honours, postgraduate, masters and doctoral level.

<div align="right">(Australian Vice Chancellors Committee, 1993)</div>

In particular, 'the basis for effective teaching and learning in higher education' was defined as voluntary and reciprocal relationships, and a shared view of learning objectives between the consenting adults involved. This struck a chord with those who recalled, during the professional development activities described below, that this was how they actually learned best themselves, and further, that their learning was deepened by collaboration with other learners.

Empirical evidence played some part in these discussions. For example, many were interested that the top teaching colleges and departments in Penn State, Syracuse, Northwestern and Arizona universities had been found by research (Donald, 1997) to use five common strategies to improve the quality of their courses. They had motivated students to learn. They had taught in ways that deepened understanding. They had taken teaching responsibilities very seriously. They had assessed student learning in fair ways. They had provided environments that were conducive to learning. Similarly, there was considerable interest in the integrated policies from the University of Auckland (1999a&c) that assume that 'effective teachers' are those that …

- provide students with opportunities to be involved in the organising of their own learning experiences, and guide them in their efforts to take greater control of their own learning;
- develop students' confidence by setting assignments which are achievable, challenging, and relevant to course or programme aims, and by providing constructive and timely feedback;
- develop students' analytical and critical thinking skills by demonstrating these skills, and providing students with achievable tasks appropriate to the development of these skills;
- provide learning experiences that will enable students to develop individual initiative and cooperative learning where appropriate;
- assist in the development of students' communication skills by providing opportunities for oral, graphic and written presentations and for feedback on their performance;
- encourage and enable students to critically evaluate their own and each other's work;

- make time available for giving advice to, and for supervising, individual students;
- keep well informed about learning and other support facilities, and encourage student use of such facilities to improve their learning and assist them in better managing their studies.

Some were assured that such ideas stressing the importance of 'active learning' and 'effective teaching' were supported by meta-analyses of research into the casual link between teaching and learning (Hattie, 1999). The key point here was that 'learning' was gradually redefined in discussions as the personal construction of knowledge, skills and dispositions. And as these discussions dried up into a provisional acceptance of this generally constructivist account of teaching and learning, the most important ideas were embedded in a policy that was of immediate interest to all academic staff; faculty promotion policy and procedures. To help ensure the clarification, understanding and commitment to these policies and procedures, the draft policy was referred back twice to Academic Court by University Council, before being recommended to and signed off by EBG in early 2006 for implementation.

PROMOTING EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

The purpose of the new faculty promotion policy was to clarify the definitions, criteria, procedures and conditions of review of University academic personnel in order to award promotion to a higher rank in recognition of their achievements. It indicated that the MEU was committed to a merit-based approach, that is, that promotion in rank will be based on the merit of the individual's performance in teaching, other forms of scholarship including research and creative activities, and community service; all as related to the vision, mission, objectives, needs and resources of the University. It explained the devolutions of authority to the Chancellor, the University Promotions Committee (UPC) and the College Promotions Committees (CPCs). It authorised these committees to receive and consider applications for promotion, consider any other materials or consult as they consider relevant and appropriate, and to make recommendations regarding the applications to the Chancellor for final determination.

The concept of 'scholarship' was given a central position in the policy. It was adopted from inter-institutional philosophical research findings (Boyer, 1990) as four forms of rigorous activity that contribute directly to the advancement of knowledge; the discovery, the integration, the application, and the teaching of knowledge. Discovery is defined in the policy as disciplined investigation that creates new ideas and understandings, adding to the stock of knowledge. Integration is defined as making connections across disciplines, in a disciplined way, to order to interpret, draw together and bring new insights to original ideas. Application is defined as the responsible and rigorous application of knowledge to problems of consequence (to people, institutions and peoples). Teaching is defined as the disciplined interaction between learners and teachers intended to build understandings, skills and the dispositions of professionals, and to interrogate the quality of knowledge.

The link between an academic staff member's terms of service and their access to promotion was then made explicit. The policy stated that faculty will be employed to contribute three forms of service noted above, and that the relative weight of these

contributions would be clarified through their employment contracts, specified in job descriptions and interpreted through supervision. A number of guarantees are given;

1. Faculty will be promoted on the basis of the demonstrated and comparable quality and relevance of services rendered.
2. The evaluation of services will be conducted using a various types of data collected using a range of methods and then triangulated through peer review.
3. Peer review in the CPCs and UPC will evaluate the evidence presented by each applicant concerning
   - The quality and relevance of teaching;
   - The comparable quality and relevance of other forms of scholarship;
   - The quality and relevance of community services; and
   - Their relationship to the vision, mission, objectives, needs and resources of the University.

The teaching category of performance in the policy referred to the full range of learning activities noted above. A key requirement was that all teaching services were to be documented and presented in a Teaching Portfolio, prefaced by a personal statement that linked the contents to the promotion criteria related to the quality and relevance of teaching. Teaching Portfolios were expected to include services provided, outcomes and relevant evaluations, especially workload records and student, peer and supervisor evaluations. They were also to include evidence of continued excellence in the classroom. This may include, but not be limited to:
   - Demonstrating that courses taught are in a continuous state of development;
   - Undertaking successfully new course assignments; by designing, developing, and effectively teaching new courses not previously part of an individual's and department's offerings; and by participating successfully in the college-wide instruction programmes;
   - Providing whole-class student evaluations of consistent teaching effectiveness in a variety of courses over a reasonable period of time since appointment;
   - Confirmation of the degree of teaching effectiveness by departmental colleagues who are directly familiar with the person's work; and
   - External assessment/reviews of student accomplishments/creative works which have a direct link to the faculty member.

Each applicant's parallel Scholarship Portfolio was expected to include documented evidence of research and creative services provided. Their third portfolio, their Community Service Portfolio, also expected to provide documented evidence of services to internal and external communities. Where appropriate, the CPCs and the UPC were directed to use six sets of generic criteria, derived from follow-up inter-institutional philosophical research in the United States, to evaluate the quality and relevance of applicants' key scholarly activities:

1. Clear *Goals*? Basic purposes clearly stated? Realistic and achievable objectives stated? Important questions defined?
2. Adequate *Preparation*? Understands prior scholarship? Brings necessary skills? Has resources needed for the project?
3. Appropriate *Methods*? Methods appropriate to the project goals? Effective use of the methods selected? Procedures modified to suit changing circumstances?
4. Significant *Results*? Are the project goals achieved? Are the outcomes significant? New areas indicated for exploration?

5. Effective *Presentation*? Suitable style and effective organisation to present outcomes? Appropriate forums used to communicate to intended audiences? Outcomes presented with clarity and integrity?

6. Reflective *Critique*? Scholar critically evaluates outcomes? Appropriate breadth of evidence used in the critique? Critical evaluation used to improve the quality of future work? (Glassick, Huber., & Maeroff, 1997)

The policy also provided additional rank-specific criteria for promotion to Senior Instructor, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor, and Professor, and the weighting of evaluation criteria for each level. It also specified the composition and procedures to be used by promotions committees to ensure due process, the procedure for applying for promotion, the annual schedule of events, the appeal process, and offerred an 'Application for Promotion Packet' including templates.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The formal approval of this provisional policy implied such a fundamental change in teaching and learning practices that a long-term approach to implementation was adopted. The Education team took the lead and provided professional development opportunities. Their focus was on constructivist pedagogy in an Information Communication Technology-enabled environment. The nature of the debates at University Council also suggested that, instead of confronting those who would continue to prefer traditional instructional practices, it would be more effective to alter key human resources policies that reproduced or changed its culture, such as promotion, and then to 'let nature take its course'.

This introduces the conceptions of the forms of leadership used. They used normative/re-educative processes rather that power/coercive or empirical/rational methods. Educative leadership has been defined as the many forms of leadership that are concerned with enabling learning at the individual, team, institutional and system levels, in educational and other knowledge organisations (Duignan & Macpherson, 1993). In universities, educative leadership is evident as professional development and as organisational learning enabled by effective human resource development, action research, critical reflection (Argyris, & Schön, 1978) and the coherent facilitation across all six phases of policy making and implementation (Macpherson, 1996):

1. The *philosophical* processes of determining purposes;
2. The *strategic* processes of evaluating circumstances, and determining options and their consequences;
3. The *political* processes of articulating policy and mobilising support and resources;
4. The *cultural* processes of reconciling cultural safety with the planned reconstruction of organisational norms and services;
5. The *management* processes of planning and achieving improvements; and
6. The *evaluation* processes of measuring outcomes against objectives and then reviewing primary purposes.

Educative leadership was particularly appropriate in knowledge organisations where the raw material created is the mass of ideas generated by clever people using scholarly methods, and where the production of valued services is achieved through teamwork supported by information and communication technology (ICT). This helps explain why

higher education has emerged as a strategic discipline in the development of knowledge societies in a globalising world. And why educative leadership is becoming essential to ICT-enabled professional teamwork in global networks. On the other hand, these networks have enabled new forms of public accountability that require universities to demonstrate the quality of teaching in order to establish and sustain their competitive position.[3] Most universities, unlike a decade ago, have designated a senior member of their executive to be responsible for the quality of teaching and learning. It is notable that a number of leading research universities in the United States anticipated this trend decades ago and collaborated in setting the destructive and simplistic dualism of 'teaching versus research' by defining teaching as one of four essential forms of scholarship, as noted above. And to further emphasise parity in the value accorded to each form of scholarship, and to eliminate category problems in human resource management and development policies and procedures, these universities adopted the generic criteria for evaluating activity in all four forms of scholarship, again as evident above.

To conclude this section, the concepts of teaching, learning, and effective teaching were all first redefined in discussions, and then in a draft policy for more systematic consultations. They were redefined in practical terms as complex sets of activities intended to achieve intended learning outcomes, both personal and organisational. The revised definitions shared a constructivist theory of learning, an educative theory of leadership (Senge, 1990) and a definition of scholarship as central to the growth of knowledge. These ideas were the basis for the MEU's new teaching and learning policies. The early and uneven implementation is described in the next section by reference to the realities of teaching and learning at MEU.

THE REALITIES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

When a person takes up an academic appointment at MEU, their Dean typically allocated a standard teaching load of 12 contact hours per week in their area of expertise for each of two standard length semesters per annum. Those with programme and other leadership roles were given fewer contact hours as compensation. Those who volunteer to teach a Summer School class were given a stipend. All salaries and stipends were tax free and benchmarked against the most attractive and already high salaries in higher education in the country, although inflation was a persistent concern. Academic staff members were provided free accommodation, increasingly on campus as the capital works programme advanced, to help create a knowledge community.

A new academic staff member was offered a university orientation programme by the HR Department and inducted into their college by their Dean and programme coordinator(s). They were provided with a modern air-conditioned office for their sole use with a view into an open area that receives direct light, a desk, chairs, filing cabinet, a personal computer and high speed Internet access. They had immediate access to glass-fronted student interview rooms. They were provided with modern teaching facilities that could cater for the full range of delivery modes; mass lectures, tutorial spaces, group work, Harvard-style tiered settings for problem-based learning, and as appropriate, bookable computing, science and engineering laboratories. All teaching spaces had excellent lighting, large whiteboards, ICT links for laptop computers, a datashow, and student seating that could be rearranged for group work. The library had a foundational collection

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[3] For example, the Teaching Quality Information web site provides comparative ratings of teaching in the universities of the United Kingdom. See http://www1.tqi.ac.uk/sites/tqi/home/index.cfm

that was growing steadily with the advice of the academic staff, and a range of study spaces. While teaching spaces were designed to accommodate a full range of teaching and learning preferences, most teachers limited their teaching style to instruction, and this was reinforced by the leadership provided.

Most academic leadership was concerned with the design, organisation and productivity of courses and programmes, not pedagogy. The annual planning process required all continuing courses (and any proposed new courses) to have convincing academic and business cases, prior to provisional approval and budgeting. The academic case for a course had to demonstrate that the course syllabus was coherent, comprehensive and essential to the degree programme(s) to which it contributed. The business case for a course was expressed on a spread sheet template as a statement of income and expenditure, and would not normally gain approval unless it exceeded a 20 percent return on income. Deans were expected to consult the responsible colleagues and establish the quality, relevance, demand and financial viability for all continuing courses annually, and schedule delivery accordingly, as well as the overall academic quality and productivity of programmes. It was discomforting to some colleagues to take part in such planning, and sometimes marketing, to help guarantee the sustainability of their courses, and thus their continuing employment. The reason for insisting on this approach was that a private university can not allow cross subsidies without a very good reason, because they are actually cross subsidies between colleagues, courses, programmes or colleges and require the deployment of scarce resources. It was particularly discomforting for some Deans to have to accept responsibility for eliminating such cross subsidies and demonstrably improve college productivities, in particular

- developing convincing academic and business cases for courses with colleagues and programme leaders,
- aggregating them into provisional college budget proposals,
- justifying and improving proposals through rigorous budget challenge processes,
- inventing solutions to problems revealed by the challenge process in order to gain approval,
- taking lead responsibility for 'right size' staffing and other resources for effective programme delivery, in collaboration with the Provost's Office, HR and General Services Departments, and
- coordinating operations to deliver on approved budgets.

Hence, while the start up of teaching systems focused on managing productivity factors to guarantee breakeven, return on equity and sustainability, many other forms of teaching and learning infrastructure normal in universities were at an early stage of development or did not exist. The issue most commented on by academic staff was the absence of research budgets. A draft research policy was approved by EBG for consultations with academic colleagues and this was intended to honour the promise made to early academic appointees; that investment in research would occur in the second five years of university's development. There was no research development unit engaged in capacity building.

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

The effective management and improvement of teaching and learning depended heavily on the performance of Academic Court (AC), and MEU's deans and programme

coordinators. The AC was established soon after the University was established and its purpose was to coordinate academic leadership services intended to implement academic policy. The AC was expected to coordinate academic review, planning and budgeting teaching programmes, programme development and accreditation, and quality assurance. It was to maintain oversight of academic leadership services in colleges, the quality of teaching and learning, courses and curricula, academic evaluation and assessment, and research, scholarship and professional development. Participants include the Provost as chair, the Provost's Office staff, the deans of colleges, the directors of English and the distant campus, chairs, programme coordinators and Registrar. The AC established six Standing Committees to act as advisory bodies, to exchange information and opinion among students, faculty and administrators, and to produce resolutions for attention by the Academic Court.

The effectiveness of AC and the Standing Committees in the period 2005-2007 was disrupted by the move to the new campus, staffing levels in the Provost's Office and IRP, the relatively unstructured nature of AC meetings, and very few meetings being called of the Standing Committees. The college and programme advisory committees were at a very early stage of development. Further, the authority of AC and University Council and the line management system of the University were disturbed from mid 2006 when continuing and executive education centres were established and made answerable only to the Chairman. A major accomplishment of the AC in the period under discussion was its development, trialling and systematic improvement of intra- and inter-campus and cross-gender use of video conferencing technology (VCT). An action research methodology was coordinated by the Provost over three semesters from Summer School 2005, with much credit due to the programme coordinators and teaching staff involved. The rationale for the VCT action research had to be submitted to the national accreditation agency for prior approval. The intra-campus trial entailed a teacher offering a face-to-face class to one gender on a given day (with the other gender receiving a simultaneous VCT broadcast), with the genders swapping delivery mode at the next meeting of the class. Instantaneous feedback from students was made possible through live microphones in both rooms. The instructor could hear, see, be heard, and respond to students in both of the male and female groups simultaneously. As noted above, Education faculty had offered an introduction to the pedagogy of constructivist teaching and learning, with later repeats explicitly related to video conferencing technology. This professional development programme proved to be a key enabler of the action research process. Another direct consequence of the action research process was the engagement and training of student prefects to assist the faculty teaching the VCT sections. These 'prefects' met regularly to discuss how to improve their service. The Information Technology Department also trained its staff to assist the VCT faculty and prefects in the event of ICT problems.

The systematic evaluation of the outcomes of the pilot used feedback from the students involved in VCT and in parallel non-VCT classes. The IRP surveyed students to identify and cognitive and affective differences between students who took the normal face-to-face and the VCT-assisted sections of the same course, on both campuses The first analysis compared the grades awarded to students taught through VCT and by regular methods, split by grade category. There were no significant differences found. The second analysis compared course results based on students' evaluations of their learning experiences. Again no significant differences were found to be due to delivery system. One reason for the absence of any significant difference could have been the management

of the pilot as action research. The pilot yielded data that enabled continuous improvement through error correction and problem solving. This may have biased the results, in a positive sense, and eliminated any potential significance differences as they emerged. The issues brought forward by the academic faculty at those meetings, and the actions taken immediately by the deans and other administrators, could also have created a 'positive halo' or 'Hawthorne effect' (Mayo, 1933). The results were so encouraging that permission was successfully sought from the accreditation agency to extend the pilot into an inter-campus mode from September 2006, with full sign off eventually achieved.

A unique feature of teaching and learning in higher education in the country was that external professional associations are either non existent, in the process of forming, or very recently formed. One consequence was that many subjects were being taught without disciplinary or ethical oversight by external experts. One of MEU's responses to this anomaly was to contract teams of international and peer-acclaimed consultants and local industry experts, in order to design internationally benchmarked and locally relevant syllabi. In the case of the five new bachelor of health science degrees, two in the team were resident expatriates, and thus able to calibrate curriculum to local needs and conditions, while all members were able to embed the requirements of international programme accreditation in their discipline. This health science team also mounted coherent advocacy for three conditions; the need for (a) a constructivist pedagogy, in particular for problem-based learning in preparation for professional service in local health care teams; (b) for courses that were common to all or some Health Science degree programmes into the third year; and (c) to give priority, when selecting appointees, to those who would actively develop professional associations, codes of ethics and scope professional practice suitable for the country. September 2007 was set as the target to see if these conditions were likely to be achieved and a college of medical and health sciences could launched in collaboration with a European university partner.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter reported initiatives taken to further advance the quality of teaching and learning at MEU, add to the international literature on teaching, learning and leadership in higher education, and offer parting advice to MEU and the Federal Government of the country. This section offers conclusions and advice to various parties.

Those appointed to sustain improvement to teaching and learning at MEU might care to reflect on the unique national, instructional, and cultural context of teaching and learning, as described, as they take advantage of the superb teaching and learning facilities. They might also reflect on the extent to which each of the seven visionary conditions identified above reflect a liberal-democratic political philosophy that they may take for granted, naively expect and thus be disappointed. They are advised to appreciate the considerable extent to which governance and management arrangements at the MEU reflect the cultural and political history of autocracy in the country. They could help advance a constructivist theory of teaching and learning in an Arabic and Islamic context, supported by a theory of scholarship based on the growth of knowledge, and hopefully, educative leadership, that are supported by key HR policies. There are likely to be many research opportunities in this situation, such as the unique nature of the teaching-research nexus, as the MEU begins to offer direct support to staff research and creative works.

The MEU was advised, with respect, in the light of high leadership turnover, to develop a fresh implementation plan for the academic promotions policy. Follow-up professional development might address the ongoing development of portfolios, VCT, online teaching and learning, peer evaluation, and creative learning activities. The professional development policy also signed off early in 2006 was strongly supportive of this agenda and similarly warranted a fresh implementation plan. Parallel policy realignment was also advised in other related HR policies concerned with selection and mentoring of academic staff, academic quality assurance, and research supervision. Action research was strongly recommended in each college to customise constructivist pedagogy to each discipline, preferably led by chairs and programme coordinators in collaboration with Institutional Research and Planning. It may also be helpful to review the job descriptions of the Provost, deans and programme coordinators to ensure that they focus appropriately on the quality of teaching, learning, and leadership services.

It was also recommended, particularly in the light of leadership and faculty turnover, that MEU Trustees review the blend of trusteeship, governance and management roles at the MEU, the development of research infrastructure, and the need to trust and support expatriates serving in leadership roles. While warmly acknowledging the wise leadership provided by Royal leaders and the traditions of autocracy in the country, it might be timely to review current political norms concerning ownership, trusteeship, governance and management in a university. Steady progress towards governance based on a more liberal-democratic philosophy might provide an environment more congenial to Western-educated academic colleagues who will continue to arrive committed to international standards of scholarship, academic freedom and institutional autonomy, and if discomforted, depart again. There are nationally strategic reasons for supporting their commitments to international standards. For example, the First Global Colloquium of University Presidents in 2005 (Columbia University, 2005) endorsed the importance of academic freedom in all nations in the following terms:

> The value of academic freedom is closely linked to the fundamental purposes and mission of the modern university. The expanding role that universities are playing in the Information Age only increases its significance. The emergence of a world-wide knowledge economy, the unparalleled transnational flow of information and ideas, and the growing number of young democracies, all make necessary the continued re-examination and articulation of the nature and importance of academic freedom. Indeed, across the globe, the defense of academic freedom remains at the heart of ongoing political and economic battles over the role and autonomy of universities.

> Academic freedom benefits society in two fundamental ways. It benefits society directly, and usually immediately, through the impacts and benefits of applied knowledge, the training of skilled professionals, and the education of future leaders and citizens. It benefits society indirectly, and usually over longer periods of time, through the creation, preservation, and transmission of knowledge and understanding for its own sake, irrespective of immediate applications.

Selecting and retaining strategic and academic leaders who can offer educative leadership to the MEU university community will be vital to this process of creating, holding and sharing knowledge, especially for the coordination of academic programmes and the development of research teams. Reintegrating the continuing and executive education

centres into the University's academic management systems will help in this process, without necessarily impairing their impressive entrepreneurialism.

The Government of the country was respectfully advised to review higher education in the national interest in a globalised context, as illustrated by the central theme of this edited collection. The comprehensive review of National school education provided an excellent model; it is leading to fundamental reforms to schooling of historic significance to the country and the Middle East. An equally fundamental review of higher education was recommended to traverse private and public sectors to ensure that the nation takes its place as the leading knowledge society in the Middle East. In so doing, it might help resolve two dilemmas fundamental to the long-term healthy development of its society.

1. The felt need among Nationals to assume full responsibility for the government and development of their country is in conflict with having to acknowledge the critical and long-term role that will have to be played by expert expatriates.[4] The undercurrents of discomfort, dependency, powerlessness and resentment by Nationals need to be patiently explored along with requests by expatriates for more appropriate citizenship and property rights, a planned extension to suffrage, and other moves towards more liberal-democratic rule (A useful text is by Raphael, 1970). A thorough review of higher education might lead to blended models of governance, such as public-private partnerships, along with a diversification of advanced learning opportunities and cooperative relationships in a multi-cultural knowledge society that may gradually render the current National-expatriate divide obsolete.

2. The quality of research in universities was being offset against investment in professional and vocational undergraduate higher education. Research is much more than a 'safety valve' that maintains the engagement of creative people in universities, by catering to their idealised perceptions of self and career. It is much more that direct investment into curriculum development and thus into the competitive advantages of courses, programmes and institutions. Research activity is the most proven method in all societies of creating relatively trustworthy raw material required by knowledge economies. When the growth of a knowledge economy is complemented with wise leadership and social entrepreneurialism, it can lead to the development of knowledge societies. It was therefore suggested to the nation that it balance its understandably heavy current investment in National human capital, currently biased heavily in favour of undergraduate professional and vocational programmes in business and ICT, with more direct investment in strategic research in the common good at an internationally benchmarked level.

The general conclusion of this chapter is that the MEU was well positioned to model the development of a knowledge community. It had clear policies concerning the critical role of scholarship in four areas, including teaching, that contribute directly to the growth of knowledge. It had criteria and processes in place to reward its academic staff with promotion in rank and to advance their professional development, all in service of MEU's key values, vision and mission. If these purposes, policies and practices are adhered to over time, and elaborated and implemented in other related areas, they have the potential to help establish the MEU as a centre of excellence in higher education in the Middle

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[4] The insights provided by Susan Ward regarding this issue are warmly acknowledged.

East. In this context the current turnover of leadership poses a relatively short-term challenge and signals the importance of moving towards a more liberal-democratic political philosophy and a separation of governance powers from management responsibilities. What can be assumed with confidence is that all of those who have departed have left with a sense of sadness and celebration; sadness at leaving when the MEU is poised for continuing growth and successful service, and celebration at having had the opportunity to help establish a knowledge organisation that is educating multicultural cohorts of business, technological, organisational, cultural and social entrepreneurs, including some of the finest young National minds.

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