UNIVERSITY OF SHARJAH
جامعة الشارقة

معهد القيادة
في التعليم العالي
INSTITUTE OF LEADERSHIP
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

ANNUAL REPORT

2023
2024

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Introduction

At a glance

Training/Workshop	**Participant**
66	**916**
Delivered Training Hours	**Initiatives and Projects**
129hrs	**13**

The **Institute of Leadership in Higher Education (ILHE)** is delighted to present the 2023/2024 Annual Report. Our commitment to supporting the University of Sharjah (UoS) as a beacon of world-class teaching, learning, and research remains unwavering in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

Throughout the year, ILHE has facilitated dynamic training sessions and workshops that have kept UoS faculty abreast with emergent trends in higher education, particularly in the realm of AI and digital technologies. Our innovative programs and initiatives have continued to equip faculty with the skills and knowledge to enrich student learning experiences, both in-person and in increasingly popular digital environments.

This report provides an overview of our key undertakings, accomplishments, and the direction we're forging for the future. We invite you to explore our strides and join us in envisioning the exciting journey ahead.

Message from the
Chancellor
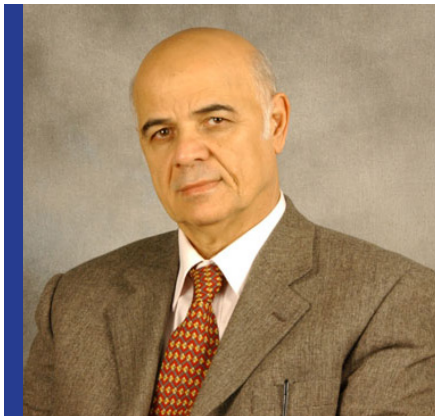
Prof. Hamid M.K. Al Naimiy

Chancellor of the University

As we navigate a world transformed by technological advancements and global interconnectivity, the University of Sharjah remains a pioneer in the Middle East and the Gulf region's academic landscape. With our diverse academic portfolio spanning 14 colleges and over 111 programs, we continue to attract and nurture world-class faculty members, staff, and students.

Our commitment to professional development remains unswerving, fueling our march towards becoming an AI-integrated higher education institution. We understand that embracing the advent of artificial intelligence is paramount to meeting and exceeding the highest international education standards.

In our commitment to staying ahead of the curve, the ILHE is crucial. Through its annual development session program, the Institute works in line with our 2019-24 strategic plan to prepare our staff and faculty for the evolving challenges of the academic field, from harnessing the power of AI in higher education to championing innovative teaching methodologies.

By embarking on this transformative journey together, we continue to offer world-class education, pioneer cutting-edge research, and drive responsible community service. As we venture into a future marked by change and innovation, I encourage our faculty and staff to engage with the ILHE. Only through continuous learning and adaptation can we ensure the University of Sharjah remains a beacon of excellence in a rapidly changing world.

Message from the
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Prof. Youssef Al Haik

Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

The University of Sharjah is more than an institution of learning; it's a thriving community committed to fostering a culture of high performance, adaptability, and continuous learning. As we face the demands of the 21st century, our commitment to staff and faculty development has never been more important.

Our ILHE is a testament to this commitment, providing a robust program of professional development opportunities that respond to the ever-evolving higher education climate. From mastering the use of AI in pedagogy to nurturing essential leadership skills, our program addresses the areas of development most critical to our mission.

The journey towards an AI-integrated future is exciting and challenging. I encourage everyone to actively participate in our development programs. Your engagement will be instrumental in fulfilling our strategic objectives and ensuring the University of Sharjah continues to be a beacon of academic excellence.

Message from the
Institute's Director

Prof. Maher Omar

Director

Institute of Leadership in Higher Education

Here at the ILHE, we understand that the future of higher education is tied to our ability to adapt, innovate, and lead. We are committed to fostering a learning environment where staff and faculty can continuously evolve their skills and contribute to the ever-transforming academic landscape.

To stay at the forefront of educational advancements, our development programs and workshops for this year will focus on areas such as AI in Higher Education, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Professional Ethics, and Technological Proficiency. These were carefully selected to align with the evolving needs of our faculty and the university's 2019-24 strategy.

As we set out on this journey of exploration and learning, I invite each one of you to be a part of it. Together, we can shape the future of education at the University of Sharjah, reinforcing our reputation as a leading academic institution ready to meet the challenges of the new world.

Vision

The ILHE aspires to be a regional hub advancing leadership in higher education and inspiring teaching excellence through innovative training, academic programs, and scholarship in teaching and learning research.

Mission

The mission of the ILHE is to strengthen the professional knowledge and leadership skills of faculty and higher education practitioners in the UAE and beyond. It leads and provides development training, educational programs, and pedagogical research opportunities to foster exceptional leadership practices and the teaching and learning process.
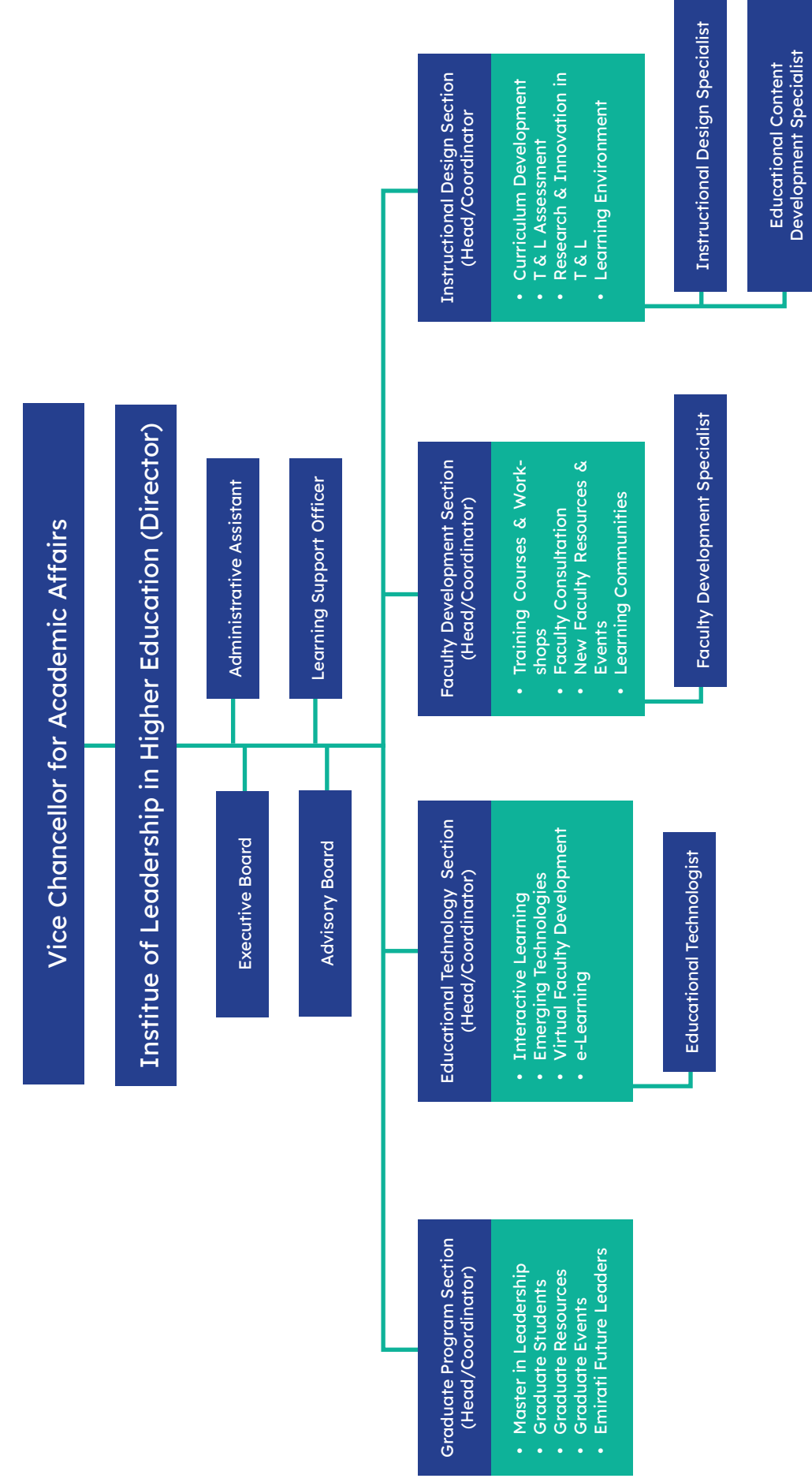
Goals

- **Training of faculty in the university in the full spectrum of the art and science of education.**

- **Providing expert support for innovation in course development, delivery, and assessments in the higher education context.**

- **Supporting the development of leadership skills in higher education nationally, regionally, and internationally.**

- **Advancing educational knowledge and practice by offering funding opportunities for action/classroom research and scholarly activities.**

- **Developing mechanisms for sustainable academic programs aimed at supporting the university's transformative agenda.**

- **Working towards becoming a hub for excellence in higher education leadership, policies, and research in the country, regionally and globally.**

Institute's Organizational Chart

Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Institue of Leadership in Higher Education (Director)

Administrative Assistant

Learning Support Officer

Executive Board

Advisory Board

Instructional Design Section (Head/Coordinator)
- Curriculum Development
- T & L Assessment
- Research & Innovation in T & L
- Learning Environment

Instructional Design Specialist

Educational Content Development Specialist

Faculty Development Section (Head/Coordinator)
- Training Courses & Work-shops
- Faculty Consultation
- New Faculty Resources & Events
- Learning Communities

Faculty Development Specialist

Educational Technology Section (Head/Coordinator)
- Interactive Learning
- Emerging Technologies
- Virtual Faculty Development
- e-Learning

Educational Technologist

Graduate Program Section (Head/Coordinator)
- Master in Leadership
- Graduate Students
- Graduate Resources
- Graduate Events
- Emirati Future Leaders

Professional Development

From 2023-2024 academic year, ILHE have successfully conducted 66 enriching workshops. The workshops were diversified, focusing on three core areas: Academic Advising, Teaching & Learning in the Age of AI, and Pedagogical Skills. While a portion of these workshops were made publicly accessible to all faculty members, a specific segment was carefully customized to align with the requirements of distinct programs.

No	Date	Title
1	13 Sep 2023	Student Advising at UoS: Stats & Facts
2	18 Sep 2023	Teaching with Technology: Enhancing Classroom Experience
3	19 Sep 2023	التدريس باستخدام التكنولوجيا: تحسين التجربة التعليمية
4	20 Sep 2023	إرشاد الطلبة في جامعة الشارقة: إحصائيات وحقائق
5	24 Oct 2023	Leadership and Followership
6	25 Sep 2023	NFD Exploring Philosophies of Teaching and Learning
7	25 Sep 2023	فلسفات التعليم والتعلم - NFD
8	26 Sep 2023	AI Technologies in Creating Content
9	26 Sep 2023	Professional Ethics and Transparent Responsibility
10	27 Sep 2023	ChatGPT for Researchers: Tools and Techniques
11	27 Sep 2023	ChatGPT للباحثين: الأدوات والتقنيات
12	2 Oct 2023	Effective Assessment and Examination Strategies
13	2 Oct 2023	استراتيجيات إختبارات الفعالة
14	2 Oct 2023	Effective Grading Strategies with Blackboard Rubrics
15	3 Oct 2023	PoT Training
16	4 Oct 2023	قواعد و ولوائح الاختبارات و النزاهة الاكاديمية
17	4 Oct 2023	Exam Rules, Regulations, and Academic Integrity

No	Date	Title
18	7 Oct 2023	Developing Grading Rubrics
19	7 Oct 2023	تطوير الروبريك
20	31 Oct 2023	Faculty Peer Observation of Teaching
21	1 Nov 2023	ملاحظة تدريس الزميل
22	6 Nov 2023	Strengthening Students' Learning Using Feedback and Feedforward
23	8 Nov 2023	Brown Bag: Faculty Mentoring Program
24	16 Nov 2023	Continuing Education in Professional Life
25	29 Jan 2024	Brown Bag: Learning communities
26	30 Jan 2024	Online Teaching and Student Learning Engagement Tools: Hands-on Workshop
27	30 Jan 2024	Online Teaching and Student Learning Engagement Tools: Hands-on Workshop
28	31 Jan 2024	أدوات التدريس التفاعلية والتعليم عبر الانترنت
29	31 Jan 2024	أدوات التدريس التفاعلية والتعليم عبر الانترنت
30	6 Feb 2024	Peer Observation of Teaching (Session 1)
31	6 Feb 2024	Peer Observation of Teaching (Session 2)
32	8 Feb 2024	ملاحظة تدريس الزميل
33	8 Feb 2024	ملاحظة تدريس الزميل
34	15 Feb 2024	New Faculty Orientation - Spring 2024
35	19 Feb 2024	Promoting Academic Integrity at UOS: Effective Strategies for Addressing Students' Misconduct
36	20 Feb 2024	استراتيجيات فعّالة لتعزيز قيم النزاهة الأكاديمة في الامتحانات في جامعة الشارقة - الواقع وأهم الممارسات التنفيذية
37	21 Feb 2024	Effective Strategies for Engaging Large Classroom Audiences
38	22 Feb 2024	Faculty AI Tools: Magic School AI

No	Date	Title
39	26 Feb 2024	Faculty AI Tools: Magic School AI
40	9 Mar 2024	Effective Academic Advising Techniques for Teaching Assistants
41	9 Mar 2024	تقنيات الإرشاد الأكاديمي الفعال لمساعدي التدريس
42	12 Mar 2024	D4FD: Turning Ideas into Startups
43	14 Mar 2024	D4FD: Design Thinking Workshop
44	19 Mar 2024	D4FD: Crafting Winning Posters for Success
45	26 Mar 2024	Brown Bag - Reflection and diversity: Essential pedagogical ingredients to enhance students' thoughtful learning and transferrable skills
46	26 Mar 2024	How to Prepare a Powerful Three-Minute Presentation Workshop
47	27 Mar 2024	Strategies for Effective Engagement and Equity-Based Relationships Between Clinical Tutors and Students
48	15 Apr 2024	Academic Advising Champion S1: Fostering Excellence in Academic Advising
49	18 Apr 2024	Academic Advising Champion S2: Bridging Academic Advising and Career Success
50	20 Apr 2024	ChatGPT for Researchers: Tools & Ethics
51	22 Apr 2024	S1: Publication Strategies for Graduate Students and Early Career Researchers in Social Sciences
52	22 Apr 2024	Academic Advising Champion S3: Holistic Advising for Students in Need
53	23 Apr 2024	Interacting with Students: Roles and Expectations of Faculty
54	23 Apr 2024	Exploring a new one-stop-solution for: online & paper-based exams with detailed analytics
55	23 Apr 2024	عرض منظومة الامتحانات الجديدة الشاملة (الكترونيا وورقيا) مع تحليل احصائي مفصّل للنتائج
56	25 Apr 2024	تقنيات الذكاء الاصطناعي في البحث العلمي وقياس الاقتباس
57	25 Apr 2024	Academic Advising Champion S4: Becoming an Advising Champion: Skills and Strategies for Success
58	27 Apr 2024	MagicSchool AI

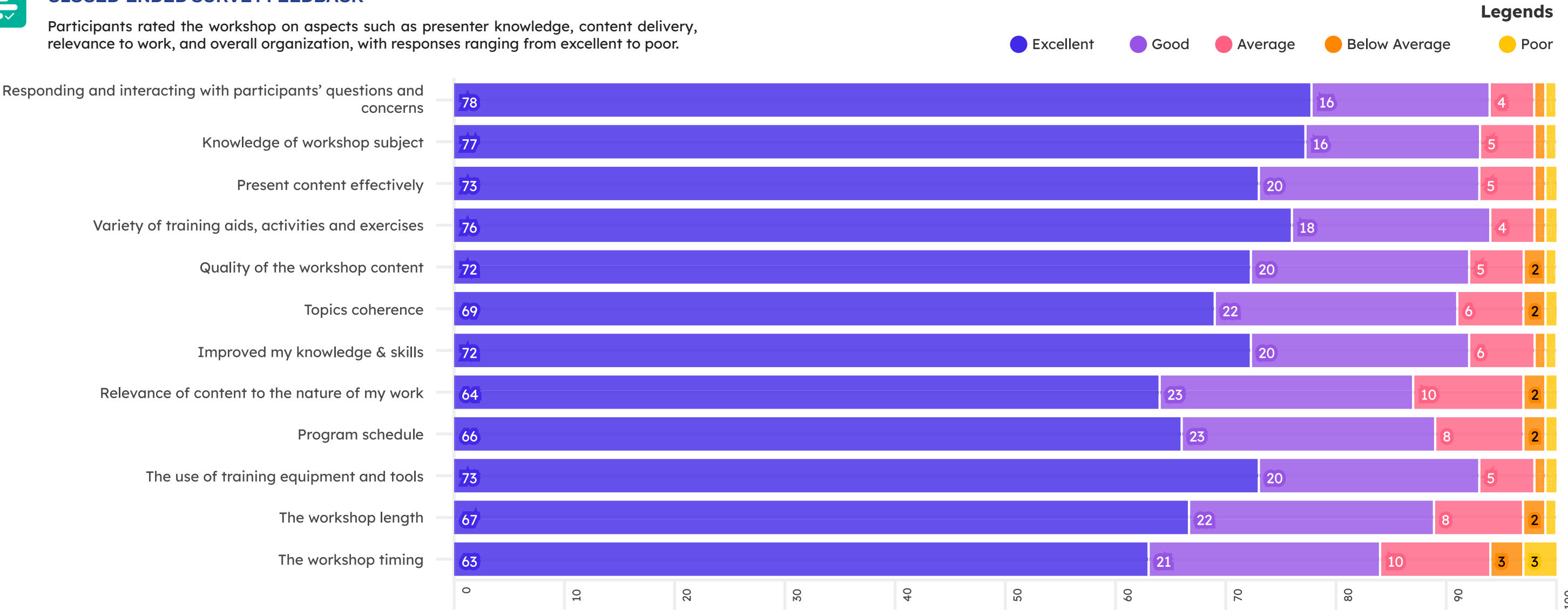| No	Date	Title
59	29 Apr 2024	S2: Publication Strategies for Graduate Students and Early Career Researchers in Social Sciences
60	29 Apr 2024	برنامج أبطال الإرشاد الأكاديمي 1 : الإرشاد الشامل للطلاب المحتاجين يقدمها
61	30 Apr 2024	دمج أدوات الذكاء الاصطناعي في تخطيط الدروس
62	2 May 2024	برنامج أبطال الإرشاد الأكاديمي 2 : كيف تصبح بطلًا في الإرشاد: المهارات والاستراتيجيات للنجاح بقيادة يقدمها
63	6 May 2024	برنامج أبطال الإرشاد الأكاديمي3 : سد الفجوة بين الإرشاد الأكاديمي والنجاح المهني
64	11 May 2024	برنامج أبطال الإرشاد الأكاديمي 4 : تعزيز التميز في الإرشاد الأكاديمي
65	5 Jun 2024	EFLI S1 : Taking Inspiration from Distinguished Emiratis and Charting a Unique Leadership Path
66	15 Jun 2024	EFLI S2: L - Leadership 101: Understanding the Fundamentals of Leadership

Overall Workshops' Evaluation

This data represents the overall results from the evaluation surveys conducted by ILHE. The surveys were administered online to participants at the conclusion of each workshop and training session.

CLOSED-ENDED SURVEY FEEDBACK

Participants rated the workshop on aspects such as presenter knowledge, content delivery, relevance to work, and overall organization, with responses ranging from excellent to poor.

Legends
● Excellent ● Good ● Average ● Below Average ● Poor

	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Responding and interacting with participants' questions and concerns	78	16	4		
Knowledge of workshop subject	77	16	5		
Present content effectively	73	20	5		
Variety of training aids, activities and exercises	76	18	4		
Quality of the workshop content	72	20	5	2	
Topics coherence	69	22	6	2	
Improved my knowledge & skills	72	20	6		
Relevance of content to the nature of my work	64	23	10	2	
Program schedule	66	23	8	2	
The use of training equipment and tools	73	20	5		
The workshop length	67	22	8	2	
The workshop timing	63	21	10	3	3

(x-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100)

OPEN-ENDED SURVEY FEEDBACK

Participants were asked to reflect on what could make the workshop more engaging or useful, and to share what they appreciated most about the session. Here are some sample responses to these questions.

What might have made this workshop more engaging or useful?

"Addressing a very important and trending issue ChatGpt with application, All very good, Get to learn on AI advances and ChatGPT "

"Learned about many technology, Get clear ideas to enhance my teaching process"

"The use of more varied training equipment and tools could enhance the learning experience."

Incorporating more real-life examples and case studies would make the sessions more relatable and practical.

What did you most appreciate in the workshop?

"Hands-on training, it should have been a hands-on workshop. It was all theory."

"More use of technology to support teaching and student learning"

The ILHE workshop evaluations reveal strong participant approval, particularly in interactive engagement and content delivery. Areas marked for improvement include content relevance and session timing. Participants suggested more practical exercises, enhanced technological integration, and real-life examples to boost engagement. The feedback provides crucial insights for refining future workshops to better align with participant needs and expectations.

Workshop Highlight

Dr. Hussein M. Elmehdi, Dean of Academic Support Services, delivers a workshop, emphasizing the importance of honesty and rigorous scholarship to faculty members.

Promoting Academic Integrity at UoS

The ILHE organized two workshops facilitated by Dr. Hussein M Elmehdi, entitled "Promoting Academic Integrity at UOS." One of these workshops was conducted in English and the other in Arabic, thereby ensuring that this critical message was accessible to the entirety of our diverse university community. These workshops were pivotal in our continuous efforts to promote academic integrity at UOS, reflecting ILHE's commitment to fostering a culture of honesty and rigorous scholarly endeavor within our academic community. They addressed the pressing issue of student cheating and explored effective strategies to mitigate it.

Dr. Elmehdi provided a comprehensive analysis of the evolving methods students employ to engage in academic dishonesty, particularly through the use of advanced technology. He underscored the necessity of a collective effort to address these challenges, advocating for a community-based approach to fostering integrity and honesty in academic pursuits.

Key highlights of the workshops:

1. **Raising Awareness:**
   Dr. Elmehdi emphasized the significance of raising awareness about academic dishonesty and its detrimental impact, ensuring that both students and faculty grasp the severity of the issue.

2. **Technological Tools:**
   The workshops showcased various technological tools and methods that can be utilized to detect and prevent cheating, demonstrating the latest software and techniques employed globally.

3. **Strict Policies and Enforcement:**
   A considerable portion of the discussion was dedicated to the implementation of stringent policies and consistent enforcement to deter academic misconduct, highlighting the necessity for clear, well-communicated, and rigorously enforced regulations.

4. **Community of Integrity:**
   Dr. Elmehdi encouraged the establishment of a community that values truth, diligence, and ethical behavior in all academic endeavors, thereby fostering a culture of integrity.

Publication Strategies for Graduate Students and Early Career Researchers in Social Sciences

The primary goal of this ongoing initiative is to empower graduate students and early career researchers in the social sciences with the knowledge and skills needed to successfully publish their research in prestigious academic journals. Led by Dr. Mehmet Sukru Bellibas, this comprehensive four-part workshop series provides participants with the essential tools and insights required for academic publishing. By participating in these workshops, attendees gain valuable writing strategies, learn to avoid common pitfalls, and receive personalized feedback on their work. Furthermore, the initiative addresses practices aimed at enhancing participants' understanding of the manuscript preparation process, improving their writing clarity and impact, and guiding them through the submission and revision processes. Ultimately, this initiative aims to increase the publication success rate of emerging researchers and foster a culture of academic excellence at the University of Sharjah.

Innitiative

Faculty Orientation Spring 2024

On 15th February 2024, the ILHE hosted its New Faculty Orientation, a key event aimed at integrating new faculty into the university community. Held at Al-Bayrouni Hall, the event featured keynotes from Prof. Hamid Al Naimiy, the Chancellor, Prof. Yousef Haik, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and other university leaders.

The orientation provided new faculty members with essential resources and insights into university policies, teaching methodologies, research opportunities, and professional development. Sessions were aimed at helping faculty understand UOS's academic structure, expectations, and the strategic transformation agenda. Topics covered included academic programs, accreditation, institutional policies, and tips for building a successful research career, with contributions from seasoned faculty and administrative leaders.

This event not only facilitated practical guidance but also fostered networking and interdisciplinary collaboration among new faculty, setting the stage for a supportive and productive academic environment at UOS.

Faculty Peer Mentoring Program

The University of Sharjah recognizes the need to continually strengthen faculty professional development for effective teaching, learning, and administrative processes. Thus, the faculty peer mentoring program is developed to complement other development initiatives at the university, including peer observation of teaching and the new faculty development program.

Under the leadership of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the program is developed and led by the ILHE at the university.

In the initiative's context, faculty peer mentoring is described as a process through which faculty engage in collaborative and mutually beneficial learning engagements with one another for their personal and professional development. Through the process, faculty share best practices to enhance teaching, learning, and customized scholarly activities within collegial and non-threatening environments.

Target audience and potential beneficiaries are as follows:

- New faculty with limited academic experience
- Faculty with moderate and considerable academic experience but new to the University of Sharjah
- Faculty with a strong passion for developing specialized skills and knowledge

Through the 'Brown Bag' event, the program has been introduced to the university community. Names of the first set of beneficiaries have also been submitted by some colleges. Hopefully, the program will be fully implemented in Fall 2024/2025 session.

03

New Faculty Development Program

Think about building a home. First, you map out where the home will sit on the lot, then you lay the foundation, followed by framing the structure, raising the walls, and adding a roof. Similarly, before we start teaching, we need to lay a solid foundation for our new faculty.

The Faculty Development Program, a comprehensive initiative designed to enhance the pedagogical skills of newly graduated academics joining the University of Sharjah as faculty members, commenced in September 2023. Six out of 15 workshops under four key categories—Pedagogical, Technological, Institutional, and Research—were conducted online, covering a broad range of professional knowledge and skills, including active learning strate-

gies, technology-aided teaching and learning, effective assessment methods, program development, institutional effectiveness, and emotional intelligence. The program is currently on hold and will resume in September 2024. The continuation of this program will further support new faculty in their professional development and contribute to their overall effectiveness and success at the university.

04

The forum, held on 13th May 2024, by the ILHE at the University of Sharjah, featured 16 proposals showcasing innovative teaching practices. Six proposals were selected for presentation, providing opportunities for faculty to share experiences and collaborate on enhancing student learning outcomes.

5th Teaching and Learning Forum

In today's fast-changing job market, we help students get ready for future jobs by focusing on employability skills. The 5th Teaching and Learning Forum aimed to provide meaningful learning experiences for students with a strong emphasis on endorsing their employability. With the theme "Innovative Teaching and Learning for Transferable Skills," the forum gathered various initiatives encompassing best practices, innovative strategies, and valuable insights driven by research and practical experience. These efforts may better equip students with the essential skills needed to thrive in an ever-evolving workplace.

Key focus areas:

- **Experiential Learning Modalities and Transferable Skills:**
  Exploring hands-on learning approaches to enhance practical skills.

- **Authentic Assessment Strategies for Transferable Skills Development:**
  Developing assessments that reflect real-world challenges.

- **Collaborative Learning Communities and Transferable Skills:**
  Fostering teamwork and

communication through collaborative efforts.

- **Industry-Responsive Curriculum Design for Employability:**
  Aligning academic programs with industry needs to improve graduate employability.

The keynote speaker, Prof. Nancy Gleason, Director of the Hilary Ballon Center for Teaching and Learning at New York University Abu Dhabi, delivered a speech on "Changing the Work of Teachers in Higher Education," emphasizing the integration of generative AI in teaching.

A total of 107 participants attended online, in addition to the deans, heads of departments, and presenters who attended in person, indicating strong interest and engagement.

05

3rd Faculty Advising Champion Program

The "Academic Advising Champions" initiative seeks to elevate excellence in academic advising in alignment with the UoS mission and strategic goals. The initiative involves designing and adapting an advising delivery system and skill set responsive to the evolving needs of students, creating a flexible and effective framework for advising that can meet the diverse and changing demands of the student body.

Participating faculty members, who were nominated by each college based on their demonstrated proficiency in advising, were invited to take part in this program. These faculty members completed a self-assessment survey, which provided valuable insights into their current understanding of and competencies for academic ad-

vising, as well as the tools that can be used effectively in this role. By enhancing their skills and knowledge, the initiative aims to transform them into highly skilled advisors who can provide excellent support to students, tailored to their individual needs. These advisors are expected to uphold the highest professional ethics and virtues associated with the advising field, ensuring they contribute positively to the academic and personal success of their students.

In partnership with NACADA (The Global Community for Academic Advising), ILHE has delivered this program for two batches in 2021/2022 and 2022/2023. For the third batch in 2023/2024, the number of participants increased to 40 faculty members, compared to 36 and 22 in the first and second batches, respectively.

NACADA
THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY
FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING

The participants in the third batch were trained in the following four topics, delivered through online workshops. Participants could choose to attend the sessions in either English or Arabic:

1. Fostering excellence in academic advising
2. Bridging Academic Advising and Career Success
3. Holistic Advising for Students in Need
4. Becoming an Advising Champion: Skills and Strategies for Success

All 8 sessions (4 in English and 4 in Arabic) were delivered between 15th April 2024 and 11th May 2024.

06

Faculty Peer Observation of Teaching (FPoT)

Faculty are expected to engage in mutually beneficial professional interactions to support their learning and the learning of their peer colleagues to im-

prove teaching. The FPoT program offers a structured opportunity to promote learning about teaching that can result in positive changes in instructional practice for faculty and better and more effective learning for students.

Several years ago, a pilot of the

FPoT program was launched, where the Institute invited teaching excellence award receiving faculty to initially engage in the peer observation of teaching process across the colleges of the University.

The program, developed and launched by the ILHE, focused

on the training and implementation of a 4-stage Faculty Peer Observation Cycle under the direction and in coordination with the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The observation cycle consists of 4 stages:

- **Stage 1:**
  Pre-Observation Conference

- **Stage 2:**
  Classroom Observation (Face-to-Face or Online)

- **Stage 3:**
  Analysis of Data and Presentation Strategy

- **Stage 4:**
  Post-Observation Conference

The Institute is now transitioning to expand the program through structured implementation. A series of workshops have been delivered each semester since the pilot. These workshops have equipped faculty with a clear understanding of program purpose and how to effectively carry meaningful peer observation of teaching and learning. The Institute will continue to advance the engagement of faculty in this endeavor with the goal of fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

The Faculty Peer Observation of Teaching (FPoT) initiative aligns with the strategic goals of the University aimed at enhancing the quality of teaching and ultimately student learning within formal coursework. Workshops will continue to be delivered so that faculty are equipped to observe each other's teaching practices, reflect on the observation process, and gain insight into how teaching and learning can improve.

The program caters to new faculty members with limited teaching experience, offering them the opportunity to be ob-

served by colleagues, thereby facilitating their professional growth and development within our academic community. Along with face-to-face workshop sessions, a Faculty Peer Observation of Teaching portal has been developed within MyUoS. This bilingual (Arabic and English) portal was developed to facilitate the FPoT process, offering features such as observer selection, accessing pertinent documents, and tracking the observation process and its ongoing status.

The Institute will continue to identify faculty oriented to the program through workshop attendance with college deans. The ultimate goal of FPoT is to train increasingly more faculty to serve as observers for a full-scale implementation of the process, leverage the dedicated portal to streamline operations, and ensure a consistent, effective approach to peer observa-

tion.

The Institute endeavors to engage with trained faculty observers by inviting them to share their experiences within a designated forum. The forum will include faculty members who have voluntarily participated in the FPoT initiative to share their experiences with the University academic community. This forum, to be organized yearly by ILHE, will provide a platform for exchanging best practices, experiences, and lessons learned, further strengthening the teaching quality and improved student learning within the University.
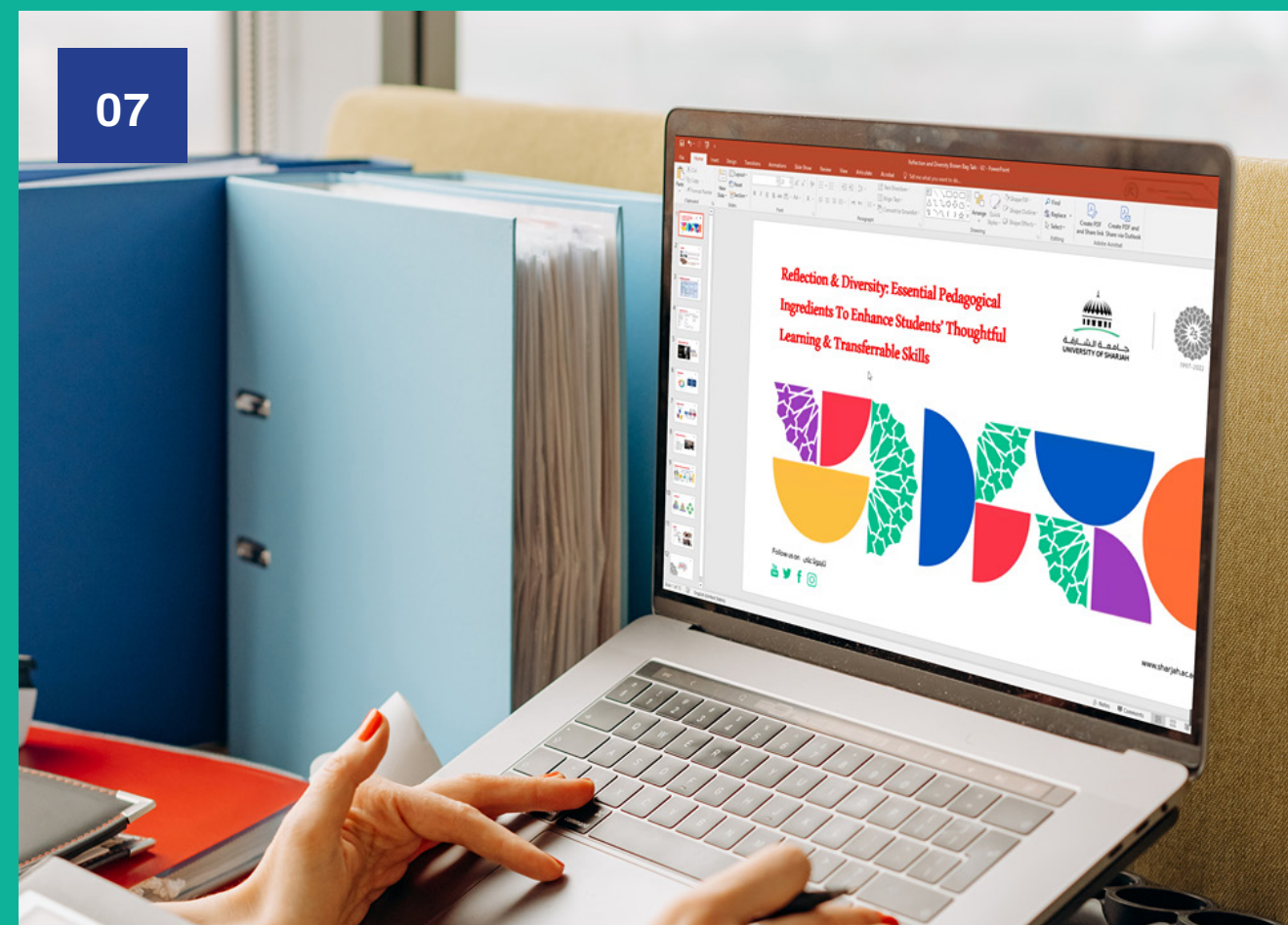
Brown Bag Gathering

The Brown Bag Gathering is an innovative initiative that began in April 2023 to foster communication, information sharing, and reflection on teaching and learning within the University of Sharjah faculty community. These informal, 45-minute online gatherings, typically scheduled over or near the lunch hour – hence the name "Brown Bag" – serve as an open forum where faculty can share essential information about new developments across the University, discuss teaching techniques and interventions, share insights from various perspectives and professional localities (such as assessment design, gamification, use of technology, etc.), promote evidence-based teaching, and evaluate teaching outcomes. Each Brown Bag Gathering is hosted by a key personality within the University

who guides online conversation.

Since its initiation, the Institute has conducted several gatherings focusing on a variety of topics. The inaugural gathering focused on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). This session aimed to collect, collate, debate, and discuss innovative ways to transform teaching practice into publishable research. Other key topics include the Faculty Mentoring Program, which emphasizes the development of supportive mentoring relationships among faculty, and Learning Communities, which foster collaborative and continuous professional development.

The Brown Bag series focuses on addressing unique topics of interest to faculty. The gatherings aim to continue to foster a culture of mutual learning, encouraging a community of practice, and focusing on pedagog-

ical innovation and excellence. Brown Bag sessions provide a sense of connection among faculty across the University, creating a safe space to learn and share ideas.

08

Emirati Future Leadership Initiative (EFLI)

UNLEASHING POTENTIAL & LEADING TOMORROW
NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The inititive aims to develop the next generation of Emirati leaders. This robust program blends intensive leadership camps, international educational tours, and dynamic training sessions to equip Emirati students with essential skills in thought leadership, governance, international relations, and sustainable development. Last year's highlights included an international visit to Malaysia, the graduation of the third cohort, and the launch of the fourth batch of the program.

The Emirati Future Leadership Camp in Malaysia

The Emirati Future Leadership Camp, organized by ILHE in partnership with University Malaya, marked a significant milestone for the third batch of the EFLI. The camp was attended by 15 students from various colleges at the University of Sharjah and chaperon by one of the staff members of ILHE travel to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The 4 days camp was designed to enhance leadership capabilities through a series of hands-on workshops and educational field trips in Malaysia. The curriculum focused on governance, future foresight, international relations, sustainability, and communication. Participants visited universities and government organizations, culminating in the presentation of group projects to a panel of experts, thus blending academic learning with real-world applications.

Participants engaged in meetings with young leaders from University Malaya and enjoyed a tour of Melaka, a UNESCO World Heritage City, which provided opportunities for cultural exchange and exploration.

Focus Areas included: Thought leadership, governance and integrity, policy formulation, communication with the media, foresighting, international relations, government, and sustainable development goals.

The camp included leadership and integrity assessments, values-driven governance sessions, governance, and integrity panel forums, thought leadership training, interactive sessions on societal issues, visits to Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT), Razak School of Government (RSOG), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, workshops on climate emergency and planetary health, discussions on the role of the Malaysian Parliament, and sessions on managing the Malaysian economy.

Presentation by the student reflecting on the finding that they achieve from attending the EFLI program

Graduation Ceremony of the 3rd Batch of EFLI

On 6th March 2024, the ILHE proudly celebrated the graduation of 36 students from the third cohort of the EFLI. The event was graced by H.H. Sheikh Sultan bin Ahmed bin Sultan Al Qasimi, Deputy Ruler of Sharjah and President of the University of Sharjah in the vibrant setting of the Student Forum. This ceremony highlighted the university's unwavering commitment to fostering the next generation of leaders and symbolized a significant milestone in the university's mission to empower students through comprehensive leadership training.

The ceremony featured a compelling presentation by Fatima Al Shamsi and Amna Al Naqbi, who shared lessons from the Future Leaders Camp at the University of Malaya in Malaysia, underscoring the program's immersive and transformative nature. The graduates also showcased five pioneering projects, including the "Sharjah School of Government," the "Exhibition for Future Generations," the "Speed Rescue App," the "Re-Toy" application, and the "Majd" application. These projects demonstrated the cohort's dedication to societal advancement, sustainability, and cultural preservation.

4th Emirati Future Leadership Initiative

The 4th set of the program was launched on 28th May 2024, with about 40 distinguished Emirati students in their penultimate and final year as members of the group. The program is re-designed with the acronym of iLeadership+. With the new framework, 10 interactive sessions will be facilitated while one visit to an entrepreneurial center will be organized. Hopefully, a leadership camp will be conducted outside the country in August 2024, or any other time approved by the University management.

2ⁿᵈ 3M Student Competition

The 2024 UoS 3M Competition, inspired by the University of Queensland, marked its second annual iteration with enhanced participation and innovation. Held on 15th April 2024 at Al Bayruni Hall, the final event saw attendance from faculty, students, and families, highlighting the University's commitment to fostering excellent communication skills and promoting academic research visibility.

A total of 50 students from 12 colleges participated, with nominees for the university-level competition attending a special workshop titled "How to Prepare a Powerful Three-Minute Presentation." The competition featured two categories: Undergraduate and Postgraduate, with four winners selected in each category.

The top winners earned significant cash awards: AED 3000 for first place, AED 2000 for second place, and AED 1000 for third place. Additionally, the audience voted for their preferred speaker, who received a special cash prize of AED 500. The judging panel comprised four faculty members from various colleges, ensuring a diverse and impartial assessment of the presentations.

This year's competition underscored the University of Sharjah's dedication to nurturing a culture of innovation and academic excellence.
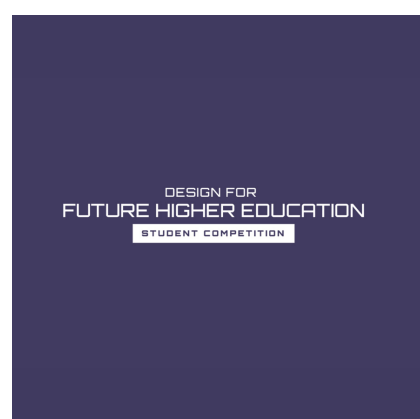
2ⁿᵈ Design for Future Higher Education Student Competition

The 2024 Design for Future Higher Education (D4FHE) competition, organized by the ILHE, successfully promoted innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration among students from various academic backgrounds. This year's competition featured 18 submissions from six colleges, with a total of 58 students participating in the final event held on 25th April 2024 at The Forum Building, Men Campus. Notably, there was a high number of submissions from the College of Pharmacy and the College of Business.

The competition focused on three categories: AI and Education, Inclusive and Sustainability in Education, and Emerging Educational Technology Solutions. Out of the 18 submissions, 2 were individual entries and 16 were group entries. A total of 17 judges, selected from faculty members across various disciplines, ensured a fair and comprehensive evaluation.

In each category, three winners were selected, making a total of nine winners. The first-place winners received AED 3000, the second-place winners received AED 2000, and the third-place winners received AED 1000.

Workshops such as "Turning Ideas into Startups," "Design Thinking," and "Crafting Winning Posters for Success" provided participants with valuable skills and insights, enhancing their project development and presentation capabilities. The competition not only celebrated student achievements and innovative thinking but also played a pivotal role in fostering a culture of academic engagement and practical problem-solving. As it continues to evolve, D4FHE remains a cornerstone of the university's commitment to enhancing the educational experience and preparing students for future academic and professional challenges.

Two students presenting their project/ideas using a research poster during the exhibition day, explaining key details and objectives to attendees.
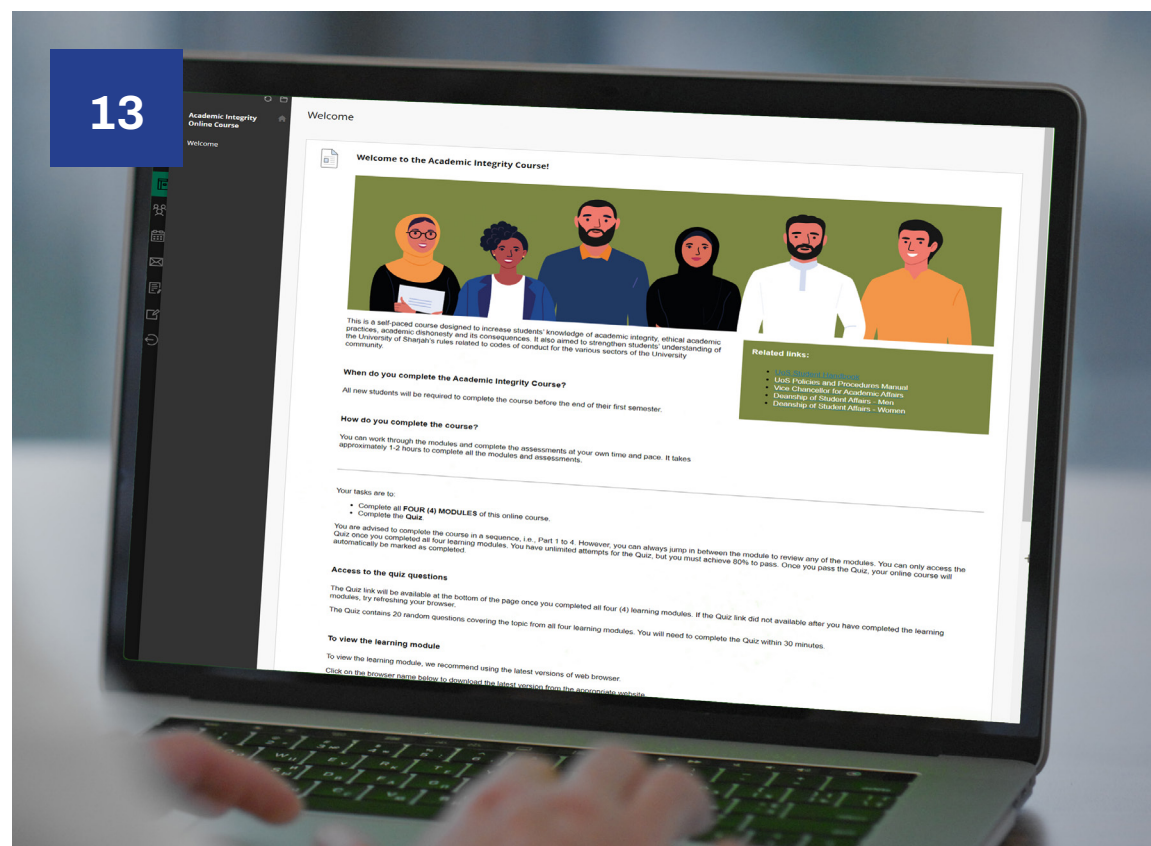
MOOC Development for Remedial Courses

Last year, the University of Sharjah embarked on an exciting initiative to develop Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), beginning with the "Arabic for Non-Arabic Speakers" course. Created by the ILHE in collaboration with the Language Institute, this course is designed to offer comprehensive Arabic language instruction to non-Arabic speakers. The "Arabic for Non-Arabic Speakers" course is now nearing completion.

Building on this success, in collaboration with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and faculty members, the ILHE team is currently designing six additional MOOCs for Remedial Arabic, English, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The design and development of these courses follow a robust framework established by the ILHE team, which includes thorough needs analysis, content creation, interactive multimedia integration, and iterative feedback loops with SMEs and faculty. These courses are progressing at different paces, with significant advancements made across various subjects. This ongoing progress in MOOC development highlights the University of Sharjah's commitment to embracing innovative educational approaches and expanding its reach beyond traditional classroom settings.

Master of Leadership in Higher Education

The Master of Leadership in Higher Education is an excellent program for those seeking leadership and administrative positions such as department chairs, directors, dean or higher positions within institutions of higher education. In the program, students will develop a strong knowledge of leadership and management skills applicable to higher institutions for advancing institutional strategic plans and goals.

The program emphasizes collaboration, inclusive leadership and application of knowledge and skills, and students will be encouraged to apply their skills to strengthen their institutions. The program will adopt a blended learning approach where course deliveries are done using a hybrid of pedagogical approaches, including face-to-face and online strategies.

Currently, the program has about 24 students, out of which 4 or 5 are likely to graduate during the summer period in 2024. Hopefully, between 6 and 10 new students would join the program in the Fall semester, 2024/2025.

In strengthening the human resources and capital in the program, Dr. Mehmet Bellibas was recruited in the Spring semester of 2023/2024 academic session. He has since been teaching and supporting students in the program.

Arabic Version Anti Verbal Bullying and Academic Integrity Course

This year, ILHE successfully translated both the Academic Integrity and Anti-Verbal Bullying courses into Arabic to enhance accessibility and inclusivity. The Anti-Verbal Bullying course is ready for deployment, while the Academic Integrity course has completed its translation, design, and development stages and is currently under review and testing.

The Academic Integrity course has gained significant support from the University through the Office of the Chancellor, as highlighted in a May 2024 circular emphasizing it as a key measure to confront cheating. This course will be mandatory for all freshmen, providing essential knowledge and understanding of ethical academic practices.

New & Upcoming Programs & Initiatives

Smart & Effective Learning – University Elective Course

This course provides students with opportunities to develop and enhance their knowledge for effective learning within the University context. Through the course, students will also be exposed to strategies for building trust and managing relationships with others within the University, their community, and professional settings. Besides, students will be introduced to all the University resources and guided on how to use the resources to foster positive learning and campus experiences. The resources include the library, sport center, advising, and counseling services to promote their mental health and reduce social issues such as bullying and academic dishonesty. Using innovative learning methodologies, students will engage in collaborative activities with colleagues in class and online to meaningfully strengthen their transferable skills to be successful as students and professionals engaging in meaningful community development projects. The strategies providing students with authentic learning experiences will include active, research and report writing, presentation, flipped, hybrid-flexible, place-based, and blended learning.

The course is approved and assigned a code in the College of Public Policy. Hopefully, it will be floated in the Fall semester, 2024/2025 academic session. The course will be particularly beneficial to new students to higher education or university of Sharjah, and those on the verge of graduating, as it also explores strategies for sustainable employability.

Accelerating Digital Transformation in Teaching and Learning

The ILHE is honored to be part of a special grant awarded by the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation (AGF) to the University of Sharjah to accelerate digital transformation in teaching and learning. This initiative, first started in April 2023, aims to enhance professional development for academic staff, improve IT and production infrastructure, and integrate classroom technology. The ILHE focus will be in providing support on faculty professional training, creating hybrid education models, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility in education. This will be done through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, the Faculty Mentoring Program, and Learning Communities.

Teaching & Learning Champions Initiative

The initiative is based on the university's need to foster the growth path in the teaching and learning strand of its strategic goals. It is also grounded in the belief that a participatory approach to community development endeavors works better than a change agent methodology. So, providing a comprehensive training and working with the college champions, we hope to collaboratively engage in a professional learning journey to chat new and practical approaches to strengthen our students' learning experiences.

ILHE Certificates of Recognition

At the end of the academic year, and in recognition of the efforts of participants who have demonstrated high level of commitment and show their willingness to develop themselves, we will give them certifications if they have completed the required workshops of the track and passed the "Reflection Paper" requirement that aims to reflect all gained knowledge and skills and what is the impact of the workshops on the performance.

Track Number	Title of the Certification	The Required Completed Workshops
Track 1	Hyflex Teaching and Learning Model	• How to plan for hybrid teaching and learning • Hybrid teaching strategies • Designing hybrid learning experience • Best practices for implementing hybrid teaching approach • Designing exemplary hybrid learning environments • Alternatives to traditional testing
Track 2	Learning Experience Design	• Organizing and presenting course materials • Designing models for interactive learning • The art of generating ideas for learning activities • Instructional systems design • Designing successful e-learning courses • Accelerated learning methods
Track 3	Teaching Methodologies	• Accelerated learning methods • Gamification without using technology • Delivering complex concepts in a fun way • The 4 learning styles: SAVI model and students' learning • Competency-based learning • Big picture analysis method • The art of story telling
Track 4	Digital Tools in Teaching and Learning	• Get interactive: practical teaching with technology • Creating interactive lessons using Nearpod • Creating a dynamic virtual environment using mural • Mind mapping for teaching • Using AI in teaching • Cutting-edge technologies in education: VR • Accelerated learning methods
Track 5	Leadership	• Paving the Path for Emerging Leaders • Motivation and Empowerment in Workplace • Strategic Thinking and Planning • Change Management • Competency-Based Interviews • Creating a Positive and Healthy Work Environment

Relocation/New Office M3

The "Renovation of ILHE Space for Conducive Faculty Engagements" initiative is in the planning stages. This initiative is rooted in our commitment to create an environment that fosters faculty growth, learning, and innovation, and the recognition that physical space plays a crucial role in achieving these goals.

We are planning a comprehensive renovation of our existing space, improving the layout for enhanced functionality, integrating cutting-edge technology, and developing areas that facilitate collaboration and engagement among faculty members. The renovations are being carefully designed based on an understanding of our faculty's needs.

Once implemented, we are confident that the improved space will stimulate more effective engagements, contributing to our mission of advancing teaching and learning excellence at the University of Sharjah. The completion of this renovation is projected by the end of the 2024 academic year.

We are excited about this future project and look forward to sharing updates about the planning and eventual progress of the renovation. We anticipate the newly renovated space will significantly enhance the professional development journey of our faculty members