

Issues in Implementing Developmental Education in a University Context

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Abstract

Implementing a coherent, effective and efficient developmental education program in an existing university context is fraught with difficulties. Issues abound concerning attitudes of relative value, misconceptions of teaching and learning, and resistance to development and change. To overcome such issues institutions need to reevaluate their basic vision of undergraduate education, to focus on their core educational values and commit to the development of an open atmosphere of cooperation and collaboration. Universities normally have the necessary tools in place to achieve best practices in undergraduate education. What is often missing is the institutional commitment to excellence. Universities should aspire to be models of educational leadership and best practice.

Introduction

A crucial challenge faced by academic development faculty is the chronic misperception among administration, faculty and students of the role and purpose of academic development programs in their own institutions. Academic development faculty frequently encounter the denigration and dismissal of the quality and validity of the courses they teach. This is due in part to the lower status sometimes accorded by university administration to academic development programs, communicated through lower salaries, higher teaching load, and the fewer credits allotted to academic development courses. It is also due to misconceptions of academic development in general. These misperceptions arise from lack of communication, the resulting lack of knowledge, a lack of interest in pedagogy, and entrenched hierarchies within the institution, all of which lead to a reduction in the ability of academic development programs to fulfill their goals and objectives.

Consequently, the relationship between faculty members in developmental education programs and faculty in other departments is often tenuous. These relationships are often predicated by unfortunate attitudes towards hierarchies of importance. Many university employees hold beliefs such as: hard science is more credible than soft science; the school core is critical while university core is marginal; a terminal degree is stronger (in all aspects) than a non-terminal degree; business and law schools should be entities in their own right and independent from the main university structures; and 'service departments' are maintained only at the sufferance of the school core concerns.

It is therefore common for faculty members to feel that some schools, programs or courses are more important than others. In this scenario, the professions of Engineering, Medicine and Law have an advantage over Business and the Humanities and Social Sciences. Hierarchies and biases also exist within schools: International Relations might be seen as the most important track in Humanities and Social Sciences, followed by Human Resources and finally Communications. By enforcing these hierarchies, faculty members directly contribute to the dilution of the quality of education offered across the institution. At their worst, these attitudes push an international standard university towards a vocational and technical role, responding to the needs and values of the marketplace rather than to long established measures of educational value.

Yet these positions and more echo through the tertiary education systems of the world. The underlying issues behind these beliefs are complex and interdisciplinary. Some are fundamental to the nature of the institution itself, and are related to factors such as

collegiality, cooperation and cross-discipline interaction. Some are fundamental to the structure of the developmental education system within the organization, e.g., prerequisite acquisition models, concurrent acquisition models, centralized models and decentralized models. Such hierarchies and attitudes are often a response to very real financial, educational and cultural realities. Yet within the culture of the university, they tear at unity and demean the educational process, leaving administration frustrated, faculty angry and students confused regarding the value of their programs and disciplines.

For developmental education, the effects of these attitudes are compounded by the common perception that such courses are remedial and, by definition, not university level. These attitudes are often accepted tacitly through an institutional lack of interest in pedagogy, an interest that is inherent to developmental educators. Such attitudes and misperceptions have direct negative consequences. For example, a faculty member who does not understand or value academic development might advise their students to rush through their academic development courses, or tell them that they are unimportant, a waste of time, or a distraction from “real” coursework. As a result, the student attends their required academic development courses with the permission of a higher-status faculty member to be disrespectful or disinterested. Then, when faced with work in their major, the student fails, having learned little about the realities of tertiary level education.

This look at developmental education will attempt to address common attitudes and misperceptions and make recommendations as to how they might be resolved. The comments and thinking discussed below have all been expressed to faculty members in the Center for Academic Development at Al Akhawayn University. The anecdotal evidence provided is supported by external data and research where possible. The goal is to shed light on the contradictory attitudes towards developmental education in the minds of administration, faculty and students. The paper begins by addressing the causes underlying the lack of understanding among faculty of the role of developmental education, continues by explaining some of the consequences for the university as a whole, and ends with recommendations about how to address this serious obstacle to CAD’s full achievement of its mandate.

These issues, crucial to the success or failure of developmental education, cannot be resolved in isolation. Addressing them will require considerable vision at the university, departmental, and school levels, as well as within the faculty and student body. A resolution to issues raised here would both require and enable an alternate vision of best practice in teaching and learning for an educational institution.

Issues and Rationalizations

Faculty members in content courses are often heard lamenting the academic capabilities of their charges. They dream of perfectly formed students: fresh faced, eager, willing and able to leap to the demands of the course and its content. They dream of well-prepared students, asking thoughtful to-the-point questions; leading brilliant seminars; delivering concise oral presentations; and submitting letter perfect manuscripts fully cited and referenced. This is a dream. Even in the United States, a country with a highly respected high school system, many students enter college with gaps in their knowledge, skills and abilities. Boylan, Bonham, and White (1999) cite National Center for Education statistics that report nearly one third of all new students in American universities are placed in one or more remedial courses. They further point out that this has been the case for hundreds of years. This is not a new issue, yet when the unpleasant reality strikes, unprepared faculty cast about for reasons, explanations and rationalizations.

The Student is the Problem

When teaching difficulties arise, often the first rationalization chosen by faculty revolves around student ability. This has a resulting effect on course content, as faculty begin to think they cannot possibly complete the course as planned. One hears in the hallways the plaintive cries of “These students are not at university standard.” “I must reduce my course demands.” “These students are only capable of high school level work”.

Such conclusions can and have led to decisions to cut some of the planned course content and requirements, a powerful, and undesired, effect. In essence, the standards of the university are lowered when the skills and abilities of the university graduates are downgraded, and the reputation of the university as a whole is damaged. This in turn impacts the developmental education program, since when student requirements are lowered there is a concurrent feeling that the skills learned in the CAD are unnecessary. Students feel that they do not need developmental education courses as they are not required to use the skills learned in their core academic program.

Faculty justify the lessened standards with comments such as: “Students cannot read university level materials so I do not ask them to;” “Students cannot cite source materials so I don’t require them to;” or “My students tell me that they cannot use the library databases.” When students express difficulty, frustrated faculty, especially those who lack pedagogical and curricular training, may abandon ambitious plans in favor of what is easier to accomplish. This is an exercise in self-defeat, one that allows the weakest students to dictate university

ambitions. If students are not required to perform to high standards and expectations then they will not do so.

Stay the Course

A second common rationalization accepts that there is a problem but counters with the idea that the best response is to soldier on and ignore it. The rationalization seems to be that “the course demands that I cover this amount of content and come hell or high water I am going to cover it. If I have to speed up the delivery of content so be it”. Yet delivering course content does not necessarily lead to the learning of that content. A faculty member can deliver any amount of content, “but the true measure of teaching effectiveness is the quality of student learning” (Felder, 2004, p.1). Students will only learn what is salient to them: what they are capable of learning and what they are motivated to learn. Felder argues “...that nobody ever learned anything nontrivial by having someone else tell it to them. For students to learn in a meaningful manner, they must be actively engaged in the learning process” (2004, p1).

The delivery of content regardless of uptake also tends to have a knock-on effect. This rationalization tends to lead to curved grades and lower grade standards, as faculty encounter lower and lower capability in response to this less attentive approach to the classroom.

Blame Somebody Else

A third rationalization for low student performance is the position that it is ‘not my fault’. Yet, if there is a discernable problem which is not one’s own fault, it then follows that it must be someone else’s fault. There are normally a wide variety of scapegoats at hand. The usual suspects include the university administration, the Language Center, the developmental education faculty and faculty teaching lower level or pre-requisite courses. For example, one common explanation for less than ideal students is that the university administration has lowered intake standards to the point that students selected are not ready for tertiary level education. This argument is often embellished with the premise that the university has increased enrolment for the base purpose of making money. Another useful culprit is the Language Center, whose courses never seem to develop students’ linguistic proficiency to the levels required by content teachers. Finally, there is the academic development program to be blamed for rarely producing the ideal: analytical researchers with a strong interest in learning.

It must be clearly understood that learning is the fundamental reason for the existence of the university. It is a core institutional issue and it is not a one-off event to be dealt with only by developmental education courses. Skills and abilities must be constructed and reinforced across the institution or they will disappear. Learning must be everyone's concern if it is to be effective. We can only blame ourselves if our institution does not work at its core.

Somebody Else's Problem

A fourth rationalization is that it is "not my responsibility". This rationalization also accepts that there are substantial weaknesses within the student population but prefers to believe that the responsibility for resolving those issues lies elsewhere. This rationalization would hold the position that "According to my contract I was hired to teach accounting, not spelling or grammar or punctuation. It is the Language Center's responsibility to teach those things". This is not the most sensible approach to solving a ubiquitous problem. Higbee, Arendale, Lundell (2005) argue that:

In embedded, infused, or mainstreamed developmental education models, best practices are directly integrated by the primary course instructor into classroom learning experiences. The course curriculum and the classroom environment are transformed through simultaneous instruction in both academic content and learning strategies. This seamless integration provides enriched learning experiences for all students and eliminates the need for prerequisite or adjunct courses, thereby saving time and money for both students and the institution (p. 11).

In other words, it is sensible for developmental education to be part and parcel of the ethos of the institution. It is everyone's collective problem and responsibility to produce the best possible graduates. Expecting students to perform at a uniformly high standard, without guidance in the rules and practices of each discipline and classroom, is unrealistic. Faculty must be prepared to use their classroom as a learning environment, rather than expecting such issues to be addressed elsewhere.

This Student Is Broken

"This student is broken. Please fix it immediately" is a particularly frustrating issue closely aligned to 'somebody else's problem'. Schools are willing to deliver program content with little understanding of the learning capacity of the students and little vision as to the

broader needs of both the institution and student. Schools that would never dream of teaching Advanced Principles of Engineering before Calculus will deliver content to students without thought of the skills necessary to learn said content. When the student falters, then comes the inevitable call to the developmental education faculty: “These students have failed their senior capstones”; “These students have failed their exit exams”; “These students have failed their exit interviews”; “These students cannot write a proper C.V. and cover letter”; “These grad students have serious faults in logic, argumentation, organization, language, and formatting”. “Please fix them immediately”. All of these calls have been made of the developmental education faculty at AUI.

This is a damning indictment of curriculum design as well as a demonstration of a tenuous understanding of pedagogy and teaching practice. The belief that students can be ‘fixed’ at the last minute is both wishful thinking and a deflection of responsibility. It is not fair to students who have spent four years in a program when they are informed that they are sub-standard at the final hurdle. It is not fair to then call upon developmental education faculty, who know that learning is not a software patch that can be quickly cobbled together and installed. Developmental education faculty understand that learning skills and abilities takes considerable time and effort. The inescapable conclusion is that something is seriously wrong with the institution that must be repaired. It is not the student that is broken, but a system that fails to identify and support learning difficulties throughout its programs.

Resistance to Solutions

The Status Quo is King

The CAD began running courses in 2000 some five years after the inception of the institution. It was conceived as the solution to set perceived weaknesses in the student population and in graduates from the institution. Feedback on AUI graduates highlighted problems with academic, social and behavioral issues. Since those issues were not being addressed in the AUI curriculum it was believed that an academic development program would be of value. The CAD faculty took the position that its macro level mission and goals were to prepare students capable of working at a university level and thus to contribute to the success of the university in terms of producing students meeting a well rounded student profile.

It is a fairly simple academic exercise to catalogue some of the entry requirements of a tertiary level institution. Many of these are commonly known and accepted, e.g., TOFEL 550+ or IELTS 6.0+ or SAT 1400. Others are less clearly defined such as university level

academic writing (10 pages, 5,000 words, fully cited and referenced?); critical reading (10-50 pages university level material per week per course?); critical thinking; ethics; leadership and so on. CAD set out to build a program that met university needs as described in a survey of faculty (See Burgess and Owens, 2002). It also worked to devise a program that would provide students with university level academic skills and abilities, technical skills and abilities, social and ethical skills and abilities as well as critical thinking skills and abilities (see also Appendix A).

The implementation of the program led to friction in several areas, however. The Language Center challenged the CAD courses with comments such as: “How can you teach students to write an academic paper when we are teaching the same students to write sentences and paragraphs”? From Composition faculty, the complaints included: “You cannot include writing in your courses. Teaching writing is our job. You teach study skills”. From the Deans came resentment that the CAD program was adding credits they considered of little value to the university core curriculum; credits that, in their minds, would be better used for more school core courses. A general issue raised was that the CAD standards were too high for a 2 credit course. The implication was that the program should be dumbed down so as not to threaten faculty teaching less demanding courses. The comment made was “Your course is only two credits so it should not be more demanding than the Composition courses”.

Interestingly enough, the argument never came that CAD should not teach reading at a text level since the Language Center was teaching reading at the sentence and paragraph level. Nor did the Composition teachers find fault with the CAD employing reading in the classroom, although one teacher complained that the reading texts used in a CAD course were too hard. That there should be pressure to reduce academic standards rather than raise them may be understandable, but it is certainly not acceptable in a university aspiring to excellence and identity. Students should be challenged intellectually and taught how to meet the challenge, and the skills they require should not be owned or guarded by certain departments.

For many years, the CAD at Al Akhawayn University asked senior administration for time to meet with both administration and faculty to explain the academic development program. The CAD faculty felt that an open discussion of academic development courses, methodologies, services and exit standards would be of intrinsic interest to the faculty. It was believed that they could then calibrate their own programs, courses and teaching methodologies to reinforce what has been taught and learned in the CAD across the AUI curriculum. The response was that this would not be looked upon favorably as “Service

departments cannot be seen to be ‘telling professors what to do in their courses’ and “Service departments do not have a role in academic decisions. Such decisions are best made at a school level.”

Is the best approach to teaching and learning to compartmentalize components of the educational experience and stipulate responsibility for each component? Is it not better to take an integrated approach and work together to provide multiple opportunities for learning to take place? This is an important set of questions, as academic development programs were developed as a solution to a real set of problems, not as problems in search of a solution. Deeply rooted issues of curricular integration are often not properly addressed in the design and implementation of the curriculum as a whole. These issues should be ideally be addressed at the inception of an academic development program and through a spirit of collaboration and cooperation. Unfortunately, all too many academic development programs develop organically as responses to student need, and are then viewed as tangential and peripheral to the main university mission.

I Am Fully Developed

Earning a post-graduate degree in any field, and then attaining a faculty position in an institute of higher education is a tremendous achievement. Faculty are the backbone of the undergraduate education system. Yet attaining a faculty position, in and of itself, does not insure that new faculty members are well prepared for the classroom. Angelo (1993) asks:

How much trust would you place in an engineer who admitted to having no knowledge of thermodynamics or other basic principles of physics, and who thought, in fact, that those physical laws didn't apply to his work? How much confidence would you have in a physician with no understanding of how bacteria and viruses cause infection, one who believed that biochemistry was irrelevant to her practice? If by some terrible mistake you were arrested and put on trial, would you hire a lawyer who thought that keeping up with the research on jury selection, effective defense strategies, and sentencing patterns was a waste of time? (p.1)

Yet this is what happens in the typical university classroom. Administration and students expect faculty members to be effective teachers but often they have had little or no prior training in effective teaching and learning. This reflects a trenchant problem in university education. Angelo argues that “Unless you're in a field such as cognitive science or

educational psychology, chances are slim that your graduate education included any survey of the research on how humans learn” (1993, p.1).

This is true of teaching methodology as well. Brent, Felder and Rajala (2006, p.1) point out that “The default preparation for a faculty career is none at all.” Brent and Felder (2000) state:

College teaching may be the only skilled profession that does not routinely provide training to its novice practitioners. New faculty members at most universities have traditionally had to learn by themselves how to plan research projects, identify and cultivate funding sources, write proposals and get them funded, attract and supervise graduate students, and present their research results in an effective manner. They have also had to teach themselves how to devise stimulating lectures and rigorous but fair assignments and tests, how to motivate students to want to learn and how to make them active participants in the learning process, and how to help them develop critical problem-solving, communication, and teamwork skills (p.1)

Boice (as cited in Brent and Felder, 2000, p.1) found that most new faculty:

- give writing and research the highest verbal priority while spending relatively little time on them and having relatively little to show for the time they spend;
- equate good teaching with correct content and use lecturing as the exclusive mode of instruction;
- equate improving their teaching with improving their lecture notes;
- spend up to 27 hours a week preparing for classes, put so much material into their lectures that they must rush to cover it all, and leave little time for interaction and discussion with students;
- teach defensively to avoid student complaints but get low teaching evaluations anyway;
- express a sense of isolation from their colleagues.

The result, according to Boice, is that “.....most new professors take between four and five years to bring their research productivity and teaching effectiveness to a level that meets institutional standards” (as cited in Brent and Felder, 2000, p.1). Brent, Felder, Rajala, Gilligan and Lee (2001, p. 1) argue that “Learning all these things by trial and error usually

takes years. Some new faculty members eventually learn them; others never do and either fail to earn tenure or spend their careers as unproductive researchers and/or ineffective teachers”.

The point is that while “Mastery of one's discipline may be *necessary* for effective college teaching, but it surely isn't *sufficient*” (Angelo, 1993 p.1). Yet despite this gap in training and preparation for the teaching and learning interface, faculty often do not make use of developmental education programs provided to improve the classroom experience. Most universities provide a wide range of professional development support to faculty. However faculty development seminars often go unattended by those who need it the most. Brent, Felder and Rajala (2006) make this point with regard to teaching and learning in schools of engineering:

Many universities...have instructional development programs, but they are usually designed and facilitated by individuals with backgrounds outside of engineering and science who have very little credibility with engineering faculty members. Typically, few engineering faculty members participate in those programs, and those who do participate tend to be dismissive of the ideas being presented (p.2).

If teaching and learning excellence is seen as a core issue in the vision of an institution, there is a need to bring all faculty onboard. There needs to be an institutional commitment to improving the learning experiences of its clients.

A Vision for Change

The points above were made in light of a vision for the future of developmental education in undergraduate education. The primary concern of undergraduate education must be student learning. The promotion of learning is why the institution exists, and why students come to the institution. Everything the university engages in should be directed at developing the learning environment, from allocation of resources to faculty review. Faculty research and development should be aimed at providing greater opportunities for student learning, as the business of teaching is meaningless without learning. A university is not fulfilling its contract with its clients if its graduates do not meet clearly understood standards of excellence. Everything else is peripheral in undergraduate education.

An Institutional Commitment to Teaching and Learning

The focus of attention in universities worldwide has strayed from the core objective of producing exemplary graduates with a solid general education. Some have moved towards

the goal of producing technicians, fodder for the requirements of the workplace. Others have emphasized research and procurement of external funding as the pinnacle of the educational domain. Publish or perish is the byword. A faculty or staff member's value to the institution is measured mainly by fundraising abilities. Yet the pendulum just may be turning. Bok (as cited in 'A Compact to Enhance Teaching and Learning at Harvard') writes "Most successful organizations today are trying hard to become effective 'learning organizations' that engage in an ongoing process of improvement by constantly evaluating their performance, identifying problems, trying various remedies, measuring their success, discarding those that do not work, and incorporating those that do (p.11).

Inspired by Bok, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University charged a task force to "consider what the Faculty of Arts and Sciences does- and what it can do better – to support and reward a commitment to the steady improvement of teaching" (A Compact to Enhance Teaching and Learning at Harvard, p.9). The taskforce reports two areas of extreme concern. One is that faculty feel that teaching excellence is not valued. Comments may be made in passing as to the importance of teaching but what really matters in hiring and promotion is "...publications and grant records" (A Compact to Enhance Teaching and Learning at Harvard, p.8). Secondly, while the university ethos as a whole is built upon the notion of openness and sharing, the classroom is often a fortress: closed, dark and dusty. To overcome these issues the taskforce proposes five goals:

1. Foster stronger collegial engagement and responsibility for effective teaching and learning
2. Support pedagogical creativity and remove impediments to experimentation
3. Regularly account for and assess all important aspects of teaching, advising and efforts at pedagogical improvement
4. Reward good teaching and contributions to pedagogical improvement at all career levels
5. Make the enhanced ... commitment to excellent teaching and enrichment of students visible within and beyond [the institution]

What the School of Arts and Sciences at Harvard is attempting is not unique. If student learning is accepted as the core of tertiary level education then it would seem logical to invest in faculty development in teaching methods and models. Scott, Dixon, and Dixon

(2006) believe institutions “...must prioritise and value academics’ studies for teaching qualifications as one of the keys to informed practice” (p. 10).

An Institutional Commitment to Developmental Education

There is a convincing body of evidence demonstrating that developmental education is both necessary and effective. Developmental education has been active for over 150 years in the American context. Nearly every tertiary level institution in the United States runs some form of developmental education program. Thousands of developmental education programs exist, employing thousands of faculty and serving millions of students. There is a clear need for developmental education as a substantial proportion of new university entrants have measurable gaps in knowledge, skills and abilities. Developmental education programs are successful, with measurable results in terms of grades achieved and persistence rates. Developmental Education programs are cost effective financially. Studies in American institutions have shown that student attrition costs an institution approximately \$8,500 per student and a five percent reduction in attrition could save as much as 260,000.00 dollars per year (Boise State University, 2005; Old Dominion University Board of Visitors Executive Committee, 1998); Phipps, 1998). A well run developmental education program has a positive effect on student attrition rates and can also have a substantial impact on the reduction student and faculty angst.

Boylan, Bonham, and White (1999) argue that:

Developmental programs are most effective on campuses where there is an institution-wide commitment to the success of underprepared students. Such a commitment helps students, faculty, and staff understand the importance of developmental education activities and makes it more likely that all those who work with developmental students will be following the same agenda and working toward the same goals and objectives (p. 4).

The resistance to discussion and dialogue is a tremendous disappointment to academic development faculty. This embodies one of the single most grievous failings of academic development programs and tertiary education as a whole. The underlying reason for this resistance is linked with strongly held beliefs about the very nature of undergraduate education. Braxton, Olsen and Simmons (1998, p.301) point out that there are strong distinctions in fields that can be characterized as high and low paradigmatic development:

Hard paradigmatic fields display higher levels of agreement on course content and degree requirements than do their low field counterparts (Lodahl and Gordon, 1972). However, low paradigmatic discipline faculty tend to value student character development, emphasize the development of critical thinking skills (analysis and synthesis), use discursive or student-centered teaching practices, and favor the use of program review and student assessment to improve teaching and learning more than do their counterparts in disciplines exhibiting high paradigmatic development (Braxton, 1995; Braxton and Hargens, 1996)

They argue that “Biology, Chemistry and Physics are examples of disciplines high in paradigmatic development, whereas history, psychology and sociology are disciplines showing low paradigmatic development” (Braxton, Olsen and Simmons, 1998, p.301). The amount of effort needed to alter states of paradigmatic development may be high. Yet if an institution sincerely wants to improve learning outcomes the effort must be made. One way to begin is through the recognition and exploitation of the expertise of developmental education faculty within the institution.

An Institutional Commitment to Cooperation and Collaboration

Institutional support for tenuous hierarchies of importance, the jealous guarding of the status quo, and the protection of knowledge and information in narrowly defined fields of expertise is a pathway to failure. Faculty need to feel that they are valued, that their teaching is important and that their research is respected, not only within the paradigms and epistemologies of their respective fields but across the institution. An institutional vision that explicitly values and supports teaching and learning and is inclusive of the whole institution can lead to a harmonious workplace. There are tremendous benefits to be reaped from the development of an institutional ethos of cooperation and collaboration. This commitment must come from the higher levels of the administration, in order to convince faculty and students that dialogue is in their best interest.

At AUI, efforts to begin this dialogue have not met with an equal response. Though CAD runs faculty development workshops on pedagogical and classroom issues, attendance at some workshops has been as low as 3 persons. Although CAD has attempted to inform faculty and administration on its goals and program, studies and papers go unread. The CAD is caught in a catch-22 – unable to resolve the situation of its low status through conversation,

because other departments view the CAD as unworthy of conducting a dialogue with – that can only be escaped through the intervention of university leadership. Without such support, the university will continue to struggle with issues of misperception and miscommunication that are divisive, counterproductive, and dispiriting to its entire faculty.

Conclusion

Clearly, improvement of professional practice has a positive effect on best practice, while inertia, traditional values and inequitable reward systems have a negative impact. Chickering, (as cited in Braxton, Olsen and Simmons, 1998, p. 300) believes “...that an organizational culture that values continued improvement in the professional practice of its faculty, inertia, traditional values concerning undergraduate education, and institutional structures and rewards affect faculty performance of the seven principles of good practice in undergraduate education”. Al Akhawayn University has an opportunity to be the leading Moroccan institution in emphasizing the fundamental importance of professional best practice in the provision of its undergraduate education. Strong leadership is required to overcome inertia, traditional values concerning undergraduate education and institutional structures that do not reward faculty excellence.

It is possible for Al Akhawayn University to succeed in this endeavor as many of the tools necessary for success are already in place. AUI has a well established and pedagogically sound academic development program in the CAD. It has a university wide student and faculty orientation program. It has the beginnings of mentoring systems in place in the School of Business and CAD. It has faculty development workshops currently running throughout the academic year.

Yet the university must address entrenched negative attitudes towards teaching, learning for its own sake, and developmental education. Faculty members must be encouraged to act as leaders, both in the classroom and with their colleagues, regarding teaching practice, student attitudes, and continuous learning support. Additionally, dialogue must be encouraged, in the form of workshops, meetings, and conversations about the role of academic development and pedagogy for the entire university. Negative perceptions about the capability of students, and resistance to taking on the responsibility for “fixing” them, must be counteracted. Faculty must be encouraged to tackle teaching difficulties with creativity and greater engagement, rather than with the series of negative responses outlined above.

In order to overcome these entrenched and complex difficulties, the university requires an institutional commitment to provide the best possible learning experience for students and faculty. The President, Vice-presidents, Deans and Directors need to express a coherent educational vision, clearly articulated in writing to the entire community, and to support that vision with the resources necessary to make it real. Faculty need to know that their pedagogical efforts are valued in terms of awards, academic rank promotion and salary promotion. They need to be offered the tools – pedagogical, technological, and emotional – with which to change an institutional culture that devalues their work.

With a sound vision of teaching and learning, and a pedagogically friendly infrastructure supporting teaching and learning excellence, faculty can aspire to the highest standards. Parents can rest assured that their investment in their children's future is grounded in best practice in undergraduate education. Students can enter the institution confident that they will receive the highest international standard undergraduate education possible, at an institution where excellence is fact the substance of its identity.

By supporting developmental education, a commitment to teaching and the broader precepts of education – through dialogue, instruction, and strong guidance - the university leadership will have truly laid the foundation for a university of the future.

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Appendix A: Skills Covered in CAD courses

	1203	1201	1205	1202	1204
Reading Skills					
Note-taking		Introduced		Reinforced	Required
Critical Reading Questions	Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Required
Vocabulary	Introduced	Required		Required	
Analysis		Introduced	Reinforced	Required	Required
Evaluation	Introduced	Introduced	Reinforced	Required	Required
Synthesis		Introduced		Required	Reinforced
Speaking Skills					
Seminar Skills		(moderating discussions)		Introduced	Reinforced
Citing outside sources in oral presentation					Introduced
Adjusting delivery to audience			Introduced	Reinforced	Required
Perception checking			Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced
Writing Skills					
Thesis statement	Referred to	Introduced		Reinforced	Required
Peer-review		Introduced			Required
Outline		Introduced		Reinforced	
Multiple drafts		Introduced		Required	Required
Paraphrasing		Introduced		Required	Required
Academic Report Writing format	Introduced	Required		Required	Required
Citation & references	Introduced	Reinforced		Required	Required
Non-text Data	Introduced			Required	
Library research		Introduced		Reinforced	Required
Listening Skills					
Note-taking		Introduced	Required	Required	Required
Active listening	Introduced	Reinforced	Practiced	Reinforced	Reinforced
Oral Skills					
Question/Answer	Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced
Oral Presentation		Introduced	Required		Required
Seminar Presentation				Introduced	
Discussion		Introduced	Reinforced		
Debate					
Critical Thinking					
Analysis	Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Required	Required
Argumentation		Introduced		Required	Required
Logic		Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced
Using fact to support contention		Introduced	Reinforced	Required	Required
Evaluation	Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Required	Required
Synthesis		Introduced		Reinforced	Required
Note-taking	Introduced	Required		Required	
Test Taking Skills					
Short Answer	Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	
Long Answer	Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	
Multiple Choice		Introduced			
Matching				Introduced	
Time Management	Introduced	Reinforced		Reinforced	Required
Planning	Introduced	Reinforced		Reinforced	
Self-Development					
Time management	Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced
Self direction		Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Required
Test-taking strategies	Introduced	Re-introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	
Reflective process		Introduced	Reinforced		Required
Team work processes	Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Required	Required
Ethics	Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Required	Required
Vocabulary Skills					
Vocabulary Development	Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced