



ISLAMIC ONLINE UNIVERSITY

INSIGHTS

MAGAZINE

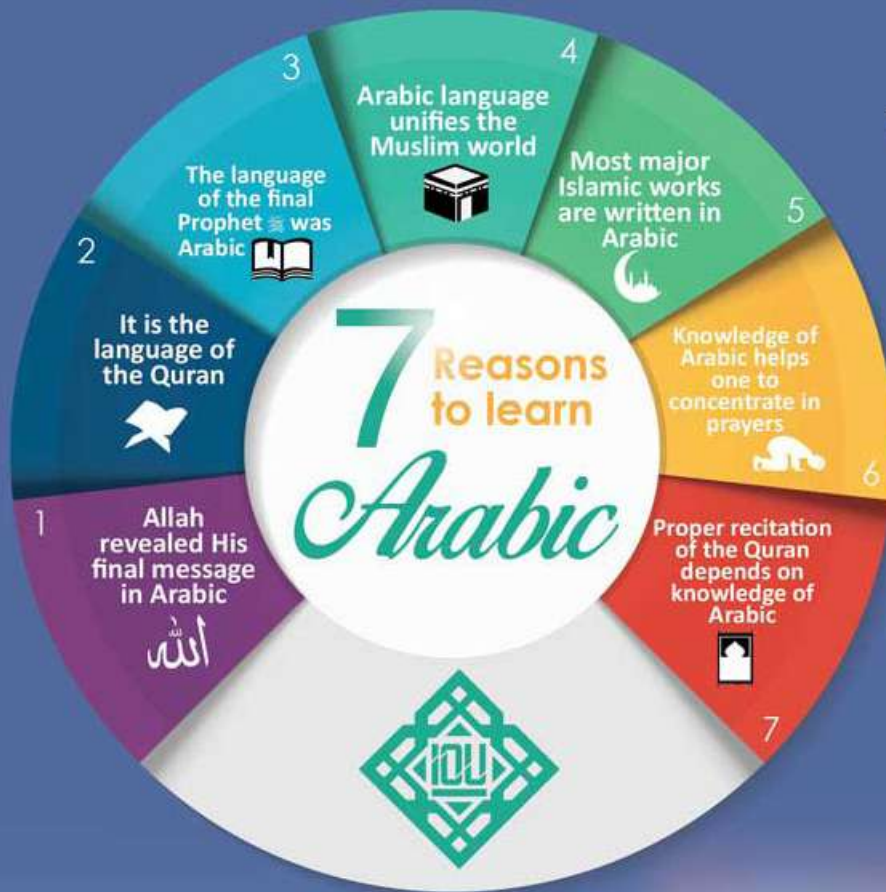
SUMMARY OF
THE IOU'S
AQEEDAH
COURSE

THE
SECURITY
CHECK

THE CAUSES OF
DEVIATION
IN AQEEDAH

ACCREDITATION
EFFORTS IN
SIERRA LEONE

LEAVING
THE NEST:
FAREWELL
TO IOU
GRADUATES



YOU WANT TO LEARN:

The fundamentals of Quranic Arabic and its grammar

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Major nominal grammatical constructions in Arabic

Morphology

Grammar rules and grammatical analysis

Al-Kalam

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Always Aim High

When I learned about the various levels of Paradise after accepting Islam, I could not imagine anyone wanting less than the highest level. However, the more Muslims I met, the more I have become astonished to find so many with little or no plans for the Hereafter. On countless occasions, people expressed that their goal was to get “at least one foot in Paradise”. However, the Prophet ﷺ encouraged us to do the opposite. He said, “Whenever you ask Allah, ask Him for Al Firdaws. It is the middle and highest place in it.” (al-Mussanaf Abu Nu’aym)

Dear Brothers and Sisters, we only have a fixed number of days in this material world. The real life is waiting for us when we may least expect it. The reality is that the quality of the life to come will be determined by our efforts in this present life. Yet we value and strive for excellence in the matters of this short life—having the best job, the best

spouse, the best house, the best car, etc.—while neglecting to strive for the best in terms of our final and everlasting abode.

Learning about the Hereafter is the best place to start waking up, as we cannot truly love and desire what we really do not know. Knowing the reality of Paradise and its delights should motivate us to do the best we can to achieve it. Consequently, the Prophet ﷺ informed us that seeking knowledge is an obligation on each and every Muslim.

We would not settle for a broken-down shack on barren land, instead of a magnificent palace with beautiful gardens in this life, why should we in the next?

- Dr. Bilal Philips & Veronika Matulova



MEET THE TEAM

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YOUR VIEWS

We would love to you hear from you. Please let us know what you liked or would like to see in the magazine. If you have a particular piece or feel you can make a valuable contribution to IOU Insights please email: info@iou-insights.com

CONTENTS

06 IOU at the Education Gurus Gathering

08 Attaining Tawheed & Earning the Rewards

11 Education at a Crossroad Today: Brainstorming of ODL Think Tanks in Kuala Lumpur at PCF8

13 Attitude of Gratitude

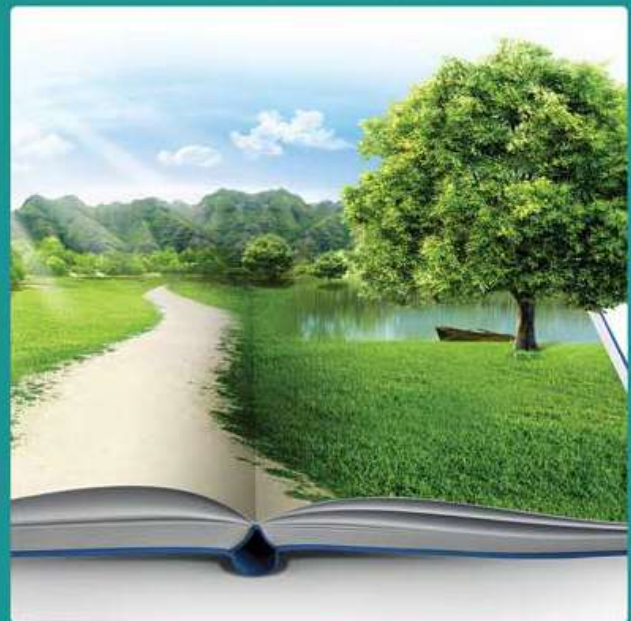
16 IOU creates awareness at ICORE 2016

17 Leaving the Nest: Farewell to IOU Graduates

20 Calendar 2017

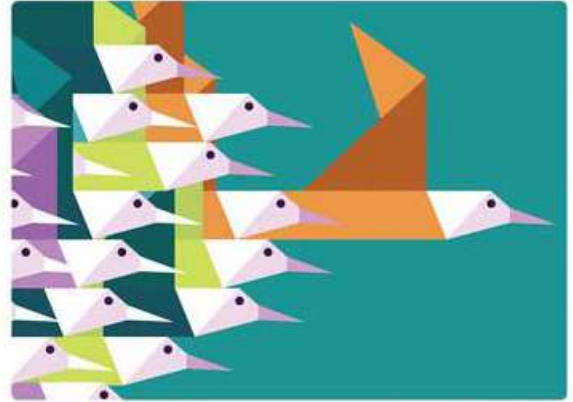
22 Avoiding Misguided Practices of Society

24 Accreditation Efforts in Sierra Leone



29

Opening the Doors of Quality Subsidized Education in Malawi



32

Summary of the IOU's Aqeedah Course

36

The Causes of Deviation in Aqeedah



39

IOU Sharing a Tutor-Development Experience at the ICDEEL-2016



41

An introduction to Client Centered Therapy: Counseling Lessons from Prophet Muhammad ﷺ



44

Celebration of African University Day 2016 at the Islamic Online University

45

Leadership Webinar - Learn and Lead

49

The Security Check



IOU at the EDUCATION GURUS GATHERING

Br. Ishmael Ntenje (Registrar of IOU Malawi campus) attended the Malawi Education Conference at the Chancellor College in Zomba, Malawi in July 2016.

Education gurus from across the globe gathered at the Chancellor College in Zomba to discuss and share notes on the issues that affect the education sector, and how education can be improved. The conference, which was held under the theme, "The Role of Education Foundation Studies in Building Sustainable Education Systems and Development", ran for 3 days from 25th to 27th July, 2016.

The Conference was officially opened at 8:30 AM by the Principal of the Chancellor College. In his speech, he called upon the stakeholders in attendance at the educational gathering to brainstorm and have a fruitful discussion that would help shape the face of education in the country as well as beyond the borders.

Overview of the topics presented and discussed by a variety of presenters:

Higher Education and Development: Policy Options and Practical Dissonances

Technology in Education: Effects of Utilization of Mobile Phones on Students' Academic and Social Life

Education for Sustainable Development

180 Degree Turns: Character Development in Education

The Role of Project and Group Work in Teaching and Assessing Large Classes

Achieving School Effectiveness through Stakeholder Participation in School Management

An Understanding of How Student

**Involvement in School Management
Contributes to Student Character
Development**

School Management and Gender

**Revisiting Quality Teacher Education for 21st
Century Classrooms**

Purposes of Higher/University Education

**The Learning Crisis: Education for All vs.
Learning For All**

**Rights-Based Education vs. Market-Based
Education**

The conference ended on a positive note, with high hopes and a call for further advancement in the Malawian education sector through relevant research work that is currently underway.

The Islamic Online University is honored to have participated in this conference, and commits to

working hand-in-hand with the relevant stakeholders to actively contribute toward providing easily accessible, affordable, and quality higher education for all Malawians in line with the mission of the University:

Changing the Nation through Education.

By **Ishmael Ntenje**



A seasoned Trainer and Educationist with over four years of progressive experience in human resources development. Bachelor Degree in Social Science - University of Malawi.

By **Syeda Madeeha Bokhari**



Sr. Madeeha is the Associate Registrar at IOU. She has a B.Sc. in Computer Engineering and a B.A. in Islamic Studies. She is currently pursuing her M.A. in Islamic Studies.



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of
domestic
violence?

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Attaining Tawheed & Earning the Rewards

And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, "There is no deity except Me, so worship Me."
(Quran 21:25)

Derived from the Arabic word wahid or one, tawheed translates into English as the "belief in the unique oneness of Allah". An easy way to understand tawheed is to think of it in terms of a tall building. Just imagine building a tall tower in the middle of the desert. You start at the bottom and build it up, brick by brick. Once complete, you start to notice that it is shaky and easily sways in the wind. You soon realize that had you built a foundation first, your building would be sturdy and unmovable.

This is what tawheed is for a true Muslim. It serves as a foundation of belief that is of paramount importance for the believers to construct their faith upon. Without tawheed, a Muslim finds himself in a precarious "building" of his own design, that could topple at any moment.

There are a variety of factors that must be taken into account in order for a Muslim to achieve tawheed.

Belief in Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) Without a Partner

To truly believe in the oneness of Allah means that we do not ascribe partners to Allah or attribute intercessors to Him; who supposedly

act as intermediaries between mankind and our Lord. Islam is the only truly monotheistic religion in the world. You only need to look as far as the Noble Quran to see verse after verse where Allah Almighty affirms that He alone created the heavens and the earth, and that He alone is worthy of worship.

"I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me." (Quran 51:56)

Anyone who does ascribe partners to Allah Almighty has committed a very grave sin; in fact, the one and the only unforgivable sin which is known as shirk, or associating partners with Allah Almighty.

"Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And he who associates others with Allah has certainly fabricated a tremendous sin." (Quran 4:48)

It is important to note that there are various

forms of shirk. The primary shirk is, of course, attributing a partner to Allah Almighty; the Catholics belief in the Trinity, which ascribes both a son and a spirit with God Almighty is one such example. There are also minor forms of shirk as well; belief in horoscopes or superstitions that people rely upon instead of Allah Almighty are just some examples. Regardless of the degree of shirk, it remains a heinous sin that is unforgivable.

Avoidance of Sin, and Obedience to the Final Message

Revealed more than 1400 years ago, the Noble Quran makes a very clear distinction between what is right and what is wrong. One of the most vital ways to achieve tawheed is through the avoidance of sin. Muslims can steer clear of sin by following the sunnah, or lifestyle, of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Known as the "living Quran," our Prophet's life remains the perfect guide that all Muslims should follow in order to achieve tawheed. Our



Final Messenger ﷺ showed us how to apply the message of the Quran in our daily lives, and that message holds true even today; regardless of advances in the modern world. The message of Islam is one that applies to all people, in all places, and at all times.

Complete Rejection of Innovation in All Forms

In our digital age, buzzwords like “innovative” and “groundbreaking” are used to describe any new electronic device being launched. How many times has the iPhone, for example, been tweaked and reinvented? Yet, nevertheless, it is still a cell phone.

Humans have a tendency to seek perfection in various parts of life, and some misguided souls even try to tweak the religion of Islam or somehow add to it through bidah, or innovation. This especially holds true when cultural norms are followed in spite of the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. For example, seeking to draw nearer to Allah Almighty through music and dance which are both completely forbidden in Islam.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ warned us against the grave sin of innovation:

“Whoever commits an act which is not a part of our matter (religion), will have it (his act) rejected.” (Muslim)

It is the responsibility of all Muslims to not only identify bidah in their own lives and cultures, but also to reject it completely. As with shirk, there are various levels of bidah, and all of them must be rejected to achieve tawheed.

The Rewards of Tawheed

Tawheed is something that must be cultivated over time and tended to, just as someone tends

“
***I did not create
the jinn
and mankind
except
to worship Me.***
”
(Quran 51:56)

to a garden to ensure it reaches its full potential. Our declaration of faith, or shahadah, “La ilaha illa Allah” exemplifies tawheed perfectly, and is the first step each Muslim takes on their journey of Islam; submitting to the will of Allah Almighty. The rewards of tawheed are many and include Allah’s forgiveness, the removal of sins, safety from the hellfire, and Paradise. There is also a group of people who will achieve Paradise without reckoning, as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“...seventy thousand of my Ummah will enter Paradise without reckoning or punishment.” (Muslim)

By Sumayyah Meehan



Sr. Sumayyah is a Content Editor for Islamic Online University. An American revert to Islam for over 20 years with a B.A. in Criminal Justice, she has been published in both Islamic and secular magazines around the world. She is also a marketing expert and a graphic designer.

EDUCATION AT A CROSSROADS TODAY: Brainstorming of ODL Think Tanks in Kuala Lumpur at PCF8

This past November 2016, academicians, policymakers, and administrators gathered to discuss matters pertaining to open and distance learning (ODL) in the Eighth Pan-Commonwealth Forum PCF8, co-hosted by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and Open University Malaysia (OUM) at the KLCC Convention Centre, in the beautiful city of Kuala Lumpur.

With over 500 participants from more than 59 countries across the globe, the hallways of the Convention Centre were filled with friendly chatter and excited salutations to both new and old faces on the first day of the forum, which ran from November 27-30. It was an enlightening experience for me to participate in this forum on behalf of the Islamic Online University.

The theme of the conference was Open, Online, and Flexible Learning: The Key to Sustainable Development. Along with the main theme, the four sub-themes were:

- ▶ Quality and Equity in Learning (The Eight Quality Assurance Frameworks, Accreditation, Certification, Benchmarking, Ranking)
- ▶ Access and Inclusion (e-Learning, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Public-Private Partnership, Equitable Educational Opportunities, Policies)
- ▶ Efficiency and Effectiveness (Business Models, Comparative Studies)
- ▶ Technology and Innovation (Teaching and Learning, Mobile Learning, Collaborative Learning, MOOCs, Open Educational Resources (OER))

Needless to say, each and every one of the above themes are of interest to us at IOU. It has been an enlightening journey for me to ponder over IOU's progress in each of these areas. We have been working for some time now to attain accreditation in different countries while also measuring our policies and practices in light of quality assurance frameworks. Similarly, accessibility and inclusion has been our goal since the formation of IOU, with the provision of tuition free degrees fully online, offering absolutely free open campus courses, and stressing upon gender equity and the inclusion of students from all walks of life. While we focus on an efficient delivery of programs and effective teaching methods, it is ultimately technology and innovation that IOU has played a pioneering role among Islamic universities. IOU has been a pioneer in offering mobile learning and upgraded ODL technologies to ensure the utilization of cutting-edge technology in our e-learning experience.



KLCC Convention Centre with the Iconic Petronas Twin Towers in the Background

Some of the highlights of the forum: there were keynote speeches on the aforementioned sub-themes by Mr. Martin Bean, CBE, Vice-Chancellor & President, RMIT University; Prof Dato' Dr. Mansor Fadzil, President/Vice-Chancellor, Open University Malaysia; Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, United Nations Under-Secretary-General & Executive Director, UN Women; and Dr. David Wiley, Chief Academic Officer, Lumen Learning.

Other enlightening sessions included the 8th edition of Asa Briggs lecture by Sir John Daniel and the plenary session with Prof Paul Prinsloo (Chairman), ODL Research Professor, University of South Africa; Prof Belinda Tynan, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) & Vice-President, RMIT University; Prof. Elifas T Bisanda, Vice-Chancellor, Open University of Tanzania; and Dr. Indrajit Banerjee, Director, Knowledge Societies Division, Communication & Information Sector, UNESCO.

Along with academicians and administrators, six ministers from Nigeria, Ghana, Seychelles, Papua New Guinea, Swaziland, and Botswana attended the forum. The forum was opened by Dato' Seri Haji Idris bin Jusoh, Minister of Higher Education, Malaysia.

There were many take-home messages from the forum. Thought-provoking points were highlighted by the speakers in keynote addresses and paper presenters in the parallel sessions, like technology is only useful when it is leveraged and harnessed with great teaching.

The accessibility of disabled students was brought up repeatedly throughout the forum in different sessions. Instructional design also received a fair amount of attention of the plenary session speakers, as well as "the ethics of care".



Along with academicians and scholars of the field, 6 ministers attended the forum from Ghana, Nigeria, Botswana, Seychelles, Swaziland, and Papua New Guinea. The conference was opened by Dato' Seri Haji Idris bin Jusoh, Minister of Higher Education, Malaysia.

I found it rejuvenating to witness thinkers and policymakers come together on the same platform to discuss open, online, and flexible learning; access and inclusion; and quality and effectiveness. Personally, this forum provided me with a great opportunity to discuss e-learning with participants from different corners of the globe, to share what we offer at IOU, and to learn from the others in turn. Indeed, as discussed at the forum, we are at a crossroads of education today. This is surely a profound statement for us as educators, administrators and even as students of the e-learning mode. Open, online and distance mode of education can open doors for many, and help to reach the unreached. It is my pleasure to reflect upon IOU's role in the field and find that we are producing contents, and we are keen to leverage technology for the benefit of the masses, in sha Allah.

By Syeda Madeeha Bokhari



Sr. Madeeha is the Associate Registrar at IOU.

A T T I T U D E O F

GRATITUDE

Gratitude and Focus

Gratitude is one of the quickest ways to regain our focus. When we are stuck, it means we are giving too much attention to something that doesn't really deserve it. Most so-called problems are usually mundane preoccupations and mental obsessions. We focus on one area to the exclusion of everything else, thus creating and magnifying our problems. Guess what?

When we focus so much on what's not working, we can't even access the part of our brain that provides us solutions. Surprised? Yeah! So, when something is not working, turn your focus to what is working, and say *Alhamdulillah Rabbil 'Alameen* aloud. What do you think you are doing by saying this? You are freeing your mind from those thoughts that bog you down; and you are reinforcing strong positive beliefs that even if some areas are not working in life, others definitely are. In this way, you are able to think in a quicker and more effective way to resolve what is not working in life. Try it out yourself! a quicker and more effective way to resolve what is not working in life. Try it out yourself!



Gratitude - The Practice of the Companions

It is reported that the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ were grateful for the calamities that they faced and were grateful to Allah for not letting something worse befall them. Now that is the attitude of gratitude!

A Miraculous Phenomenon

Being grateful to Allah works wonders. When you acknowledge His Hand in your life, miracles happen. You might be in the middle of a problem that you have the least bit of knowledge about and suddenly the solution will dawn upon you. For example, it's like when someone returns an old loan that you had completely forgotten about at a time when you are in dire need of money. Or, when you happen to be thinking about your loved ones, you receive a call from one of them at the exact time. So, when something you long for happens, be very grateful to the One who made it happen.

Appreciate Small to Get BIG!

We usually ignore many things that are readily available to us and need a BIG reason to be grateful. Our family, friends, body, health, job, leisure time, education, food, wisdom, smiles, children, and even the painful lessons that life teaches us (and the list goes on) are HUGE blessings to be grateful for. If you don't have the same feeling, just close your eyes and imagine one of these blessings vanishing from your life. How does that feel? This is EXACTLY the reason you need to be thankful for each and every moment.

"If you were to count Allah's favors, you would

not be able to number them; most surely humanity is very unjust, very ungrateful." (Quran 14:34)

Parting Words

It is a pity that many of us were trained by childhood to hunger for more and never be satisfied with what we already have. Being grateful to Allah for His blessings is sometimes a challenge for us. Most of us could use a bit of fine tuning. Below are some tools that you can use to learn to be more grateful to Him.

Tools:

1- Make a list of twenty things you appreciate right NOW. Write *alhamdulillah* in front of every blessing. Make a list of the things you feel good about and why you are grateful for that thing, situation, or person in your life.

How did you feel doing this? Here's the good news: you just increased your positive emissions, and now you are actually able to attract more happiness, abundance, and prosperity in your life.

2- Start looking for EVERYTHING you can be grateful for in life and start talking about it all the time, no matter how insignificant it is. If you find a buck from your old shirt's pocket, celebrate! Go around and tell everyone how grateful you are for that. That's how you are actually tuning your mind to show gratitude for the tiniest blessing in your life.

3- At least once a day, share a GRATITUDE status on facebook and twitter (or whatever social media you use), and ask others what they are grateful for. *In sha Allah*, you will get a reward for your SHUKR (gratitude) and theirs too.

4- Stand in front of the mirror: focus on your

eyes that can see, ears that can hear, and nose that can smell, rather than just the imperfections you see, like measuring the size and diameter of that small pimple on your face.

5- Try to seek the positive out of every negative. Take out at least three good lessons from every painful experience and be grateful that life threw that situation at you so that you could learn. And then, move on.

In a nutshell, developing the attitude of gratitude to Allah will work wonders in your life. Identify those wonders and be grateful for them so that you can have more.



By Bela Khan



Sr. Bela is an author and speaker. She serves as a Lecturer of Psychology at IOU. She helps women come out of their misery and become better versions of themselves. She can be reached at belakhan.com.

IOU creates awareness at ICORE 2016

In a bid to break down barriers to education across the globe, the Islamic Online University (IOU) recently took part in the International Conference on Research in Education (ICORE 2016) held by the University of Punjab in Lahore, Pakistan, on November 23-25, 2016. The IOU was represented by Professor and Dean, Muhammad Ahsan (Faculty of Advanced Studies and Research, Islamic Online University), and over 2500 delegates from all over the world attended the conference.

Dr. Ahsan delivered his keynote lecture on the "Role of e-Learning in the Development of the Muslim World - A Case Study of the Islamic Online University" to a captivated audience. His lecture was very well-received and helped create awareness amongst academic staff and youth. The Q&A session which followed was met with a great reception and dozens of questions were asked which indicated a great interest in the IOU.

The IOU hopes that the conference will result in attracting more students and assist in the recruitment of highly qualified teachers. Through presentations such as this, the IOU seeks to further promote its objectives and broaden its reach to the masses.

During his trip to Pakistan, Dr. Ahsan also held a large number of workshops on academic research at several universities, including:

- **The International Islamic University, Islamabad**



2016 ICORE 4th International Conference on Research in Education
Theme: Combating Contemporary Challenges through Education

REGISTRATION WORKSHOPS

2016 ICORE
Innovations in Teaching & Learning

Post-conference Workshops on Saturday. Learning

Speaker: Waheed Shahzad Hall Time: 10:00-12:30 Hrs. Resource Person: Dr. Muhammad Ahsan

- **Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan**
- **Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi**
- **Hazara University**
- **Qurtaba University**

Through his workshops, Dr. Ahsan was able to highlight the significant work that the IOU is doing to educate communities and be a leader in e-learning for students from all walks of life.

By Sumayyah Meehan



Sr. Sumayyah is a Content Editor for Islamic Online University.



LEAVING THE NEST:

Farewell to IOU Graduates

On January 7, 2016, IOU held the third online convocation ceremony for the IOU's 148 graduates of Fall 2015 and Spring 2016. Dr. Bilal Philips, the Chancellor of the IOU; Sh. Hussein Yee, a Chinese Islamic scholar and the President of Pertubuhan Al-Khaadem in Malaysia; and Dr. Muhammad Ahsan, the Dean of IOU Faculty of Advanced Studies and Research; were present to congratulate the graduates and encourage them to continue this noble path of the Prophet's inheritors.

We, at IOU Insights, would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to all IOU graduates. Education is the most powerful weapon which can be used to change the world. May you find it on your scale of good deeds on the Day of Judgment.

By Veronika Matulova



By **Veronika Matulova**



Sr. Veronika is the IOU Insights Managing Editor. She holds a B.A. in Islamic Studies from the IOU and is currently on the path of perfecting her Quranic recitation.

By **Madiha Shoukat**



Sr. Madiha completed the IOU Higher Diploma program from the IOU and holds a Bachelor of Information Science. She is currently pursuing a Daeeya certificate course in Kuwait.

The graduates of the Islamic Online University in Kuwait were treated to a local ceremony at the IELC in Salmiya. The guest speaker, Sr. Asmaa Abdul Hameed, encouraged the students and the graduates with her wise words to make use of the unique opportunity provided by the IOU and gain Islamic education for the benefit in this world and the next. The graduates were then awarded their graduation diplomas and small presents.

By Madiha Shoukat

3RD GRADUATION FALL 2015 - SPRING 2016

B.A. in Islamic Studies Fall 2015

Emad Ahmed Ali Salih	Canada	Canada
Aamina Gaya	"	"
Veronika Matulova	Czech Rep	"
Stephanie Jaeger	Germany	Germany
Husna Shahbaz	India	USA
Mohamed Ismail Shahul	"	Kuwait
Noorul Fathima	"	"
Sana Siddiqui	"	KSA
Rasitha Parveen	"	Kuwait
Shahataz Shaik	"	UAE
Irfan Khan	"	KSA
Mohamed Ibrahim	"	Kuwait
Bushra Khaishagi	"	India
Nuru Said Mbarak	Kenya	Kenya
Ja'afar Sulaiman	Nigeria	Nigeria
Sikiru Yunusa	"	"
Usman Abdullahi Danjuma	"	"
Abdul Kabir Shotonwa	"	"
Ibrahim Gata	"	"
Hussain Mohamed Didi	Maldives	Maldives
Atufa Muhammad Ali	Pakistan	Pakistan
Rehana Sayeed	"	"
Masooma Durrani	"	UAE
Ahmad Wurie Barrie	Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone
Amer Samie	USA	USA
Khwaja Asif Ahmed	"	"
Craig Lyons	"	Kuwait

Spring 2016

Gyulshen Adilova	Russia	Russia
Moegamat Y. Abrahams	South Africa	South Africa
Tasneem Khan-Abrahams	"	"
Ali Abdulle	Somalia	Canada
Sithy Jariya Jawfer	Qatar	Qatar
Karimah A. Hernandez	USA	USA

Bridge Diploma to M.A.I.S. Fall 2015

Najib Murshed	Afghanistan	Afghanistan
Khadijah Natalie Arbee	Australia	South Africa
Tamara Leeder	"	Oman
Muhammad Istiaq Ali	Bangladesh	Hong Kong
Mohiuddin Hyder Khan	"	Bangladesh
Wafaa Talha	Canada	Canada
Hammad Khan	"	"
Yoesra El Damahoury	Egypt	Netherlands
Muhammad Mousa	"	Egypt
Mohamed Boujataoui	Germany	Germany
Ahmed Issaka	Ghana	Ghana
Sa-id Mukhtar Abubakar	"	"
Rukhsana Mehboob	India	KSA
Yashfeen Jalil Ahmed	"	Oman
Ambreen Sherwani	"	India
Mubeena Ifthikkaruddin	"	"
Fathi Ali	Kenya	Kenya
Tanzilah Yousrina Dobir	Mauritius	Mauritius
Hafsah Hassan Gwarzo	Nigeria	Nigeria
Adam Abubakar Mukhtar	"	"
AbdulRasaq O. O. Bashorun	"	"
Noaman Asar	Pakistan	Pakistan
Maisa Naseem	"	UAE
Mehwish Masud	"	Pakistan
Yasmin Toor	"	"
Mohamed R. M. Farook	Sri Lanka	Qatar
Ahsanullah Haji	UK	UK
Nausheen Farooque	USA	USA
Gregory Morse	"	Hungary
Amina Ashraf	"	USA
Ashraf Muhammad	"	"
Adebayo Badmos	"	"
Aateka Hamad	"	"
Haya Sheriff	"	"
Mahfooza Ahmadi	"	"
Abdenasser Zouhri	"	"

Spring 2016

Hamida Mubasshera	Bangladesh	USA
Muhammad Raihanul Mizan	"	Bangladesh
Yahuza Abubakari	Ghana	Ghana
Fakeha Neelofar	India	UAE
Jabeen Siraj	"	KSA
Arjumand Adil	"	UAE
Zulaikha Z	"	India
Kulsoom Fatima	"	"
Aysha Abdul Raof	"	KSA
Fikri Waskito	Indonesia	Malaysia
Muhammad Aidarus Noor	Kenya	Kenya
Edington Kachala	Malawi	Malawi
Mahdiya Sahib	New Zealand	New Zealand
Hammed Alao	Nigeria	Nigeria
Dhoonnoorayn O. Durojaye	"	"
Sogunle Idris	"	"
Muhammad Auwal Dahiru	"	"
Hadiza Ahamad	"	Malaysia
Zainab Bello Muhammadu	"	Nigeria
Shazia Rahim Anwar	Pakistan	USA
Maria Ayub Bham	"	KSA

Spring 2016

Cherfaoui Mohamed	Algeria	Algeria
Nusrat Nowrin	Bangladesh	Canada
Abdinasir Farah	Canada	"

Bridge Diploma to M.A.I.S. Spring 2016

Nasreen Sultana	India	KSA
Rukaiah Maulvi Abdul Aziz	"	UAE
Maryam M. Basheeruddin	"	KSA
Fatima Tausif Khan	"	India
Anwar Unnisa	"	KSA
M. Noordheen	"	India
Fathima Safoorah	"	KSA
Manal Abdulrahman Salim	Kenya	Kenya
Olanrewaju Kazeem	Nigeria	Nigeria
Itopa Obiyo Sadiq	"	"
Aishatu Mikaila Hassan	"	"
Rufai Jelili	"	"
Luqman Gbadamosi	"	"
Hafiza Bagha	Pakistan	Canada
Fasiha Rashid	"	UAE
Shehzad ul Haq	"	UAE
Sumyia Ghulam Rasul	"	Canada
Afshan Aftab	"	Pakistan
Waqas Javed	"	Kuwait
Sher Jan	"	Pakistan
Mohamed N. M. Rafiudeen	Sri Lanka	Qatar
Ibrahim Ahmed Mohamed	Somalia	Somalia
Noor Ahmad Pitafi	UK	UK
Raheela Ahmad	USA	USA
Abdusselam Bowwe	"	"

Intensive Arabic Program Fall 2015

Katerina Stanieková	Czech Rep	Qatar
Asad Khan	India	India
Suhaib Varikkodan	"	KSA
Almir Sahmanovic	Russia	USA
Saifudeen B A Rahman	Singapore	Singapore

Spring 2016

Yaser Aljarrah	Canada	Canada
Haboubakar Labo	Cameroon	Cameroon
Halah Ahmed	Egypt	USA
Basid Mohamed Anesary	India	France
Eifah Abdul Naser	"	UAE
Maliha Ali Abeid	Kenya	Kenya
Maryam Othman	Nigeria	Nigeria
Aisha Khabeeb Mustapha	"	"
Maryam Ahmad Karim	"	"
Shazia Khalid Rahim	Pakistan	Pakistan
Sadaf Ather farooq	"	UAE
Mehwish Adhi	"	Pakistan
Tooba Salahuddin	"	"
Mourtada Diallo	Senegal	Senegal
Ilyas Mahamad Warsame	Somalia	Somalia
James Jamaal Nelson	USA	USA
Afroza Akhter	"	USA

Certificate in Psychology Fall 2015

Ahmed Said Abdulrahman	Kenya	Kenya
Juhi Nadeem Shad	India	India

Associate Degree in Psychology Spring 2016

Amna Asghar	Pakistan	Pakistan
Piroska Aliz	Tunisia	Tunisia

Certificate in Education Fall 2015

Naeema Halim	Pakistan	Pakistan
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Spring 2016

Naureen Sajid	Pakistan	Kenya
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Advance Diploma in Islamic Studies Spring 2016

Demba Ndiaye	USA	USA
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IOU EVENTS CALENDAR 2017

CHANGING THE NATION THROUGH EDUCATION

JANUARY

- Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 Convocation Ceremony
- Fall 2016 Final Exam
- Strengthen the Knot by Sr. Bela Khan (Free Diploma Course)

FEBRUARY

- Late Final Exams Fall 2016
 - Semester Break
- Registration for Spring 2017
- Money Myth by Sr. Hamida Mubasshera (Free Diploma Course)

MARCH

- Spring 2017 Enrollment
- Launching B.A. in Arabic Language and Linguistics
- Launching B.A.I.S. in Indonesian
- Study Period 1

APRIL

Study Period 1 Continues

MAY

- Spring 2017 Midterm Exams
- Ramadan

JUNE

- Eid Al-Fitr
- Study Period 2

JULY

Study Period 2 Continues

AUGUST

- Spring 2017 Final Exams
 - Hajj
- Registration for Fall 2017

SEPTEMBER

- Eid Al-Adha
- Fall 2017 Enrollment
- Study Period 1

OCTOBER

- Registration for Fall 2017 Ends
- Study Period 1 Continues
- Saddle & Shield: Galloping Islamic History by Br. Dawood Vaid (Free Diploma Course)

NOVEMBER

Fall 2017 Midterm Exams

DECEMBER

Study Period 2

The information provided in this calendar is intended for informational purposes only and is subject to change without notice.



HUNGRY FOR KNOWLEDGE?

Come and see what IOU has to offer!

Department of Islamic Studies

- Master of Arts in Islamic Studies (MAIS)
- Bachelor of Arts in Islamic Studies (BAIS)
- Higher Diploma (BMAIS)

Department of Education

- Bachelor of Education (BEEd)
- Associate Degree in Education (AED)
- Certificate in Education (CEd)

Department of Islamic Economics, Banking & Finance

- Bachelor of Islamic Economics, Banking & Finance (BSc IBE)
- Associate Degree in Islamic Economics, Banking and Finance (AIBE)
- Certificate in Islamic Economics, Banking & Finance (CIBE)

Department of Psychology

- Bachelor of Psychology (BSc PSY)
- Associate Degree in Psychology (APSY)
- Certificate in Psychology (CPSY)

Department of Information Technology

- Bachelor of Science in IT (BSc IT)
- Associate Degree in Information Technology (AIT)
- Certificate in Information Technology (CIT)

IOU's total registered student body has reached over 250,000 from 229 countries in the world in less than 7 years, making it the NUMBER ONE university in the world with respect to the diversity of its student body.

Semester registration OPEN all year round!

Visit our website and discover IOU www.iou.edu.gm

Email: info@iou.edu.gm

Department of Business Administration

- Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)
- Associate Degree in Business Administration (ABA)
- Certificate in Business Administration (CBA)

Department of Arabic Language and Linguistics

- Bachelor in Arabic Language and Linguistics (BAARB)
- Intensive Arabic Program (IAP)

Global Qur'an Memorization Center

- Quran Memorization
- Ijaazah Program

Youth Dual Credit

Enables high school students to:

- earn university credits
- experience university courses
- prepare for the academic life
- enter the freshman year with advantage

Department of English Language and Linguistics

- Certificate in Intensive English (IEC)

General Diploma in Islamic Studies

- 24+ free courses to complete



ISLAMIC ONLINE UNIVERSITY

Founder and Chancellor DR. BILAL PHILIPS:

- B.A. in Islamic Studies, University of Madinah, KSA
- M.A. in Islamic Theology, Riyadh, KSA
- Ph.D. in Islamic Theology, University of Wales, UK
- Author of over 50 books on various Islamic topics
- Among the 500 most influential Muslims in "The Muslim 500" journal

BENEFITS OF STUDYING WITH IOU

- highest quality
- affordable
- flexible
- organized
- easily accessible
- completely online
- in English medium

Seeking authentic knowledge couldn't get any easier.

AVOIDING THE *Misguided Practices* OF SOCIETY

"...This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion..." (Quran 5:3)

Allah Almighty revealed the above verse on the day of Hajjatul Wida, and confirmed that Islam is complete and perfect in its original form as it was revealed to our Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, any addition or deviation in its practices is not a part of Islam.

Humans, however, have a tendency to err and Muslims are not exempt from this fallacy. Sometimes people make mistakes out of ignorance and other times people may deviate by following a crooked path of ascribing partners to Allah.

Some examples of making mistakes in Islam are

praying too fast without proper focus or telling white lies to get out of trouble. However, the real problem is a deviation from the true path and adding innovations to Islam. An example of deviation is the celebration of "Eid Milad-un-Nabi," an event that was never celebrated during the lives of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the Khulafa-ur-Rashideen, or the beloved grandsons of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Hasan and Husayn. However, some people nowadays have taken their devotion to the Prophet ﷺ to an extreme level and carry out massive celebrations in his honor while blasting Bollywood style "nasheeds" from massive speakers. These innovated events also cause traffic jams in the cities in which they are held and a mass pandemonium for its residents.

This is completely against the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, who strictly forbade us from

harming any Muslim with either our words or actions.

“A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand Muslims are safe.” (Bukhari)

Another example of deviation from the true nature of Islam can be seen during Eid-ul-Adha. Following the sunnah established by Prophet Ibrahim, Muslims sacrifice animals in the name of Allah and distribute the meat among family, neighbors, and the needy. This practice is supposed to be about humbleness and submitting to the Will of Allah, however, some people have taken this as an opportunity to show-off their wealth by flaunting the price of their sacrifice. Additionally, some people keep most of the meat for themselves and only give away the useless scraps to the needy.

The examples cited above are misguided practices that bring no benefit to anyone. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself said,

“The one who deviates from my Sunnah, is not from me.” (Bukhari)

Also, **“The worst deeds of all are innovations and every innovation is bidah and every bidah is a deviation and every deviation will be in the hellfire.”** (Nasaa’i Vol.1 pg 179, Minhaaj ul-Muslimeen pg 514, sanad: Sahih)

Allah Almighty says,

“And obey Allah and obey the Messenger, but if you turn away - then upon Our Messenger is only [the duty of] clear notification.”
(Quran 64:12)

“
As conscious beings, we should always be aware of our true religion by learning it and implementing it in our lives.
”

It is quite clear, from these ahadith and ayat, that Muslims must only follow the practices of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as we have been taught, and anything extra is not part of Islam. We should not become like sheep chasing trends and following the crowd without ever questioning these actions. As conscious beings, we should always be aware of our true religion by learning it and implementing it in our lives.

May Allah Almighty bless us all with His Mercy and guide us on the true path, ameen.

By Abdur Rahman Fayyaz



Br. Abdur Rahman is a writer and editor at Wresigns; an online venture that provides copywriting, editing, and graphic designing services. He aspires to travel the world, and pen down his experiences for the benefit of humankind at large.

ACCREDITATION efforts in Sierra Leone



Dr. Bilal meets IOU students

July 17, 2016

July 2016 was an overwhelming month full of student registrations at various mosques, schools, and meeting places. Anticipation was in the air as we also prepared for Dr. Bilal's arrival. He finally arrived at the Lungi International Airport to much fanfare.

July 18, 2016

MEETING WITH THE IOU COMMITTEE

The day Dr. Bilal arrived, he met with the IOU Committee in Freetown. At the meeting, issues surrounding the old and new offices were discussed. Moreover, plans to meet with the NCTVA, TEC, and Ministry of education officials were made in order to fasttrack the accreditation process as it had been lagging for a while.



On the streets of Freetown

July 19, 2016

MEETING WITH THE NCTVA OFFICIALS

The Executive director, Mr. M.A. Jalloh, chaired a meeting at the NCTVA Headquarters at Tower Hill. Honorable guests included Dr. Bilal Philips, Her Excellency Ambassador Hajiah Alari Cole (a committee member), and the IOU Representative, Sheikh Alie Kallay. At the meeting, Dr. Bilal acknowledged the efforts made by the Committee and thanked the



Dr. Bilal attending the Certification Ceremony of the Quranic College held in his honor, organized by the President of Sierra Leone Muslim Missionaries Union, Sheikh Muhammad Abdul Zaki Kallon

July 19, 2016

Director for granting IOU accreditation for its Diploma and Certificate courses. He encouraged the NCTVA to continue supporting IOU until it is fully recognized by the TEC; to ensure that Sierra Leoneans can benefit from the variety of courses IOU has to offer and become a more developed country.

MEETING WITH THE WIFE OF THE LATE PRESIDENT

After the NCTVA meeting, Dr. Bilal received an invitation to witness the first board meeting of the President Tejan Kabbah's Foundation for Education, at her Walpole Street office in Freetown. During the meeting Mrs. Kabbah, wife of the late president, welcomed Dr. Bilal and asked him to brief her about IOU's activities.

Following the briefing, board members presented their inquiries to Dr. Bilal and his responses resulted in their membership of IOU. They pledged to work and co-operate with IOU whenever the need arises.



Dr. Bilal receiving a gift from the proprietress of Haikal Academy High School, Hajah Hawa Turay

July 20, 2016

MEETING WITH THE TEC

Yet another meeting was held with TEC. The Chancellor of IOU addressed the Accreditation Committee and mentioned all the IOU accredited countries, since its establishment in 2007, now including Sierra Leone. In response,

the Committee's chairperson welcomed and reassured Dr. Bilal of their confidence in IOU. However, a concern was raised regarding online academic fraud. With the sudden emergence of online universities, authenticity is difficult to monitor. For example, St. Clement University, an online establishment had its license revoked after accreditation, due to online academic fraudulence. This concern was put to rest by providing all the necessary detailed IOU documents that were required by the TEC. In conclusion, TEC officials confirmed that all the documents needed had been reviewed and certified.



Presenting an IOU Insights magazine to the President of the United Council of Imams in Sierra Leone, Alhaji Yahya Deen Kamara

July 21, 2016

MEETING WITH THE STUDENTS

The first ever IOU-student-meeting in Freetown was held at the conference hall of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists. IOU representative, Sheikh Alie Kallay, commenced the program by introducing the Chancellor, who then gave a timeline summary of IOU's activities since 2007 until the present day. Attendees were thrilled and grateful to hear about the offline learning system for IOU students with limited internet access; put in place for third world countries like Sierra Leone. Other IOU meeting contributors included: Ambassador Hajiah Alari Cole, Sheikh Zakki Kallon, President of the Sierra Leone Muslim Missionaries Union, Sheikh Fomba Abu Bakarr Suwary, Principal of Sheikh TAIS Academy, and Dr. Ibrahim Jalloh of the Ansarul-Islam Islamic Mission.

July 22, 2016

MEETING WITH THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

During the second meeting with the Minister of Education, Dr. Minkailu Bah, Dr. Bilal expressed his gratitude for the NCTVA's pending accreditation. He indicated his disappointment over the delay of the accreditation process. The Minister stated that since IOU is a university, it does not need NCTVA accreditation. Furthermore, he was astonished to hear that the TEC had not yet granted accreditation to the IOU. He proclaimed, "It (IOU) deserves TEC accreditation right away!" In our presence, he called one of the key officials and asked her to fasttrack the accreditation process. *Alhamdulillah.*



Meeting with IOU Board Members at the IOU's office in Freetown

Mohammed Lappia, to use it for conducting IOU's offline courses, from time to time.

July 24, 2016

VISITING KARLIA VILLAGE: 8 MILES FROM BO TOWN

Haikal Academy held a donation program in the village of Karlia; a village with only 35 huts, and a 100% Muslim population. In the company of the Chancellor and an IOU Representative, Dr. Bilal traveled to the village in the morning and helped distribute donated items among vulnerable villagers who were badly affected by the Ebola scourge in 2014. Karlia village lost 37 of its citizens to the Ebola epidemic. Due to this, Dr. Bilal promised to give scholarships to the Ebola victim orphans, upon completion of high school.



Dr. Bilal meets Mr. Mucson Sesay, the proprietor of the Canadian College of ICT, and Dr. Alpha T. Wurie, the former Education Minister (from the left)

July 23, 2016

MEETING WITH HAIKAL ACADEMY IN BO

Proprietress of Haikal Academy, Hajiah Hawa Turay, invited IOU's Chancellor to visit the Haikal Academy in Bo, a city located on the south end of the country. Since it was Friday, Dr. Bilal had the honor to officiate the Jumuah Khutbah and prayer at the Central Mosque in Bo Town. Thereafter, the Chancellor was impressed with the Haikal Academy, which he was invited to inspect. Plans were made with the Principal, Mr.

July 30, 2016

MEETING OF THE PROPRIETOR

Dr. Bilal met with the former Minister of Education, a bio-chemist himself, Dr. Alpha Wurie; and the founder of the Canadian College of Information and Technology, Mr. Muckson Sesay. He informed them about IOU's activities and the advantages that it has above other online universities in the world. In response, Dr. Wurie pledged his support to IOU, and Mr. Sesay offered his cooperation and an office with

computers and regular maintenance on a lease basis.

PUBLIC LECTURE

The Chancellor was invited to participate at the Sierra Leone Muslim Missionaries Union certification ceremony. He presented the successful students with the award certificates after his lecture on the importance of relevant Islamic education.

THE PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Chancellor was hosted on the SLBC TV Program, "THE PODIUM", the AYV/ TV & Radio on DJ Base's Program, "Night Life" and in another program, "Islamic Hour".

By Sheikh Alie Y. Kallay



Sheikh Alie is the IOU Sierra Leone Representative, currently pursuing an M.A. in Islamic Studies. He is the Managing Editor of the Muslim Journal newspaper, the Chief Imam of Ibadu Rahman Mosque in Freetown, and a Lecturer of Freetown Teachers College.



Dr. Bilal speaking to the Africa Young Voices (AYV) audience



Dr. Bilal discussing with an Egyptian Missionary



Dr. Bilal speaking to the Certification Ceremony audience at the Quranic College



Dr. Bilal visiting Karliah village, heavily affected by the Ebola virus

IOU Accomplishments of 2016

At IOU, we aim to change nations through education, one year at a time. This year, we introduced new programs, conducted webinars, and took part in events worldwide, alhamdulillah. Here is a brief glimpse of IOU's year below:

1. NEW AFFILIATIONS, MEMBERSHIPS, AND LICENSE

IOU signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Islamic University of Uganda and received the ICIFE (International Council of Islamic Finance Educators) country certificates for four countries—India, Gambia, Sierra Leone, and Somaliland. The B.Sc. IBE program provided by the IOU was awarded with the ICIFE Certificate of Conformity by the ICIFE.

This year, IOU also became a member of the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU).

2. NEW PROGRAMS

IOU launched three new programs under the Global Qur'an Memorization Center (GQMC):

- One-on-One Quran Memorization
- Tajweed Easy Starter
- Tajweed Intensive

The enrollments started from December 15, 2016.

3. NEW COURSES IN THE DIPLOMA SECTION

There were many courses launched under the diploma section, including Al-Muminaat, Eternal Bond, Visionary Parenting, and Money Matters. The "YL360: 360 Degree Young Leadership Development" course was enhanced and re-launched with many more exciting and helpful topics added.

4. IOU CONFERENCES AND ACTIVITIES

This year was marked by two of our amazing

conferences! While the **Ramadan Retreat** aimed to uplift the imaan during the month of Ramadan; **Healing the Soul**, a sequel to the Solace 2015 conference, aimed to raise awareness about mental illnesses like dementia, PTSD, eating disorders, and a variety of other topics. Apart from these beneficial conferences, IOU conducted a total of 13 free webinars, covering topics such as decision-making, marriage, reflections on surahs, and more.

Additionally, IOU also took part in the **MoodleMoot**, as well as the **Malawi Education Conference**, the Eighth Pan-Commonwealth Forum PCF8, and International Conference on Research in Education (ICORE 2016).

A total of **3274 people enrolled** into our courses from **97 different countries**, **5847 people appeared in the exams** for the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016, and **147 people graduated** this year. The IOU Helpdesk attentively responded to **115,000 queries** throughout the year. We conducted about 10,167 live sessions for different courses this year.

We hope and pray that with Allah's help and the support we receive from people worldwide, we will be able to continue providing quality education and increase our reach with each year, in sha Allah.

By Banukah Banday



Sr. Banukah is the Events Manager at the Islamic Online University. She has a B.Tech. in Information Technology and is looking forward to doing a Masters in Management.

Opening the Doors of Quality, Subsidized EDUCATION IN MALAWI



Team Selfie with Dr. Bilal. First row (from left): Farhan Karmall and Dr. Bilal Phillips. Second row (from left): Ishmael Ntenje (Registrar – Malawi campus), Mohammed Moshin, and Hunain Ajjaz. Third row (from left): Ishmael Ndeketu (IT Officer – Malawi campus) and Edington Kachala.

–August 2016 was a historic month in the history of Malawi, as it saw the opening of the first Islamic University in the country.

In August 2016, Dr. Bilal (IOU Chancellor), Br. Farhan (Assistant Head of IT Services), and Br. Hunain (Chief of Academic Services) visited Malawi for the first time to check the nominated site’s suitability for an IOU physical campus.

Two Malawi regional staff, Br. Moshin (IOU Global Payments Office) and Br. Abdullah (IOU Malawi local representative), played a vital role in coordinating visits of IOU international staff, which lead to the opening of the first IOU physical campus in Malawi.

The IOU Campus is located in the city of Blantyre, which is the second largest city in Malawi. While Lilongwe is the administrative

capital, Blantyre is regarded as the commercial and industrial capital of Malawi. Muslims represent an estimated 13% of the Malawian population according to the World Factbook, CIA. Education-wise, the majority of Malawians who qualify for university entry are unable to access higher education due to the poverty levels in the country.

As the first Islamic University in the country, the IOU will be offering an authentic Islamic education, which will also help suppress the rise of extremism and misguided practices among some Muslims, as well as a subsidized education consisting of various sciences to contribute toward the development of the Malawian society at large.

The IOU campus is located in the top-right wing of the ICBM College compound. The campus is

equipped with a fully functional library, computer lab, internet facility, study room with multimedia facilities, offices for the local staff, and a large ground for recreational purposes.

Alhamdulillah.

Prior to the second visit, the IOU's online accreditation team worked diligently to prepare all of the necessary documents to apply to the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) in Malawi for registration as a university and accreditation of its programs. The team was comprised of Br. Sameer, Sr. Salma, Br. Shaji, Sr. Madeeha, Br. Moshin, Br. Hunain, and Sh. Mukhtar.

The NCHE of Malawi scheduled site inspections and a review of the IOU documentation on 27 and 28 October. The national council appointed a national panel of reviewers to appear at the IOU campus in Blantyre, Malawi, to evaluate the institution and attend presentations made on behalf of IOU by a team of presenters.

The IOU presenters, with Sh. Mukhtar Raban as the lead presenter and coordinator of the presentations followed by Dr. Muhammad Ahsan, and Br. Farhan Karmali; flew from their respective countries (South Africa, UK, and India) to appear in Malawi.

The presentation was opened by Sh. Mukhtar



Panel of presenters of the IOU international accreditation team, Br. Farhan Karmali (Deputy Head: IT), Sh. Mukhtar Raban (Director: Teaching and Learning), and Dr. Muhammad Ahsan (Dean: Faculty of Advanced Studies).



IOU Computer Lab



Dr. Bilal Briefing the Local Campus Staff. The two sisters are Ameena Ghana (right) and Amlina Yassin (left) (Malawi campus Receptionist and Secretary respectively).



A Study Room with a Multimedia Facility

to the NCHE panel on October 27 in the boardroom of the IOU Malawi campus. It provided an overview of the IOU international operations and academics. Br. Farhan presented on the IT and online systems of IOU while Dr. Ahsan provided an overview of postgraduate and research matters of IOU. Sh. Mukhtar chaired the sessions with the NCE panel and answered questions related to academic, teaching and learning, assessment and managerial issues. Br. Farhan also demonstrated the IOU learning management system.

The NCHE panel engaged with the IOU presenters and conducted on-site inspections. After engagement with IOU staff and the presenters, closed-door sessions were held to thoroughly go over IOU documents. They spent the day in the IOU board room deliberating and concluded their evaluation on October 28. Their findings were subsequently submitted to the NCHE, which were tabled for discussion and

decision by the council in February 2017. The council met and took the following decision: "The NCHE of Malawi has granted the IOU provisional registration as a recognized university in Malawi for one year. IOU is permitted to advertise its programs during this year."

Through the hard work and dedication of the IOU team, this successful outcome was reached and the institution secured registration as a university. Thus, IOU will be acting on the recommendations made by the NCHE in order to receive full accreditation and lengthened registration.



IOU Board Room with Full Multimedia and Online Conference Facilities



By Hunain Aijaz



Br. Hunain is the Chief of Academic Services and a lecturer in the Department of Islamic Studies at IOU.

By Mukhtar Rabban



Br. Hunain Sh. Mukhtar is the Director of Teaching and Learning at IOU. He is a Shari'ah graduate of the Islamic University of Madinah, currently completing a Ph.D. in Education. He also serves as the Vice-President of the Council of Islamic Affairs and an advisor to the Council of Universities South Africa. He is a graduate from the University of Karachi where he attained his M.A. in Islamic History.

Summary of the IOU's AQEEDAH COURSE



In Islam, a belief is not simply based on what is held in the heart. It is also what is expressed by the mouth and the limbs. It is extremely important that one's beliefs are derived from the correct and authentic sources. A person's whole life can be corrupted by incorrect beliefs; therefore, a fundamental and comprehensive look at the Islamic belief system, as well as other belief systems, helps the Muslim student of knowledge practice the correct creed.

Islamic creed is known as Aqeedah in Arabic, and it is the foundation of faith or belief. Knowing the requirements of belief—what we are required to believe and what we are required to deny—is a fundamental part of the Islamic faith. The sayings and actions which will nullify faith are of central importance to a Muslim.

At the Islamic Online University, over the course of seven semesters, students explore the basic beliefs that are essential to the Islamic faith, as well as those concepts which are deviant or remove a person from Islam. By touching upon other belief systems, students get a complete understanding of what humans have believed throughout the ages and what the bases of those beliefs as well as which parts

have deviated from them. Additionally, students take a comprehensive look at the similarities and differences of other faiths/beliefs in relation to Islam.

▶ AQEEDAH 101



This course is comprised of a study of the fundamental issues in the science of tawheed/aqeedah that is most relevant today. It gives an overview of the three categories of tawheed as well as their opposites in the categories of shirk. The issue of the fitrah, as well as common areas in which people have fallen into shirk in contemporary times, is also discussed.

▶ AQEEDAH 102



In this course, students are introduced to the third category of tawheed: Tawheed ul-Asmaa was-Sifaat. Students will look at the significance of belief in revelation, understanding the belief in destiny, signs of the Last Day and the Day of Resurrection, the status of the Prophet's Companions, obedience to rulers, and the abandonment of deviants.

► **AQEEDAH 201**



Issues related to pre-destination, sainthood, and miracles are among the major themes covered in this course, as the oldest and most classical work on the Islamic creed from the 9th century, Aqeedah At-Tahawiyah, is presented.

► **AQEEDAH 202**



This course covers the major sects which split off from the main body of Muslims such as the Khawarij, Shi'ites, Qadiyanis, Elijans, and Mutazilites. Both the history and creedal differences of each sect are discussed in detail.

► **AQEEDAH 301**



Though this course, students are provided with an overview of the science of comparative religions with an emphasis on the differences between Islam and other religions. The course will also cover major ancient religions such as those found in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Japan, China, India, Iran, Greece, and Rome.

► **AQEEDAH 302**



This course provides students with an opportunity to compare and contrast Islam with the theology, beliefs, and books of Judaism and Christianity. A particular emphasis of the course will be an understanding of how the teachings and practices of the Jews and Christians have evolved over time.

► **AQEEDAH 401**



In this course, students will look at the inhabitants of the spirit world, beginning with the angels, the jinn, and human souls. Today, various misconceptions surround these topics, and authentic evidence from the Quran and Sunnah regarding these falsehoods is a must for the student of knowledge.

► **AQEEDAH 501 (M.A.I.S.)**

IOU M.A.I.S. students will be introduced in this course introduced to the study of advanced aqeedah—the third category of tawheed: Tawheed ul-Asmaa' was-Sifaat and matters pertaining to imaan.





AQEEDAH 502 (M.A.I.S.)

This course is based on the study of the Asha'irah sect, one of the famous and widespread existing sects attributed to Islam, and more specifically, to the methodology of Ahl us-Sunnah wal Jama'at. This study is expected to give the M.A.I.S. student a wide view across the Asha'irah sect looking into their origin, their beliefs in various aspects of the deen, and how truly can they be attributed to the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ.

IOU AQEEDA INSTRUCTORS

Meet IOU's aqeedah instructors who bring their experience and knowledge into the learning environment and make your courses enjoyable and amazing.

By **Veronika Matulova**



Sr. Veronika is the IOU Insights Managing Editor.



Dr. Bilal Philips



Dr. Ibrahim Nuhu Tahir



Dr. James Jones



Sh. Kamil Ahmad

There is a difference between

KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH.

Satan had
knowledge—he knew
Allah better than you
and I—but he didn't
have faith.

—*Dr. Bilal Philips*

OFFICIAL SITE:

www.bilalphilips.com | Facebook: www.facebook.com/DrBilalPhilips

YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/aabphilips | Instagram: www.instagram.com/bilalphilips

The Causes of Deviation in Aqeedah



Part 1

Aqeedah, or matters of faith (creed), is a key aspect of Islam. Without it, a Muslim cannot enter Paradise.

Allah the Exalted says, "Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And he who associates others with Allah has certainly fabricated a tremendous sin." (Quran 4:48)

Therefore, every Muslim must strive to safeguard his aqeedah

and protect it from factors which invalidate it. Thus, it is imperative for every Muslim to know the reasons which cause deviation so that he or she may avoid them. Unfortunately, many Muslims around the world have deviated from the correct aqeedah due to a number of reasons.

REASONS BEHIND DEVIATION

1) Ignorance about the correct aqeedah

Many Muslims are ignorant about the correct aqeedah. Therefore, they engage in practices which contradict the Sharee'ah, which places them out of the folds of Islam. Ignorance destroys Islam, as was indicated by 'Umar, who said,

"The bonds of Islam will be undone one by one if people, who do not know about the

pre-Islamic period of Ignorance, grow up in Islam." (Majmoo al-Fatawa 10/301)

2) Following the callers to evil and those who lead people astray

The advocates of deviation cause great harm to Islam because they call others to their evil ways, and many heedless Muslims follow them blindly.

Allah the Exalted says, "And We made them leaders inviting to the Fire, and on the Day of Resurrection they will not be helped." (Quran 28:41)

The Prophet ﷺ also warned us about the exponents of evil as he said,

"There will be some people who will invite others to the doors of Hell, and whoever accepts their invitation to it will be thrown in it (by them)." (Bukhaari, Hadith Number 3606)

He also said, "What I fear for my ummah are the misguiding leaders." (At-Tirmithi, Hadith Number 2229)

In another hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, Allah does not take away knowledge by snatching it from the people, but He takes it away by taking away (the lives of) the religious scholars till none of the scholars stays alive. Then the people will take ignorant ones as their leaders, who, when asked to deliver

religious verdicts, will issue them without knowledge, the result being that they will go astray and will lead others astray." (Bukhari, Hadith Number 100)

Examples of leaders of misguidance include as-Samiri who enticed the Children of Israel to worship a calf, and 'Amr ibn 'Amir al-Khuzaa'ee who was the first person to establish the custom of setting animals free in the name of the idols.

3) Following whims and desires

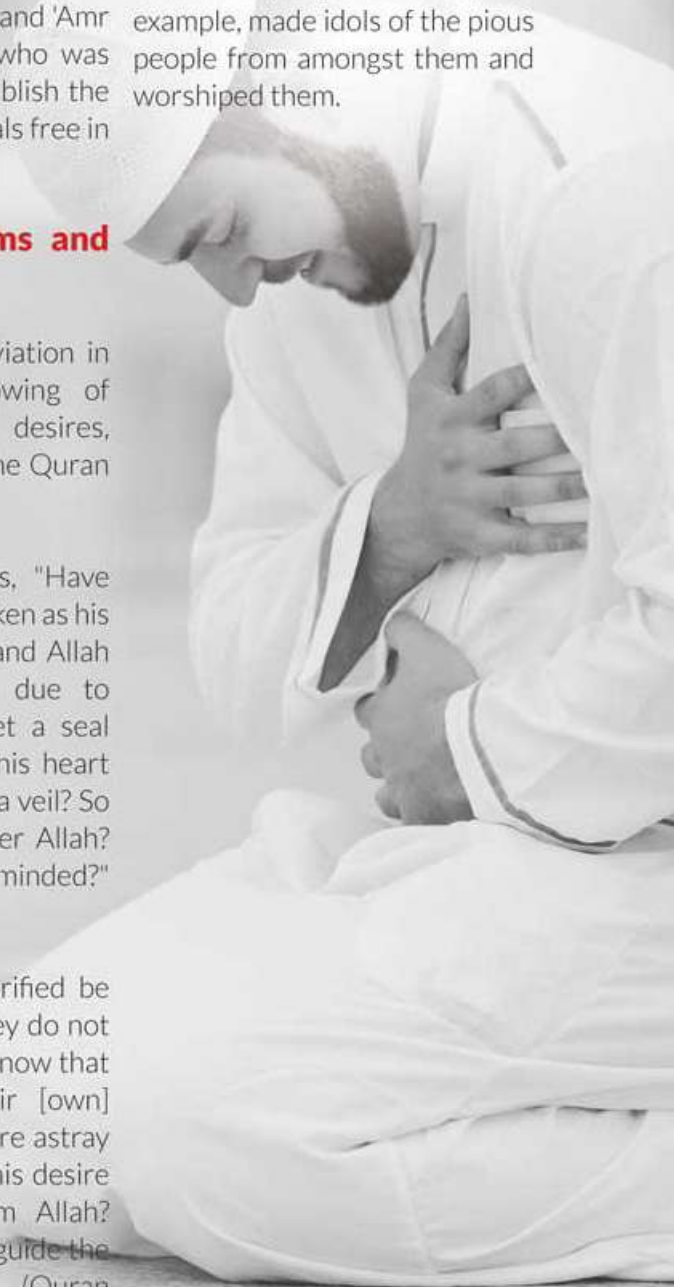
A major factor for deviation in aqeedah is the following of personal whims and desires, instead of abiding by the Quran and the Sunnah.

Allah the Exalted says, "Have you seen he who has taken as his God his [own] desire, and Allah has sent him astray due to knowledge and has set a seal upon his hearing and his heart and put over his vision a veil? So who will guide him after Allah? Then will you not be reminded?" (Quran 45:23)

Allah, Exalted and Glorified be He also said, "But if they do not respond to you - then know that they only follow their [own] desires. And who is more astray than one who follows his desire without guidance from Allah? Indeed, Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people." (Quran 28:50)

4) Having an exaggerated belief in righteous people

This is evidenced by excessive praise heaped upon pious people by raising them above their status, worshiping their tombs or sacrificing animals for their sake. The people of Noah, for example, made idols of the pious people from amongst them and worshiped them.



Allah the Exalted says, "Noah said, "My Lord, indeed they have disobeyed me and followed him whose wealth and children will not increase him except in loss. And they conspired an immense conspiracy. And said, 'Never leave your gods and never leave Wadd or Suwa' or Yaghuth and Ya'uq and Nasr.'" (Quran 71:21-23)

The Prophet ﷺ advised his ummah to be wary and to avoid extreme beliefs in righteous people. He said, "O people, beware of exaggeration in religious matters, for those who came before you were doomed because of exaggeration in religious matters." (Ibn Maajah 3029)

By **Sh. Shaibu Asali**



Sh. Shaibu is the Head of the IOU's Translation Department, a Researcher at the IOU, and a Zimbabwe-based caller to Islam. He has a B.A. in Shariah from the Madeenah Islamic University and an M.A. in Fiqh from the Hamad bin Khalifa University in Qatar.

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IOU Sharing a Tutor-Development Experience at the **ICDEEL - 2016**

In the third week of December 2016, I traveled to Islamabad, Pakistan, to attend the International Conference on Distance Education and E-Learning (ICDEEL - 2016) as a paper presenter. The conference was held at the majestic Faisal Mosque complex. It was organized by the Directorate of Distance Education, International Islamic University Islamabad, in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan.

I presented a paper in a parallel session entitled "*Tutor Training: The Unaddressed Challenge in E-learning*". It was co-authored with my colleague, Syeda Madeeha Bokhari. This research was based on our experience of tutor development and relevant matters at the Islamic Online University. The presentation was very well received by the academicians at the conference. The question and answer session was very vibrant. I thoroughly enjoyed answering enthusiastic questions of fellow academicians and administrators from different universities.

The conference was a good initiative to bring together academicians and administrative

staff from various parts of the country and from overseas as well. The focus was fully on discussions about offering academic programs through distance or blended mode. It was a beneficial experience to listen to the keynote addresses of the eminent academicians and experts of Open and Distance Learning (ODL).

Overall it was a good and enlightening experience. Prof. Dr. N. B. Jumani, Director, Directorate of Distance Education, and his team deserve a round of applause for organizing the conference.

By **Hunain Aijaz**



Br. Hunain is the Chief of Academic Services and a lecturer in the Department of Islamic Studies at IOU.



Prof. Dr. Samina Malik (left); Prof. Dr. Masoom Yasinzal, Rector (middle); Prof. Dr. N. B. Jumanani (4th from the left); Dr. Muhammad Munir Kayani (5th from the left); and Prof. Dr. Ahmed Yousif Ahmed Al Dralweesh, President IIUI (at the podium), IIUI, Pakistan



With Prof. Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar who discussed the case study of Distance Education Program at Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur (left) and Prof. Dr. N. B. Jumanani, Director, Directorate of Distance Education/Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, International Islamic University, Islamabad (middle)



Prof. David Roof, Ball State University, USA addressed the topic of Distance Education for Teacher Training



Prof. Dr. Cecilia Junio-Sabio, Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of the City of Manila, Philippines, shared the Philippines Country Report on distance education

International Conference on Distance Education and E-Learning (ICDEEL-2016) focuses on the use of the latest media/technologies in distance learning, and implementation and integration of new technologies in distance teaching learning.

During the two-day international conference, more than 50 foreign and national scholars presented 120 papers discussing various topics pertaining to the distance education and e-learning. Among the issues addressed were techniques and resources of online teaching, the education of women through distance learning, and the use of social media by university students.

By Veronika Matulova,
IOU Insights Managing Editor

Part 2

An introduction to Client Centered Therapy:

Counseling Lessons from
Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

In the last article, we looked at Client Centered Therapy (CCT) as an approach to counseling that focuses on the therapeutic relationship and process as a means to reduce distress by promoting 3 core conditions: empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence, while working toward a goal of self-actualisation. Many of the therapeutic techniques used in today's form of counseling are identical to those used by our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ over 1400 years ago. "You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for anyone whose hope is in Allah." (Quran 33:21)

The Prophet ﷺ was not only a Prophet and a teacher, but he was also a counselor who helped and supported the Ummah in many ways: financially, socially, emotionally, and psychologically. In counseling his followers, he ﷺ used techniques like those used by Client Centred Therapists today.

THERAPEUTIC TECHNIQUES

Verbal and nonverbal communication: The Prophet ﷺ used nonverbal communication, such as smiling and a positive tone of voice to connect with his followers, something counselors do today. Counselors use nonverbal communication to show clients understanding in such a way that avoids interruption, yet indicates an empathic response to what they are saying while sharing their feelings.

Clear in speech: The Prophet ﷺ was always clear in his speech to ensure the message he was delivering was properly understood. "Narrated Anas: Whenever the Prophet ﷺ spoke a sentence (said a thing), he used to repeat it thrice so that the people could understand it properly from him, and whenever he asked permission to enter, (he knocked at the door) thrice with (the Islamic) greeting." (Sahih al-Bukhari, 95)
Likewise, in counseling, speaking clearly ensures



the development of a healthy and productive, more effective therapeutic relationship; as the core conditions are easier to attain.

Maintaining attention: The Prophet ﷺ was reported to use numerous techniques to attract his listeners' attention. Such techniques included asking general questions, using the word 'behold', sitting forward from a more casual position, and frequent repetition. These techniques ensured that his followers were doing more than just listening. They were actually paying full attention, and therefore were more likely to act upon the information they heard. In counseling, similar techniques are used as a way to continually engage the client. It also lets the client know that they are being heard, shown an aspect of empathy, and a genuine interest is being taken in what they are saying. These techniques, in particular, encourage the client to expand on what they are sharing and explore their emotions in greater depth.

Adherence to ethical and moral standards: The Prophet ﷺ guarded the secrets of those who sought counsel from him. This technique contributed to the avoidance of sins, such as backbiting, as well as enhanced the trustworthiness of the Prophet ﷺ. It also made people more comfortable and allowed them to ask questions without fear in order to strengthen their faith and practises.

In counseling, guarding the client's secrets by maintaining confidentiality is a rule that must be adhered to by the counselor to ensure that ethical and moral standards are maintained within the relationship. This helps to build a trusting relationship that exhibits characteristics of unconditional positive regard as the client is free to express and explore all their feelings, even the most uncomfortable ones, within a safe environment, which is free from judgment.

Summarisation: When delivering speeches, the Prophet ﷺ would make sure to be brief and to the point, and often used summarisation to conclude. This ensured that he would not be misunderstood by others, which was very important in his role of spreading the message. Narrated A'isha: The Prophet ﷺ used to talk so clearly that if somebody wanted to count the number of his words, he could do so.' (Sahih al-Bukhari, 3567)

Counselors use the same technique to ensure that they have understood what the client has expressed. This enhances the effect of empathy and helps the client to feel understood and respected, as it is made clear that the counselor has heard all that they have said. It is also a useful technique to use so the client can hear their own story retold by the counselor. Hearing their own story, rather than telling it, can be a useful way to stimulate their problem solving skills.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COUNSELOR

Good character: The Prophet ﷺ was known and honored for his outstanding characteristics. His honesty, morality, and generosity gave him the

ideal characteristics to provide effective counseling to his followers.

Positive attitude: The Prophet ﷺ did not look down upon anyone who sought counsel from him. He had a positive attitude toward counseling. This positive attitude was important in developing and maintaining relationships with Muslims and non-Muslims alike. An attitude such as this should be applied even beyond the counseling relationship as a way of life. 'And verily, you (O Muhammad!) ﷺ have an exalted standard of character!' (Quran, 68:4)

Caring: The Prophet ﷺ showed interest and care for his followers by smiling. This was another way to portray a positive attitude that made people feel happy and good. As a nonverbal form of communication, smiling can help to ease and build confidence; making it more comfortable to open up and express difficult feelings. These are all key skills used by counselors that we can all learn from and apply when supporting friends and family who are facing difficulties.

The Islamic Online University offers online counseling lead by the standards of CCT, compatible with Islamic principles, borrowed from the lessons of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.
<http://islamiconlineuniversity.com/counseling/counsel.php>

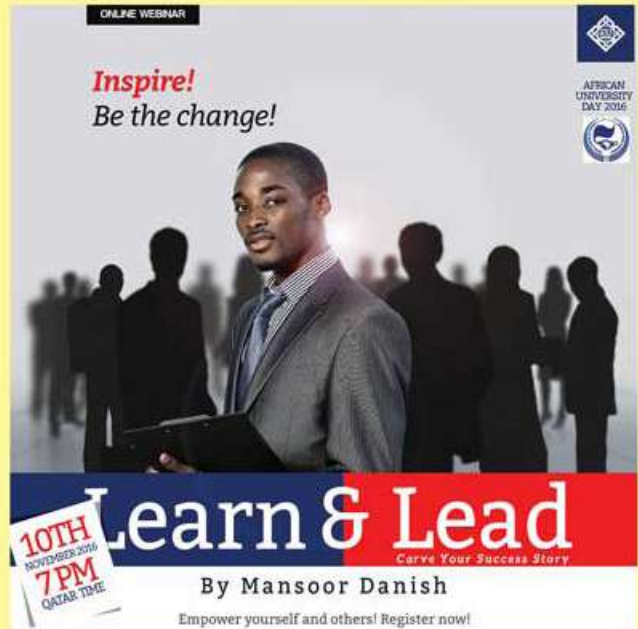
By Hannah Morris

Sr. Hannah holds an M.A. degree in Psychology, and has over 10 years of experience working in health and social care settings in the UK, USA, and Ireland. She is an IOU Psychology instructor and a counselor for IOU's Islamic Counseling Services:
islamiconlineuniversity.com/counseling/counsel.php

Celebration of African University Day 2016 at the ISLAMIC ONLINE UNIVERSITY

The African University Day 2016 was celebrated with great enthusiasm at the Islamic Online University. An exciting webinar was arranged to commemorate the special occasion on November 10, 2016. The title of the webinar was, "Learn and Lead: Carve Your Success Story". Mr. Mansoor Danish, lecturer of Islamic Economics, Banking and Finance Department, kept the audience captivated with his lively presentation and thought-provoking concepts about how to become a great and successful leader in all areas of life by focusing first and foremost on the professional field. The webinar came to an end after a long and productive question and answer session, where participants had an opportunity to ask questions.

The event was open to all students, staff, and the general public. It was well received by the participants. While the University headquarters are in the Gambia and there is a significantly large student body of IOU in the continent of Africa, the celebration was geared toward students from all over the world. It provided the Islamic Online University a great opportunity to raise awareness about the African University Day, which is an initiative of the Association of African Universities (AAU), where IOU is a full member institution. It also provided the IOU with the platform to arrange an exciting webinar, based on the overall theme of the event this year, "Entrepreneurial Learning and Communities of Practice."



The Islamic Online University greatly appreciates this and other such initiatives of the Association of African Universities (AAU), to promote dialogue and discussion among the stakeholders, policy makers, and relevant personnel, for further improvement of education in the region. The University is delighted to be part of this historic initiative and looks forward to taking part next year.

By Hunain Aijaz



Br. Hunain is the Chief of Academic Services and a lecturer in the Department of Islamic Studies at IOU.

By Syeda Madeeha Bokhari



Sr. Madeeha is the Associate Registrar at IOU.



LEADERSHIP WEBINAR

-LEARN AND LEAD

WHY LEADERSHIP?

The discussion of leadership in today's highly competitive professional environment can never be overlooked. In fact, leadership is not a discussion that can be restricted to merely workplace scenarios. It can also be extended to include the area of personal relationships, where leadership plays an important role. In managing personal relationships, we need a leader to resolve issues and disputes within the family as well as guide us to make important decisions in our life. In this article, we focus on leadership from a profes-

¹Cohen, W.A. 'The Art of the Leader

sional perspective.

DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership is composed of two dynamics—those that follow, and a clear vision or purpose. In the absence of either of the two, the role of a leader becomes redundant and ambiguous. Leadership is summed up as "the art of influencing others to their maximum performance to accomplish any task, objective, or project."

The two key points here are:

- 1) the art of influencing (referring to the skills of a leader)
- 2) accomplishment of any task, objective or project (willingness and ability of the follower)

DUTIES OF A LEADER

Based on the above definition, we can list a few important duties of a leader:

1) Creating and Establishing Long-Term Strategies

The leader is expected to be a visionary and must be able to create and establish long-term

strategies for the team. A leader who can't set a vision for the team is misleading them.

2) Communication

Communication is the lifeline of any organization. The leader must ensure that regular communication is maintained with the followers and that there exists an open exchange of ideas. Effective communication is a two-way street between the leader and the followers. This also facilitates building strong and trusting relationships, which is key to effective leadership.

3) Acting with Integrity and Fairness

A leader is expected to display

excellent morals and integrity, both in their personal, and professional life. A leader who is perceived as weak (on grounds of morality) in the sight of his followers will never be able to accomplish the vision of the organization. This explains why Almighty God, in reference to Prophet Muhammad r, said in the Noble Quran: "...and indeed you possess a great character." (Surah Al-Qalam: 4)

This verse on the excellence of the character of the Prophet of Islam r reflects the importance of this quality in a leader.

4) Providing Counsel, Direction & Motivation

This duty of a leader stems from the above definition which

mentions the leader's 'art of influencing'. An effective leader needs to regularly counsel and motivate his team to meet the objectives and vision of the organization. He provides a direction by being an example to his team. He sets the standard, and the team follows him.

5) Producing Results and Meeting Goals & Objectives

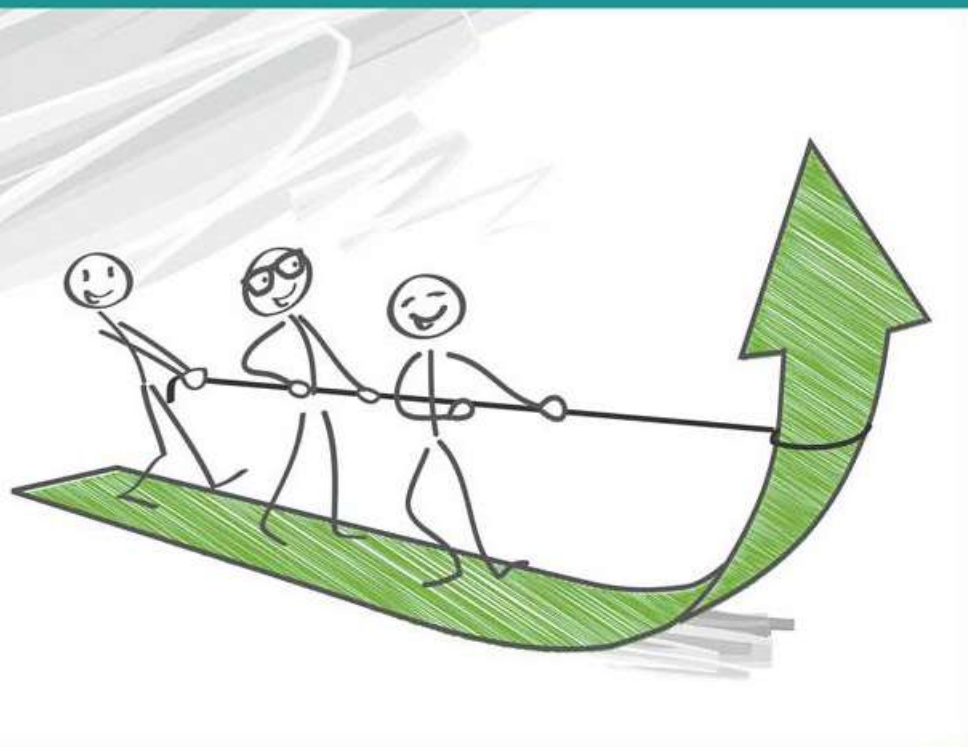
This is the quantitative part of the duties of a leader. Here, the leader is expected to meet the top-line (revenue targets) & bottom-line (profit) targets. A leader is expected to stretch his team's efforts and motivate them to exceed the goals and objectives set by the organization.

LEADERSHIP STYLES

These styles were proposed by Daniel Goleman in his article, 'Leadership That Gets Results' which was published in the Harvard Business Review. He pointed out 6 emotional leadership styles. A successful leader is expected to possess all these styles in his interactions with his followers. Based on the situation, the environment, and the personality of the individual being addressed, a leader is expected to use different styles in order to effectively manage the challenges of the workplace.

Visionary Leader

A visionary leader mobilizes



his team toward a common/shared goal and vision. This style is also called the 'Come with me' style of leadership. It works best when a team has a new vision due to changing circumstances.

Coaching Leader

A coaching leader develops followers for the future. It is also called the 'Try this' style of leadership. It works best when the leader wants to help build lasting personal strengths in the team members. It works least when the team is defiant and unwilling to change. If a leader manages this style poorly, it may appear like micro-managing.

Affiliative Leader

This is often referred to as the 'People come first' style of leadership. This leadership style works on creating a feeling of bonding with and belonging to the organization. It creates emotional bonds and works best when the team is undergoing stress and needs to rebuild trust.

Excessive use of this style may lead to too much praise and nurture which, in turn, might lead to mediocrity in performance.

Democratic Leader

This leadership style is best used when building a consensus within the team. It is also called the 'What do you think' style of leadership. It works best when the leader wants the team to buy into a decision or take ownership of a decision. It also helps in gathering new ideas. However, it is not the best style in the case of emergencies; when a leader is expected to be decisive.

Pace-Setting Leader

A leader using this style sets the standard for the team to follow. Also called the 'Do as I do, now' style of leadership. It works best when a team is already motivated and skilled and the leader is in search of quick results. If done poorly, it may lead to a blind following of the leader that might overwhelm the team members and limit



innovation in the workplace.

Commanding Leader

This is a style which must be used as a last resort. A leader using this style commands and expects full compliance. It is also referred to as 'Do what I tell you' style of leadership. It is used mostly with 'problem' employees who do not respond to other styles of leadership. It should be avoided, if possible, as it may alienate people and stifle flexibility.

In conclusion, an effective leader must work on incorporating the different styles mentioned above in his personality. He must be able to understand individual situations and apply each style accordingly.

When we study the life of the greatest leader, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, we find that he was a practical example of all the leadership styles mentioned above. As Allah mentions in the Noble Quran:

"In the Prophet of Allah there is certainly for you a good example..." (Surah Ahzab: 21)

By Mansoor Danish



Br. Mansoor holds a Master's degree in Finance. He is a Lecturer and Supervisor for the IOU Islamic Economics Department, and a trained public speaker. He can be contacted at www.mansoordanish.com

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SECURITY

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"I bear witness that there is no deity (none truly to be worshiped) but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah." ~ Islamic Testimony of Faith

All Muslims testify to their faith, alhamdulillah for that. We pray our salah, fast during the month of Ramadan, give zakah and, by the mercy of Allah, try to complete all the obligations as commanded by Him.

However, when was the last time you 'checked' your religion? When was the last time you examined it to ensure that it is free from deviation? Or perhaps, you never felt the need to do so because you are quite confident about what you practise. Unfortunately, the passage of time and societal influences can affect our faith, and that is why all Muslims should consistently make sure they are following the path that is straight.

Misguidance comes in all shapes and sizes. Muslims must remain vigilant in safeguarding their belief, and adhere solely to the Quran and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. For example, adopting the 'modern trends' of society comes quite easy to many of us. This process is often effortless because of our desire to blend in to avoid being labeled with the terms 'loner' or 'extremist' because we cling to our religion and its practises. We love blending in, even though by doing so, we open ourselves up to external influences without any security check. So many compromises have been made with society and culture that we are at a stage wherein we consider the cultural and societal practises as a part of Islam; when obviously, the truth is far away from it.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: *"There will come a time when holding on to your Iman (belief) will be like holding on to hot coals."* (Tirmidhi)

There is no denying that we are living in this 'time' now. Social norms may change periodically, but Islam remains the same. These changes can lead to corruption in our religion with deviations and ignorance.

It is our responsibility and duty to adjust our permeability levels to only absorb that which is in accordance with the true and pure Islam that was sent to us by Allah, and taught by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It is our duty to conduct a reality check regularly to filter out all elements of falsehood. It is also our responsibility to seek knowledge so that we can tame our soul when it tries to adopt practices which work against the commands of Allah.

As Muslims living in a world where societal and cultural influences transgress all bounds, it is our responsibility to give ourselves a security check to see if our beliefs or worship have been polluted by such influences. Realizing our shortcomings, we must reinforce ourselves with correct Islamic knowledge of this beautiful religion.

Every now and then, ask yourself this, "When was the last time you 'checked' your religion?"

“
It is our responsibility to give ourselves a security check to see if our beliefs have been polluted.
”

By Aishah Ahmed



Sr. Aishah Sr. Aishah is a postgraduate chemist pursuing her B.A. in Islamic Studies at IOU where she is the IOU Chat-Info-HelpDesk Officer. Sr. Aishah also serves as the Head of the Islamic Studies Department at Hikmah International School, Bangalore.



MY LORD,
INCREASE ME IN
KNOWLEDGE.

QURAN 20:114



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