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PALESTINIAN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PFDP)

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ACRONYMS

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Full Reference</u>
ALC	Academic Literacy Campaign (BU)
AMIDEAST	America-Mideast Education and Training Services, Inc.
ANU	An-Najah National University
AOR	Agreement Officer Representative
APAD	Association of Palestinian Academic Developers
AQAC	Academic and Quality Assurance Commission
AWRAD	Arab World Research and Development
BU	Bethlehem University
CBL	Community-Based Learning
CELT	Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (ANU)
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CETL	Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (BU, PPU)
CEU	Central European University
COP	Chief of Party
CPT	Collaborative Project(s) in Teaching
CTE	Center for Teaching Excellence
DVC	Digital video conference
ETSC	Effective Teaching Strategies Course
HEC	Higher Education Council
iBT	Internet-Based Test (TOEFL)
ICT	Information and communications technology
IT	Information technology

KCLTI	Kadoorie Center for Learning and Teaching Innovation
LD	Learning Disabilities
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAT	Master of Arts in Teaching (Bard/Al-Quds)
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MoEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
NSP	Network Scholarship Program (OSF)
OSF	Open Society Foundations (formerly Open Society Institute)
PFDP	Palestinian Faculty Development Program
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PPU	Palestine Polytechnic University
PROL	Palestine Rule of Law Program
PTUK	Palestine Technical University–Kadoorie
SET	Seminars on Excellence in Teaching
STFP	Short-Term Fellowship Program
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TEMIS	Tertiary Education Management Information System
TESOL	Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages
TOEFL	Test of English as Foreign Language
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNWRA	UN Relief and Works Agency
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Putting down roots in the West Bank and Gaza is no simple matter, whether for trees, people, or development assistance projects. Both the natural and political terrains can be rocky, and careful nurturing is often required to help fragile seedlings overcome the forces of nature, as well as of history and politics. Success demands long-term commitment, dedicated resources, and tenacity. Over the past decade, AMIDEAST has been privileged to work with an expansive network of individuals who embody these characteristics and who, collectively, have enabled the Palestinian Faculty Development Program (PFDP) to make a permanent mark on the quality of higher education in the West Bank and Gaza. We extend our thanks and appreciation to our USAID colleagues, to the Open Society Foundations, to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and above all to the thousands of Palestinian educators who participated in and contributed to PFDP, and who now carry on the work initiated through this program.

At the time PFDP was conceived, Palestinian higher education was experiencing challenges on multiple fronts. Rapid population increases had led to a tripling of enrollment in Palestinian universities over the previous decade, while declining public funding and limited ability to impose fees on students prevented a commensurate increase in faculty numbers. This, in turn, contributed to ever-larger class sizes and heavy teaching loads. Only about half of all Palestinian university faculty held PhD degrees, and the percentage of full-time faculty was falling. Limited resources and other constraints precluded access to current curricula, research methodology, and technology, and many students were graduating without the skills and knowledge of their global peers. A USAID-commissioned study published in 2003—*An Assessment of Higher Education Needs in the West Bank and Gaza*¹—documented these and other issues and noted, “the trends in different indices [journal/teacher ratio, student/teacher ratio, faculty promotion, percentage of faculty holding specific degrees, percentage of part-time teachers]...converged, indicating a deterioration in the quality of university education.”

Through ongoing discussion with university faculty and administrators, AMIDEAST confirmed what USAID’s 2003 study had concluded: that the most important perceived need among Palestinian universities themselves at the time of PFDP’s conception was faculty development. Not since the USAID-funded Human Resources Development Project (HRDP)—implemented by AMIDEAST from 1979 to 1992—had there been a comprehensive program to address faculty development at Palestinian universities, and many of those trained through HRDP were, in 2005, approaching retirement or had left academia. University administrations believed that this lack of recent, comprehensive faculty development was beginning to seriously affect the ability of their students to learn, and therefore to be competitive with their global peers upon graduation.

AMIDEAST and the Open Society Foundations (OSF²) joined forces to design a program that would help address some of the core challenges noted above. In September 2005, USAID awarded to AMIDEAST and its partner OSF a sole-source cooperative agreement to implement PFDP, launching what would

¹ United States Agency for International Development. *An Assessment of Higher Education Needs in the West Bank and Gaza*, September 2003. Submitted by the Academy for Educational Development. Prepared by Maher Hashweh, Mazen Hashweh, and Sue Berryman.

² The organization was known at the time as OSI—Open Society Institute. The name has since changed, and this report will use the new name, Open Society Foundations, throughout.

become a nearly 10-year effort to increase capacity and quality in the higher education sector in the West Bank and Gaza. The program would address long-term issues of reform in teaching and learning practices and set in motion a process whose multiplier effect would extend throughout Palestinian higher education. The primary objectives of PFDP as they ultimately evolved were as follows.

- To promote the expansion, retention, and professional development of young, promising academics teaching the social sciences and humanities
- To revitalize and reform the teaching of these disciplines at Palestinian higher education institutions
- To promote an institutional culture of teaching and learning
- To identify and develop future higher education leaders from among program participants and alumni

Drawing from international research and experiences of universities and systems that have successfully embarked on the challenge of improving the quality of teaching and learning, AMIDEAST pursued the above objectives through three broad and mutually reinforcing activities as listed below.

1. Providing direct support for university educators to develop their knowledge and skills in teaching and their abilities to advance the scholarship of teaching through reflective practice and research
2. Promoting university policies and practices that support and reward effective teaching and student learning
3. Building a broad culture of support and community of good practice across Palestinian academics and institutions of higher learning

Through the successive components of PFDP, a community of practice has evolved among Palestinian academics, beginning with a focus on improving the quality of individual Palestinian faculty, expanding to facilitate improved teaching and learning practices in higher education institution, and culminating in the establishment of Centers of Teaching Excellence, where a new culture of teaching and learning has taken root.

Over the course of a decade, this multifaceted approach generated total participation of over 3,600 Palestinian faculty and university administrators in PFDP events, training, and degree programs, where they were introduced to new concepts and models in teaching and learning, higher education management, national higher education policy, and international linkages and expertise. In addition, outreach via the Centers for Teaching Excellence has exposed well over 1,000 current Palestinian faculty to new pedagogical tools, research findings, and faculty development in just a few short years. In a real and tangible way, PFDP has furthered the understanding and practice of student-centered learning approaches among Palestinian university faculty, initiated and incentivized faculty engagement within their own institutions and within a broader community of practice, and institutionalized university resources dedicated to quality teaching and learning.

The breadth and depth of interventions at the individual, institutional, and national levels have enabled the ideas and innovations that PFDP introduced to permeate throughout the educational system. PFDP

participants have increased not only their professional abilities and administrative competencies, but now have higher expectations and standards regarding what can be achieved within their institutions and collaboratively across professional networks. They have expressed this in academic forums locally and internationally, benefited other faculty and their students through the sharing and practice of effective teaching strategies, and raised the bar on teaching standards and learning outcomes. This multiplier effect at the individual and institutional levels is making tangible contributions to the improvement of higher education quality in the West Bank and Gaza.

PFDP has generated lasting impact in Palestinian higher education in the following ways.

- Upgraded the professional competencies of thousands of faculty members from 19 Palestinian universities and training centers, in addition to Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) employees, who are now using in their classrooms teaching strategies recognized internationally as effective in improving student learning outcomes (See Appendix 1)
- Developed and expanded a broad and vibrant community of practice among Palestinian faculty that has been formalized in a professional association—the Association of Palestinian Academic Developers (APAD)—spearheaded by PFDP alumni
- Strengthened international linkages among Palestinian faculty and institutions with dozens of international universities and academics in the U.S. and Europe
- Institutionalized the commitment to faculty development and promotion of effective teaching practices through the establishment of Centers for Teaching Excellence (CTEs) at four Palestinian universities
- Through training-of-trainer programs both directly and within the Centers for Teaching Excellence, created a cadre of master trainers in university pedagogies who continue to share their expertise in teaching excellence with faculty at their own and other institutions
- Prompted the development and formal introduction of new course models that incorporate community-based, project-based, and blended learning to help students develop skills important for their success after graduation
- Facilitated the development and approval of a bachelor's degree and professional graduate diploma in special needs education—the first in Palestine—through support for faculty members via Collaborative Projects in Teaching grants and a PhD Fellowship

The national policy seminars introduced late in the program's tenure brought government and private sector stakeholders into strategic, national-level discussions about the future of higher education in the West Bank. However, with the exception of policies and documents produced within the Academic and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC), neither the seminars nor the resulting policy recommendations were able to generate momentum in the area of national-level reform by the time PFDP concluded.

Like the proverbial seed planted in fertile soil, the impact of the Palestinian Faculty Development Program is now firmly rooted within Palestinian higher education. The program contributed directly to significant improvements in the quality of higher education in the West Bank and Gaza; the outcomes listed above have already moved beyond what PFDP itself directly facilitated and serve as a testament to the sustainability of PFDP's approach and the commitment of Palestinian educators.

LOOKING AHEAD

Sustaining the Impact

Several factors are recognized as critical for the sustainability of development projects. These include local participation in the activity, the development of local expertise to continue the activity, broad distribution of benefits, and financial viability. Over nearly a decade, significant USAID and cost-shared resources were invested in the Palestinian higher education sector through PFDP, and at its conclusion, reflection on the sustainability of its achievements is warranted.

Two major developments, both occurring in the final years of the program, indicate that the community of practice arising out of PFDP's intervention has gained a momentum of its own that will sustain the improvements in teaching and learning introduced through the program. The first is the Association of Palestinian Academic Developers (APAD). Spearheaded by PFDP alumni, it formalizes the community of practice and provides a forum through which academics from all



Attendees at PFDP's third annual Academic Colloquium, held at An-Najah National University in July 2009 and focused on *Teaching Practice in Palestinian Tertiary Education*.

Palestinian universities can continue to engage, support and motivate one another, collaborate in ongoing research, and share experiences. The founders' meeting and consultation towards the development of by-laws was supported by PFDP in the project's final month; thereafter, and without PFDP support, the association's officers submitted a formal licensure application to the Ministry of the Interior and have since received approval. This development reflects local initiative for the creation of a formal network among Palestinian academics committed to promoting effective strategies of teaching and learning in higher education.

On a much larger scale, the four PFDP-supported Centers for Teaching Excellence (CTEs) represent the institutionalization of a changing culture in Palestinian higher education. The student-centered learning and innovative teaching strategies that the CTEs are promoting through faculty workshops and other outreach are well on their way to becoming mainstreamed. University administrations have approved revised policies that provide faculty with the flexibility to pursue new teaching and assessment strategies, demonstrating support at the highest institutional level. New curriculum and course models are taking hold, examples of which include Bethlehem University's Academic Literacy Campaign, as well as community-based and project-based learning at An-Najah National and Palestine Polytechnic Universities. The four CTEs that PFDP supported feature alumni of other PFDP components, suggesting that PFDP's earlier work with individual faculty members was particularly important to the development of institutional capacity in higher education. CTE personnel are now regularly tapped for input into their university's strategic planning efforts, and all four centers appear to be assured of financial viability through dedicated university budgets. Above all, student satisfaction with these new approaches to

teaching and their newfound engagement in their own learning is evident, and their final report on the CTEs, AMIDEAST's external evaluators noted they had achieved outcomes of an international standard.

This is not to say that there are no risks to sustainability, and indeed, challenges remain. Among them, although most of the centers have benefited from the strong leadership of their current directors, only one of the four centers has put in place a succession plan to ensure continuity. To the extent that donor support will still be necessary to fund certain activities or for expansion of CTE services, a preoccupation with fundraising has the potential to distract center leadership from its core mission. CTE facilities have been well equipped through their PFDP grants, and their technological capabilities may lead other departments to co-opt them for alternative purposes. And finally, monitoring and evaluation procedures are not well developed in some centers, which may limit their ability to track improvements in learning outcomes stemming from the introduction of new teaching strategies.

Sustainability depends on a host of factors both internal and external. In the February 2015 final external evaluation report on the CTEs, the external evaluators analyzed the CTEs' future prospects based on a series of sustainability criteria, as illustrated below. In their judgment, indications are positive for the sustainability of the centers and, through them, ongoing practice of the knowledge, skills, and approaches cultivated through PFDP.³

Sustainability Analysis

Sustainability Criteria	Clarification	Evaluation of CTEs
Policy sustainability	Government policies support the CTE program and the program is consistent with these policies.	The CTE program is aligned with MoEHE quality assurance policies and with recommendations for strengthening the quality of teaching and learning.
	The CTE program is consistent with university regulations and policies.	Each CTE operates within a supportive university policy and regulatory environment; where conflicting issues arise in this environment (for example, concerning assessment), universities have approved sensible modifications to permit better practices. However, further work is needed to more fully align university policies (e.g. on faculty rewards, assessment practices, curriculum planning) with the goal of student-centered learning.
Institutional and organizational sustainability	Change and quality improvement is sustainable if it is based on local commitment, effective leadership and management, initiative and openness to change.	Led by local faculty, all CTEs are managed within existing university structures and report to a vice-president (academic). Local initiative is apparent in grant documents, and local leadership and commitment is evident in strong support from university presidents, increasing involvement by middle management (deans and heads), and by continuing funding and space allocation.

³ Knapper, Christopher K. and Robert A. Cannon. *Centers for Teaching Excellence Phase 2 Final Evaluation Study*, February 28, 2015, pp. 43-48.

Sustainability Criteria	Clarification	Evaluation of CTEs
Institutional and organizational sustainability (continued)	Broad participation by faculty and administrators in program planning, implementation, and evaluation.	High levels of participation in CTEs by faculty and administrators are evident in program planning, implementation, and evaluation. In some CTEs, the quality of program evaluations needs attention and there are risks that invalid and misleading data are being used in decision-making.
	There is evidence of breadth (different groups) and depth (different levels) of participation demonstrating strength of local ownership.	<i>Breadth:</i> Faculty from across the disciplines are coming together in CTE activities. A culture where learning and teaching issues are routinely discussed is strongly evident at Bethlehem University (BU) and An-Najah National University (ANU), including in the highest decision-making councils, and is emerging in the two newer CTEs at Palestinian Polytechnic University (PPU) and Palestine Technical University-Kadoorie (PTUK). <i>Depth:</i> Faculty and administrators (including recent faculty appointees up to and including the university presidents) have participated in CTE activities. Deans and heads are becoming more involved, often after personally benefitting from a CTE activity. <i>Strength:</i> All teaching fellows/trainers in the centers expressed a strong commitment to provide continuing services to their CTE. Expertise in teaching and educational development is being enhanced through ongoing conversations and activities within each university, by interaction among Palestinian universities, and exposure to international consultants <i>Local ownership:</i> There is an evident sense of fierce local ownership and responsibility to continue without external support at each CTE.
	The CTEs work with local communities and with other universities locally and internationally to develop cooperative and sustainable approaches to quality improvement.	All CTEs are able to demonstrate examples of these approaches. Notable initiatives include a focus on community-based learning, successful conferences organized by three CTEs, and partnerships and cooperation with universities in the Middle East, North America, and Europe.
Financial sustainability	Continuity of resource support is strong and the cost of the CTE is affordable and financially realistic.	All CTEs are assured of continuing financial support by their respective universities in the immediate future. Expenditures for space and equipment have been completed (PFDP-funded) and should serve the institutions for several years to come. However, the cessation of project funds may jeopardize some activities, such as international partnerships. Another potential risk is that involvement of CTEs in fund-raising will distract center staff from central educational development activities.

Sustainability Criteria	Clarification	Evaluation of CTEs
Personnel sustainability	Key staff is available to provide continuing academic and administrative leadership of the CTE.	ANU and BU have built a depth of experience among faculty that will provide a future leadership resource, and ANU has appointed an associate director. With only one full-time academic in each new CTE (PPU and PTUK), the centers are at risk from the potential lack of continuity in academic leadership.
	The CTEs use and develop local capacity in their work and that of faculty “clients.” Capacity building for local faculty has sufficiently deepened their understanding to ensure adequate effectiveness in leadership roles.	Local faculty members are actively supporting the work of CTEs in all four universities. The continuing professional development of all people working with CTEs is critical for their credibility and survival and the existence of succession plans to address organizational and leadership changes would reduce this risk.
Sustainability of educational development approaches	The educational development activities, approaches, and strategies are appropriate for local conditions.	Local universities all place priority on quality teaching and student-centered learning; strategies and approaches to development are appropriate and reflect broadly based evidence of good practice. But current development activities need to be strengthened by diversifying strategies away from undue reliance on workshops and toward a deeper and broader program-and-project approach such as developing academic literacy (BU) and introducing community-based learning (ANU, PPU).
Social and cultural sustainability	The CTE program is socially and culturally appropriate for local conditions. All groups in the university are included and participate in activities.	The CTE program in each university is sustainable when assessed against these criteria and the CTEs include all groups in the university. Women are reasonably well represented in CTE staffing profiles (one CTE director and one director of e-learning are female) at BU and ANU respectively. With respect to program participation, female faculty and students are equitably represented at ANU and BU, but female faculty are under-represented at PPU and PTUK. The evaluators found no evidence to suggest that social and cultural factors may be impediments to sustainability.
External political and economic sustainability	Political and economic factors have an impact on sustainability.	The political and economic situation of Palestinian universities presents a continuing risk to sustainability that is extremely difficult for CTEs to manage.

Recommendations

Based on the outcomes of PFDP and the current state of Palestinian higher education, there are a number of areas that warrant consideration for future USAID support to further extend and solidify the already

substantial achievements realized under PFDP. Several of these have been raised previously in the context of the needs assessments and other activities that AMIDEAST conducted under this program.

- The seminal *National Study of Undergraduate Teaching Practices in Palestine* was conducted in 2009, but there has been no major follow-up study that would confirm the extent of change resulting from the work of PFDP, and of the CTEs in particular. Faculty evaluations for CTE workshops and student evaluations of CTE-trained faculty all show improvements in the institutional culture of teaching and learning, but there has not yet been a systematic mixed-methods counter-factual evaluation of the extent of change and the impact on student learning. Such a study would be useful for the existing CTEs and would also inform any decision to make further investment in these or additional centers.
 - The CTEs at Bethlehem and An-Najah National Universities benefited from a second development grant that enabled them to consolidate and expand many of their achievements in the first grant period. The newer centers at Palestine Polytechnic and Palestine Technical Universities have made significant progress with the support of a single grant, but they are still—in the words of the external evaluators—“fragile.” As with their predecessors, another period of external support would enable them to further develop and institutionalize their initial progress and improve their prospects for sustainability.
 - The positive impact that the CTEs have made on teaching and learning at their respective institutions has gained national exposure through the conferences that they have hosted to showcase their experience. Several other universities applied for CTE grants from PFDP and were not chosen, and it is likely that the success of the four funded centers has piqued similar interest in yet additional institutions. Funding for the development of additional centers would serve to further a national network and expand the introduction of improved teaching and learning to benefit more students.
 - Greater attention needs to be given to issues associated with the transition from school to university and the provision of academic support services to students.
 - Much of the change that has evolved with the support of PFDP has occurred in spite of restrictive Palestinian government policies. Through the National Policy Seminars and direct support for the work of AQAC, PFDP was able to move forward discussion on key topics for policy reform. Further investment in this area will not be productive unless or until committed and reform-minded MoEHE leadership is appointed. If and when that time comes, USAID should be poised and ready to work closely with such leadership to help create a policy environment more favorable to innovation in higher education.
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PFDP PROGRAM COMPONENTS

A Model of Academic Change and Development

The extent and nature of PFDP's interventions followed a continuum toward progressively more developed models of academic change and development internationally recognized to be increasingly more effective in a teaching and learning context. The table below, developed by Dr. Gregory Light, former director of Northwestern University's Searle Center for Advanced Learning and Teaching, illustrates the four levels of academic development and change that emerged during PFDP. The descriptions are differentiated according to the type of practice they represent—corrective practice, best practice, reflective practice and community of practice—and in terms of the focus the teacher education takes, the knowledge and skills being developed, the kind of activities used to foster their development, and their relationship to research and student learning.

The relationship between the models is cumulative, meaning that each successive model incorporates aspects of the previous model but extends them in important ways. For example, the advanced knowledge and skills emphasized in the reflective practice model includes and builds on those of the corrective practice and best practice models. The later models incorporate practices that are widely recognized to improve teaching and learning and to promote the sustainability of the educational achievement through deeper and broader outcomes, such as the development of communities to support and maintain change and innovation. In this respect, each successive model is richer and more complex than the one that precedes it.

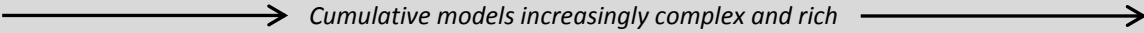
PFDP's initial activities focused on improving subject-specific skills and knowledge among individual educators, mostly at the university level. PFDP's earliest activities included full-length PhD and short-term faculty exchange fellowships at American universities; eventually, this program component was expanded to include master's fellowships as well. While the U.S.-based training PFDP sponsored certainly included exposure to and involvement in higher-order teaching and learning, the pedagogical tradition from which these faculty came and to which they returned was largely characterized by the *corrective practice model* below.

By providing training in pedagogical skills and best practices that maximize student learning, PFDP's delivery of the Seminars on Excellence in Teaching (SET) moved participants in Palestine to the *best practice model*. The University Administrator Seminars sought to reinforce these same principles within university administration so that administrators would be better placed to adapt policies supportive of innovative approaches in teaching.

The development of a cadre of SET master trainers initiated the transition to *reflective practice* and built initial local training capacity important for sustainability. The Faculty Development Seminars and Higher Education Roundtables reinforced skills in and knowledge of higher-order forms of student learning and provided a forum in which practitioners could discuss practical applications and experience. The Faculty Grants and Collaborative Projects in Teaching, meanwhile, supported research on and development of

methodologies, tools, and curriculum informed by a growing understanding of effective teaching and learning principles.

Models of Academic Change and Development: Learning and Teaching

FEATURES	MODELS			
	Corrective Practice	Best Practice	Reflective Practice	Community of Practice
				
Teacher Education Focus	<u>Individual</u> Basic personal skills (addressing behavioral deficits) for teaching and instruction	<u>Individual</u> Advanced practitioner skills for using and implementing best teaching practices	<u>Individual-Collaborative</u> Professional, reflective growth of teaching based on core principles of pedagogical design	<u>Collaborative</u> Professional, shared growth of learning and teaching within multiple communities and fields
Knowledge & Skill Development	Specific skills and competencies for giving information (e.g. information, communication, and presentation skills)	Specialized pedagogical knowledge and skills to master best practices (e.g. construct learning outcomes; manage groups, create assessment rubrics)	Expert knowledge of core conceptual frameworks and design principles for learning (e.g. nature of learning, collaboration, inquiry, and evaluation in learning environments)	Professional knowledge and skills for fostering, spreading, and sustaining community practices and values (e.g. mentoring, collaboration, networking, innovation, scholarship, research, publishing)
Types of Activities	Workshops, micro teaching, one-to-one clinics, acquisition of tips, and strategies.	Workshops, seminars and training on specific pedagogical skills, competencies, and practices	Workshops, seminars, collaborations, retreats, focus groups, and projects etc. relating skills, knowledge & data	Seminars, workshops, community meetings, conferences, retreats, association meetings, collaborative projects
Research	<u>External-limited</u> Information and communication skills, practical, research by others	<u>External-extensive</u> Evaluation research on best practice by other practitioners and researchers	<u>Personal collaborative</u> Scholarship of teaching; teaching as research, evaluation & assessment of own practices.	<u>Collaborative</u> Research, dissemination & publishing on practice and learning principles of practice. Collaborative projects within and across multiple communities.
Student Learning	No special focus on student learning	Recognition of student learning as key goal of teaching practice	Recognition of deeper (higher order) forms of student learning is core focus of teaching	Recognition of deeper (higher order) forms of student learning in terms of wider community problems & challenges

The evolution of PFDP intervention through successive models of teaching practice provided a foundation for their culmination in the *community of practice* model of academic change with the establishment of four Centers for Teaching Excellence (CTEs). These centers are now fostering and encouraging the adoption of more effective approaches to teaching, supporting and mentoring individual teachers as they revise curriculum and teaching strategies, and providing a forum for regular exchange and sharing among faculty that is also leading to new levels of inter-departmental collaboration. Several of the CTEs have spearheaded the development of courses that incorporate community-based and project-based learning, giving students a real-world context in which to apply what they are learning.

Notably, this highest-order model is the one most clearly associated with sustainability. It reflects a common culture of learning that is shared throughout the institution, and the existence of a vibrant community of practice in which innovation can thrive and students can be active participants in their own learning. The CTEs are now leading the charge among colleagues at other institutions; other faculty frequently seek them out for training and mentoring, and the national-level events they have mounted in recent years have attracted large and diverse audiences from other universities seeking to initiate change within their own institutions. The table below depicts the major PFDP components, the span of time in which they were active, and the level of academic practice that each represents.

Major PFDP Components	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
PhD Fellows	33 Fellows									
Pre-Academic Training & Professional English Development	228 Participants; all fellows participated, as well as others									
Short-Term Fellows		29 Fellows								
Masters Scholarships for Administrators and MoEHE Personnel					16 Scholars					
Effective Teaching Strategies Course & Seminars for Excellence in Teaching	66 Participants									
Teaching Excellence Awards		23 Participants								
U.S.-Based Fellows Conference		153 Attendees Across Six Conferences								
Academic Colloquia		1,160 Attendees Across Six Colloquia								
Administrative Seminars			99 Participants							
Collaborative Projects in Teaching			4 Grantees							
Faculty Grants for Teaching and Learning				26 Grantees						
SET Master Trainers				7 Master Trainers						
Higher Education Roundtables & National Policy Seminars						979 Participants				
Centers for Teaching Excellence						At Least 1,000 Faculty Engaged				
Association of Palestinian Academic Developers										21

Levels of Impact

Corrective Practice	Reflective Practice
Best Practice	Community of Practice

The pages that follow summarize the many components of PFDP that have contributed to the evolution of a community of practice among Palestinian academics: from improved quality of individual Palestinian faculty, to improved teaching and learning practices in higher education institution, to an improved institutional approach to teaching and learning. This trajectory culminated in the establishment of Centers of Teaching Excellence, where a new culture of teaching and learning has taken root.

Improved Quality of Palestinian Faculty

PhD Fellowships

In 2005, 50% of Palestinian university faculty held only a master's degree, and many of those who earned PhD degrees through the USAID-funded Human Resources Development Program implemented by AMIDEAST in the 1980s were approaching retirement age. PFDP's PhD Fellowship program represented a conscious strategy to upgrade the skills of promising young Palestinian social scientists as well as to combat "brain drain" in the region by supporting talented scholars who would return to teach at their home universities in the West Bank and Gaza. Palestinian faculty chosen to study in the United States on PFDP Fellowships represented a range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, providing significant intellectual and research talent for those Palestinian universities to which they returned. The PhD degrees they earned in the United States prepared them to establish graduate programs in their disciplines in Palestinian universities, to undertake state-of-the-art research, and to effectively mentor graduate students. Exposure to new teaching methodologies helped them become more effective instructors, and many formed relationships with U.S. faculty that can continue to benefit them in their ongoing professional development.



PhD Fellows at an annual U.S.-Based Fellows Conference hosted by OSF in conjunction with OSF's annual Palestinian Rule of Law program conference.

Intensive outreach activities at relevant institutions were conducted beginning in 2005, with the first PhD cohort selected in December 2005. In this first selection, as well as one conducted later in the program, eligible academic disciplines included the following: education, urban planning, political science, social work and public policy/public administration. The limited number of eligible fields of study ultimately served to narrow the applicant pool, as did Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) and home university insistence on five to ten years of service upon the

fellows' return (although this was ultimately not enforceable). Many otherwise qualified applicants did not have sufficiently strong English language skills to enable their acceptance into a U.S. doctoral program; this was especially true in Gaza. In addition, the necessary exclusion of Palestinian Authority employees (those working in government positions in addition to their part-time university teaching jobs, and faculty at public institutions including Al-Aqsa University in Gaza) further limited the pool of eligible applicants. Despite these constraints, consistently high-quality candidates were identified who also provided good geographic distribution (approximately 74% from the West Bank and 26% from Gaza), representation from nine different Palestinian universities, and a gender split that included 33% women—significantly higher than the then-existing percentage of female university faculty.

Pre-academic assessment and training were provided for all PhD Fellows prior to their program start date to help them prepare for required standardized tests, improve their English language proficiency and academic writing skills, and gain professional skills in areas such as public speaking, communication and presentation skills, SPSS and advanced SPSS, PowerPoint and Web search, and research methodology. U.S. university placement was managed by OSF in collaboration with specific institutions with which it had previously established relationships. These included: University of Florida, University of Massachusetts–Amherst,

Columbia University, Columbia University's Teachers College, University of Washington, Cleveland State University, Brandeis University, University of Michigan, Southern Illinois University–Carbondale, University of Texas at Austin, University of Illinois/Urbana-Champaign, University of Denver, Boston College, Portland State University, University of Akron, and University of Texas at Dallas.

In total, 34 PhD Fellows were selected, prepared for travel to and study in the United States, placed at U.S. universities in partnership with the Open Society Foundation (OSF), and began their studies. Of these, 31 (over 90%) have earned their doctorates, and most have returned home and are teaching in Palestinian universities; two are still finishing their degrees as of this writing; and one returned home after completing just a master's degree.

An alumni survey compiled by AMIDEAST in late 2014 documents participants' satisfaction with their PhD Fellowships and the impact on their professional development that they attribute to their U.S. study programs. All participants who completed the survey ranked their overall experience as good to excellent. They cited the program as having had an exceptionally positive impact on their understanding of their academic discipline, and perhaps most importantly, that they could apply what they learned in the U.S. to improving the quality of education in the West Bank and Gaza. Increases in such key areas research skills, ability to access knowledge, and leadership skills were also highly rated.



PFDP PhD Fellow Fida Yaseen receives her doctorate from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, in 2010. Yaseen is now an Assistant Professor in the Center for Urban and Regional Planning at An-Najah National University.

Some individual fellows can already point to exceptional progress achieved since their graduation. Dr. Mohammed Zayyad has developed a full bachelor's degree program in Special Needs Education that was accepted by Al-Quds University and approved by the MoEHE in 2014, constituting the first such program in the West Bank or Gaza. Dr. Kefah Barham has served as an expert for two national conferences on e-learning as part of integrating learning technology into the Palestinian curriculum. Dr. Hasan Ayoub credits his U.S. degree with advancing him from a part-time teaching job to a full-time assistant professor. "My scholarship has added a lot to my leadership skills," reported one PhD Fellow alumnus. "I am now responsible for the [portfolio] of inclusive education at my school. I also am now a member in the financial committee and educational committee."

A listing of PhD Fellows appears in Appendix 2.

Short-Term Fellowship Program

Between 2007 and 2010, twenty-nine Short-Term Fellows from the West Bank and Gaza participated in an innovative non-degree faculty exchange program focused on encouraging the pursuit of academic careers, generating new approaches to curricular and pedagogical reform, and providing scholarly research opportunities. The Short-Term Fellowship Program (STFP) awards were designed to encourage the pursuit of academic careers with a focus on teaching; generate new approaches to curricular and

pedagogical reform; and support the development of regional, international and departmental partnerships, thereby significantly improving the quality of education in the West Bank and Gaza.



Short-Term Fellow Tariq Serhan conducts a field visit during his stay at the University of South Florida. Serhan studied education and urban planning during his short-term visits to the U.S.

Part-time and full-time faculty from Palestinian universities and colleges teaching in one of 17 social science and humanities fields spent fellowship periods of 3–5 months at partner universities in the United States. Participating faculty members and administrators engaged in curriculum development, research and teaching in their fields, which included a wide range of disciplines such as public health, urban planning, hydrology, higher education administration and bilingual education.

Each fellow made between one and three visits to their host institution so that the long-term value of connections deepened

and institutional, academic, and peer networking and relationship building could be better achieved. This structure also allowed for completion of longer-term course development projects. For example, Jamal Rabee carried out a joint research project with a U.S. faculty mentor at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Education on problem-based learning and teaching methods that—over the course of three visits—provided a basis for a comparison between Palestinian and American students. Saed Koni, whose Short-Term Fellowship was hosted by Syracuse University, was able to facilitate several memoranda of understanding between Syracuse University and his home institution, An-Najah National University (ANU): a) between Syracuse University's L.C. Smith College of Engineering and Computer Science and ANU's College of Engineering; b) between Syracuse University's Whitman School of Management and ANU's College of Economics and Administrative Sciences and College of Graduate Studies; c) between Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Public Administration and Citizenship and ANU's College of Graduate Studies; and d) between the two universities for general collaboration and youth exchange.

The short length of each exchange visit was planned to avoid disrupting faculty responsibilities in their home institutions. Participants were able to maintain connections and immediately apply knowledge gained on return home. However, some Palestinian universities were reluctant to promote the program or continue paying faculty while they were in the U.S. for even the short period of the fellowship. This issue, together with the non-degree nature of the program and its initial limitation to only five eligible fields of study, led to a decrease in applications in the program's second year. Subsequently, however, applications increased again as the number of eligible fields were broadened and the lifting of the no-contact policy with the Palestinian Authority allowed consideration of applications from additional institutions. The first seven Short-Term Fellows embarked on their sojourns in 2007, one additional began in 2008, and ten fellows—five from each of the West Bank and Gaza—made their first visits in 2009. In 2010, the last 13 fellows (including one from Gaza) initiated their STF programs.

Short-Term Fellowship semi-finalists, along with PhD Fellowship finalists, together participated in up to 275 hours of pre-academic training, including TOEFL test preparation, intensive English, and professional and research skills. Prior to departing for their exchanges, the first cohort of STF finalists took part in the first 40 hours of what was originally intended to be a two-part, 80-hour “Effective Teaching Strategies Course,” designed and delivered by pedagogical experts from Central European University’s Special and Extensions Unit. The seminar, delivered in Ramallah in July 2006, focused on how to design a teaching portfolio and how to best take advantage of the exchange experience in terms of teaching and curriculum development. Training focused on the relationship between research and the classroom, course content, and methodology of delivery. Unfortunately, the closure of the Erez crossing that summer precluded Fellows from Gaza from traveling to Ramallah to participate in the course. Subsequently, enrollment in the course was opened to a broader range of faculty applicants and it was renamed the *Seminar on Excellence in Teaching* (SET). Eventually, this would develop into a major component of PFDP.

A list of Short-Term Fellows appears in Appendix 3.

Master’s Degree Fellowship Program for Teachers and Principals of Private and Public Schools and Ministry of Education Officials



PFDP’s first cohort of Master’s Degree Fellows during a pre-departure orientation meeting.

A 2008 study of USAID-funded scholarship programs⁴ recommended additional support for master’s degree training, particularly in disciplines that are weak or unavailable in Palestinian universities. Inherent in this recommendation was the cultivation of future Palestinian leaders who, through their U.S.-based academic and personal experiences, would be prepared to contribute to the development of Palestinian society. Subsequently, USAID requested that PFDP add a program component enabling school teachers and principals, as well as mid-level MoEHE administrators and supervisors, to pursue U.S. master’s

degrees in education administration, education leadership, curriculum design, education policy, education technology, school counseling, or special education—master’s-level programs unavailable at Palestinian universities.

The broader goal of this program was to increase the skills and knowledge of a select group of public sector education professionals who, upon their return, would help build the ministry’s capacity to implement its National Teacher Education Strategy, finalized in 2008 with technical support from UNESCO.

AMIDEAST’s responsibility for this component was focused on recruitment, selection, and pre-academic training, as well as ensuring inclusion in follow-on activities upon their return. OSF shared in the selection process and took the lead in U.S. university placement and monitoring of the grantees. AMIDEAST and OSF expected to support at least 35 master’s degree fellowships in two cohorts of 20 and 15, respectively. However, due to a number of circumstances, only nine candidates were chosen for

⁴Wein, Gerald, and Sarah Auten. *An Evaluation of the Clinton and Master’s Degree and Presidential Scholarship Programs and the Palestinian Faculty Development Program*. Aguirre Division of JBS International, 2008.

the first cohort instead of the planned 20. One difficulty was the short time period available for advertising the scholarships to all schools and ministry offices after AMIDEAST's cooperative agreement was modified and negotiations were concluded with the ministry regarding selection criteria. In addition, after AMIDEAST, OSF, and the MoEHE had agreed upon the criteria to be applied and advertised the opportunity, the ministry made changes that resulted in more stringent criteria and limited the number of applicants that could still be considered "qualified." Finally, while ministry officials had assured AMIDEAST that significant numbers of its staff had sufficient English language proficiency to pursue a U.S. graduate degree, this was discovered not to be the case once short-listed candidates were interviewed. Once the application process was complete, insufficient time remained to provide intensive English training to candidates who ranked highly in all criteria except language. In the first round, 48 applications were received, 15 were shortlisted and interviewed, and ten were selected. These ten finalists were provided with pre-academic training in research methodologies and academic writing. One dropped out before university placements were finalized, leaving a final cohort of nine candidates who began their master's degree studies in the fall of 2010 and graduated the following spring.

AMIDEAST was able to begin advertising the fellowships much further in advance for the second cohort, resulting in a total application pool of 32. Of these, 18 were short-listed and interviewed, were provided with a TOEFL preparation course, and sat for the iBT exam. Based on test scores and subsequent interviews, ten finalists were selected and received pre-academic training in academic writing, research methodology, IT skills, and SPSS. Seven candidates ultimately enrolled in master's degree programs during 2011–12.⁵

In all, sixteen Palestinian teachers, school administrators, and Directorate-level employees—more than 50% of them women—received one-year fellowships for U.S. study, with placement and on-program support provided by OSF.⁶ The four universities from which they graduated were: Syracuse University's School of Education, Boston College's Lynch School, the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Kentucky's School of Education. The Fellows' research covered a wide spectrum of educational policy and practice areas and was rooted in practical application in the Palestinian context. By fall 2012, all had graduated and returned to the West Bank and Gaza.

Six (37.5%) of the master's fellows responded to AMIDEAST's alumni survey administered in late 2014. Three were classified as "administrators" and three as professors for the purposes of analysis, and their



Members of the second cohort of Master's Degree Fellows pose with PFDP staff at the 2012 U.S.-Based Fellows Conference in Denver.

⁵ Of the ten finalists, one was not granted a visa, one was denied participation by her husband, and a third withdrew for personal reasons.

⁶ Abeer Shahin was actually selected as a PhD Fellow and began a doctoral program at the University of Pennsylvania. As a preliminary step, he completed a master's degree in Educational Policy and Philosophy, and then returned to the West Bank without completing his PhD. We are therefore counting him among the master's candidates, although he was not selected through the same process nor from the same pool of applicants as the other master's fellows, all of whom were MoEHE employees.

responses are not disaggregated from those of the PhD Fellows. The majority of respondents in both categories ranked as “excellent” their improved leadership skills, increase in professional knowledge in their academic disciplines, and increase in their ability to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as a result of their scholarship programs.

Several master’s fellows noted the pivotal nature of their U.S. degree programs. For example, Ms. Fatima Mohammed, a secondary school English teacher, says she is more confident now than before her participation: “I also had a great chance to reform myself and exchange my experience with different people.” Mr. Inad Mialeh, also a secondary school English teacher, noted the increase in professional opportunities that stemmed from his U.S. master’s degree: “I start[ed] working with students with disabilities, and I work now on improving their condition and support their inclusion in Palestine.”

Ms. Nida Arafat returned to her work at the Directorate of Education in Nablus as an educational supervisor of mathematics. She describes the impact of the program as follows: “My way of thinking has changed completely, my methods of research and work have also shifted for the best. I have a new experience and expertise that I can teach to my fellow teachers and colleagues.” In addition, she believes she will have a greater impact on educational quality because of her experience in policy education research in the U.S. She was recently chosen as a member of the Consulting Committee for Math in An-Najah National University’s College of Science, where she is working to strengthen the teaching of mathematics.

However, it is worth noting that all of the master’s degree candidates remain in essentially the same positions they held before embarking on their U.S. study programs, and the MoEHE has given them only a very small salary increase. Many are succeeding in broadening their involvement and influence beyond the confines of those positions, but thus far, there have been no signs of promotional opportunities for these returned scholars. In the view of one master’s degree recipient who is a secondary school principal, “The Ministry of Education did not give us the opportunity for promotion. In fact, they neglect us.”

A list of Master’s Degree Fellows appears in Appendix 4.

Pre-Academic Training

Pre-academic professional training was provided for all PFDP fellows to support them both with university admission and in developing the skills they would need to make the most of program opportunities. In some cases, as with the very first training session that began in December 2005 and focused on TOEFL preparation, training was offered to semi-finalists rather than waiting for final selection, to provide an adequate period of preparation and help ensure that those who received fellowships were selected based on their academic work and personal qualities rather than their English proficiency. Locations for training included Gaza and Nablus as well as Ramallah, and online advanced English language training was arranged in one case for a group from Hebron and Tulkaram who had difficulty traveling to other locations. Training focused on flexible response to actual needs, and in some cases, courses were lengthened or otherwise adapted based on instructor observations and participant feedback.

Some PFDP program participants received approximately 275 contact hours of pre-academic training, not including the one-week Effective Teaching Strategies Course offered only in 2006 and discussed separately in this report. In addition to TOEFL preparation (up to 30 hours) and intensive English language training (up to 60 hours), pre-academic training topics included GRE preparation for the PhD

candidates (up to 32 hours); public speaking (up to 18 hours); communication and presentation skills (up to 24 hours); SPSS survey methodology (up to 30 hours); advanced SPSS (16 hours); effective PowerPoint presentation design (12 hours); Web search skills (4 hours); and academic writing and research methodology (48 hours).

Participants' attendance in pre-academic training was mandatory or "strongly encouraged," except in cases where it was recognized that they already had significant experience in, for example, SPSS or PowerPoint. Courses were generally tailored to serve a range of skill levels. Small class size prevailed in all cases, which allowed for considerable one-on-one interaction, discussion, and small group work. Such activities served to support cohort-building, one of the indirect aims of the pre-academic training. Fellows had the opportunity to get to know one another, setting the stage for future networking and communication that would ultimately factor into the development of higher-level models of community among Palestinian academics.

Evaluations were given after each course, and participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive. "Very practical course with hands-on material and direct implementation on computer," commented one participant about a PowerPoint/Web search skills class. Another who had attended a communication and presentation skills class wrote that "[d]ealing with real examples and exposing common mistakes was very beneficial. I enjoyed working in groups, sharing ideas, taking feedback and then applying the ideas."

Annual U.S.-Based Fellows Conferences



PhD Fellows at the 2012 U.S.-Based Fellows Conference, held at the University of Denver and featuring research presentations by several Fellows.

Beginning in 2007, OSF organized six three-day conferences that brought together PhD, Master's Degree, and Short-Term Fellows studying in the U.S. These conferences occurred annually in different cities in the United States. In addition to furthering the professional development of PFDP program participants, these events were designed to encourage networking and team-building, and to build a sense of community among the scholars.

The U.S.-Based Fellows Conferences were held on campuses of universities that were hosting PFDP Fellows at the time.

Proceedings included discipline-specific and interdisciplinary panels composed of PFDP Fellows and academic experts and provided a forum in which program beneficiaries presented their research, learned about the work of their colleagues, and shared scholarly ideas. For program administrators, the conferences provided an opportunity to garner feedback on program administration and beneficiaries. Discipline-based workshops, brainstorming sessions, and alumni research project discussions helped Fellows network as well as to move their individual efforts forward. In response to feedback from Fellows, OSF expanded Fellow-led components of the conference—such as special topic discussions and presentation of PhD research findings—in subsequent years.

U.S.-Based Fellows Conferences were held at Brandeis University's Heller School of Social Policy (2007), Portland State University's Hatfield School of Government (2008), the University of Florida's College of Design, Construction, and Planning (2009), the University of Texas–Austin (2010), Syracuse University (2011), and the University of Denver (2012).

A summary of conference agendas appears in Appendix 5.

Academic Colloquia

The annual Academic Colloquium in the West Bank/Gaza was developed primarily to further intellectual exchange among PFDP alumni, and as such to serve as a parallel component to the U.S.-Based Fellows Conference in the U.S. It provided a local framework for exploring the scholarship and practice of excellent teaching and constituted an important mechanism for reinforcing and cementing the growing network of alumni from multiple PFDP program components. As a forum in which PFDP fellows and others could present their research, it served for many as a capstone experience.

International presenters were also featured at each event, enabling those present to explore institutional linkages and share diverse views among an international cohort of university educators.

The first Academic Colloquium took place in July 2007 and constituted the largest such gathering of academic faculty from Palestinian universities in recent memory, and the first to be focused on the practice of university teaching. Approximately 170 academic faculty from Palestinian universities attended, approximately 40 of them via digital video conference from Gaza as the Gaza border with Israel was closed, and physical attendance at the colloquium was therefore impossible for the Gaza participants. Faculty from Gaza participated via DVC for the first three years, but transmission delays and other technical difficulties proved frustrating and limited the benefits of participation for all concerned, resulting in the decision not to continue with this practice after 2009.

The significance of the Academic Colloquia as a major annual event for the Palestinian higher education sector is reflected in the fact that each and every one was launched by the Minister of Education and one or more senior USAID representatives. The six colloquia held from 2007 through 2012 attracted a combined total attendance of nearly 1,200 (36% of which was female), played an important role in strengthening connections among the many beneficiaries of PFDP support, and contributed to a developing community of practice among Palestinian faculty committed to improving teaching and learning practices at the university level.

A summary of the six Academic Colloquia appears in Appendix 6.



Palestinian Minister of Education and Higher Education Ms. Lamis Al-Alami at the 2009 Academic Colloquium, flanked by USAID's Education Development Office Director Thomas Johnson (right) and ANU President Rami Hamdallah (currently Prime Minister). The minister delivered opening remarks at several of PFDP's Academic Colloquia.

Improved Teaching and Administrative Practices

Seminar for Excellence in Teaching (SET)

A central theme of PFDP involved improving the quality of Palestinian higher education through improved teaching. Initially, AMIDEAST required all short-term fellows to take a two-week Effective Teaching Strategies Course during their pre-academic training, and the PhD grantees were expected to take the course as a post-degree activity upon their return home. The course was designed to encourage faculty to reflect on questions about student learning derived from their own experiences in the classroom.

AMIDEAST contracted with experts at Central European University's Special and Extensions Unit to design and deliver this course based on their extensive experience conducting similar workshops on pedagogy for international faculty. The course was structured in two parts; the first 40 hours served as an introduction to designing a teaching portfolio and was intended to prepare Short-Term Fellows to take best advantage of their first U.S. visit from the standpoint of teaching and curriculum development. This structure logically corresponded to the needs of the grantees and goals of PFDP.



Dr. Sophia Howlett, Central European University's Department of Special and Extension Programs Director and the leader of PFDP's Seminars for Excellence in Teaching, with a group of SET participants.

Eight PFDP Short Term Fellows from the West Bank attended the Effective Teaching Strategies Course (ETSC), which was held in July 2006 in Ramallah and taught by Dr. Sophia Howlett, CEU's Department of Special and Extension Programs Director, and her colleague Joanna Renc-Roe. Training covered course design, assessment and evaluation, trends in higher education, comparative system, planning and methods, the scholarship of teaching, reflection, and peer review.

The training aimed to expose teachers to a variety of approaches and key issues that would enable them to become more of a “scholar in the

classroom”—that is, a professional scholar ready to engage in teaching as an academic practice informed by research and by discussion of models of good practice, guided by the spirit of inquiry and critical intellectual engagement as in any other academic activity. The workshop helped participants cope with the increasing demands for professionalism, the demonstration of skills, and appropriate strategies required of university faculty. Training sessions were designed to address the needs of both junior and senior faculty; introductory sessions provided less experienced participants with background knowledge, a repertoire of skills and practice opportunities for the improvement of their course designs and teaching, while the more advanced sessions focused on models of good practice in core areas.

Overall, the Short-Term Fellows who participated in the ETSC found the training to be very valuable; the quality of instruction, professionalism of the trainers, and relevance of the subject matter received consistent praise. For many, the topics covered were totally new, even for some of the more senior academics. This is not surprising, as the concept of “the scholarship of teaching” was an emerging trend

in higher education in the U.S. and Europe in the early years of PFDP, and it was not well known in many other parts of the world. A quote from one of the participants nicely sums upon the course: “I believe that the training overall was very beneficial, an eye opener for many of us. The information was very refreshing and reinforcing. I have personally gained knowledge and new skills from the training.”

The ETSC’s beneficial impact on the eight initial fellows led AMIDEAST to extend enrollment to a much broader spectrum of participants, and CEU revised the course to take into account evaluations from the short-term fellows the previous year, and in accordance with the needs expressed by local faculty. In 2007, the 80-hour program was renamed the *Seminar for Excellence in Teaching* (SET).

SET ran four times between 2007 and 2011, taught by expert trainers from CEU and later supplemented by PFDP SET participants, seven of whom went on to become Master Trainers able to assure the continuation of the training in Palestinian universities—especially at university CTEs. The program exposed faculty to a variety of teaching approaches and key issues associated with course design, and it encouraged an understanding of the university teacher as a professional scholar whose teaching is informed by research and discussion of models of good practice and guided by the spirit of inquiry and critical intellectual engagement. The first session targeted course design, general issues in student assessment, assessment criteria, and innovative assessment methods, and concluded with group presentations. The second 40-hour training session—delivered approximately six months after the first—explored traditions of lectures and seminars, looked at new methods of teaching in the form of problem-based learning, research-based learning, integrated learning, experimental learning, reflective learning, and community-based learning. Short presentations modeled each type of teaching. The session culminated with an examination of peer evaluation and classroom observations.

A total of 66 university faculty from 12 West Bank universities completed the SET program; of these, 18—or 27.3%—were women. Unfortunately, faculty in Gaza were never able to benefit from this program component. Five Short-Term Fellows from Gaza had been expected to participate in the ETSC in 2006, but closure of Gaza’s border with Israel prevented their travel. It was AMIDEAST’s intention to offer SET training in Cairo especially for Gaza faculty, but this proved logistically impossible. In early 2007, the U.S. government instituted a no-contact policy that prevented the involvement in PFDP of anyone from the Islamic University of Gaza, Al-Aqsa University, or the five technical colleges in Gaza, and most SET applications that year had come from Islamic University of Gaza faculty. A scheduled training session for Al-Azhar University faculty was cancelled because the timing conflicted with the university exam schedule, and in any case the Israeli Defense Force did not grant exit permits for the intended participants. Already experiencing travel challenges with the PhD and Short-Term Fellowship grantees, AMIDEAST determined that it was not logistically possible to continue SET plans for Gaza faculty.

SET Master Trainers

As a way to further the value and impact of the Seminars for Excellence in Teaching and institutionalize local training capacity, ten Palestinian faculty from myriad academic disciplines were selected and trained to become PFDP SET Master Trainers in areas of course design, teaching methodology, and comparative trends in higher education. This program was initiated with a two-day conference in Ramallah in 2009 led by trainers from the Central European University (CEU).

Over the next three years, the master trainer candidates underwent extensive training on the methods and manners of teaching the SET course, and they assisted the CEU trainers in multiple SET workshops. In a culminating event in late March 2011, the master trainer candidates delivered an abridged SET training to faculty from An-Najah National University and Bethlehem University in conjunction with those universities' new Centers for Teaching Excellence; CEU trainers audited the workshops and evaluated the trainers. Seven master trainer candidates were subsequently certified as SET master trainers: two from Al-Quds University and one each from Palestine Polytechnic University, Al-Quds Open University, Hebron University, Palestine Ahliya University College, and Bethlehem University. Of the seven, five are women. They continue to serve as local experts in teaching and learning in Palestinian higher education and regularly conduct training workshops at their own institutions as well as other Palestinian universities and colleges. Five of the master trainers became members of the steering committee for PFDP's National Roundtables on Higher Education, and two received PFDP Teaching Excellence Awards in 2011. One—Dr. Adnan Shehadeh—played an instrumental role in the development of PPU's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, where he currently serves as director.



SET master trainers work together at a session. Master trainers would go on to play a pivotal role in the development of Centers for Teaching Excellence at several Palestinian universities.

Through PFDP, AMIDEAST continued to encourage and support the trainers to pursue non-degree opportunities, such as presenting at international conferences, attending intensive seminars, conducting research, or visiting universities in the U.S., Europe, and the region to expand their knowledge and experience. In April 2012, PFDP supported Dr. Adnan Shehadeh and Dr. Maysa Al Usta to travel to France to jointly present a paper on “Roundtables on Higher Education as a Forum for Development—A Case from Palestine” at the International Journal for Arts and Science (IJAS) Conference. In 2011, PFDP supported Rima Dabdoub and Sami Basha to present at the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning's annual conference in Wisconsin.

A list of SET participants and master trainers appears in Appendix 7.

University Administrator Seminars

Building on the success of the Seminars on Excellence in Teaching, AMIDEAST partnered with Central European University to offer Palestinian faculty working in senior administrative roles the opportunity to enhance their skills in areas such as finance, student services, strategic planning, and human resources.

CEU's Department of Special and Extension Programs designed a range of different seminars between 2008



Participants in the 2010 University Administrator Seminar at CEU appear with Dr. Sophia Howlett and PFDP COP Dr. John FitzGibbon.

and 2011 addressing important issues in higher education management, policies, and procedures, especially in the context of supporting new methodologies and approaches for improving teaching and learning. Topics were practical and specific, and participants were expected to bring back new insights and knowledge to apply in their respective institutions. In addition to the Palestinian participants, 10–12 representatives from universities in other countries also participated in each seminar, providing a comparative perspective. A total of 82 (13% female) administrators from 14 tertiary institutions as well as the MoEHE participated in the 15 seminars offered over a three-year period. Among their number were university presidents and vice presidents, as well as individuals who would play key roles in the new Centers for Teaching Excellence. One of the attendees from Gaza, Professor Mohammed Ali Abu Zuhri, President of Al-Aqsa University in Gaza, later became the Minister of Higher Education. Political obstacles and travel restrictions prevented administrators from Gaza from participating in all but one of the seminars.

A list of topics and participants appears in Appendix 8.

Faculty Development Seminars



A Faculty Development Seminar focused on speech therapy, led by Dr. Itaf Arafat, an Al-Quds University specialist in speech and language therapy.

The Faculty Development Seminars were launched in late 2007 in response to demand—spurred on by the first Academic Colloquium a few months earlier—from PFDP alumni and other higher education leaders for more frequent and broadly accessible professional development opportunities that would bring faculty together to discuss and debate trends in higher education. The resulting workshops and seminars promoted the goals of PFDP and took advantage of local and international expertise to provide regular opportunities for faculty networking.

In all, over a four-year period beginning in fall 2007, PFDP organized a series of 15 faculty development seminars that attracted a combined total attendance of 993 participants, of whom 31.9% were female. They ranged from smaller workshops focusing on specialized topics to larger events addressing topics of broad interest to the higher education community. The Faculty Development Seminars heightened awareness about important themes in the scholarship of teaching and learning, provided a forum in which university administrators and faculty could share experiences, and furthered the development of a community of practice.

A summary of the Faculty Development Seminar topics appears in Appendix 9.

Professional English Development (PED) for Faculty

Weak English language skills among many faculty and university administrators continue to present challenges for higher education development in the West Bank and Gaza—among them, difficulty accessing new English-language research, forming important individual and institutional relationships with universities in English-speaking countries, and educating students for a globalized economy in which

English has quickly become a major language of communication. The low English language proficiency levels of some PFDP PhD and Short-Term Fellows applicants limited the numbers for whom AMIDEAST and OSF could secure placements at U.S. universities. In 2010, AMIDEAST introduced the Professional English Development (PED) program to address this issue.

PED spanned three years (2010 through 2012) and provided English language skills training to faculty who had completed their degrees in the MENA region and therefore did not have a chance to advance their English language skills.

PED enabled PFDP to reach faculty who did not have the requisite English language skills to take part in the fellowship program in the United States or to take full advantage of the program's other professional development activities. The program consisted of 200 hours of classroom-based language training: 100 hours focused on basic English language grammar, vocabulary, and conversation, followed by 100 hours focused on more advanced English, academic writing, and conversation in a professional context.

A range of universities were actively involved in this program both as sources of faculty and in providing the facilities where the courses were held. These included: Palestine Polytechnic University, Arab American University, Al-Azhar University, Palestine Ahliya University College in Bethlehem, Al-Quds Open University, Aroub College, and Palestine Technical University–Kadoorie. A total of 166 faculty members (30% female) completed all 200 hours of the program.



USAID PFDP COP Dr. John Shumaker (second from left) and USAID Agreement Officer Representative Samer Saad (second from right) awarding certificates to 2011 graduates of PFDP's Professional English Development for Faculty program.

Support for the Master of Arts in Teaching—Al-Quds University/Bard College

At USAID's request, AMIDEAST provided support for the Al-Quds Bard College for Arts and Sciences (AQB) Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Program, which was inaugurated in late 2010 as the first of its kind in Palestine and the first in the region. The program, a long-term partnership between Bard College and Al-Quds University, seeks to raise the level of Palestinian education as a way of preparing young Palestinians to assume the responsibilities of leadership and self-governance in a potential future democratic state. It is unique in its focus on application of contemporary pedagogy to specific disciplines and features close integration of theory and practice. The Al-Quds/Bard partnership is based on the premise that to educate future leaders and foster economic development, education should encourage critical thinking and an entrepreneurial spirit. Students should have a chance to achieve excellence in the social sciences and humanities as well as the natural sciences.

The MAT program's first class of 50 was drawn from in-service teachers at cooperating public and private schools. PFDP eventually provided scholarships for 116 graduate students divided into two cohorts, procured furniture and equipment for the Al-Quds/Bard Center that was renovated to serve as the locus for MAT program activities, and helped fund international faculty as well as the development and institutionalization of program structure, curriculum, and faculty. Although the program's administration

was largely handled by Al-Quds University and Bard College, its development was heavily supported through PFDP.

Even after the close of PFDP, the MAT program continues to offer a new model of teacher training, integrating graduate-level study in an academic discipline and key areas in education with ongoing work as a teacher or apprentice in a classroom setting. The two-year program prepares teachers to teach grades 5–12. In the first program year, students study full time and teach half time; in the second year, they complete their master’s research projects and academic field experience. They are thus well prepared to apply their skills in the classroom immediately upon graduation. Subsequently, graduates are expected to serve as mentors for future MAT students. Al-Quds and Bard continue to share responsibility for curricular development, faculty training, recruitment, and program administration as of this writing.

Improved Institutional Culture of Teaching and Learning

Faculty Grants in Teaching and Learning

In 2007, a faculty grants component was added to PFDP to support the scholarship and best practices of teaching and learning within Palestinian universities and colleges. Grant projects were required to fall into one of the following categories: a) internal, multi-disciplinary workshops on effective lecturing; b) coordinating a local conference on teaching techniques; or, c) covering the cost of a faculty member’s time for teaching and learning activities within a university department. Projects could also be research-oriented, and an emphasis was placed on multi-university representation through academic teams producing outcomes that would be accessible and disseminated through open source, Web-based means.



Dr. Maher Hashweh’s course on enhanced and effective use of technology in education, was funded through a 2010–2011 PFDP Faculty Grant.

The initial grants were announced in March 2007 and generated 70 applications that were screened in a two-stage review process, resulting in 25 semi-finalists to be forwarded to a formal review committee. However, the USAID Regional Legal Advisor then ruled that these grants were institutional rather than individual in nature, and the process was suspended until a final determination on compliance could be made. Associated with this decision was the fact that 41% of the Faculty Grant applications were from the Islamic University of Gaza and five more were from the Community College of Applied Science and Technology in Gaza, both of which has become ineligible to receive USAID funding. In early 2008, USAID approved for AMIDEAST to proceed with the grants, provided that both the individual applicant and his/her institution cleared vetting prior to award.

The Faculty Grant process was re-opened in February 2008 and generated 19 applications. Nine semi-finalists were interviewed by the selection committee, and five grants were funded. Two more grant cycles

were implemented in 2009 and 2010, resulting in 8 and 13 grants, respectively, for a total of 26 grants (14.4% to female recipients) to faculty from ten universities. Total funds awarded were \$560,115.

Grantee projects covered a range of topics promoting more effective teaching and learning in diverse fields of study, including faculty training and mentoring, curriculum or materials development, and teaching methodologies including e-learning and problem-based learning. Many grantees hosted multiple workshops either for research purposes or to share and discuss the results of their work, and a national conference on English language teaching issues organized by one grantee attracted 300 attendees in the West Bank and another 300 in Gaza who participated via DVC.

Overall, the impact these grants had on PFDP's main goals of improving teaching and learning is somewhat difficult to measure. The grantees themselves benefited through their individual projects in terms of expanding their experience and learning and their efforts demonstrably contributed to their academic discipline. However, the broader impact on academic colleagues, their university department, or universities is not known and was not measured directly, although many of the recipients became active contributors to the development of the Centers for Teaching Excellence. In this regard, AMIDEAST believes that it was an effective component in the continuum leading to a broad community of practice among Palestinian university academics.

A list of grantees and their project foci appears in Appendix 10.

Collaborative Projects in Teaching (CPT)

Collaborative Projects in Teaching were intended to establish a framework for long-term collaborative development of scholarly teaching in areas important to undergraduate humanities and social sciences curricula. Near-term objectives included developing scholarly and innovative undergraduate teaching, promoting critical thinking, and establishing a collaborative structure that fosters peer exchange and learning among local and international faculty. An additional objective was to move away from a teacher-centered higher education model toward one that incorporated faculty teamwork and two-way learning dialogues. The CPT component of PFDP was introduced in 2008 and continued until January 2011.

Applications for CPT projects were solicited from alumni of other PFDP components, building on their exposure to and experience in effective teaching practices. Funded projects focused on peer observation of teaching, English for specific purposes, and special needs education. The four CPT grants awarded are summarized below. The idea of CPT initially attracted considerable interest from faculty, but the difficulty of following through with a collaborative project with fellow faculty proved very challenging. This was because of several reasons: 1) participants were volunteering their time amidst already busy schedules; 2) movement of individuals between cities within the West Bank was always challenging due to Israeli security, which impeded projects involving different universities in different cities; 3) project leaders needed buy-in from the most senior levels of their university to proceed, and this was not always forthcoming in practice; 4) there was lack of a culture of collaboration among and between faculty, which although one of the incentives for introducing this component, but also proved to limit its ultimate effectiveness.

Dr. Mai Al-Maghatheh (Hebron University)

Peer Observation of Teaching

Dr. Mai Al-Maghatheh's project involved introducing peer observation of teaching at Hebron University, working with colleagues at Bethlehem University, Palestine Polytechnic University and Al-Quds University. Such peer observation—based on experiential learning, reflection on practice, and learning through doing—is widely recognized as an internal quality enhancement measure that improves teaching and learning in higher education. Dr. Al-Maghatheh launched her project at a five-day conference on “Peer Observation of Teaching” that she hosted in Ramallah in late 2008. Her presentation was supported by Dr. John O'Connor, Professor of Interdisciplinary and Integrative Studies at George Mason University in the United States, and Dr. Graham Stott, Associate Professor in the Department of Modern Languages at Arab American University–Jenin. Twenty-six Palestinian faculty representing Al-Quds, An-Najah, Bethlehem, Birzeit, Hebron, and Palestine Polytechnic Universities participated. Six months later, participating faculty reconvened to discuss data from their classroom observations. A final three-day event in August 2009 provided an opportunity to present findings and discuss peer observation of teaching in higher education through a series of workshops and seminars for 28 participants from seven universities.

Dr. Sami Basha (Bethlehem University)

Special Needs Education, I



Dr. Sami Basha and PFDOP COP Dr. Chris Shinn pose with faculty who participated in Dr. Basha's PFDOP-funded Collaborative Project in Teaching.

Dr. Sami Basha's first CPT focused on establishing a network of university professors and community experts to assess the ways in which academia could better address the education of special needs children. Another objective of the grant was to develop university curricula for a minor specialization for students enrolled in Bethlehem University's pre-service teacher education program, as no such specialization was then available.

The project was presented and discussed during a four-day conference in Bethlehem in October 2008. Dr. Basha was supported at this event by Professor Rita Sidoli from the University of

Sacre Cuore of Milan, Italy, an expert on teaching and researching special needs education. Fourteen Palestinian faculty representing eight universities and colleges as well as the MoEHE attended. The conference included a visit to an audio-phonetic rehabilitation center and a meeting with four school principals from the Bethlehem area to solicit their perspectives on this topic. Dr. Basha held a follow-up three-day workshop in February–March 2009, where he was assisted by Professor Peter Farrell, Dean of Special Needs Education at Manchester University, United Kingdom. Thirteen university faculty and one MoEHE representative attended the workshop.

A workshop on “Special Needs Education” for school teachers, representatives from institutions that work within the special needs sector and parents who have children with special needs followed in May 2009. Its primary purpose was to spread awareness and introduce people to special needs education challenges

within Palestinian society. Dr. Basha was assisted at this workshop by Dr. Walid Wajeeh Sabbah from the Arab American University–Jenin, who lectured on the genetic factors that lead to learning disorders. The project culminated with the first National Conference on Special Needs Education, which attracted over 100 participants, including representatives from USAID and other donors, Directors-General and staff from the MoEHE, the Assistant Deputy Minister, the Academic and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC) Director, school principals, heads of NGOs and agencies providing services to special needs children, and students. Participants debated the merits of and next steps in developing a master’s, diploma, or certificate in special education.

Dr. Sami Basha (Bethlehem University) **Special Needs Education, II**

Dr. Basha was awarded a second CPT grant to continue his work in spreading awareness of special needs education in the West Bank through public presentations, and to develop a master’s degree in education with a specialization in special needs to be offered in at least one Palestinian university—the first such program at any institution in the West Bank or Gaza. Several activities were made possible as a result of this award.

A three-day workshop was organized in 2010 for twelve participants that included contributions by Dr. Farrell and a brainstorming session about developing a strategic plan for delivering the proposed master’s program in Palestinian universities.

In September 2010, Dr. Basha organized a convention to mark Autism Day, attended by over 120 participants from different civil society organizations, schools and universities, and another 120 online participants. The aim of the convention was to introduce participants to research conducted in this field and to stress the importance of raising awareness, especially with regards to achieving the correct diagnosis. Dr. Rima Al-Kilani, Director General of Counseling and Special Education at the MoEHE, and Dr. Linda Eddy, Associate Professor at Washington State University’s College of Nursing, gave keynote speeches.

Dr. Basha conducted a briefing in August 2010 for potential candidates of the master’s program in special needs. The workshop outlined the variety of courses planned for the program and means of preparing for such courses. From November through December 2010, several follow-up events were held for potential candidates, with approximately 30 participants.

Dr. Basha has since revised his curriculum as a one-year Professional Diploma in Special Education. It was accepted by Palestine Ahliya University College and in 2014 was approved by the MoEHE.

Dr. Khalid Aisha, Dr. Abdel Karim Daraghme (An-Najah National University) **Improving Teaching and Learning of English Language**

Dr. Khalid Aisha and Dr. Abdel Karim Daraghme, who served as primary implementer, focused on improving the teaching and learning of the English language by developing an effective blended learning environment using technology to connect students from different universities. Dr. Deborah Healey and Dr. Kay Westerfield from the University of Oregon served as international advisors. The project involved collaboration between the Arab American University–Jenin, Al-Quds Open University, Al-Quds University, and Birzeit University. One primary meeting and three secondary workshops were conducted for fifteen professors from these universities, covering an examination of the existing techniques already being used to

teach English in Palestinian universities; how to develop syllabi for English language courses; and how to refine and complete syllabi for English language courses at the participating universities.

Teaching Excellence Awards

PFDP's Teaching Excellence Awards were inaugurated in 2007 with the aim of identifying and nurturing future higher education leaders from among PFDP alumni and participants. These awards highlighted the importance of teaching in higher education, inspiring teachers within academia and recognizing success. Individual awards of up to \$2,000 were given to faculty for outstanding achievement in or commitment to teaching. Eligible individuals included junior and senior, full- and part-time faculty currently teaching at a university or college in the West Bank and Gaza. Nominations were submitted by supervisors or peers, and each nominee was then required to collect and submit a comprehensive dossier reflecting his or her experience and activities.



The 2010 recipients of PFDP's Teaching Excellence Award pose with their certificates. The award sought to recognize faculty who demonstrated exceptional success in or commitment to great undergraduate teaching.

This small but important activity complemented the other main components of PFDP by recognizing achievements and providing a model for Palestinian universities to reward teaching excellence after PFDP's conclusion. Over a six-year period, 23 faculty (30.4% female) from ten universities received national recognition through the Teaching Excellence Awards. The awards were announced at the annual PFDP conference's gala event and the awardees were presented their award in front a large audience of peers. During many of these events, the USAID Mission Director and relevant university presidents presented the award. This high

profile approach further highlighted the importance of teaching in higher education.

The Teaching Excellence Awards' program inspired Palestine Polytechnic University to institute its own teaching excellence award, which the university's Board of Trustees formally approved in 2015. This effort was spearheaded by Dr. Adnan Shehadeh, Director of PPU's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and himself a recipient of a PFDP Teaching Excellence Award in 2011.

A list of Teaching Excellence Award recipients appears in Appendix 11.

Higher Education Roundtables

AMIDEAST launched a series of Higher Education Roundtables in 2011 in response to requests from PFDP alumni and other higher education leaders for continuing professional development of university faculty and staff at Palestinian universities who are—or have the potential to become—leaders in Palestine's education system. The broad goals were as follows.

- To stimulate national discussion on critical topics in higher education, leveraging the presence of international experts working with Palestinian colleagues to provide insight into international best practices
- To balance concept and practice by applying internationally recognized best practices to the Palestinian context
- To provide systematic exposure of potential leaders and managers of Palestinian universities to core topics that promote the development of a new generation of higher education leaders and managers in Palestinian universities
- To create a national community of faculty members and key administrators committed to sustaining active dialogue, collaboration, and actions to improve the overall climate and performance of Palestinian universities



Brother Peter Gray, Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University, entertains questions at a 2012 Higher Education Roundtable on Leadership in Higher Education.

Up to six participants from each of ten universities were nominated by university presidents and vice presidents to attend the roundtables, scheduled monthly over a period of nine months. MoEHE and UNRWA representatives also participated. The program covered a range of topics—selected by a steering committee consisting of PFDP staff and Palestinian university representatives—that contributed to deeper understanding of higher education management, development and leadership. Venues rotated among a number of West Bank cities—primarily Ramallah, Bethlehem, and Jericho.

The series engaged 16 international experts and 42 Palestinian counterparts in a study of current best practices in world higher education systems. This interaction focused on examining effective and evolving models of higher education around the world and exploring their relevance and utility to the Palestinian context. Several of the international experts made follow-on presentations or participated in campus-wide discussions at individual universities, and they engaged in exploration of joint programs and projects with groups of Palestinian university representatives.

In their evaluations of the roundtables, a significant majority (65–70%) of participants stated that they plan to introduce new ideas and activities into their teaching as a result of the Roundtables, and/or start an activity with students relating to the subject matter of a specific seminar. They expressed a new appreciation for the value of wider professional engagement with colleagues from other universities. This type of periodic, system-wide communication was rare prior to the activities implemented through PFDP. In addition, through the unusual opportunity to engage across institutions and professional levels, participants noted what they described as a chronic lack of communication and collaboration between the MoEHE and university faculty and staff, and between senior university administrators and their campus constituencies.



Dr. Kevin Kecskes of Portland State University speaks at the fifth Higher Education Roundtable, held in January 2012, which focused on *Community Engagement and University Development*.

Participation in the Higher Education Roundtables led to new opportunities for some specific individuals. As a result of Roundtable 4, Dr. Saida Affounh of Al-Quds Open University (and who would soon move to An-Najah National University) was awarded a scholarship by the Sloan Consortium⁷ to participate in Pennsylvania State University's Institute for Emerging Leadership in Online Learning. Two members of the steering committee (and themselves PFDP master trainers)—Dr. Adnan Shehadeh (Palestine Polytechnic University) and Maysa Soufan (Al-Quds University)—delivered a joint paper on the Higher Education Roundtables at the annual conference sponsored by the International Journal for Arts and Sciences in Paris in

April 2012. Additionally, Rima Dabdoub of Bethlehem University submitted an abstract to the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning on evaluating the impact on individual faculty of such faculty development activities as the Roundtable series and support from the Centers for Excellence in Teaching. The abstract was accepted for development into a formal presentation that Ms. Dabdoub delivered at the October 2012 conference in Hamilton, Ontario.

Combined attendance at the nine Roundtables was 734 (15.7% female). A listing of Higher Education Roundtables appears in Appendix 12.

The National Study of Undergraduate Teaching Practices in Palestine

Undergraduate teaching is central to what most Palestinian faculty are employed to do. Undergraduate student enrollment tripled between 1996 and 2009, and it has continued to grow since then. One of the most effective ways for Palestinian universities to respond to societal needs is to produce graduates who have necessary content knowledge in their respective academic discipline, who can think critically, and who can problem-solve. All three are dependent on good teaching practice. As PFDP continued to introduce additional components promoting improved approaches to teaching and learning within Palestinian higher education institutions, it became clear that no information existed on the quality of teaching practices and its link to learner outcomes in higher education. The comprehensive *National Study of Undergraduate Teaching Practices in Palestine* was therefore launched both to serve as a baseline against which to measure change over time, as well as to help PFDP better target new initiatives in the remaining life of the project. This landmark study was the first-ever empirical study of undergraduate teaching and learning practices in Palestine. Its goals were as follows.

- To provide baseline information on the state of tertiary education in teaching, instructor credentials and discipline-specific needs
- To critically evaluate and track the effectiveness of pre-service training, classroom instruction and learning, in-service professional development, and methods for assessing academic achievement in undergraduate classrooms

⁷ The Sloan Consortium is now known as the Online Learning Consortium.

- To identify short- and long-term issues of reform in teaching and learning practices
- To recommend approaches toward strengthening best practices and fostering innovative, discipline-specific pedagogies
- To enhance the professional development of instructors by recommending strategies for increasing the efficacy and linkages between pre-service and in-service training

AMIDEAST gathered a team of academics to design and implement this mixed-methods study. Led by Dr. Louis Cristillo of the Columbia University Teachers College and Dr. Amaney Jamal of Princeton University, the team also included Dr. Taisir Abdallah (Al-Quds University), Dr. Ali Habayeb (An-Najah National University), Dr. Akram Ijla (Al-Azhar University and a PFDP PhD Fellowship alumnus), in addition to a number of research assistants. AMIDEAST also contracted with the Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD) polling center for survey administration. The research team worked collaboratively in the design, data collection, analysis and production of the study, drawing data from thirteen Palestinian universities in the West Bank and Gaza, three UNRWA training centers, and four public technical colleges. The study employed a mixed-methods approach and incorporated focus groups as well as a national survey, thus integrating qualitative and quantitative data. It sought to gain insight into the state of teaching practice among Palestinian universities and colleges; the type of teaching and learning in which teachers and students engaged in typical university classrooms; what materials and pedagogical approaches were commonly used; and how teachers assessed student learning.

Study results indicated that Palestinian universities continued to emphasize teacher-centered teaching approaches and assessment despite of faculty exposure to student-centered approaches and the increased use of information technology by students. They also identified the underdevelopment of professional development and mentoring for faculty and of co-curricular resources for students, and revealed policy, socio-economic, and structural constraints to change.

Summarized findings were as follows.

- Teacher-centered models of instruction prevail over learner-centered techniques.
 - Faculty who brought or acquired effective learner-centered teaching practices in their first year were more likely to continue using them throughout their careers.
 - The availability of vast quantities of information via the Internet is making teacher-centered methods increasingly less relevant.
 - The integrated use of co-curricular resources that enhance student learning remains underdeveloped.
 - Professional development, scholarly output, and professional interaction among faculty is infrequent and fragmented.
 - No formal mentoring system exists for new faculty.
 - Faculty, students, and parents believed that university administrations were committed to improving the quality of education.
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- Teachers recognize constraints that prevent university administrations from relieving conditions that negatively affect teaching and learning, such as overcrowded classrooms.
- Assessment and grading policies reinforced traditional reliance on summative assessments based on mid-term and final exams.
- Students believed that academic policies failed to integrate teachers, students, and curriculum into a cohesive culture of learning.
- Faculty had little opportunity to contribute to decision-making on teaching and professional development.
- Students, parents, and teachers believed that a student's individual motivation and family background were primary determinants of academic success.
- Social and economic instability negatively affected students' academic outcomes.
- There is growing concern among teachers, students, and parents that a university education is losing relevance vis-à-vis the labor market.
- Economic pressures forcing teachers to take on second jobs and have overloaded teaching schedules, giving them less time to engage in professional development or provide students with adequate attention.
- General perception holds that issues related to higher education were very low on the list of priorities for government leaders.

Based on the findings, the report issued the following recommendations.

- Implement an “excellence in teaching” faculty development program administered by a dedicated department or unit that works closely with a quality assurance unit.
 - Expand the capacity of the Quality Assurance Units, especially for monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning practices.
 - Require academic departments to assess their system of evaluating faculty performance to include teaching effectiveness as well as research productivity.
 - Provide opportunities for third- and fourth-year undergraduates to work more closely with faculty as teaching or research assistants.
 - Establish Library and Information Technology Services divisions at every university to integrate course content with co-curricular resources.
 - Establish capacity-building research partnerships with NGOs and foreign universities to provide learning enrichment opportunities.
 - Require faculty to submit an annual report on their professional activities.
 - Establish a National Association for the Advancement of Higher Education in Palestine to function as a mechanism for promoting inter-university cooperation and exchange.
 - Promote the establishment of a graduate school for the advanced study of education in Palestine.
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- Form a task force to examine the influence of the *Tawjihi* on teaching and learning at all levels.
- Place the development and improvement of all tertiary institutions at the top of national policy priorities.

The report was published in early 2010, and PFDP hosted several workshops at which lead researcher Dr. Cristillo presented the findings to stakeholders. The first such event took place at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and the second at the ministry's National Institute for Education and Training. In addition to discussing details about the study itself, the workshops addressed various methods of teaching and learning, and teacher- and learner-centered pedagogies. Participants included university and MoEHE officials, with those in Gaza connected via DVC. The report succeeded in giving greater visibility to the goals and activities of PFDP,



Participants at the 2009 Academic Colloquium discuss the then-forthcoming National Study of Undergraduate Teaching in a break-out session.

and it provided baseline information on teaching and assessment practices, faculty participation in professional development, institutional support for faculty development, and quality teaching and socio-economic impacts on the quality of teaching and learning in Palestinian higher education. Recommendations addressed to Palestinian universities, the Higher Education Council and Palestinian government leaders proposed ways in which undergraduate teaching and learning could be strengthened: improved faculty development, mentorship and review, curriculum quality assurance, increased inter-university linkages, and placing higher education at the top of national policy priorities.

The report's recommendations helped to catalyze PFDP's support for the establishment of Centers for Teaching Excellence (CTEs) in selected Palestinian universities, and it also guided the centers themselves in designing activities to address the deficiencies they identified in their respective approaches to teaching and learning.

Scholarships for Students at Local Universities

As compliance requirements increasingly restricted the number of colleges and universities in Gaza with which PFDP could work beginning in 2006, USAID sought to identify alternative avenues through which to support higher education in Gaza. Accordingly, USAID modified the PFDP cooperative agreement to include a scholarship component for students at Al-Azhar University, which for a time was the only university in Gaza with which PFDP could engage. The funds provided supported partial scholarship awards covering 60–70% of tuition costs for 2,000 undergraduate students in their second or third year. Scholarships were awarded to those with an academic achievement of 75% or higher (B average) and enabled quality students who otherwise would have had to drop out for financial reasons to remain enrolled, thereby contributing to the stability of the university.

The modification that included the scholarship provision was signed in September 2009, and throughout the next several months, AMIDEAST worked with Al-Azhar University to determine scholarship criteria

and verify the eligibility for selection. All students whose PFDP scholarship would exceed \$1,000 were sent to USAID for vetting. However, in 2010, a change in board members of Al-Azhar University prompted re-vetting by USAID, followed by its detailed review of the university by-laws in February and the council members in March. Vetting of students and issuing of scholarships was put on hold pending a Mission decision. Approximately six months later, USAID confirmed that Al-Azhar University's Board of Trustees and University Council members had all cleared vetting, and in June 2010, student vetting clearances started to come through. Scholarship funds were transferred to Al-Azhar University in September 2010. A ceremony to acknowledge the scholarships was held in January 2011 at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Ramallah, attended by Her Excellency Dr. Lamis Al-Alami, Minister of Education and Higher Education, and Mr. Michael Harvey, USAID Mission Director; a parallel event was held at Al-Azhar University in Gaza, and the two gatherings were connected via DVC.

Association of Palestinian Academic Developers (APAD)

As PFDP scholarship alumni become increasingly involved in academic, governmental, and private sector leadership roles throughout Palestine, and in the absence of any national organization to promote dialogue, analysis, scholarship and publication among West Bank academics, many faculty began to recognize that a professional association for Palestinian academics could be critical for the long-term qualitative development of higher education. In September 2014, the respective directors of An-Najah National University's and Palestine Polytechnic University's Centers for Teaching Excellence—both of whom had been engaged with multiple components of PFDP throughout its life—initiated a discussion with the PFDP COP about possible project support for such an association. Its central purpose would be to engage a community of educational practitioners in the West Bank and Gaza in a continuing conversation about teaching and learning, its research, and its practice, with the goal of continuing the expansion and improvement of student-centered learning.

Over the next several months and with the encouragement of PFDP and USAID, PPU's CETL Director Dr. Adnan Shehadeh took the lead in refining the concept, identifying a core group of interested colleagues, and developing a plan for moving forward. USAID approved AMIDEAST's request for PFDP to provide modest support initial activities, including technical assistance and fees for registering the new association with the Ministry of the Interior.

The founding meeting for the Association of Palestinian Academic Developers (APAD) took place on May 9, 2015, and was attended by the following faculty: Dr. Adnan Shehadeh (PPU), Dr. Abdel Karim Daraghme (ANU), Dr. Mai Al Maghatheh (Hebron University), Dr. Sami Basha (Palestine Ahliya University College), Dr. Ghassan Shahin (ANU), Dr. Saida Affouneh (ANU), and Dr. Samer Najjar. PFDP's COP John Knight, three visiting Searle Center personnel (Greg Light, Denise Drane, and Nancy Ruggeri), and USAID's Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) Samer Saad served as advisors and/or observers during this first meeting. Dr. Adnan Shehadeh was elected as the founding association president, Dr. Abdel Karim Daraghme as vice president, Dr. Sami Basha as secretary, and Dr. Mai Al-Maghatheh as treasurer. Over the following three weeks the president and vice president examined and finalized the association's by-laws, and the founding members also agreed to use the continuing services of Dr. Light as a consultant to the developing association, now named the Association of Palestinian Academic Developers (APAD).

On 15 June, 2015, a larger group of 21 Palestinian faculty gathered to further APAD's development by discussing the membership requirements for the association, membership fee levels, the proposed by-laws further revised and distributed by Dr. Shehadeh and Dr. Daraghmeh, and approving moving forward with the registration process during the summer.

APAD plans indicate its membership will eventually consist of educational professionals from all Palestinian universities, although the initiative for its development, its first elected officers, and the core of its initial membership consists of PFDP alumni. APAD goes well beyond the concept of an alumni association envisioned by AMIDEAST at an earlier point in the project. As a professional association open to all Palestinian academics, APAD is a manifestation of the community of practice that PFDP has helped to develop over the past decade. The fact that it was established through local initiative augers well for its sustainability as a forum where ongoing research and the best practices in teaching and learning can continue to be encouraged and shared.

Centers for Teaching Excellence

Academic symposia, teaching training, and faculty development throughout PFDP raised the profile of quality teaching and learning outcomes in West Bank universities and created expectations for institutional adoption of new pedagogical methods and aims. Eventually, many of PFDP's stakeholders recognized that the program's long-term goals would be best achieved if they could be institutionalized in a solid, sustainable framework. This realization, combined with PFDP's focus on promoting quality teaching and learning outcomes, culminated in the establishment of Centers of Teaching Excellence (CTEs) at Palestinian universities. CTEs were established to be the focal point to support faculty development, excellence in



An-Najah National University students present research projects to faculty members at the 2014 National Conference on Community Based Learning. The students developed these projects in courses that made use of teaching and learning methods that ANU's Center of Excellence in Learning and Teaching introduced to the university.

teaching, and research into teaching and learning in higher education—and to carry on the work that PFDP initiated through its earlier program components. In 2011, after a competitive application process, Bethlehem University (BU) and An-Najah National University (ANU) received PFDP grants to establish Centers for Teaching Excellence⁸; partner U.S. universities (Portland State University and Northwestern University, respectively) were assigned to provide the fledgling centers with ongoing support and guidance. A second round of grants initiated in the spring of 2013 resulted in additional support for the first two centers and supported the establishment of two additional centers at Palestine Polytechnic University (PPU) and Palestinian Technical University—Kadoorie (PTUK). By the end of PFDP, four

⁸ The term “Centers for Teaching Excellence,” or CTEs, is used in a nonspecific sense to refer to the centers as a whole. When a specific individual center is referenced, that center's actual name or acronym is used.

centers for teaching and learning excellence were functioning in West Bank universities; as of this writing, all four continue to support their respective universities' work to improve learning through improved teaching methods.

These centers represent the culmination of earlier PFDP-sponsored activities that had focused initially on furthering the knowledge and quality of individual faculty members, and then on improving teaching and administrative practices more broadly through a range of training activities that prepared larger numbers of faculty to introduce more effective teaching practices into their classes and institutions. Subsequent activities provided a forum for these educators to meet and explore new approaches, share successes, and recognize one another's achievements—in the process, developing a vibrant community of practice. The Centers of Teaching Excellence have helped institutionalize and solidify this commitment to the scholarship and practice of effective teaching and learning practices by creating visible, dedicated units that faculty can use to help improve their teaching, ensuring the continued development of Palestinian university capacity beyond the life of PFDP.⁹

Earlier PFDP-sponsored activities laid the foundation for CTE development. At ANU's Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), for example, three of the five center trainers attended the PFDP-sponsored Seminar for Excellence in Teaching and University Administrator Seminars. E-Learning Director Dr. Saida Affouneh—who is also one of the trainers—received two Faculty Grants and was a Teaching Excellence Award recipient. Community-Based Learning Coordinator Emad Dawwas was a PFDP PhD Fellow. The university's acting president attended an Administrator Seminar. CELT Director Abdel Karim Daraghmeah was the principle implementer for a Collaborative Project in Teaching and completed the Seminar on Excellence in Teaching. PPU's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) Director Dr. Adnan Shehadeh is a SET master trainer, recipient of the Teaching Excellence Award, and an Administrator Seminar participant. Bethlehem University's President Brother Peter Bray participated in an Administrator Seminar, as did Vice President for Academic Affairs Irene Hazou. Rima Dabdoub, a faculty member in the Department of English, is a SET master trainer and recipient of the Teaching Excellence Award. All have attended Roundtables. The expertise in effective teaching strategies that these individuals shared as a result of their previous PFDP involvement was instrumental in enabling their respective centers' early successes.

The decision to support the development of university-based centers dedicated to teaching and learning was influenced by the 2009 *National Study of Undergraduate Teaching Practices in Palestine*, led by Dr. Louis Cristillo under PFDP auspices, which recommended the establishment of a university unit dedicated to faculty professional development. Similarly, PFDP needs assessments in both 2007 and 2009

⁹ PFDP's initial approach incorporated a matching grants program to support the development of Centers for Teaching and Learning within Palestinian institutions. A number of factors made it impractical at that time, including new vetting requirements and USAID's Anti-Terrorism Certificate, which most institutions were reluctant to sign. In addition, the grant amounts were relatively small with no formal mechanism to provide technical assistance to universities seeking to develop such a center. This component was removed from the program description in 2006, and Collaborative Projects in Teaching were pursued as an alternative way of promoting teamwork among faculty across many institutions.

In 2009, in accordance with the aims of the National Teacher Education Strategy published a year earlier, U.S.-Palestinian University Partnership Grants were added to the PFDP portfolio. They aimed to provide significant funds to at least two Palestinian universities in order to restructure and enhance their pre-service and/or in-service teacher education program, with major support provided by at least one U.S. university. The timing of this approach as well proved problematic, as the Faculties of Education were in the midst of an accreditation process that would need to conclude before any thought could be given to restructuring the programs, and it also became clear that extensive negotiation would be required between USAID, European donors, and the MoEHE in order to avoid overlap in supporting the restructuring of formal teacher education.

documented high interest in institutional engagement so that continuing professional development for faculty and administrators would not depend solely on outside funding. CTEs were integrated into most of the Palestinian universities' long-term plans, and some nascent centers were already providing a fertile context for development. The idea also had wide support among higher education leadership.

The CTE program was divided into two phases, which are outlined below.

PHASE I. Based on a growing recognition of the need to institutionalize PFDP's work in a sustainable way, Phase I of the CTE program—originally expected to be the only phase—was intended to enable the development of sustainable, impactful centers at two Palestinian universities to strengthen their long-term commitment to effective teaching and learning strategies. It began with a general call for proposals reflecting an integrated approach to improving learning and teaching, including an emphasis on student-centered learning, faculty development to support new teaching methods, review of relevant university policies relating to teaching, provisions of incentives for better teaching, appropriate use of educational technologies, and broad-based governance. After a search process involving visits to all West Bank universities, ten submitted concept papers, and six were short-listed: Birzeit University, An-Najah National University, Bethlehem University, Hebron University, Palestine Polytechnic University, and Palestine Technical University—Kadoorie. In September 2010, AMIDEAST organized a two-day workshop in which visiting teams from U.S. partner universities provided technical support to these six universities as the latter finalized their CTE plans and proposals.



Dr. Christopher Knapper (right), one of PFDP's external CTE evaluators, meets with BU's CETL leadership team (from right to left): Dr. Irene Hazou, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs; Brother Peter Smith, Vice President for Academic Affairs; and Dr. Rabab Tamish, CETL Director.

Phase I Grant Recipients. Final agreements with the two ultimate grant recipients—Bethlehem University (BU) and An-Najah National University (ANU)—were signed in February 2011. Modest support was subsequently provided to Hebron University to support some of the programs and activities in its fledgling, pre-existing CTE, including procurement of equipment and furniture, a needs assessment, brochure design and printing, website development, and international travel expenses.

Each CTE developed its own goals and objectives. ANU's Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELТ) took a train-the-trainer approach to develop the capacity of its faculty in learner-centered teaching and faculty development, with training workshop content determined through a needs assessment and focused on course design, assessment, problem-based learning, action research, e-learning and leadership. The CELТ aimed primarily to:

- 1) Develop a new faculty orientation program
- 2) Conduct program, market, and learner needs assessments
- 3) Train returning faculty on newer teaching methodologies essential to shift toward learner-centered approaches

- 4) Encourage action research to identify challenges and recommend solutions
- 5) Integrate technology into the teaching and learning processes.

BU's proposal for its Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) focused on building its faculty's capacity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for student-centered teaching. To improve quality as well as promote a sense of ownership over student-centered learning at BU, the primary objectives for the CETL were as follows.

- 1) Engage in activities at multiple levels (teacher-student, department-faculty, university-wide, community, and national and international partnerships)
- 2) Train faculty
- 3) Evaluate BU programs and courses
- 4) Create community partnerships
- 5) Support innovative action research by BU faculty

An extensive needs assessment conducted by the BU center highlighted priority topics for faculty training and influenced how the CETL designed its activities and interaction with faculty, administration, and students.

Phase I CTE Development. Within a year of their founding, both CTEs embarked on an impressive collection of activities, attracted large numbers of faculty to their events, and established themselves within the larger university. In their report on Phase I, the program's external evaluators noted significant, positive impacts from each of the two CTEs; while they could not draw definitive conclusions at that point, they noted that senior faculty and administrators at the two universities believed that the CTEs were accomplishing their goals and institutionalizing a new culture of effective, student-centered learning. "The project has had demonstrable and positive impacts on beneficiaries," they wrote.¹⁰

Each center identified the development of master trainers as critical to its strategic plan, and as soon as cadres of trainers were prepared, both centers instituted a wide-ranging series of faculty workshops and new-faculty orientations. By the end of this first grant, the BU CETL director reported that 85% of all full-time faculty had participated in at least one CETL-sponsored event. Reflective practices assisted students in designing their own learning, manifested in new courses that incorporated project-based and community-based learning. Both ANU and BU also offered innovation grants for action research projects related to teaching and learning. PFDP grants furnished the dedicated space that was provided for each center, and the existence of a "neutral" location for faculty to gather facilitated the development of a university-wide community of practice around teaching and learning. The centers established websites and published brochures to communicate their activities, objectives, and successes. As of this writing, both centers are continuing to actively use their websites to publish information about their activities and ways for faculty to improve their teaching.

Toward the end of the first grant year, BU and ANU jointly organized a national conference, *Sharing Models of Innovative Teaching in Higher Education*, as required in their grant agreements for the purposes of capacity building. The conference featured 34 presenters from three West Bank and nine foreign universities, and attracted over 200 participants. The conference succeeded in bringing together

¹⁰ Knapper, Christopher K. and Robert A. Cannon, *Centers for Teaching Excellence Evaluation Study: Final Report of the External Evaluators*, 31 July 2012, pg. 37.

academics from various disciplines and institutions to share research and experience in innovative teaching and learning strategies, and to a more limited extent, to discuss challenges that the centers had experienced. As the external evaluators would go on to note, BU and ANU were the only two Palestinian universities with functioning CTEs at the time, and so their impact extended beyond their own universities as others looked to them for guidance.¹¹



Staff members at An-Najah National University's Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching.

Ongoing involvement from the partner U.S. universities supported CTE development in this first stage, albeit with mixed success. The Northwestern-ANU partnership worked well, perhaps in part because both institutions share a focus on STEM fields and were able to find common ground and mutually relevant issues related to teaching and learning in those fields; Northwestern faculty also trained the master trainers at both institutions. By contrast, the Portland State-BU relationship was only partially successful due to what the two universities referred to as differences in philosophy and interests. The external evaluators recommended in their final report on Phase I that any future partner institutions be

selected by the CTEs themselves to ensure appropriateness and relevance of the relationship.

Even at this early stage, the CTEs received strong support from senior university administrators, who ensured ongoing support for the centers by dedicating a budget line item to their activities, and who enacted changes in university policies to bring them in line with the work of the CTEs. The external evaluators noted in their final report that these administrators recognized the importance and impact of the CTEs' work and were willing to support their mission. New and more flexible assessment policies were adopted at both universities that gave faculty the freedom to engage in the innovative approaches to teaching and assessment that the CTEs advocated and supported. Redesigned courses incorporated more blended learning components, student-centered activities, and project-based learning, and student evaluations of teachers who participated in the CTE workshops improved. The external evaluators reported that the people they interviewed at each university described their center as a catalyst for discussions about teaching that crossed discipline and departmental boundaries. According to one respondent quoted in the final evaluation, "For the first time, we are networking across the university."¹²

In their final evaluation of Phase I, the external evaluators summarized: "USAID funding has produced two educational development centers that have proved remarkably successful in a very short time. The two centers both have well-qualified and committed directors and each has well-equipped and dedicated space. They have mounted an ambitious set of programs, attracted a large number of faculty members to the events they have organized, and established a profile across the university. ... These strong beginnings are the foundation for the future success of educational development in these universities, and hopefully over time, across the entire Palestinian university system."¹³

¹¹ Knapper, Christopher K. and Robert A. Cannon, *Centers for Teaching Excellence Evaluation Study: Final Report of the External Evaluators*, 31 July 2012, pg. 34.

¹² Ibid., pg. 26.

¹³ Ibid., pg. 49.

PHASE II. Based on the positive outcomes from the CTEs at An-Najah National and Bethlehem Universities, USAID and AMIDEAST agreed to extend PFDP for two additional years—through September 2014—to continue support for these two centers and to develop two new centers at other West Bank universities. A budget was tentatively approved, but a delay in the release of funds for USAID’s West Bank Mission delayed the signing of the modification. The modification was eventually signed in March 2013, and AMIDEAST began soliciting applications for the new CTE grant opportunity. Phase II finalists included Palestine Polytechnic University (PPU), Al-Quds Open University, and Birzeit University; in consultation with USAID,

AMIDEAST decided not to proceed with Al-Quds Open University’s CTE based largely on the size and complexity of the university compared with what could be expected during the relatively short period of implementation. A grant agreement with PPU was signed in August 2013. AMIDEAST also expected to sign an agreement with Birzeit University, but this was precluded by the university administration’s refusal to sign USAID’s required Anti-Terrorism Certificate. AMIDEAST then began negotiating with Palestine Technical University–Kadoorie (PTUK). As the latter is a public institution and therefore prohibited from receiving direct funding, AMIDEAST determined that it would procure goods and services on behalf of the university instead of releasing funds to the university’s own management. PTUK’s CTE agreement was signed in February 2014, leaving the university barely a year to implement activities before PFDP closed.



Staff members at Palestine Technical University—Kadoorie’s Kadoorie Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation.

Phase II, New CTEs. PTUK’s efforts focused on establishing its center—the Kadoorie Center for Learning and Teaching Innovation, or KCLTI—and gaining university-wide recognition for its activities. Through a separate MOU, ANU provided support for PTUK’s initial center development through a series of training-of-trainer sessions, advice on strategies for student involvement, monitoring and evaluation, website development, and conference implementation. ANU also provided support to PTUK faculty in redesigning two courses on operations research, technical writing, and professional ethics to incorporate more student-centered approaches. Additional training-of-trainers was delivered by Northwestern University Searle Center faculty, and in January 2015, the PTUK trainers joined PPU faculty for a four-day academic workshop at Lund University in Sweden. In December 2014, PTUK hosted a three-day conference on *Innovation in Learning and Teaching: From Policies to Practice*, focused on science and technology. Faculty from the other three CTEs participated in the conference, presenting on the effective practices instituted in their own institutions. International experts from seven countries made presentations and ran workshops for PTUK faculty in conjunction with the conference.

The short time available for implementation limited the extent to which the external evaluators could draw conclusions about progress and prospects for PTUK’s center, and the productivity of that time was compromised to some extent by administrative challenges with staffing, planning, logistical and financial matters that the other three centers largely avoided. There has been limited opportunity to engage students in new approaches to learning and teaching as of this writing, but students have reported that the eight trainers are already implementing changes in their own classes with clear positive results and increased student satisfaction. PTUK’s initial focus on the training of trainers will be especially valuable in the near future, when the university expects to hire significant numbers of new teachers. As Knapper and Cannon

noted in their final report, “The initial investment in preparing these trainers is already paying dividends even before they start to work with faculty. They are each implementing changes with their own students in the undergraduate courses they teach, and we saw impressive evidence from the work of students, and their thoughtful comments about their learning experiences, that these trainers are achieving very positive learning outcomes that are quite consistent with the goal of promoting student-centered learning.”¹⁴



Staff members at Palestinian Technical University—Kadoorie’s Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Innovation pose with Dr. Christopher Knapper, one of PFDP’s external CTE evaluators.

Palestine Polytechnic University’s Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) opened in May 2014, and in just 20 months, five master trainers were trained and delivered 20 workshops with a combined attendance of 500. The workshops were delivered by PPU’s master trainers as well as by faculty from other institutions, including Mai Al-Maghatheh from Hebron University (one of PFDP’s certified master trainers) and Emad Dawwas from ANU (a former PFDP PhD Fellow). The faculty who have participated in training workshops and instituted more learner-centered methodologies in their courses report positive changes in their students’ attitudes to learning and improved learning outcomes.

The clear benefits of these workshops led PPU’s Council of Deans to adopt two important policies that will ensure the center’s sustainability: first, all new faculty are now required to complete 65 hours of training workshops on effective teaching practices to be considered for tenure; second, in all future promotion decisions, teaching performance and teaching portfolios will be weighted equally with research. Five of the university’s trainers attended a one-week training-of-trainers delivered by Oxford Brookes University that included blended learning design, flipped teaching, effective online discussion, and case-based learning. As a result of workshops that the trainers subsequently delivered, faculty in five of PPU’s colleges have developed eight separate community-based learning courses. Finally, PPU’s administration has institutionalized an annual teaching excellence award to encourage and recognize excellent teaching practice, and the university by-laws have been amended to formalize this development. The external evaluators noted in their final report on PPU’s CETL that, although they had some concerns about the center’s workability in its current form because it was so new at the time and was still in the process of developing its staff, they were pleased with the direction in which it was heading and the early impacts it was already having. “[PPU’s CETL] is making steady progress in a university that continues to demonstrate its continuing commitment to improving the quality of learning and teaching,” they wrote.¹⁵

The external evaluators concluded that despite the relatively short time since their founding, the CTEs at both PPU and PTUK already exhibit key indicators of sustainability, and although initial decision-making for both centers was largely top-down, both are developing core communities of practice that are now driving the evolution of a new culture of teaching and learning from the bottom up.

¹⁴ Knapper, Christopher K. and Robert A. *Centers for Teaching Excellence Phase 2 Final Evaluation Study*, February 28, 2015, pgs. 39-40.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pg. 36.



An orientation session for new faculty members at Bethlehem University, organized by the school's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

Phase II, Continuing Support. Phase II grants for ANU and BU, meanwhile, enabled consolidation and expansion of the achievements they obtained in Phase I. The external evaluators would go on to note in their Phase II report that this additional period of support has allowed the two older centers to expand their operations and become truly engrained in the fabric of their universities.

ANU's CELT has focused on turning learner-centered practices into the university's dominant culture, and has incorporated applied learning

methodologies into courses and programs. Support for faculty in the development of community-based learning, done partly in partnership with the American University in Cairo, has resulted in a total of 21 CBL courses now available to students in varied fields of study. In 2014, ANU's CELT teams trained 150 faculty members on new methods and alternative assessment practices and provided new faculty orientation to 98 new hires; total faculty trained since the center's founding now approaches 700, out of a total faculty of almost 1,000. ANU has institutionalized its annual conference on innovation in teaching and learning, and the 2014 event—which focused on community-based learning—drew more than 300 participants, including 156 students. Center leadership has solidified and now includes a director and associate director, CBL coordinator, PBL coordinator, and an e-learning coordinator, in addition to a team of trainers that meets regularly and is available to support individual faculty seeking to improve teaching quality, course design, and assessment.

In addition, ANU's CELT in 2014 commissioned an independent self-study that demonstrated statistically significant results: instructors who had gone through CELT training were more likely to implement new, interactive teaching strategies, and students in their classes reported that they enjoyed those classes more than ones taught with traditional methods. "I consider the course an opportunity to solve my community's problem as well as to collect the data so as to be more familiar with the course," said one student enrolled in a CBL course, "because the course in the previous semester was taught following the conventional method and worked only on already-collected data."¹⁶ PFDP's external evaluators commended this study and pointed to ANU as an example of what can be accomplished in a well-run CTE seeking to improve itself and its place in its university. ANU's nationally recognized e-learning director provides training on the effective integration of technology in student-centered learning, and the university has adopted an e-learning policy that supports the development of blended learning.

BU's CETL now plays a critical role in helping departments define and revise learning outcomes through workshops and one-on-one consultation with faculty to deepen the work begun in Phase I. In Phase II, new training programs focused on assisting deans and chairs to develop skills in monitoring; several new deans and chairs who benefited from faculty training in Phase I have now moved into roles where they can influence change more broadly. Informal monthly meetings ("academic *dardashat*") invite all faculty to come discuss topics related to teaching and learning in higher education. The center coordinated a

¹⁶ Nazzal, Zahel, Denise Drane, Rana Abu Samra, Tamara Awwad, Nagam Taslaq, and Wattan Nazal. *CELT Dissemination & Overall Impact on Teaching and Learning at An-Najah National University*, August 2014–January 2015, pg. 15.

university-wide Academic Literacy Campaign (ALC) to identify skills gaps among students, and then worked with faculty to revise key courses to reinforce and build those skills. Meetings with Arabic and English faculty resulted in important modifications to two major courses offered to all first-year students, with shifts away from a focus on grammar and toward active writing and reading skills. Teachers in other subjects have integrated literacy skills into their courses with support from CETL staff, and more than 20 separate teachers have documented improvements in students' writing skills since the ALC began. The CETL is cooperating with Diak University of Applied Science in Finland to pilot work on the impact on student learning of using iPads, and with the Dean of Research to establish an 18-month course for teachers on the scholarship of teaching and learning. In the words of one dean, the work of the CETL is moving from “enriching knowledge to institutionalization and internalization”—exactly the kind of work PFDP's final two years were intended to incorporate. This is especially evident in the requirement that all new faculty complete the CETL's two-year orientation program.

The February 2015 final external evaluation report noted that in Phase II, ANU and BU have consolidated their earlier achievements and are emerging as strong, well-regarded centers: “USAID's support for these two centers ... has had very positive outcomes of a kind we have rarely encountered elsewhere in our development work,”¹⁷ continuing on to say that both exhibit practices, innovations, ideas, and relationships that have achieved “world-class” outcomes.

The 2009 *National Study of Undergraduate Teaching Practices in Palestine* highlighted concerns about the relevance of university education for students, the prevalence of teacher-centered methodologies, the limited opportunities for professional development among faculty, and academic policies that discouraged the integration of innovating teaching, learning and assessment approaches that would enhance learning outcomes. The developments summarized above indicate that especially at BU and ANU, the introduction of innovative, student-centered teaching strategies through training of faculty, curriculum redesign, and reforms in institutional policies has resulted in a major shift in the academic culture, with both teachers and students reporting greater student engagement and learning. This development has been documented through the external evaluations of all four CTEs, and as a component of its Phase II grant, ANU conducted its own impact study that similarly provided evidence that its CELT has been instrumental in facilitating the new, learner-centered approaches many ANU faculty have adopted in the past few years.

Reform of Palestinian Higher Education

Supporting the Ministry of Education and Higher Education

AMIDEAST sought to engage the Ministry of Education and Higher Education at the outset of PFDP in 2005, but within six months, the U.S. government prohibited further interaction with the Palestinian public sector in response to the formation of a unity Palestinian government that included Hamas. The restriction was lifted in the West Bank in 2007, and since then, MoEHE involvement in PFDP has slowly increased in tandem with a national emphasis on education and the recognized role that university faculty play in improving the quality of higher education. This was reflected in the 2008 Palestinian Reform and

¹⁷ Knapper, Christopher K. and Robert A. Cannon. *Centers for Teaching Excellence Evaluation Study: Final Report of the External Evaluators*, 31 July 2012, pg. 10.

Development Plan designed to develop and implement policies and strategies toward improved teacher training at all levels. It was also expressed in the ministry's National Teacher Education Strategy, produced in concert with UNRWA, higher education institutions, and the NGO community, and also published in 2008. Senior ministry officials have participated in many PFDP activities since 2007. These include the University Administrator Seminars, Higher Education Roundtables, and Academic Colloquia; with regard to the latter, it is noteworthy that the minister him/herself opened each and every session six years running, reflecting the high regard with which the ministry viewed the importance and impact of PFDP. The introduction of PFDP's Master's Degree Fellowship Program component was in response to ministry requests for capacity building among its staff, and the program design and eligibility requirements were coordinated closely with the ministry.



Participants in the first Higher Education Roundtable, which was held in Ramallah in September 2011 and focused on the *History and Development of World Universities and Higher Education Systems*.

In 2012, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education split into two separate ministries. While the change itself was short-lived, it heralded an important turning point for PFDP's engagement with the ministry. Dr. Ali Jarbawi was appointed Minister of Higher Education, and until his resignation in June 2013 when the two ministries again merged, he worked closely with PFDP's Chief of Party in seeking to move forward discussion and consideration of reform in Palestinian higher education. Initially, this included the provision of technical assistance in several areas.

For example, in December 2012, Chief of Party Dr. John Shumaker submitted to MoEHE a policy report and recommendations on *Regulating for-Profit Universities*. Developed at the request of Minister Jarbawi, it summarized the explosive growth of private universities around the world and identified some of the challenges that arise in regulating them. The report recommended that MoEHE hold for-profit universities to the same standards that apply to public (non-profit) universities and government universities in Palestine; publish benchmarking data that measures how well the institutions compare with each other; and provide accurate information to students and families about the relative effectiveness of these universities in comparison with each other.

Also at the request of Minister Jarbawi and in cooperation with Chemonics International under its USAID-funded PACE project (Palestinian Authority Capacity Enhancement), AMIDEAST arranged for two local consultants to work on a part-time basis with the ministry on two projects that Minister Jarbawi had identified as key elements of his agenda. For a period of approximately three months ending in late 2012, PACE provided funding for the consultant work, and PFDP provided oversight and technical guidance. The projects included the following.

- **Dr. Suhail Sultan** of Palestine Polytechnic University was retained to design a new governance structure for higher education and formulate recommendations for the internal reorganization of the ministry itself. His report included an analysis of patterns of university governance in other national systems and options for Palestine, and an organizational analysis of the current internal structure of the MOHE and options for changes.

- **Dr. Mohammed Al-Subu'**, former director of the Academic and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC) and newly on the faculty at An-Najah National University, was retained to provide orientation and support for the new director, Dr. Mirvat Bulbul, as she entered her new position. He was also tasked with drafting a new law to regulate the three private (for profit) universities in Palestine: Arab American University–Jenin, Palestine University, and Gaza Women's University. He conducted extensive research on similar laws in force in other MENA countries and presented a new draft law to the Minister in December 2012. The minister referred the report to AQAC for follow-up and asked PFDP to work with Dr. Bulbul to begin building a proper, data-based accountability system for the ministry and the universities.

Dr. Bulbul, the head of ACAQ, moved immediately to consider the recommendation in Dr. Shumaker's report for a rigorous new data-based mandatory system for reporting and accountability for Palestinian universities. There are currently no reliable data that would support such comparative studies; the Tertiary Education Management Information System (TEMIS) that the MoEHE developed with support from the World Bank had not yet attained a level of maturity that allowed for the collection of key data. Beginning in January 2013, PFDP worked with Dr. Bulbul and her staff—and the Ministry's TEMIS working group—to develop a more robust system of key performance indicators and accountability reports that the Ministry would use initially as a management tool and eventually as a means of informing the public about university quality and effectiveness.

Minister Jarbawi also requested that PFDP and the ministry formalize an agreement to coordinate efforts in higher education and communicate on a regular basis about plans, results, and evaluations, in part to help convey the ministry's active support for improvement in higher education to the public and to universities. A draft agreement was developed and submitted to USAID for review; while it was never signed, its development reflected the collaborative relationship PFDP had established with the minister and MoHE, as well as Minister Jarbawi's commitment to higher education reform. At the same time, ongoing discussion between AMIDEAST, USAID, and officials at MoHE and AQAC on priority issues in Palestinian higher education led to the development of a new PFDP component:

National Policy Seminars. These roundtable events were intended to generate discussion around key topics related to quality assurance in higher education, stimulate policy briefings, and develop policy recommendation frameworks to be presented to Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) for consideration.

In June 2013, the Palestinian Authority recombined the Ministries of Education and Higher Education into a single entity, Minister Jarbawi resigned, and Dr. Ali Abu Zuhri was appointed as the new Minister. AMIDEAST had already obtained USAID's approval to provide additional technical assistance to AQAC for the purposes of moving forward Jarbawi's reform agenda. Just prior to his departure, Minister Jarbawi submitted a list of priorities, of which two fit within PFDP's scope: quality assurance, and e-learning



Dr. Fahoum Shalabi, Deputy Minister of Education and Higher Education, presents on strategic planning at the third National Policy Roundtable Seminar, which focused on *Scientific Research in Higher Education*. Dr. Shalabi is flanked in this photo by Dr. Sophia Howlett, of Central European University, who served as a trainer for several PFDP components.

policies and regulation. PFDP identified and retained consultants who worked under the direction of AQAC Director Bulbul. Meanwhile, topics for the forthcoming National Policy Seminars were finalized in consultation with Minister Abu Zuhri, and AMIDEAST worked with Dr. Bulbul to organize and implement the first seminar on *Quality Assurance of Higher Education in Palestine: Governance, Procedures and Standards*, which dealt primarily with governance of AQAC and the means for assuring its objective and transparent role in the accreditation process.

The unanticipated departure of Dr. Bulbul as Director of AQAC at the end of November 2013 required the postponement of additional seminars until early 2014. The return of Dr. Mohammed Al-Subu' to his former position as AQAC Director in February 2014 paved the way for the resumption of the National Policy Seminar series. *Reform of the Higher Education Council* was the topic for a January 2014 seminar, and *Scientific Research in Higher Education* was discussed in March. The much-awaited seminar on *Open and Distance Learning* policy was held in May 2014. Minister Abu Zuhri actively engaged in these roundtables and chaired the January, March, and May sessions.

The appointment of Dr. Khawla Shakhshsheer as Minister of Education and Higher Education in June 2014 impacted PFDP's effective working relationship with the ministry. The new minister focused her attention almost entirely on primary and secondary education and seldom responded to PFDP efforts to engage her with the project. She attended only two of the final five national policy roundtables and, unlike her predecessor, did not participate in the discussions. However, she allowed PFDP to continue coordinating with Dr. Al-Subu' to finalize the topics, agendas, and schedules for the remaining policy forums, subject to the review and approval of Deputy Minister of Higher Education Dr. Fahoum Shalabi. The final five seminars were as follows: *Financing as a Strategic Tool in Palestinian Higher Education* (conducted in two parts in September and October 2014); *University Admissions Criteria in Palestine: Beyond the Tawjihi* (November 2014); *Improving Foreign Degree Certification and Recognition* (December 2014); and *Internationalization in Higher Education* (January 2015). Together with designated technical experts in each topic area, AMIDEAST and the AQAC director worked together to document the proceedings and recommendations of each national seminar, organize a series of follow-on workshops, and finalize relevant policy proposals for submission to MoEHE and the Prime Minister. Among the outcomes of the National Policy Seminars are the following.

- By-laws for Open and Distance Learning (ODL) for Palestinian higher education were developed and submitted to the MoEHE and AQAC in May–June 2014, and then expanded and resubmitted in January 2015.
 - Recommendations stemming from the seminar on Research in Higher Education prompted the ministry's subsequent decision to fund seven national higher education research centers at Palestinian universities.
 - A new draft law recommending AQAC's independence from MoEHE stemmed from the seminar on Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Palestine. While it has not been enacted, the Prime Minister has agreed with the recommendations and the AQAC director currently reports to him rather than to the Minister of Education and Higher Education.
 - Consistent with recommendations from the seminar on Research in Higher Education, the new president of Palestine Polytechnic University—one of the presenters at this roundtable—has
-

established two private sector-PPU advisory committees that are now working with PPU faculty members on joint university-private sector research.

This policy reform component was added to PFDP to provide support for the reform agenda put forward by Minister Jarbawi, and its success in promoting improved quality in Palestinian higher education depended on sustained ministerial commitment to make substantive policy changes—a condition that has not been present since Dr. Jarbawi's resignation. Although little in the way of system-wide reform has been achieved as a direct result of PFDP's implementation of the National Policy Seminars, they represented an important first step by initiating national-level dialogue on key issues in higher education policy, generating consensus among educators around draft laws and policies that have been submitted to MoEHE, and influencing incremental developments such as those highlighted above. Significant reform will depend largely on the interest, commitment, and will of political appointees to put these issues back on the national agenda.

An outline of National Policy Seminar proceedings and outcomes appears in Appendix 13.



Roundtable Five leader Hisham Kuhail listens to group discussion recommendations from Hebron University's Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Ahmad Atawneh and Deputy Minister Fahoum Shalabi on higher education financing strategies during the October 2014 session.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Program Management and Personnel

AMIDEAST assumed the prime contracting role for PFDP. Initial responsibilities included all in-country activities: selection of participants, assistance with visas and international travel, pre-departure orientations, pre-academic training, and post-fellowship activities including the Academic Colloquia and Effective Teaching Strategies Course. Throughout the program, AMIDEAST's Chief of Party served as point of contact for the local USAID mission and the Open Society Foundations (OSF) in New York. OSF was a subcontractor to AMIDEAST, as well as a major donor to the project. OSF participated in the selection process, ensured cost-sharing with strategic university partners, and handled all participant placements and monitoring from New York.

The COP, based in AMIDEAST's West Bank office, was responsible for providing overall leadership, direction, and supervision of the program in the West Bank and Gaza, with oversight from AMIDEAST's Washington, DC-based Vice President for Programs and support from DC-based Contracts and Grants staff. Initially, the COP was supported in the West Bank and Gaza by a team of two program officers—one each in the West Bank and Gaza—who coordinated all field-based aspects of PFDP; a program assistant in Ramallah; and administrative support from accounting and other staff in AMIDEAST's Ramallah and Gaza offices. All West Bank/Gaza field office staff, with the exception of the COP, were Palestinian. The staffing model was designed to minimize cost and enable the rapid launch of the program.



AMIDEAST COPs John Shumaker, John FitzGibbon, and Chris Shinn, and Operations Manager Nariman Rajab, during PFDP's final Academic Colloquium in 2012.

OSF-based staff included a New York-based Program Manager and Program Coordinator/Placement Monitoring Specialist. The Network Scholarship Programs Director provided senior oversight on the OSF side and served on selection committees for PFDP fellows. OSF staff remained involved in PFDP until all U.S.-based fellows had completed their programs (or until their PFDP support terminated).

As PFDP expanded its activity and scope, additional staff members were hired. These included an Outreach and Program Coordinator in 2008, a Grants Manager and a Communications Coordinator in 2009, an Education Programs Manager in 2010. Also 2010, the position of Operations and Compliance Manager was created and filled by an existing staff member.

PFDP spanned nearly a full decade, and during this time, AMIDEAST staff and many of PFDP's key stakeholders moved on from their positions and were replaced by new personnel. In some cases, this transition was smooth and involved overlap that permitted programs to move forward without significant

disruption. In other cases, program plans were negatively impacted by changes in personnel resulting in delays and the need to change timeline expectations.

PFDP was led by a succession of six Chiefs of Party, as follows.

Dr. Chris Shinn	September 2005–May 2009
Dr. John FitzGibbon	May 2009–September 2010
Dr. John Shumaker	October 2010–June 2013
Dr. Robert Cannon (Interim)	July 2013–August 2013
Dr. Nancy George	November 2013–March 2014
Dr. John Knight	March 2014–June 2015

After multiple earlier extensions, PFDP was scheduled to end in September 2012, but AMIDEAST and USAID agreed to extend the program for an additional two years to implement a second round of CTE grants. When funds were not transferred to the West Bank USAID Mission in a timely way, USAID extended PFDP for six months—to March 2013—in hopes that funding would come through by then in order to then process the two-year extension. PFDP had actually begun the close-out process when, in March 2013, approval was given for the extension. The uncertainty over PFDP's continuation, however, had led COP Dr. John Shumaker to begin looking for alternative employment, and although the extension was ultimately signed, he had already accepted an offer. Recruiting a qualified replacement was a long and difficult process, and to bridge the gap, AMIDEAST retained Dr. Robert Cannon on a consulting basis to serve as interim COP.

As the final end of the program approached, senior staff members began to resign, and given the short time left, it was not possible to replace them at a comparable level. AMIDEAST was fortunate to have the services of an intern who proved extremely capable, and AMIDEAST Ramallah staff also provided additional support as PFDP began the close-out process. A final three-month extension to PFDP was permitted through June 2015, with staff supporting programming into June in addition to implementing close-out procedures.

AMIDEAST's permanent offices in Ramallah provided a ready base from which to launch and administer PFDP, and it also provided for additional part-time staff support in periods when the project itself was short-staffed. As noted above, this model was cost-effective and minimized the need to hire a full complement of full-time staff. However, in retrospect, a more robust staffing model would have served the project well, particularly as it expanded over the years. PFDP's Chief of Party effectively served as both the primary technical expert and the senior program administrator for much of the program's lifespan, putting excessive pressure on a single individual and contributing to difficulties in hiring a new COP in 2013. In addition, while a full-time monitoring and evaluation specialist did not seem necessary at the program outset, when most activities centered around scholarship administration, this role would have been beneficial in the program's later years, as PFDP's interventions expanded and were poised to make an impact at the systems level.

Monitoring and Evaluation

PFDP began largely as a scholarship program for university faculty, with doctoral degree programs and short-term fellowship programs constituting the core of program activity. At the outset, additional components were designed to enhance the experience of PFDP fellows before, during, and after their U.S.-based study; matching grants to universities were relatively modest as originally conceived. Over time, program goals and objectives evolved and expanded to incorporate a much greater emphasis on institutionalizing an improved culture of teaching and learning within Palestinian higher education, and new program components were developed accordingly. These successive components reflected the evolving development of Palestinian higher education through PFDP's life; as key individuals in institutions of Palestinian higher education—some of them former PFDP participants—began to recognize the benefits they could reap from systems-level reform, PFDP expanded to help them bridge that gap. As a consequence of these changes, the monitoring and evaluation of PFDP evolved with the project; specific evaluation mechanisms for new program components were put into place as those components were created and funded. This served the project well given the ten-year length of PFDP and the fluctuating importance and complexity of its various components over time.

At the outset, AMIDEAST and OSF jointly conducted PFDP monitoring, reporting, and evaluation. Evaluations undertaken after all workshops and colloquia as well as before, during, and after the U.S.-based training programs, aimed to assess the quality of activity design and content and the value of the U.S. study experience. These evaluations regularly shaped future activities and developed new ways of delivering program content. PFDP staff at AMIDEAST met regularly with USAID representatives to share feedback and to work to improve program components as needed. In this respect, formative monitoring and evaluation (M&E) was well integrated into program delivery, and the program design reflected continuous input from participants and potential beneficiaries throughout Palestinian higher education. AMIDEAST provided data as required for USAID's TraiNet and GeoMIS databases.

In addition to this ongoing M&E, three research and assessment products in the first three years of PFDP provided much needed insight into the effectiveness of the program, the core needs as viewed by participants and potential participants, and the overall state of higher education from the perspectives of administrators and faculty. These were the Needs Assessments of 2007 and 2009, and the *National Study of Undergraduate Teaching Practices in Palestine*. In addition, PFDP conducted a survey of its alumni fellows in late 2014 in an effort to gain insight into the longer-term impact of their U.S. study in particular.

Needs Assessment, March 2007. Spurred in part by the relatively low response to the second round of short-term fellow recruitment, AMIDEAST and OSF in 2007 designed and conducted a survey to capture faculty views on the need for various kinds of training, as well as on how to shape the Short-Term Fellowship Program to be more attractive and relevant. Interviews were conducted with 65 senior faculty from ten universities, and 167 (out of 200 targeted) responded to an online survey. With a focus on faculty development, the four areas for which needs were assessed included: visiting international scholars, short-term training (including for administrators), research fellowships, and collaborative projects to support teaching. Results indicated interest in all these focus areas, but especially for short-term fellowships for faculty and administrators; regarding the short-term fellowship in particular, there was a consensus on the need to expand the eligible fields of study and to incorporate a research

component. The concept of small groups of faculty engaging in collaborative, theme-based academic projects over a period of 12–24 months was also popular. Much of the feedback reflected a desire to more systematically develop institutional linkages with U.S. and European universities. It revealed a strong interest in e-learning and the development of resources for the integration of information technology into traditional face-to-face teaching. Many faculty suggested funding one or more university-based centers to institutionalize knowledge and experience about teaching to ensure its sustainability. This concept had been an original component of PFDP, but complications in disbursing funds to institutions stemming from new compliance requirements as well as other factors had prevented its implementation up to this point.

In coordination with USAID, AMIDEAST responded to the survey results by inaugurating the short-term administrative fellowships at Central European University in Budapest in January 2008, and the Collaborate Projects in Teaching in May 2008 as well as by continuing existing faculty development and academic exchange opportunities. The Collaborative Projects in Teaching represented an alternative approach to the originally envisioned institutional grants.

Higher Education Roundtable, November 2008. Further monitoring and evaluation was structured around the expressed needs of Palestinian faculty members and administrators. In November 2008, PFDP hosted a roundtable discussion with eleven Palestinian university presidents, vice presidents, and other key decision-makers representing eleven Palestinian universities to identify faculty development needs and further explore ways to build institutional capacity. The event was structured around two specific questions: 1) What were critical faculty development needs and priorities within Palestinian higher education and how could these be better supported; and 2) What were the priorities of higher education administrators and what technical assistance or training would be most effective in addressing these needs? PFDP hosted this VIP event as a preliminary step to launching the 2009 higher education needs assessment.

Needs Assessment, March 2009. This survey constituted a follow-up to the 2007 needs assessment and focused on specific aspects of PFDP. The eight-page survey included 35 questions designed to elicit a better understanding of faculty priorities and needs in four areas: 1) institutionalizing faculty development; 2) administrative training; 3) faculty grants; and 4) the academic colloquium. Finalized in collaboration with USAID and OSF, the survey was translated into Arabic and disseminated to faculty at all West Bank and Gaza universities and UNRWA Training Centers, including to PFDP participants. The survey was designed to assess the extent to which faculty had participated in PFDP to date, the effectiveness of the professional development opportunities PFDP offered, home institution support of professional development, and personal interests regarding further professional development.

Of the 192 respondents, 24% were women faculty members. Sixty-one percent of respondents indicated that they had taken part in one PFDP activity. Nearly half (48%) felt that each Palestinian institution of higher learning should fund faculty professional development internally, and the majority favored workshops, seminars and short training courses over graduate education scholarships. Equally, however, responses made it clear that there was very strong interest in funded research opportunities in targeted academic fields.

Faculty were also surveyed on the value of administrative training, and responses reflected the extent to which they themselves had administrative duties on campus. Those in favor of additional administrative training preferred it to be at a supervisory level, and they were most interested in information and communications technology, e-learning, strategic planning, and faculty roles and responsibilities. Of the

130 responses to the question about the content for the next academic colloquium, the majority chose an exploration of how to achieve excellence in teaching. PFDP responded with a 2009 academic colloquium on *Teaching Practice in Palestinian Tertiary Education* and a 2010 academic colloquium on *Building Partnership in Teaching Excellence*.

CTE Evaluations. A number of evaluation mechanisms were incorporated into PFDP's support for Centers for Teaching Excellence (CTE). These included self-assessments by the centers themselves at key points during their grants, a formative evaluation process conducted by two external consultants, and summative evaluations—again conducted by external consultants, at the conclusion of each round of grant funding.

The external evaluators with whom AMIDEAST contracted for the CTE evaluations were Dr. Christopher Knapper and Dr. Robert Cannon, each with 40 years of experience in educational development and evaluation in schools, universities and other educational institutions. Christopher Knapper, the evaluation team leader, is from Canada and has spent much of his academic life working with educational development programs worldwide that are similar in goals and scope to those of the CTEs. He is widely acknowledged as a leading expert and consultant on educational development in higher educational settings. Robert Cannon, from Australia, has similarly broad experience with teaching and learning centers, having led one in Australia for 24 years and established another in Indonesia. He also has extensive experience with educational development projects in higher and basic education supported by USAID and other donors.

During each grant cycle, the external consultants conducted an interim evaluation of each CTE, which was followed by a final evaluation at the end of the grant period. The evaluations were based on extended site visits, institutional self-studies, milestone reports, center publications, websites, relevant background information on the universities, and evaluations of workshops, conferences and other CTE activities. Monitoring and evaluation consistency was maintained by retaining the same external evaluations throughout the process. In all, five reports were submitted, as follows.

- A preliminary report issued in November 2011 and based on a site visit in September and October, documenting the consultants' observations concerning progress to date of the new CTEs at Bethlehem University and An-Najah National University
 - Final report on the conclusion of the first grant cycle, issued in July 2012 and based on a May-June visit to the centers as well as institutional self-studies, milestone reports, center publications, workshop evaluations, and other data
 - A preliminary report for the second grant cycle, issued in June 2013 and based on a June 2013 site visit. In addition to ongoing PFDP-funded activity at Bethlehem and An-Najah National University, new centers were funded at Palestine Polytechnic University and Palestine Technical University-Kadoorie
 - An interim report for the second grant cycle, issued in March 2014 and based on a February 2014 site visit
 - A final report for the second grant cycle, issued in February 2015 and based on a January-February 2015 site visit
-

As a result of the positive conclusions and recommendations made by the evaluators regarding the progress of CTEs at Bethlehem and An-Najah National Universities during the first grant cycle, USAID agreed to extend PFDP for an additional two years and provided funding for ongoing development of the first two centers and to support the creation of new centers at two other West Bank universities. Substantive discussion of the CTEs, including findings from the evaluations noted above, is provided elsewhere in this report. However, it is worth reiterating that the evaluators concluded that all four CTEs had achieved remarkable success within a short time. Each mounted an ambitious set of academic development programs, established productive links with universities internationally, and attracted faculty to the events they organized, including a series of national conferences. The more mature CTEs at An-Najah National University and Bethlehem University are now well integrated into their respective universities. The newer CTEs at Palestine Polytechnic University and Palestine Technical University–Kadoorie are still at an early stage of development and therefore more “fragile,” requiring strong management to ensure their continuing survival and growth.

Alumni survey, 2014. In July and August 2015, AMIDEAST conducted a survey of PFDP-funded degree recipients, including PhD Fellows, Master’s Degree Fellows, and graduates of the Bard/Al-Quds Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program. None of the MAT graduates responded, likely because they had no previous direct contact with PFDP or USAID, as PFDP had paid their scholarship support directly to Bard/Al-Quds. Eighteen of the PhD and Master’s Degree Fellows who received the online survey responded to it—a response rate of 50%.¹⁸ Two versions of the survey were developed: one for teachers and another for administrators. Survey questions asked alumni to assess the impact of the program on their leadership development and professional skills development, their views on the quality of their experience, and their perspectives on the future of higher education in the West Bank and Gaza. Summary findings include the following.

- Nearly 77% of respondents reported good-to-excellent impact of their PFDP programs on their leadership development.
- Among teachers and professors, 90% or more rated good-to-excellent the increase in their ability to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum, instruction and assessment, research skills, professional knowledge in their disciplines, and potential for improving the quality of education in the West Bank and Gaza.
- Among administrators, 100% assessed as good-to-excellent the increase in their professional knowledge and research skills and potential for improving the quality of education in the West Bank and Gaza.
- All respondents ranked highly the quality of their overall scholarship experience, including on-program support from AMIDEAST and OSF, their academic program and faculty advisor, classes, and research resources. Lower satisfaction levels were indicated for the quality of housing.
- Most respondents indicated relatively low expectations for improvement in Palestinian higher education over the next 3–8 years. Among the factors cited were lack of freedom of movement, brain drain, and lack of interest or support from MoEHE. By contrast, one hopeful administrator

¹⁸ Contact information was not available for all scholarship alumni at the time of the survey.

noted an increase in “new thinking and new techniques” among students and positive indications of development and change that bode well for the longer term.

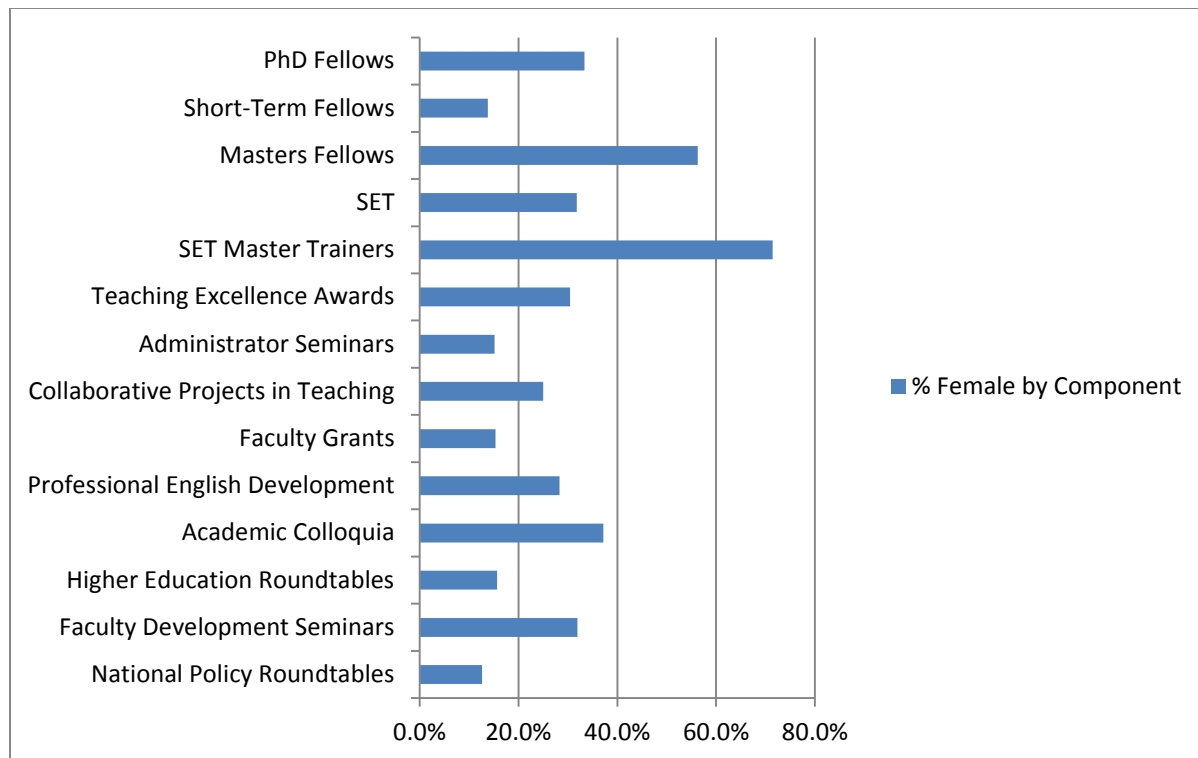
- Aspects of Palestinian education noted by respondents as most in need of change and improvement included the curriculum, teaching methods, and assessment.

Gender Factors

At the outset of PFDP in 2005, fewer than 12.5% of Palestinian faculty were women, and the percentage of women in university administration was even lower. While USAID did not require special consideration of gender or gender integration in the implementation of PFDP, AMIDEAST made a concerted effort to ensure that at least 20% of PFDP participants were female, and this target was exceeded in most components as the chart below illustrates. Of particular note, 33% of the PhD Fellows and 56% of the Master’s Degree Fellows were women, the latter reflecting a higher proportion of female teachers and administrators at the pre-tertiary level than at the university level. Nearly 32% of those completing the Seminar in Excellence in Teaching (SET) were women, as were a majority of the SET master trainers (71.4%). One of the four Collaborative Projects in Teaching grant recipients was female, and 30% of the Teaching Excellence Award recipients were women. By contrast, the percentage of women receiving short-term fellowships and faculty grants, and enrolling in the University Administrator Seminars at Central European University, reached only 13.8–15.4%. The lower participation rate for women in the University Administrator Seminars reflects the relatively low proportion of women in university administration.

Feedback that AMIDEAST received regarding the Short-Term Fellowships cited the inability to bring family members as a disincentive, and this factor would perhaps have discouraged more women than men; in 2011, female applicants constituted only 10 out of 70 Short-Term Fellowship applicants. Women constituted a meaningful percentage of attendees at the Academic Colloquia and the Faculty Development Seminars. However, both the Higher Education Roundtables and the National Policy Roundtables had disappointingly low percentages of women—15.7% and 12.7%, respectively. As with the University Administrator Seminars, the low number of senior women university administrators would explain lower levels of participation in the Higher Education Roundtables, which consisted largely of university administrators. Similarly, the limited presence of women at senior levels in government and the private sector limited the relative numbers that could be involved in the National Policy Seminars. It should be noted that the greater percentage of female participants in other program components consisting of less senior individuals speaks well for the future of female faculty in Palestine.

Percentage of Female PFDP Participants by Component



Female faculty now constitute around 23.5% of the total in Palestinian tertiary institutions, although they are still not well represented in traditionally male-dominated academic fields such as science, engineering, mathematics, and medicine. In an effort to address this imbalance and to further the professional development of women in higher education, PFDP worked with the CTE directors to increase the percentage of female faculty participating in CTE activities and programs by accommodating their needs in the timing and location of events and ensuring special efforts to provide to female faculty with advance knowledge of and invitations to these events. PFDP also encouraged the development of policies, procedures, and processes leading to such positive change. CTEs were asked to gather data regarding the percentages of female training participants in the second grant cycle's first six months of professional development activities.

In FY14, Bethlehem University's CETL reported a 5% increase in the participation of female faculty in CETL training activities; while acknowledging that the varied nature of the center's many activities makes this calculation questionable, the center confirmed that more than 90% of the university's female teachers attended more than one center-run activity. An-Najah National University's CELT has tracked the participation of female faculty in its activities since August 2011, which was the first new faculty orientation of the CELT-trained team. In 2012, women as a percentage of faculty trainees increased by 4%, dropped by 2.8% in 2013, and then increased by 21.6% in FY14, when 58% of faculty trainees were women; this is an impressive achievement given that women constitute only about 21% of the university's total faculty, and it reflects ANU's concerted efforts to involve more women faculty in training during the Phase II CTE grant. At PPU, during the first four months of 2015, 74 of the center's

313 faculty trainees, or 23.6%, were women; approximately equivalent to the percentage of women among the faculty as a whole.

Palestinian University Faculty by Gender

University	2004-2005				2014-2015			
	Female	Male	Total	% Female	Female	Male	Total	% Female
Al-Aqsa University	22	179	201	10.9%	51	310	361	14.1%
Al-Azhar University	23	233	256	9.0%	24	231	255	9.4%
Al-Istiqlal University					12	71	83	14.5%
Al-Quds Open University	174	1,335	1,509	11.5%	282	1,248	1,530	18.4%
Al-Quds University	47	311	358	13.1%	153	579	732	20.9%
An-Najah National University	65	379	444	14.6%	175	662	837	20.9%
Arab American University—Jenin	23	109	132	17.4%	48	245	293	16.4%
Bethlehem University	45	102	147	30.6%	70	123	193	36.3%
Birzeit University	58	291	349	16.6%	159	355	514	30.9%
Gaza University					3	13	16	18.8%
Hebron University	29	200	229	12.7%	70	295	365	19.2%
Islamic University of Gaza	15	348	363	4.1%	63	556	619	10.2%
Palestine Polytechnic University	6	83	89	6.7%	58	180	238	24.4%
Palestine Technical University—Kadoorie					39	134	173	22.5%
Palestine University					15	79	94	16.0%
Total	507	3,570	4,077	12.4%	1,222	5,081	6,303	19.4%

Source: Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Programming and Analysis Department, October 2015

Note: Highlighted rows indicate universities with PFDP-supported CTEs, described at length elsewhere in this report.

Other Factors of Note

Several macro-level factors that influenced program implementation warrant brief discussion.

- PFDP evolved from a unique public-private partnership between USAID and the Open Society Foundations. OSF's mandate to further the humanities, as opposed to professional or technical fields of study, dominated the early years of the program. In later years this changed somewhat, as a distinct focus on improving teaching and learning in all fields became a hallmark of the program. OSF introduced its university academic network to Palestinian faculty from the very beginning, setting in motion a web of connections and communication between individuals and institutions that has had a lasting impact on the program. In this regard, the impact of OSF's contribution is best measured not by the millions of dollars it contributed to PFDP, but by its role in shaping the program's broad thematic directions.
- The USAID West Bank/Gaza Mission's funding, priorities, and portfolio is subject to U.S. Congressional oversight and is further complicated by the ebb and flow of U.S. domestic politics, the broader Palestinian-Israeli peace process, and internal Palestinian politics. The resulting working environment was therefore subject to rapid change on multiple occasions over the course of ten years. On several occasions, significant amounts of additional funding became available that required new or revised program components to be ramped up quickly; other times, prolonged

uncertainty about incremental funding or expansion reduced the program to bare bones activity and—in 2013—the program’s uncertain future contributed to the departure of the Chief of Party.

- PFDP’s long period of implementation also made it a convenient mechanism through which USAID could fund and rapidly implement tangentially related activities such as scholarships for undergraduate students in Gaza and for master’s degree students enrolled in the Bard/Al-Quds Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program.
 - Israeli policies and border closures prevented some scholarship finalists in Gaza from enrolling in their U.S. programs on time—or, in some cases, at all—and except for the early part of 2006, precluded Gaza faculty from participating in most PFDP events.
 - Vetting and other compliance issues mandated by USAID complicated certain aspects of implementation, led to significant delays and administrative burden, and—especially in Gaza—seriously restricted the number of universities with which PFDP could work. Al-Azhar student scholarships were delayed by at least a semester due to vetting issues, and the awarding of Faculty Grants was delayed by a full year pending USAID’s legal ruling on whether they constituted support for individuals or institutions.
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Appendix 1: Institutional Affiliations, PFDP Direct Beneficiaries

Institution	PhD	STF	MA	SET	Admin Seminars	Faculty Grants	Collaborative Projects	TOTAL
Al-Aqsa University		5			1			6
Al-Azhar University	1	3			1	2		7
Al-Quds University	6	1		11	8	3		29
Al-Quds Open University	4	2		20	11	6		43
An-Najah National University	6	3		6	12	1	1	29
Arab American University–Jenin		2		2	10	1		15
Birzeit University	9	2	1	7	11	7		37
Bethlehem University	1	1		6	9	2	2	21
Community College of Applied Science and Technology	1							1
Hebron University		1		1	7		1	10
Islamic University of Gaza	5							5
Palestine Technical College–Aroub		2		1		1		4
Palestine Technical College–Ramallah				1				1
Palestine Technical University– Kadoorie				2	3			5
Palestine Ahliya University College				1	4			5
Palestine Polytechnic University		3		6	13	1		23
University of Palestine						2		2
UNRWA Women’s Training Center				2	3			5
UNRWA Men’s Training Center		3			2			5
Ministry of Education/Higher Education			2		4			6
District Office			5					5
Public School			8					8
TOTALS	33	28	16	66	99	26	4	272

Appendix 2: PhD Fellows

Name	M/F	Home Institution	U.S. Institution/ Graduation Year	Field of Study	Position in 2015
Abdelnasser Arafat	M	Birzeit University	University of Florida/2011	Urban Planning	Faculty of Geography, Birzeit University
Dissertation Topic <i>Evaluating Accessibility and Travel Cost As Suitability Components in the Allocation of Land Use, A Case Study of Identifying Land for Affordable Housing in Three Counties in Florida</i>					
Abdrabu Abu Alyan	M	Islamic University of Gaza	University of Massachusetts Amherst/2011	Education/ TESOL	Department of English, Islamic University of Gaza
Dissertation Topic <i>Exploring Teachers' Beliefs Regarding the Concepts of Culture and Intercultural Communicative Competence in EFL Palestinian University Context: A Case Study</i>					
Abeer Shaheen	F	Birzeit University	Columbia University/ 2011	Political Science	Teaching Fellow, Columbia University NY
Dissertation Topic <i>From Dictatorship to Democracy: Iraq under Erasure in May 2014</i>					
Ahmad Abu Awad	M	Birzeit University	Teachers College, Columbia University/ 2013	Comparative Education	Faculty, Birzeit University
Dissertation Topic <i>Genres of Governmentality: The Role of the Intifada Appeals in the Palestinian National Imaginary</i>					
Ahmed Al Noubani	M	Birzeit University	University of Washington/ 2010	Urban Design and Planning	Faculty of Geography, Birzeit University
Dissertation Topic <i>Dynamics of Land-Use and Land-Cover Change: The Case of the Palestinian West Bank</i>					

Name	M/F	Home Institution	U.S. Institution/ Graduation Year	Field of Study	Position in 2015
Akram Ijla	M	Al-Quds University	Cleveland State University of Ohio/2008	Urban Planning	Associate Professor, University of Palestine
Dissertation Topic <i>The Impact of Local Historic Designation on Residential Property Values: An Analysis of Three Slow-Growth and Three Fast-Growth Central Cities in the United States</i>					
Alma Hamdallah Othman	F	An-Najah National University	University of Florida/2013	Design, Construction and Planning	Consultant at UN-HABITAT and Faculty, An-Najah National University
Dissertation Topic <i>Effects of Urban Design Qualities on People's Perception of Residential Density</i>					
Ammar Al-Dwaik	M	Part-time Lecturer, Birzeit University	Brandeis University/ 2012	Social Policy and Management	Coordinator, Palestinian National Human Rights Action Plan, UN-OHCHR
Dissertation Topic <i>The Relations and Interactions between the Palestinian Authority and Islamic Social Service Organizations</i>					
AyhabFaleh Saad	M	Birzeit University	University of Michigan/ 2014	Political Science and Economics	Faculty, Birzeit University
Dissertation Topic <i>Three Essays on International Trade and Institutions</i>					
Ayman Khalifah	M	Al-Quds University	University of Massachusetts Amherst/ 2010	International Education	Faculty, Bard/Al-Quds Honors College
Dissertation Topic <i>Educational Research In Palestine: Epistemological And Cultural Challenges - A Case Study</i>					

Name	M/F	Home Institution	U.S. Institution/ Graduation Year	Field of Study	Position in 2015
Bilal Younis	M	Al-Quds University	Southern Illinois University, Carbondale/ 2012	Instructional Technology/ E-Learning	Lecturer, Palestinian Technical College–Aroub
Dissertation Topic <i>Creating Digital Games as Interactive Learning Environments: Factors that affect Palestinian teachers' success in modifying video games from instruction</i>					
Dua' Nakhala	F	Birzeit University	University of Texas at Austin/2011	Urban Planning	Analyst at CIJA, Brussels, Belgium
Dissertation Topic <i>Walls and Fences: The Making of Good Neighbors?!</i>					
Emad Dawwas	M	An-Najah National University	University of Washington/ 2011	Urban Planning	Faculty, An-Najah National University
Dissertation Topic <i>Spatio-Temporal Analysis of Urban Development Patterns in Palestinian Communities: Bethlehem-Hebron Region (BHR) as a Case</i>					
FidaYaseen (Araj)	F	An-Najah National University	University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign/ 2010	Urban Planning	Asst. Professor, Center for Urban and Regional Planning, An-Najah National University
Dissertation Topic <i>Planning Under Deep Political Conflict: The Relationship Between Afforestation Planning and the Struggle Over Space in the Palestinian Territories</i>					
Hasan Ayoub	M	Part-time Faculty, An-Najah National University	University of Denver, Colorado/ 2012	International Studies	Faculty, An-Najah National University
Dissertation Topic <i>Whether a One-State Solution to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A comparative Study of Settler-Colonial Domination Systems in South Africa and Palestine</i>					

Name	M/F	Home Institution	U.S. Institution/ Graduation Year	Field of Study	Position in 2015
Hasan El-Nabih	M	Islamic University of Gaza	Boston College/2010	Education	Faculty, Islamic University of Gaza
Dissertation Topic <i>The Acquisition of the English Causative-Inchoative Alternation by Arabic Native Speakers</i>					
Ihab Daqqaq	M	Coordinator, Bethlehem University	Columbia University/ 2014	Social Work	Faculty, Education, Bethlehem University
Dissertation Topic <i>Palestinian Women's Movements and Their Relations With the Palestinian Nationalist Movement: A History of Partnership and A Future of Challenging Cooperation</i>					
Jehad Alayasa	M	Al-Quds and Arab American Universities	Portland State University/ 2012	Public Affairs and Policy	Faculty, Public Administration, Birzeit University
Dissertation Topic <i>Building on the Strengths of Indigenous Knowledge to Promote Sustainable Development in Crisis Conditions from the Community Level: The Case of Palestine</i>					
Karam Turk Adawi	F	Al-Quds University	Brandeis University/ 2012	Social Policy and Management	Researcher, School of Kinesiology and Health Science, York University, Canada
Dissertation Topic <i>Impact of Organizational Factors on Patients' Outcomes in Cardiac Rehabilitation</i>					
Kefah Barham	F	UNRWA Teacher/ Part-time Lecturer Al-Quds Open University	University of Massachusetts Amherst/2014	Educational Policy	Faculty, Education, An-Najah National University
Dissertation Topic <i>Computer Integration in Palestinian Secondary Schools: Theory and Practice</i>					

Name	M/F	Home Institution	U.S. Institution/ Graduation Year	Field of Study	Position in 2015
Khitam Abu Hamad	F	Part-Time Lecturer, Community College of Applied Sciences and Technology	Brandeis University/ 2011	Social Policy	Gaza Office Manager for Terre des Hommes and Lecturer, Al-Quds University
Dissertation Topic <i>Determinants of Fertility and the Impact of Maternal and Child Health Services on Contraceptive Use in the Gaza Strip</i>					
Maysoon Abu El-Noor	F	Islamic University of Gaza	University of Akron/2011	Public Administration and Urban Studies	Nursing Faculty, Islamic University of Gaza
Dissertation Topic <i>Spiritual Care of the Hospitalized Patients Following Admission to the Cardiac Care Units: Policy Implications</i>					
Mohammad Awad	M	Manager, World Vision and Part-Time Lecturer Al-Quds Open University	University of Texas-Dallas/ 2010	Public Administration	Asst. Professor, MBA Program, Hebron University
Dissertation Topic <i>Volunteerism in Non-Profit Sector - A Case Study of Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the West Bank</i>					
Muhammad Zayyad	M	Al-Quds University	Boston College/ 2009	Special Needs Education	Faculty and elementary/ special education trainer
Dissertation Topic <i>The Impact of Mediated Cognitive Strategies on the Reading Comprehension Performance and Self-Efficacy of Palestinian-Arab Middle School Students with LD: A Mixed-Methods Research</i>					

Name	M/F	Home Institution	U.S. Institution/ Graduation Year	Field of Study	Position in 2015
Najwa Safadi	F	Lecturer, Al-Quds Open University	Boston College/2012	Social Work	Asst. Professor and Coordinator, MSW, Al-Quds University
Dissertation Topic <i>The Dynamics of Decision-Making in Formulating Anti-Poverty Policies in Palestine</i>					
Naser Abu El-Noor	M	Islamic University of Gaza	University of Akron/2010	Public Administration	Asst. Professor, Nursing, Islamic University of Gaza
Dissertation Topic <i>Quality of Life and Barriers to Health Care of Prostate Cancer Survivors Residing in Gaza Strip</i>					
Ola Khalili	F	An-Najah National University	University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2010	Education	Asst. Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, Birzeit University
Dissertation Topic <i>Teacher Professional Development Programs in Palestine: Changes, Beliefs, and Practices</i>					
Sadeq Firwana	M	Faculty, Islamic University of Gaza	Boston College/2012	Education	Faculty, Islamic University
Dissertation Topic <i>Impact of Palestinian EFL Teachers' Attitudes Toward Oral Errors on Their Students' Attitudes and Choice of Error Treatment Strategies</i>					
Sahera Bleibleh	F	Part-time Lecturer, Birzeit University	University of Washington/ 2012	Urban Design and Planning	Faculty, United Arab Emirates University
Dissertation Topic <i>Everyday life: Spatial oppression and resilience under the Israeli occupation: The case of the old Town of Nablus, Palestine</i>					

Name	M/F	Home Institution	U.S. Institution/ Graduation Year	Field of Study	Position in 2015
Wael Dokhan	M	Al-Azhar University	University of Denver/ 2010	International Studies	Unknown
Dissertation Topic <i>Unknown</i>					
Wael Ramadan	M	Part-time Lecturer, Al-Quds Open University	Cleveland State University/ 2009	Management	Faculty, Sheridan University, Canada
Dissertation Topic <i>The Influence of Organizational Culture on Sustainable Competitive Advantage of SMEs, Best Business Practices for Achieving World-Class Status, The Link Between Business & Region</i>					
Wasim Al Habil	M	Part-Time Lecturer, Al-Quds Open University	Cleveland State University/ 2009	Public Administration	Asst. Professor, Commerce, Islamic University of Gaza
Dissertation Topic <i>Occupations, a Diaspora, and the Design of Local Governments for a Palestinian State</i>					
Ziad Zaghrout	M	Birzeit University	University of Washington, Seattle/ 2010	Public Policy and Management	Asst. Professor, Public Administration, Birzeit University
Dissertation Topic <i>Hidden Agents: Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) in the Palestinian Territories</i>					

Appendix 3: Short-Term Fellowship Participants

Name	Home University	U.S. University	Field of Study	M/F	Position in 2015
Cohort 1 Short Term Fellowships—First Visit Conducted Jan-May 2007					
Jamal Rabee	UNRWA Men's Training Center	University of Pennsylvania	Education	M	Lecturer, UNRWA Men's Training Center
Hisham Hidmi	Al-Quds Open University	Vanderbilt University	Education	M	Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, Al-Quds Open University
Ata Darwish	Al-Azhar University	University of Pennsylvania	Education	M	Lecturer, Al-Azhar University
Abdulfattah Shamleh	Hebron University	University of South Maine	Public Service	M	Director, Institute of Public Administration, An-Najah National University
Sahar Natsha	Birzeit University	Duke University	International Development	F	Field Officer, International Committee of the Red Cross
Saed Al-Koni	An-Najah National University	Syracuse University	Education Technology	M	Dean of Graduate Studies and Professor, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, An-Najah National University
Mazen Hamada	Al-Azhar University	University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign	Urban Planning	M	Assistant Professor, Al-Azhar University
Cohort 2 Short Term Fellowships—First Visit Conducted Jan–May 2008					
Bilal Shafei	An-Najah National University	Columbia University	International Studies	M	Director, Language Resource Center, An-Najah National University
Cohort 3 Short Term Fellowships—First Visit Conducted Jan–May 2009					
Khaled Abed Rabbo	UNRWA Men's Training Center	University of New Mexico	Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies	M	Program Support Officer, UNRWA-EdP
Munir Serhan	UNRWA Men's Training Center	Iowa State University	Civil Engineering	M	Assistant Professor, UNRWA Women's Training Center
Yusuf Subuh	Palestinian Technical College Aroub	Utah State University	Hydrology	M	Faculty, Hebron University
Hassan Arafat	An-Najah National University	Utah State University	Hydrology	M	Associate Professor, Water and Environmental Engineering Program, Masdar Institute of Science and Technology, UAE
Wael Abu Hassan	Arab American University, Jenin	California State University, Northridge	Clinical and Behavioral Psychology	M	Professor, Arab American University–Jenin

Name	Home University	U.S. University	Field of Study	M/F	Position in 2015
Cohort 3 Short Term Fellowships—First Visit Conducted Aug - Dec 2009					
Shawqi Ghannam	Al-Aqsa University	University of Indiana--Bloomington	English	M	Assistant Professor, Al-Aqsa University
Khaled El-Sousi	Al-Aqsa University	Iowa State University	Civil Engineering	M	Assistant Professor, Al-Aqsa University
Ala Al-Ghoul	Al-Aqsa University	University of Indiana, Bloomington	English	M	English Lecturer, Al-Aqsa University, and member of the Writers Union in Gaza
Ahed Helles	Al-Aqsa University	University of Florida	Design, Construction and Planning	M	Assistant Professor, Al-Aqsa University
Mohammed El-Sahhar	Al-Aqsa University	University of Illinois at Chicago	Public Health	M	Lecturer, Sports, Al-Aqsa University
Cohort 4 Short Term Fellowships—First Visit Conducted January 2010					
Nadera Alaraj	Bethlehem University	Lewis University	Education/ IT	F	Vice Chairman, Internet Society, Palestine Chapter
Khaled Jum'a	Al-Quds Open University	Indiana State University	Education/ English	M	Academic Supervisor and English teacher, Al-Quds Open University
Tariq Serhan	UNRWA Men's Training Center	University of South Florida Tampa	Education/ Urban Planning	M	Deputy Principal, UNRWA Men's Training Center
Nabil Al-Joulani	Palestine Polytechnic University	New Jersey Institute of Technology	Environmental Science	M	Faculty of Engineering, Palestine Polytechnic University
Samir Said	Polytechnic University (PPU)	Hartford University	Education/ Environmental Science	M	Vice President of Academic Affairs, Palestine Polytechnic University
Akram Miqdad	Al-Quds University	City University of New York	Education	M	Lecturer, Language Center, Al-Quds University
Salaheddin Juneidi	Palestine Technical College--Aroub	University of Pennsylvania	Education	M	Assistant Professor, Palestine Technical College--Aroub
Nadia Najjab	Birzeit University	Georgetown University	History	F	Assistant Professor, University of Exeter, UK, Program Development
Hani Mahdi	Al-Azhar University	University of Illinois	Public Health	M	Lecturer, Al-Azhar University, and Ministry of Health Employee

Name	Home University	U.S. University	Field of Study	M/F	Position in 2015
Ayesha al Rifa'i	Principal, UNRWA Women's Training Center, Ramallah	University of California, Berkley	Gender and Women's Studies	F	Dean of Education Sciences Faculty and Principal, UNRWA Women's Training Center
Osama Atta	Palestine Polytechnic University	Villanova University	Computer and Electric Engineering	M	Associate Professor, Electrical Engineering, Palestine Polytechnic University

Appendix 4: Master's Degree Fellows

Name	M/F	Home Institution and Position	U.S. Institution/ Graduation Year	Discipline
Jamal Hussein Turkman	M	English Supervisor, Directorate of Education—Jenin	Syracuse University/2012	Teaching and Curriculum
Kefaya Massarwa	F	Headmistress, Raba Secondary Girls' School	Syracuse University/2011	Educational Administration/ Leadership
Luna Nasrallah	F	English Supervisor/ Directorate of Education—Bethlehem	Syracuse University/2012	Teaching and Curriculum
Ma'zouz Sbeih	M	English Supervisor, Salfit	Boston College/2011	Educational Management
Maha Masri	F	Teacher, Qablan Primary School	Syracuse University/2011	Teaching and Curriculum
Murad Abd AlGani	M	Central Educational Supervisor, Ministry of Education	University of Kentucky/2012	Educational Policy/ Evaluation
Najah Ma'ali	F	Principal, Ajja Secondary School, Jenin	Syracuse University/2012	Educational Leadership
Najeh Shahin**	M	Faculty, Birzeit University	University of Pennsylvania/2008	Educational Policy/ Philosophy
Nida Arafat	F	Mathematics Supervisor, Nablus	University Pennsylvania/ 2011	Educational Measurement
Reem Ayoush	F	Ministry of Education Curriculum Committee	Syracuse University/2012	Teaching and Curriculum
Samar Samara	F	Principal, Ein Yabroud Secondary Girls School	Syracuse University/2011	Educational Leadership
Zuheir Khalaf	M	Educational Resource Center, Qalqilia	Syracuse University/2012	Educational Technology
Awatef Tayseer Masri	F	Principal, Al-Aeshiya Secondary School	University of Kentucky/2012	Educational Policy
Ismail Najjar	M	English Teacher, Hebron	Syracuse University/2012	Teaching and Curriculum
Inad Mialeh	M	English Teacher, Al Ittihad Secondary School	Syracuse University/2011	Special Education - Disabilities
Fatima Mohammed	F	English Teacher, Al Teera Secondary Girls School	Boston College/2011	Curriculum and Instruction

****Note:** Najeh Shahin began studies as PhD Fellow, but graduated with an MA instead. He has been counted as a Master's Degree Fellow and not as a PhD Fellow.