Welcome Note:

This is the first issue of what we expect will be a regular newsletter dedicated to news about research at Zayed University. The role of research at the University has undergone a transformation in recent years, as the University has moved from being an institution focused almost exclusively on undergraduate teaching to a university with a much more comprehensive mission that includes the production of knowledge. As expressed in the University’s mission statement, “through research, scholarship, creative activities, outreach and continuing education services, the University provides educational leadership, expands opportunity, and disseminates knowledge to local, regional, and global communities.” The University’s vision and mission statements both identify research as one of the primary ways in which Zayed University will make a contribution to the UAE and the world. This newsletter will highlight some of the ways in which Zayed University researchers are fulfilling that mission.

Research and creative activity at Zayed University takes a variety of forms: disciplinary research disseminated through conferences and publications, media production, artistic exhibitions, scholarship on teaching and learning, and policy-oriented research for government agencies. We also strongly encourage the enhancement of the student experience at both the undergraduate and graduate levels by infusing research into the curriculum and making faculty-mentored research opportunities available to as many students as possible, through workshops, research assistantships, co-authorship with faculty, and the Undergraduate Research Scholars Program.

The research output of Zayed University faculty has increased steadily over the last several years. The number of scholarly publications indexed in Scopus has tripled in just five years. Many Zayed University faculty researchers publish in the top journals in their fields. Several have received awards and other recognition for their work. Although for most of them their disciplinary expertise developed outside this region and their postgraduate work was unrelated to the UAE, a large number of faculty are now engaged in research that is directly related to the UAE and the wider Gulf region, enhancing the University’s role as a provider of expertise in service to the nation. Approximately two-thirds of grants awarded to Zayed University faculty in 2017 were for projects related to the UAE.

Zayed University faculty have been active in developing fruitful research collaborations with colleagues both inside and outside the UAE. A large proportion of the publications coming from University scholars have been co-authored with scholars either from other institutions within the UAE, or from universities abroad. It is widely recognized that collaborative research is more likely to result in both publications and citations, while also leading to further collaboration through a “virtuous cycle” of collaborative research, publication, further research, and further publications. As the graphics toward the end of this newsletter show, Zayed University has been part of this trend, as international collaboration is an element in a substantial percentage of scholarly impact, whether measured by publications or by citations. The map shows the extent of research collaboration, covering every region of the globe.

Zayed University faculty have responded to the call, from leaders of both the University and the nation, to increase the quantity and quality of research in order to confirm the University’s status as a producer of knowledge. This newsletter will give you just a taste of what has been happening lately. There is much more to come, and much more that we plan to contribute to the nation and the world.

Dr. J. Michael Allen
Assistant Provost for Research
Much of the research done in the College of Arts and Creative Enterprises is organized in four Research Clusters. However, a vast amount of ‘Creative Projects’ add to the diversity of the College’s research output.

The Research Cluster ‘Patterns in the MENA Region’ is a collection of projects exploring the notion of patterns both as visual and organizational elements of material culture, its representation and associated community. The aim of the cluster is to research, discover, document, interpret and apply a cohesive knowledge of the material culture and creative development of the UAE and MENA Region in the global context. The shared goal of the projects in the cluster is to further the understanding of cultural identity in communities through their various forms of representation today as well as in the past and aim to feed into a digital collection of ‘Patterns’ of the MENA Region.

Arts and Design education in the United Arab Emirates primarily follows traditional methods of teaching, similar to and partially adopted from programs in the United States and Europe. Unfortunately, these teaching paths often pay no great attention to the specific preconditions that preliminary education in the UAE entails. Whilst students in the Western world are usually equipped with a good level of craftsmanship, local students fundamentally lack these skills. The Research Cluster ‘21st Century Fabrication and Robotics’ addresses the educational challenges and questions that arise from the use of innovative fabrication technologies, in an environment with such limitations. We research the impact of these technologies onto the quality of the students’ work and derive answers from these works in order to adjust or maintain the direction of current and future curricula.

The Research Cluster ‘COMET: Communicating, Observing, Mapping Environments and Tolerance’ aims to collect, document and map narratives, heritage, locations and places to consider cultural and sustainability problems to propose solutions engaged with art, design and craft strategies. These strategies introduce traditional tools and experiment to bridge new technologies and introduce potential prototypes for arts processes and outcomes. Through a collaborative and creative platform, this cluster incorporates the STEAM model and co-existence approach for change and intercultural dialog. With
knowledge transfer of the UAE being a crucial tenet of this cluster, the scope of research for Mapping & Re-envisioning Islands and Typographic Matchmaking for a Region/Place/Location considers the UAE, in particular the islands with historical and heritage prominence, along with the plans of future islands for comparison, and key Emirati heritage sites, targeting the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

The Designing Food Revolution for Social Change Research Cluster aims to create a complete food system that utilizes a cross-disciplinary approach to research and practice. It includes staff, students and faculty to co-create a sustainable food system encompassing research/practice in planting, growing, soil testing, marketing and commercialization and eventually full integration into the University system.

2017 was a very successful year for the College of Business in terms of research, with faculty authoring research papers in a variety of top tier academic journals. COB faculty published 25 papers in ABDC (Australian Business Deans Council) A* and A ranked journals. These included the Journal of Organizational Behavior, Management Accounting Research, Journal of Corporate Finance, Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization and Tourism Management.

Student Research participation with faculty:
Six COB students participated in a research project in collaboration with their faculty advisors. They successfully completed three different projects, resulting in the publication of two papers and one case study.

COB staff have been working with the Federal Authority for Human Resources (FAHR) in encouraging students to team with faculty to work on field research in the human resources and innovation area and to pursue FAHR research award acknowledgement. The award seeks to contribute to the enrichment of HR strategy in the Federal government and to enhance various initiatives through improved HR practices and future strategies. The award also seeks to motivate youth to continue their research initiatives while gaining deeper knowledge of work life.

Conferences, Seminars and workshops
The COB hosted a Nobel Prize winner at Zayed University in March 2017. Under the Patronage of Her Excellency Sheikha Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasimi, President of Zayed University, Christopher Pissarides, Regius Professor of Economics at the London School of Economics and Associate at the Center for Economic Performance, gave a lecture to students in an event held at the Abu Dhabi campus. The lecture, entitled ‘Human Capital as a Factor of Economic Development and Growth’, attracted great interest with more than 300 students, faculty, staff and guests from several universities in Abu Dhabi and Al-Ain in attendance.

The COB organized the third annual Quantitative Research Symposium (QRS) in January 2017. The symposium brought together UAE-based researchers and international counterparts at Zayed University’s Dubai campus. QRS was held under the patronage, and in the presence of, Sheikha Shamma Bint
Sultan Bin Khalifa Al Nahyan. It sought to promote world-class quantitative research and to develop a research culture of excellence.

On October 24th and 25th, the COB hosted Professor Jarrad Harford, Chair of the Department of Finance and Economics and the Paul Pigott-PACCAR Professor in Business Administration at Foster School of Business - University of Washington. Dr. Harford is a world-renowned scholar in corporate finance. His numerous publications in top-tier journals have attracted over 9,600 citations in Google Scholar, making him one of the most cited academics in his field. Dr. Harford currently serves as a Managing Editor of the Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis and as an Associate Editor for the Journal of Financial Economics, and the Journal of Corporate Finance. Dr. Harford conducted several professional workshops and seminars with faculty and students in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi campuses. In addition, he led a discussion with the faculty on how to publish in top-tier journals focusing on how to excel in academic writing. Dr. Harford’s lecture to the students focused on mergers and acquisitions, illustrating the broader impact of merger activity and why mergers matter.

The COB had the privilege of inviting the KPMG distinguished professor of Accounting, Dr. Miklos Vasarhelyi, for a two-day visit on 19th – 20th November, 2017. Dr. Vasarhelyi is Professor of Accounting Information Systems and Director of the Rutgers University Accounting Research Center and Continuous Auditing & Reporting Lab (CAR Lab). He is credited with pioneering the field of ‘continuous auditing’ and is a leading researcher in this field. At Rutgers Business School, Dr. Vasarhelyi heads the Continuous Auditing and Reporting Laboratory, which works on projects for such leading companies as Siemens, KPMG, Procter & Gamble, AICPA, CA Technologies and Brazil’s Itau-Unibanco. He also leads the RADAR (Rutgers AICPA Data Analytics Research Initiative), a project supported by the eight leading CPA firms, AICPA, and CPA Canada. Dr. Vasarhelyi conducted several seminars for faculty, practitioners, regulators, and students on the Dubai and Abu Dhabi campuses. Among other highlights, he presented his latest research on “Big Data and Audit Analytics: The Future of Audit” which included the current work of the CAR Lab, and the evolution of ‘Big Data’ related analytic techniques. He also discussed the utilisation of artificial intelligence, cognitive computing, and Blockchain in the auditing field. Dr. Vasarhelyi shared his experience with faculty members about publishing in top-tier journals, including the importance of communication with editors, response to reviewers, and blind reviewing processes. He presented an inspiring case-study to ZU students about Bell Laboratories’ continuous auditing approach, highlighting this new trend in auditing. The COB is planning for another visit for Professor Vasarhelyi and his team during the 2018 Spring Term.

On November 1st Maja Graso, Emily David, and Jeroen Camps were invited to the COB to present the current status of their cluster grant funded work focusing on the relationship between justice perceptions and Emirati Identity. The researchers are working with colleagues Stijn Decoster and Afra Ahmad. Maja Graso previously worked at Zayed University and is now Senior Lecturer at the Otago Business School in New Zealand. Emily David also worked previously Zayed University as Associate Professor and is now working in CEIBS (China Europe International Business School) in Shanghai, China. Jeroen Camps is a leadership expert who graduated from the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium.
Diversity in research themes ruled the game as CCMS finished the fall semester with publications in top tier, peer-reviewed international journals, book chapters, research talks and collaborations with industry partners.


The rich variety in research themes was reflected in the book chapters as well, with publications on social media and visual rhetoric, decision-making during crisis, sustainability and cultural diversity. Dhanesh published her work on social media and the rise of visual rhetoric in an edited book on public relations, by Routledge. Fotiadis wrote on decision-making in a public hospital during economic crisis in a book series on culture, tourism and hospitality research, by Emerald Publishing. As second author, Fotiadis had two book chapters, one on barriers to implementing green management in the hospitality industry in an edited book by Emerald and another on Generation Y perspective of hotel disintermediation and user-generated content in Routledge Handbook of Hospitality Marketing. Alejandra Val Cubero examined the implementation of the Convention on Cultural Diversity in an edited book on diversity and the audiovisual Industry.

Faculty members’ multifarious research interests were on full display during the research talks hosted this semester as Russell Williams shared his research on video game advertising; Yulia Medvedeva spoke on media and immigrants’ learning from American political news; Michael Ogden discussed the development of actuality storytelling through interactive documentary; and Melissa Lee Price shared stories of Jamestown, VA, USA, settlers and their descendants as they migrated along the Fall Line Road and the Great Wagon road from 1611-1940.

The college also initiated a couple of research collaborations. Gaelle Duthler, Ganga Dhanesh, Russell Williams and Zoe Hurley partnered with the Advertising Business Group
College of Communications and Media Sciences Contd...

(ABG) to examine consumer trust in social media influencers in the UAE. Duthler and Dhanesh presented preliminary findings at the ABG’s anniversary event in Dubai on Dec. 6. Natasa Slak Valek has initiated research on creative tourism with Abu Dhabi Art hub. Results were presented at the Fourth International Conference on Emerging Research Paradigms in Business and Social Sciences at the Middlesex University in Dubai in Jan. 2018.

College of Education

In line with the research strategic plan to provide CoE members with the latest up-to-date research training, Dr. Rana Tamim, Dean of the College led a series of 6 workshops on a variety of contemporary educational research topics for Assistant Professors, staff members and interested faculty. Topics included qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods research; reliability and validity; ethical issues and ZU ethical clearance procedures; scales of measurement and implications for research design. In addition, Professor Robert Bernard, a renowned specialist in the area of statistical analysis for educational research; offered two full-day workshops on quantitative data analysis. The workshops were well attended and were a real success.

College of Education SETs Day research Activities

On 31st October, the College of Education organized two separate research workshops for its faculty. The first one focused on quantitative data analysis; parametric and non-parametric tests and the use of SPSS. A visiting scholar, Dr. Robert Bernard from Concordia University, Canada, led the workshop. The second workshop focused on how to do research when there is no time for research. A group of faculty members worked at establishing a community of research practice at the college. The team spent the day on co-researching and co-authoring a paper exploring challenges, strengths, enablers and recommendations for conducting research at ZU context, a teaching university with a strong focus on research. Dr. Qais Almeqdad facilitated this workshop. Both workshops were very rich and rewarding to all faculty participants.

College of Education Lunch and Learn Program

The College of Education Research Affairs Committee, in collaboration with the Early Childhood Learning Center, organized a series of six bi-weekly Lunch and Learn research sessions. College of Education faculty and ECLC members presented a wide range of topics including bilingual books, translanguaging, inclusive education, independent learning, and ZU RIF grant processes. Presenters were Dr. Qais Almeqdad, Ms. Najah AlKhodr, Dr. Anna Dillon, Dr. Zeina Hojejij, Ms. Alecia Perkins, Ms. Rima Malkawi, Dr. Wejdan Alsakran and Dr. Kay Gallagher. This was a great opportunity for faculty to share their research findings with colleagues. The talks were well attended by ZU faculty, ECLC teachers, and members from community-based academic institutions.
Activities

The ECLC has been involved in a number of research projects, many of which are related to the research cluster ‘Dual Language Education in the Early Years’—PI Dr. Anna Dillon. Projects include exploring outdoor gardening activities in the Superhero Plant Museum in the ECLC (with Dr. Asia Foster and Dr. Edward Nichols), using Makaton to enhance language acquisition (with Dr. Qais Almeqdad and Ms. Hina Shaikh), using the Communicative Development Inventories to measure bilingual development (with Plymouth University), exploring the text quality of bilingual books (with Dr. Zeina Hojeij, Ms. Alecia Perkins and Ms. Rima Malkawi), and exploring the identities of Third Culture Kids (with Ms. Tabassim Ali). A longitudinal study to develop a corpus of Emirati Arabic is also funded through Dr. Anna Dillon’s RIF grant (with UAEU).

The Fourth College of Education Students' Research and Creative Projects Symposium

Funded by ZU Office of Research, and organized by the college’s Academic Advisors and Field Experience office, the College of Education celebrated its students' academic work during the Fourth Students' Research and Creative Projects Symposium on both its campuses on the 20th and 23rd of November. Around 180 graduate and undergraduate students, from 20 different courses, participated in 24 research and creative projects under the supervision of their instructors. ZU’s Vice-President, Professor Reyadh AlMahaideb, and Provost, Professor Marilyn Roberts, toured the displays and talked to the presenting students about their projects. Assistant Provost for Research, Dr. Michael Allen, served as a jury member for the evaluation of the projects on the AUH campus. Both events were well attended by partner schools, local organizations and the ZU wider community.

College of Education- Research Cluster, RIF, Start-Up Grants and External Fund

Professor Hanada Thomure and Dr. Rana Tamim along with 11 co-investigators have submitted a cluster fund proposal that aims at establishing the College of Education at Zayed University as the national and international leader in research on instructional and learning methods in Arabic language; “ZU-BilARABI”. In addition, CoE faculty members have submitted 8 proposals covering topics in educational technology, early childhood, special and inclusive education, social work and language learning. Two separate research projects by Dr. Anna Dillon and Dr. Mariam AlHashimi have submitted for The ADEK Award for Research Excellence. Three start-up grants were received by newly joined colleagues to complete their ongoing research and establish new ones relevant to UAE context.
Research lies at the very heart of College of Humanities and Social Sciences; our faculty are exceptionally active in the publications arena. This is evident in the richness and diversity of the college’s multidisciplinary, multi-lingual research capacity and in the subsequent projects that were accomplished throughout 2017. CHSS faculty worked tirelessly to cover many current themes and topics such as Migration, Political Economy, Islamic Thought and Jurisprudence, Arabic Literature, Social Equality, Philosophy, Anthropology, Drama and Culture. By the end of the 2017 academic year, faculty had produced more than fifty publications that included nineteen books and/or book chapters, thirty-seven journal articles as well as other editorial publications.

The subject of politics produced varied publications that included discussions of current issues related to nation states such as the role of the military in third world countries and the effect of ISIS on Takfiri ideology. From an economic standpoint, articles covered a range of current issues such as China’s recent economic relations with the GCC, the modernization of Russia’s

Studies in theology examined topics including the evolvement of Christianity among its followers, Islamic relation to ideas and practice, philosophical interpretations of the relationship between divine texts and the mind; and the construction of awareness to counter terrorism.
economy, the relationship between Islamic banking and liquidity risks as well as market analysis in relation to the propensity of firms to cooperate in high risk environments. Moreover, college faculty provided profound studies of migration that covered issues related to development, inequality and ecology. In addition, faculty produced unique projects in anthropology and culture such as an exploration of flamenco dancing among the expatriate community and the nature of labor accommodation in unstable environs. In addition, the field of social studies focused on the spatial analysis of Emirati higher education by analyzing the socio-cultural status and gender roles that contribute to the concept of cocooning. Studies in theology examined topics including the evolvement of Christianity among its followers, Islamic relation to ideas and practice, philosophical interpretations of the relationship between divine texts and the mind; and the construction of awareness to counter terrorism. Equally, the realms of literature and linguistic examined diverse issues ranging from the lamenting places in Arabic poetry to semantic diversity in the Arabic lexicon.

With the support of the Office of Research, nine research grants were awarded to unique faculty projects during 2017. College faculty have been enthusiastic in conducting their planned research and this is reflected in the range of proposals covering titles in the performing arts, contemporary Arab literature, an archeological study trade between Zanzibar and the Emirates, the privatization of urban growth in Cairo, a critical analysis of Islamic finance, women’s movement in Germany and the restructuring the energy sector in Ghana. Along with the internally awarded grants, an external grant from the London School of Economics was awarded to support an upcoming study of identity and heritage in the UAE.

The college has also been actively involved in conducting a stimulating Lecture Series with participation from international scholars presenting their ongoing research or latest findings on a number of global issues. The highlight of the 2017 Series was the keynote speech on women and violence during the first CSSH ‘Distinguished Lecture’ event by the president of the International Sociological Association, Dr. Margret Abraham. Other visiting scholars from Germany, Spain and Australia, as well as our own resident faculty, participated in thought-provoking public lectures which further enriched the research and academic environment at Zayed University. As of January to December 2017, CHSS has conducted 16 lectures distributed between Abu Dhabi and Dubai campuses. The lecture series is met with a wide acclaim and is attended by students and faculty from other colleges.
With regards to research, the College of Natural and Health Sciences has a very active team of faculty members and associates that work hard to reach out to the community, government and industrial sectors to support in key areas. These include: public health, nutrition, psychology, tolerance, happiness and subjective wellbeing, cognitive science, water and waste management, sustainable water production, environmental air and noise quality and assessment, energy policy, climate change, ecosystems, marine pollution, and environmental innovation amongst others. In addition to our internationally recognized academic research output we also provide experienced strategic thinking and advice on the most valuable ways to direct both regional and national environmental and health effectiveness through our consultancy services.

The CNHS has published 4 newsletters since December 2016 that provide analytically all research work of its faculty. They can be found in the following link: https://www.zu.ac.ae/main/en/colleges/colleges/__college_of_natural_and_health_sciences/Newsletter.aspx.

In summary, 61 publications were recorded in 2016 and 80 from January 2017 until the end of November. The publication rate per faculty for the 2017 year is 2.25. More than 80% of these articles were published in the two best known world databases, SCOPUS and PUBMED.

In addition, the CNHS held 16 Lecture Series under the leadership of Dr. Papandreou in 2017, where faculty had an opportunity to present their research work to the rest of their colleagues and students. Moreover, the CNHS and ZU is hosting a fully open reviewed journal with the help of “Knowledge E” publication services called Arab Journal of Nutrition and Exercise. Dr. Papandreou is the Editor in Chief and the journal is seeking acceptance in SCOPUS database in the year 2018.

Finally, and more importantly, the CNHS has the highest number of external MOUs at ZU. More specifically, CNHS has 11 MOUs with entities such as Ministry of Energy, Space Agency, ICBA, Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation, CAMFIL, Max Planck Institute, and many others, while another four (Ministry of Health and Prevention, Cleveland Hospital, Federal Authority of Nuclear Regulation and Sorbonne University) are coming up, with a total budget of more than 5.5 million AED.

"The CNHS has published 4 newsletters since December 2016 that provide analytically all research work of its faculty."
The College of Technological Innovation (CTI) provides advanced computing facilities for supporting and sustaining a research culture aligned to the needs of the UAE. Areas of research include Internet of Things (IoT), Digital Forensics, Human-Computer Interaction (HCI), Artificial Intelligence, Enterprise Systems, Transportation Sustainability, Mobile Computing and Network Technologies such as wireless and sensory networks.

The faculty in the College of Technological Innovation excel in linking teaching and research; they promote active learning within their research. Students are encouraged to undertake research and publish their work in local and international conferences, by jointly working with faculty. In the past three years, faculty and students co-authored more than 50 joint papers.

Furthermore, the College of Technological Innovation hosts an annual international undergraduate research conference on applied computing, widely attended by students from universities in the Middle East region. The objective of this conference is to promote undergraduate research activity and entrepreneurship at universities in the UAE, other GCC countries, and the rest of the Arab world by providing a forum for students to present their work and interact with other young researchers, faculty, and leaders from the IT industry. In addition to student presentations and posters, the conference program includes high profile, invited speakers from academia and industry, and a panel discussion. Last year, the conference was held at the Dubai campus of Zayed University and it attracted over 450 participants who presented 160 graduation projects from 40 educational institutions in the Gulf region and many other Arab countries, including UAE, KSA, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Jordan, and Palestine. The college is preparing to host the 10th Annual edition of this conference at the end of April 2018.

The College of Technological Innovation is also organizing the 19th edition of the Web Information Systems Engineering conference. WISE is a top tier conference in information systems and engineering. The aim of WISE 2018 is to provide an International forum for researchers, professionals, and industrial practitioners to share their knowledge and insights in the rapidly growing area of Web technologies, methodologies, and applications. This edition will promote the theme of Web Engineering in the Era of Big Data and Blockchains, two highly important areas for the world economy, in general and the knowledge economy in particular. It is expected that the event will gather around 250 researchers and practitioners from all over the world. It will be an opportunity to increase the visibility of Zayed University in general, and around the CTI activities. CTI will host the conference in Fall 2018.
The University College in both campuses: Abu-Dhabi and Dubai, conducted research seminars on a monthly basis. These included, but were not limited to, studies that were already disseminated. Some research topics were on: “Dialogic teaching and iPads in the second language classroom” (Senem Donanci); “Dancing in the highlands of Bolivia” (Dr. Ximena Cordova); “Hanging stars by hand” (Dr. Brian Thornton); “Participation in textual and social information landscapes” (Dr. Mehtap Kocatepe); and “Intrinsic geometry, coordinates and geodesics” (Nicola Spinelli).

In January 2017, the new hires received the Start-Up grants, and eleven faculty members received the RIF grants. One of the funded projects was on developing a dynamic mechanism to sense the physical environment by utilizing the smartphone and smartwatch (Dr. Francis Chow). Another one, by Dr. Ikko Tucker, promotes the development of a culture that makes it desirable to pursue a sustainable life-style. Dr. Rana Zain is exploring the use of Web 2.0 in UAE higher education, and Dr. Mahmoud Bataineh processes a safe method for wastewater treatment based on the catalytic degradation of organic persistent pollutants.

Moving to UC humanities and language research, Dr. Chrysavg Papagianni is recording in her RIF project stories of successful Emirati women creating a record of the country’s film history. Dr. Mohamed Qureshi is describing the influence of age on language acquisition, and Dr. Wafa Zoghbor is bridging the gap between research on Phonology and pedagogical implications. In most of these activities, the Principal Investigators from the University College are working in collaboration with scholars within and outside Zayed University.

Dr. David Palfreyman obtained a research cluster grant under the title: Languaging and higher education in bilingual contexts which focuses on the unique features of UAE higher education, while making connections with contexts in other parts of the world. The cluster involves eight research projects by fifteen researchers including Dr. Telma Steinhagen who is working on translanguaging in English composition classrooms in higher education.

Some UC faculty members contributed to research by government entities; Dr. Linda Smail collaborated with Prof. Mouawiya Alawad (ISER) on developing the UAE youth wellbeing index report, and Dr. Wafa Zoghbor on exploring the role of the Arabic language on empowering the UAE national identity. Dr. Marielle Patronis is actively researching the implications of technology in English composition teaching and assessment. The recent adoption of summative e-assessments at the university has been the impetus for her current research project on “Students’ Attitude toward Summative e-assessment”. Her preliminary results indicate that the level of exam anxiety among candidates increased when writing extended essays online.

The above activities were presented in regional and international conferences, and were published as scholarly work including conference proceedings, book chapters, and SCOPUS journal articles. Dr. Linda Smail published recently “Junction trees constructions in Bayesian networks” and Dr. Mahmoud Bataineh co-authored an article on “Method development for selective and nontargeted identification of nitro compounds in diesel particulate matter” with a group of ZU colleagues.
Academic Bridge Program (ABP) faculty have been actively involved in research projects centered around the use of mobile technology as a learning tool (Ajda Osifo, Guy Meredith), learner portfolios (John Landers), organizational learning (Burcu Tezcan-Unal, Suzanne Littlewood & Wayne Jones), extensive reading (Timothy Nicoll, Amanda Bradford), learner engagement (Dr. Raymond Sheehan), and in-sessional language support (Kara McKeown, Suzanne Littlewood & Wayne Jones).

In addition to the many individual research projects faculty have conducted, perhaps the most exciting development this year is the formation of a research cluster on English Medium Instruction (EMI). With Dr. Tony Myers and Dr. Sarah Hopkyns as the Principal Investigators, the cluster involves eighteen researchers from Zayed University’s ABP, UC and CHSS, as well as from international universities such as the University of Oxford and University of Leicester (UK), the National University of Singapore, and the University of East Carolina (USA). The cluster investigates the pedagogical and sociological implications of EMI through three distinct strands: a) Determining best practices, b) Attitudes of stakeholders, and c) EMI and identity. As this area of research was declared a ‘research priority’ by The International Research Foundation (TIRF), its current relevance is high.

In terms of dissemination of research, ABP faculty have given research presentations at several major conferences in the field of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics. Paola Trejo, Amanda Bradford and Dr. Sarah Hopkyns presented at the annual IATEFL (International Association of Teaching English as a Foreign Language) conference in Glasgow (April 2017). Furthermore, ABP Assessment Supervisor, Liz Jones, attended the 39th Language Testing Research Colloquium at Universidad de los Andes, Bogota, Colombia, and Dr. Sarah Hopkyns (ABP) and Norman Williams (UC) attended the English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) Symposium at Oxford University (June 2017). Dr. Sarah Hopkyns and Paola Trejo presented at the 10th Annual International Conference for ICT in Language Learning in Florence, Italy, and Amanda Bradford presented her research on extensive reading at TESOL Italy in Rome.

Exciting research plans are in place for Spring 2018 with several ABP faculty having been accepted to present at the three main conferences in the field of Applied linguistics: TESOL International (Chicago, USA), AAAL (Chicago, USA) and IATEFL (Brighton, UK). Scopus-listed journal publications are also underway. For example, Dr. Sarah Hopkyns (ABP), Dr. Wafa Zoghbor (UC) and Peter Hassall (UC) have an Asian Englishes journal article (on linguistic hybridity in the UAE) in press.

This year, the ABP Research Committee has produced two informative newsletters promoting faculty research. The committee’s first ‘research drop-in session’ also took place this year. It provided information to faculty regarding ethical clearance, grants, Scopus-listed journals, and research priorities. It was well attended and a further session is planned for January 2018.
The Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) was founded in February 2010, and is operating under the Provost Office and in very close teamwork with the Office of Research at Zayed University. ISER’s mission is to work closely with U.A.E. government departments and other public and private sector organizations to undertake empirical research on social and economic issues which will inform public policy and civil society in the UAE and the region. During 2017, by teaming with the Office of Research, we have introduced the Policy Research Incentive Program which resulted in 25 research papers some of them are already published in peer-reviewed journals and others are on their way to be published. Also, some of ISER’s activities, in collaboration with the Office of Research, during 2017 included the following:

Producing the first UAE wellbeing youth index “UAE Youth Wellbeing Index Report 2017” in cooperation with the Department of Economic Development in Dubai, the Emirates Foundation and the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority. In this index, 35 indicators that measure youth wellbeing across seven domains can be used to identify which areas of youth wellbeing require immediate or long-term attention. The UAE overall rank in this index was ninth, which is the border of high and medium among 30 other countries participating the index. UAE was also ranked first in 9 out of the 35 indicators. The strongest performances can be observed in Health, ICT, Education and Economic Opportunity domains.

Also, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, we have produced a detailed report to monitor the impact of Emirati culture and social media on national identity among the various categories of citizens in the United Arab Emirates. The main results indicate very high pride of national identity among all groups of citizens, and a great deal of sensing the danger of alienation of identity due to many factors such as the heavy use of social medium, openness and the large numbers of mixed cultures in the country. The participants also showed great interest in the Emirati heritage and its strong relationship with national identity. The study relied heavily on the excellent work of 13 ZU students who managed to complete around 500 interviews with Emiratis from all age groups.

Some of the published research during 2017 includes “Labor Migrations to Resource-rich Countries: Comparative Perspectives on Migrants’ Rights in Canada, Norway and the United Arab Emirates” in the International Journal on Minority and Group Rights, “More than a criminal tool: the Hawala system’s role as a critical remittance channel for low-income Pakistani migrants in Dubai” in Remittances Review and “UAE Labor Market: Development, Structure, and Characteristics”, chapter in Productivity in the UAE, forthcoming, Oxford University Press. In addition, we have produced a working paper on “Educational Barriers to Female Leadership in UAE” and are participating in the UAE Human Resources Report by writing one chapter on “Overview of the Labor Market in the UAE”.

Other activates include our representation in the UAE team that helps to produce the UAE chapter in World Economic Forum’s World Competitiveness Report, our participation in Abu Dhabi Dialogue between the GCC and labor exporting countries in Asia as observant, in addition to training Dubai Police team in research and forecasting techniques.

Finally, we are in the process of conducting three studies related to Emirati youth in collaboration with the Department of Economic Development in Dubai: UAE Youth & Education: Current situation, issues, concerns and attitudes; UAE Youth in the Labor Market: Challenges and Opportunities and Social Life and Wellbeing of UAE Youth, in addition to many other plans for future policy-oriented research.
ZU librarians come from a wide variety of academic disciplines, with an eclectic array of academic qualifications. There is a deliberate and systematic maximization of the benefits of their disciplinary specialties expressed through the way their faculty liaison responsibilities are allocated. In the process, that also establishes their practical and realistic career paths. They possess thorough knowledge of the library science discipline however through their specialized information science professional training.

With a predominantly net-generation student user community who tend to prefer fast and easy rather than slow and methodical ways of solving their given or expected tasks, modern academic libraries generally face challenges keeping in line with the Aesop fable-like analogy about winning out of unhurried and careful ways of searching, retrieving, analyzing, and using information. That is instigated by the nature of the current fast-changing information environment with many competing alternative information sources that everyone in the university (and the rest of the UAE) has access to. Thus, ZU librarians are tirelessly working towards having the library as the go-to place in the university. That explains why their approach is to have library database use-related messages seamlessly embedded in the teaching curriculum and research projects. That also explains why they collaborate rather than substitute faculty colleagues as they meet students in classes, i.e. applying collaborative information literacy skills instruction and guidance. The idea is to support the ZU knowledge focused teaching and learning curriculum.

The library totally supports research efforts of the ZU community. This is expressed in the form of advice, regular workshops, and responding to other queries that arise. This includes providing suggestions on where to publish, Open Access matters, acquiring full-text of articles in instances where the library is not subscribing, citation management, and so on. Librarians are also involved in research projects and other creative activities that not only enhance their individual careers, but also raise their awareness of the experiences of the university faculty and student researchers they are supporting, for example, awareness of the implications of Open Access publishing, self-publishing, and generally the core of the modern scholarly publishing paradigm.

Products from ZU librarians include scholarly articles in research and reference work, information literacy assessment, capacity building for library staff, knowledge management, data literacy of academics and research students in higher education institutions, etc., and working together with the ZU Accessibility Office for Special Needs to have an inclusive library facility. Librarians also contribute to the ZU community and wider UAE through work in projects, such as having a film archive, participating in thematic activities such as organizing a display regarding Mental Health outreach to local schools, and more.
Established in the Fall of 2012, the Center for Educational Innovation (CEI) has been involved in designing and implementing innovative curricular and faculty development programs across the university. The CEI focuses on three main areas of support: (1) Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, (2) Pedagogical Innovation, and (3) Educational Technology.

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Course was designed for full-time teaching faculty who are finding it hard to do disciplinary research due to their teaching load or who have not been engaged in research in a while and they need help with conceptualizing, designing and implementing a research project. The course is offered in 5 two-hour weekly sessions allowing time between sessions to help faculty reflect on their teaching practice and use the skills taught during each session to develop a research question and start to formulate a proposal for researching their teaching practice. In particular, the SoTL course aims to enable participants to:

- Understand the difference between Scholarly Teaching and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

- Practice being a reflective practitioner.

- Critically discuss different theories of learning, teaching approaches and frameworks.

- Reflect on their teaching philosophy.

- Familiarize with different research designs appropriate for researching teaching and learning (e.g. action research).

- Learn how to write appropriate research questions.

- Review different types of instruments for data collection (qualitative and quantitative) and learn how to critically evaluate them.

- Familiarize with common statistical procedures for different types of data and how to interpret statistics used in basic research.

- Familiarize with the stages involved in developing and completing a research project successfully, and describe the purpose and content of a research proposal.

- Understand the ZU ethical approval process and appreciate why such approval is required and what ethics committees look for in applications.

- Identify strategies to disseminate research results and findings, and to prepare successful conference presentations and papers for submission to peer review journals.

SoTL is an avenue to evidence-based teaching as it allows faculty to evaluate their teaching practices and their effectiveness on student learning. Since 2014, the SoTL course has been delivered face to face in both the Abu Dhabi and the Dubai campuses.

To date a total of 98 faculty members have attended the SoTL Certificate course. This represents about 15% of the total full-time teaching faculty across both campuses at Zayed University. There are currently a total of 59 SoTL-related projects at different stages of development.

Graduates of the SoTL course go on to present their research locally at the annual SoTL Conference (https://www.zu.ac.ae/main/en/cei/SoTLConf2018/index.aspx) and internationally as well as publish their papers in journals and conference proceedings. Over the past three years, at least 12 papers have been published in journals and conference proceedings by SoTL graduates, and a further 29 conference presentations have been delivered.

To further support faculty in their efforts for continuous professional development, in Fall 2017, the CEI proudly launched a new flexible professional development initiative, the Innovative Teaching Program (ITP). The program is the first in the UAE to be accredited by the UK Higher Education Academy and information on how to avail of the program can be found on the CEI website: https://www.zu.ac.ae/main/en/cei/ITP/index.aspx.
The Research Ethics Committee has been busy this year and recently announced two new initiatives that will help to improve the research culture at Zayed University. In order to facilitate faculty research and ensure timely ethical approval, members of the Research Ethics Committee have each begun holding a weekly office hour solely dedicated to the REC. This initiative is aimed at reducing barriers between researchers and the REC by allowing them to discuss their applications, ask questions and get advice about what supporting documents might be needed and what criteria need to be fulfilled. This initiative has so far proven to be a great success and has been well received by faculty and researchers alike – for office hours’ details, please refer to the Research website.

In order to facilitate student research, the Research Ethics Committee recently developed a proposal to create a student research ethics committee - the SREC! Look for more details in the next edition of the newsletter.
The Hub:

The mission of the Office of Research is to facilitate innovative research to support both the objectives of Zayed University and the national development of the UAE.

The success of our mission depends on the quality of research relevant to the needs of the UAE, the level of accountability as measured against international standards, and the effective partnerships built by Zayed University at home and abroad.

To achieve this, Office of Research supports many programs designed to enhance the research culture at Zayed University, by supporting quality research that creates new knowledge in all areas of endeavor.

There are many University and UAE initiatives designed to encourage and support an active research agenda, including the annual Research Incentive Fund Grants (RIF), The Provost’s Research Fellowship Awards and a range of competitive funding opportunities offered by external organizations.

In line with UAE Vision 2021 to unify knowledge, of which research is considered as a main pillar, the Office of Research also offers the Undergraduate Research Scholars Program to students.

Our office locations:

Abu Dhabi: Location: Admin Building, Level 2, office no 25.
Dubai: Location: Admin building, Level 2.

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Ms. Ingrid Liekens
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(Ingrid’s areas of responsibility are internal and external grants, workshops).

Ms. Shurooq AL Hashimi
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(Shurooq’s areas of responsibility are Start Up Grants, Undergraduate Research Scholar Program (URSP) and REC)

Ms. Priya Sridhar
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Priya.sridhar@zu.ac.ae
Office number: +971 4 402 1254
The Link:

Research Standing Committee

The Research Standing Committee is comprised of representatives from the colleges and other relevant units across both campuses and meets every month to discuss issues pertaining to growing the research capacity of Zayed University.

The main tasks of this committee include:

A. Review and recommend research and scholarly/creative activity policies and procedures
B. Review strategic plans for research and scholarly/creative activity
C. Frame issues and advise on such matters as:
   a. a vision/mission statement for research and creative activity at ZU
   b. definitions of appropriate research activities for ZU

c. infrastructure and support to stimulate scholarly and creative activity
d. enhancement of scholarly, creative activity and interdisciplinary research and dissemination of the results
e. student involvement in undergraduate scholarly and creative activity
f. annual review of guidelines for and operation of the internal faculty scholarly and creative activity grants, and when necessary, to recommend revisions
D. Review and make recommendations on competitive grant and award programs offered within the University as needed, including

E. Provide recommendation related to ethical approval for research

You may contact your college/unit representative with any relevant research queries you may have.

Committee members for the year 2017-18 are:

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<tr>
<th>Chair of the committee</th>
<th>Michael Allen, Assistant Provost for Research</th>
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<tr>
<td>College of Arts and Creative Enterprises</td>
<td>Thorsten Lomker (DXB)</td>
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<td>College of Business Sciences</td>
<td>Abdelrahman Baqrain (DXB)</td>
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<td>College of Communication and Media Sciences</td>
<td>Ganga Dhanesh (DXB)</td>
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<td>College of Education</td>
<td>Qais Almeqdad (AUH)</td>
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<td>College of Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
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<td>College of Natural and Health Sciences</td>
<td>Dimitrios Papandreou (AUH)</td>
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<td>College of Technological Innovation</td>
<td>May Al Taei (AUH)</td>
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<td>University College</td>
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<td>Academic Bridge Program</td>
<td>Sarah Hopkyns (AUH)</td>
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<td>Library and Learning Commons</td>
<td>Judith Mavodza (AUH)</td>
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<td>Institute for Social and Economic Research</td>
<td>Mouawiya AlAwad (DXB)</td>
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<td>Center for Educational Innovation</td>
<td>Christina Gitsaki (DXB)</td>
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<td>Research Ethics Committee</td>
<td>Mercedes Sheen (DXB)</td>
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