

Clarification of the Issues

Subtitle

BACKGROUND: It has been brought to my attention on two occasions that complaints have been registered in my regard. Below is a list of the complaints as I have understood them in two discussions in the presence of Wayne Oliver, Chief Coordinator, and Ismail Elscharfi, Senior Coordinator. During the first meeting Ridha El Arbi, Coordinator was also present. During the second meeting Dr. Abdullah Al Bargi was also present. These meetings took place on Wednesday, 30 November 2011 and Monday, 12 December 2011, respectively.

Although I asked to see the allegations in writing, I was told that only the facts as they were reported would be recorded and access to my file has not been permitted. Obviously, this makes it difficult to respond to the allegations in a very thorough way. As the complaints are numerous, various, and sudden, I have decided to reply anyway.

The Allegations

SKIPPING CLASS - During the first meeting I was accused of skipping class on several occasions.

My first absence was to attend a meeting at the Islamic Economic Research Center (now called the Islamic Economics Institute). I was invited by Abdullah Turkistani, Director, to attend the meeting. The result of the meeting was a paper that has since been submitted for review and is expected to be published in the Spring of 2012. Other good things resulting from that meeting for which I am responsible include a likely teleconference with a world renown Austrian economist and the introduction of his book to the university.

In order to attend this meeting I cancelled the third session of a morning class and allowed my students to go home early.

Two additional partial absences were due to medical appointments that were scheduled before my teaching assignment for the 2nd Module had been posted. These appointments were not easily cancelled as I had already waited one month to obtain them. The medical records necessary to attest to these appointments are available on request.

It was made clear by all present at the meeting that I would inform my coordinator of all future expected absences before they occur. I agreed to this and have subsequently followed up in this regard.

REFERENCE TO RELIGION IN THE CLASSROOM - It was apparently reported by a student that I had made an inappropriate remark to another student about religion. This matter was brought to my attention during the 2nd meeting. What the reporting student said and what I said were not the same. The failure on the part of the student to report correctly was likely due to his inability to distinguish properly between the plural and singular use of the word god.

In occidental culture Greek and Roman mythology are both a scholarly pursuit and a popular art form. In ancient times one attributed to gods the causes of otherwise unexplainable events. The student to whom I made the remark was offering an explanation for an event that was very far fetched. In order to emphasize just how far fetched his explanation appeared, I asked, if it could not have been brought about by the gods.

No further reference to Roman and Greek mythology, or for that matter religious belief of any kind, will be made in class. Further, students will be discouraged from doing the same.

REFERENCE TO SEX IN THE CLASSROOM - My classroom audience comprise some 20 male students between the ages of 18 and 20. They are at an age in which sex is a prominent part of their conscious awareness. When a student makes an allusion to sex in the classroom during a discussion I can suppress, entertain, or ignore it.

In the future I will ignore or suppress such allusions.

ALLEGATION OF POOR BEHAVIOR TOWARD ANOTHER COLLEAGUE - On Saturday, 3 November 2011 a colleague was assigned to my class to assist me with the conducting of the speaking exam of my Level IV students. He arrived punctually. As he was a more experienced colleague, he came with many of his own suggestions. Unfortunately, some of them conflicted with my own test strategy designed to meet the outline provided me by my coordinator. When I asked my assistant to sit at the back of the room facing the speaker, he refused and insisted on occupying his own desk in the front of the room facing the speaker's audience. This led to a brief discussion about each other's role in the class.

As it was becoming increasingly embarrassing for me in front of my students, I put up my hand and stated that I did not wish to hear anymore and that the exam should begin, whereupon I was accused of treating my colleague like a student. Fortunately, a building supervisor entered the room. Whereupon I immediately stood up and drew the entire discussion to the outside of the room away from the purview of my students. When we returned to the classroom, my colleague proceeded to the back of the room facing the speaker, and I initiated the examination. During the exam my colleague's coordinator entered the room sat for a few moments and left.

When the examination was over I thanked my colleague for his assistance, shook his hand, and waited for the next exam during which I would become his assistant. This never occurred, because I was told by a senior coordinator that I would assist a different colleague,

ALLEGATION THAT I DO NOT CONTRIBUTE - During the 2nd meeting I was told that I do not contribute well to the university. I can understand neither the reasoning, nor the motivation for this statement. In addition, to the performance of my regular duties as a Level III and Level IV instructor I have contributed the following since my arrival to Jeddah in April 2011:

- 16 May 2011 - **Recommendations for Program Development and Improvement.** First impression requested by Dr. Kinsara with cover letter.
- 20 June 2011 - **Building a Program in the Probable Absence of Real Incentives.** A paper presented to Ayman Habis, Vice Dean and my colleagues at a faculty conference. In my presentation I made a case for a likely mismatch between undergraduate student need for the English language and the material that we are teaching our students. I then proposed a research project to overcome the mismatch.
- 25 June 2011 - **KAU Undergraduate Student English Language Needs and Uses Assessment Project.** A preliminary project proposal and a request for data available at the university registrar's office were prepared. The primary purpose of the proposed research was to identify clearly how the English language is used among KAU undergraduate students during their post-foundation year studies. Secondary, but important research topics included the measurement of post-foundation year language attrition and advancement, pre- and post-foundation year English language training and exposure, and post-foundation year opinion about their foundation year training.

Although a portion of the data was eventually obtained, the formal proposal was never completed, as the Institute had not yet established a policy to handle such research matters. The research proposal is still pending.

- 19 September 2011 - **Suggestions for Improving KAU Recreational Facilities.** Letter to Prof. Abdullah M. Mohorjy, Dean of Student Affairs. In an effort to understand why certain sports facilities were not being made more available to faculty and students a statement of the problem was prepared for Dean Mohorjy and the Vice Dean, Dr. Abdullatif A. Neamatallah at the Dean's request.
- 2 October 2011 - **Informal Observation Lesson Plan.** Received a grade of satisfactory performance.
- 5 October 2011 - **Teleconference at the Islamic Economic Research Institute.** I was invited by Abdullah Turkistani, Director, to attend a teleconference on the world's current financial crisis. My attendance resulted in a paper entitled "Money Creation and the Revolution". This paper will be published in the bilingual journal *Procesos de Mercado* in the spring of 2012.

The warm welcome that I received at the Institute encouraged me to propose another teleconference that would feature the renown Austrian economist Jesús Huerta de Soto. With Dr. Turkistani's permission I invited Dr. De Soto to speak.

- 17 October 2011 - **Informal Student Survey.** Mid-module survey of my Module I students. Indicates overall approval of my teaching style and knowledge of the subject matter.
- 22 October 2011 - **Portfolio Feedback - An Idea That Could Be Better Executed.** When requested by ELI to provide feedback with regard to the introduction of the Portfolio I surveyed my class and came up with the aforementioned list of suggestions

and data.

- 24 November 2011 - **Correspondence with Jesús Huerta de Soto** inviting him to participate in a teleconference with the Islamic Economic Research Center (Islamic Economics Institute).
- 30 November 2011 - **Letter to Wayne Oliver** requesting guidance in regard to the enforcement of the campus non-smoking rule. A copy of this letter was distributed to the entire faculty and the issue was raised by me at the 6 December faculty meeting.
- 11 December 2011 - **Arabic Language Institute Graduation Ceremony**. Presented a speech at the graduation ceremony. Requested to speak by Mansour Awaad, Institute Coordinator.