

AMIDEAST امد ياست

PALESTINIAN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PFDP)

Fourth Quarter
Performance Monitoring Report
July 1 – September 30, 2006



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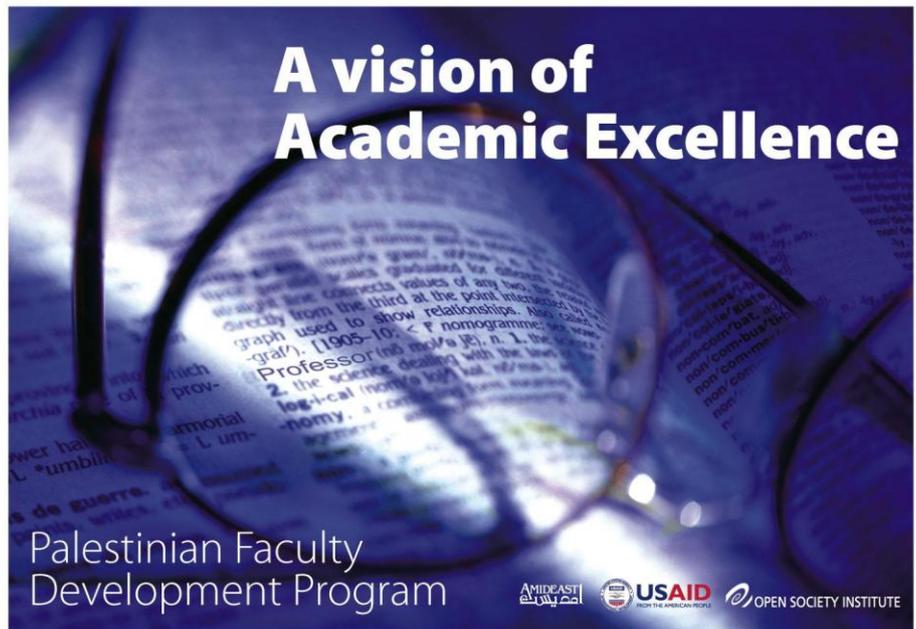


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Executive Summary

The fourth quarter of implementing PFDP focused on four activities: US university placement for STF, delivery of the Effective Teaching Strategies Course, a departure orientation, and final logistics for ensuring the PhD Fellows safe, and timely arrival at their US host universities. Pre-academic training continued in Gaza and Ramallah for most candidates and involved 79 contact hours, bringing the total contact hours for all pre-academic training for the year to 546. A significant amount of work went into the final departure of 21 PhD Fellows. A detailed Participant Departure Checklist is provided in Appendix E. In addition, OSI concluded the Short Term Fellows US university placement. Appendix A provides a list of these placements.

1. Pre-Academic Training

Pre-academic training continued on a limited scaled with relatively few hours being delivered this quarter. A total of 79 hours were completed this quarter in the form of three courses: academic writing, research methodology and advanced SPSS. However, the importance of the six-day academic writing and research methodology courses involved bringing most of the candidates together for the first time. Therefore, the six days allowed the PhD group to really get to know each other and served as a culminating social and academic experience prior to their departures to the US.

Academic Writing and Research Methodology

Ramallah: 48 hours

Dates: July 9-15, 2006

15 West Bank participants attended. Another eight participants from Gaza were supposed to attend the seminar, but could not due to Gaza being closed. Even Palestinians with valid permits were denied exit. The training took advantage of visiting trainers from Central European University and focused on Academic Writing and Research Methodology. Four instructors Sophie Howlett, David Ridout, Joanna Renc-Roe, and Elissa Helms alternated in delivering the material. A breakdown of the subjects is described below:

Day One (David Ridout)

- Introduction to Academic Writing, what it is?
- Expectations of Graduate Academic Writing
- Cross Cultural differences in Writing Processes
- Reading Skills

Day Two (Elissa Helms)

- Academic Writing:
 - Sources Part 1 - Overview of the why, how, and what of using sources Discussion of Plagiarism
 - Sources Part 2 - Practical Exercises on Using Sources
- Research methodology and design

Day Three (Elissa Helms)

- Academic Writing: Structuring a Paper (Micro level)
Paraphrasing Thesis Statements;

Structuring a paper (Macro level)
Writing an Introduction

- Meta-discourse
- Research methodology and design

Day Four (Elissa Helms)

- Introduction to course design,
Part 1: syllabus development, goals and learning outcomes
Part 2: course structuring
- Research methodology and design

Day Five (Sophie Howlett)

- Research methodology and research task
- Research methodology and design

Day Six (Joanna Renc-Roe)

- Lecturing and presentation skills
- Seminar skills/TA skills
- Research Methodology and Design



Sophie Howlett lecturing about research methodology

The writing course helped students enhance their English language skills in areas such as grammar, rhetoric, sentence and paragraph structure, simple outlining, parts of the essay, and patterns of organization. Participants of this course benefited by gaining skills and confidence to understand, write, and edit compositions of academic writing.

The focus on Qualitative Methods and Research Design aimed to introduce students to the logic and methods of qualitative research. It focused on formulating research questions, choosing appropriate methods, and designing research projects. The course also introduced students to some of the major qualitative research methods, including questionnaires and surveys, interviewing, focus groups, participant observation and ethnography. The underlying principle of the course was to encourage students who may be familiar with more quantitative and structured research methods to consider the advantages and fresh perspectives offered with qualitative methods. Class activities focused on proposed dissertation research that should also help students begin their Ph.D. programs with more focus and sense of purpose. The course ended with a discussion of ethics and issues of objectivity that arise when using qualitative methods.

Advanced SPSS Course

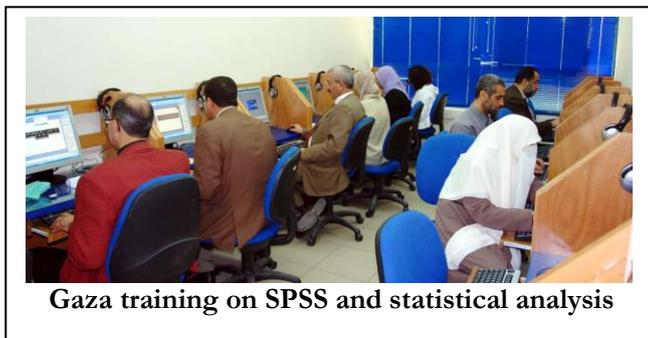
Ramallah: 16 hours, July

16 participants

Gaza: 15 Hours, June 22-July 6

10 participants

This course comprised the second part of SPSS training. The first part occurred at the end of the previous



Gaza training on SPSS and statistical analysis

quarter. Participants were trained on the concepts of designing survey methodology, including random sampling according to the variables of interest, and how best to collect data through survey questionnaires for employers and graduates. In addition, participants learned how to enter different types of data sets using the software SPSS, how to make the data ready for analysis, how to describe the data by using tabular, graphical and numerical methods, and how to examine the relationships between two or more variables. Furthermore, the students learned how to analyze the data by using parametric and non-parametric hypothesis testing and analysis of variance. The course

was originally designed to cover 15 hours of training. However, participants expressed a serious need to extend the course to cover additional course material in order to meet their academic needs.

2. Effective Teaching Strategies Course

AMIDEAST sub-contracted a team of academic experts to design and deliver the first half of a two-part 80 hour seminar on effective teaching strategies. The team chosen to do the scope of work was based with the Special and Extensions Unit of the Central European University (CEU) in Budapest. The Special and Extensions Unit is comprised of an unusual group of academic staff who routinely travel around Europe, particularly former Soviet Union countries, and deliver workshops on improving the quality of university instruction. Therefore, they have considerable experience in conducting the kind of workshop that mirrors the goals of PFDP and specifically the program component addressing pedagogy.

ETSC Design: After initially contacting and committing to work with Sophie Howlette, Director of CEU's Special and Extensions Unit, a discussion ensued about how best to structure the workshop. The COP originally designed it as a two-week intensive seminar for the Short Term Fellows. However, based upon Sophie's experience with similar workshops she recommended it be broken up into two separate one-week seminars for two reasons: 1) the information over two-weeks would be too much to effectively absorb given the intensive nature of the course; 2) the content could be designed to take advantage of the two-visit structure of the Short Term Fellows. Therefore, a two-part series was designed so that the first 40-hour seminar would serve as a introduction for how to design a teaching portfolio and better prepare the Short Term Fellows on how to best take advantage of their first US visit from the standpoint of teaching and curriculum development. This structure logically corresponded to the needs of the grantees and goals of PFDP. The actual material used for the first seminar was based upon existing materials that Sophie's team had used for similar programs. However, upon her request, each Short Term finalist also provided a current course curriculum in advance of their visit. These curricula helped Sophie and her colleague, Joanna Renc-Roe, tailor the material to the needs and level of the Palestinian faculty.

ETSC Delivery:

Eight PFDP Short Term Fellows from the West Bank attended the Effective Teaching Strategies Course which was held between Sunday, July 9th and Thursday, July 13th, 2006. The training took place at the Grand Park Hotel in Ramallah, and was co-taught by Sophie Howlett, a professor at the Central European University (CEU), Budapest, Hungary, and her colleague Joanna Renc-Roe. The subjects covered by Sophie and Joanna are described below.

Day One:

- Course Design 1: Alignment Theory
Learning Outcomes
Transferable Skills
Structuring Courses
Types of Content

Day Two:

- Course Design 2: Alignment Theory –
Advanced: relate goals and learning outcomes to structure, teaching methods, assessment and evaluation techniques; subject benchmarking;
- Assessment: Teaching essay writing and giving exams.



Joanna Renc-Roe: teaching portfolios

Day Three:

- Introduction to Evaluation – Student Evaluation and Peer Review
- Trends in Higher Education – Comparative European/US;
- Modularization and Credit Systems – Comparative European/US.

Day Four:

- Review of main teaching and learning issues
- Review of methods and signature pedagogies: discussion of cases
- Complex teaching goals and methods
- Advanced planning and methods design

Day Five:

- Introduction to issues around the scholarly enquiry into teaching
- Beginnings of self-enquiry: writing and reviewing teaching philosophies
- Peer review of teaching: introduction and analysis of questions, issues, methods
- Building a fellowship of enquiry: questions, interests, tasks, texts.

The training developed by the Central European University's Curriculum Resource Center (CRC) aimed to expose teachers to a variety of approaches and key issues which allow them to experience and come to understand course design and teaching differently, and bring them closer to a "scholar in the classroom" concept. Furthermore, the goal is to encourage an understanding of the university teacher as a professional scholar ready to engage in teaching as an academic practice that is informed by research and by discussion of models of good practice, and which is guided by the spirit of inquiry and critical intellectual engagement as any other academic activity.

The training focused on the relationship between the research and the classroom, the content of an academic course and the various possible methods of its delivery. The workshop helped participants cope with the increasing demands for professionalism, the demonstration of skills and appropriate strategies required of university faculty. Sessions of the training were designed in a way to address the needs of both junior and senior faculty: the introductory sessions were aimed to provide less experienced participants with background knowledge, a repertoire of skills and practice opportunities for the improvement of their course design and teaching. The more advanced sessions focused on discussing models of good practice in core areas such as advanced course design, innovate ways of assessing students, evaluation of teaching, degree structuring.

ETSC Evaluation:

Perhaps one of the biggest concerns about the delivery of the ETSC was attendance. This program component is designed as pillar of PFDP and as such requires 100% mandatory attendance. However, during this first year five participants from Gaza were supposed to attend the seminar, but could not because Gaza was closed and Israeli security did not allow exit of individuals, even those with approved permits. Three of five Gazan grantees had valid permits. This meant 38% of the group never attended. In addition, although attendance by the 8 West Bankers was required, three of them missed one day (different days) due to academic responsibilities at their universities. This is unacceptable.

As a result, it is recommended that the ETSC for the first and second cohort of Gazans be delivered in tandem in Cairo next summer. It is simply not realistic to plan on Israeli security to grant permits for Palestinians to travel to Ramallah. Conversely, it is not recommended for security reasons for the foreign consultants to travel to Gaza and spend such a lengthy period. Secondly, it is recommended that once the Short Term finalists are chosen that a formal letter requiring their signature, as well as their supervisor's signature, is distributed and returned back to AMIDEAST which will require all finalists to clear their academic

responsibilities for 5 full days in order to attend 100% of the ETSC. The letter will serve to highlight their responsibility and formalize the importance of the ETSC.

Formal evaluations were designed and distributed by Sophie. The responses were largely positive. One common criticism involved not having the materials in advance and neatly bound for easy reference. Instead the materials were distributed as each topic area was covered on a given day. 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 too surprising because the concept of “the scholarship of teaching” is an emerging trend in higher education in the US and Europe and virtually unheard of among higher education systems more concerned with such basics as finding sufficient teachers or appropriate classroom space. Of the four main component areas of the ETSC: course design; assessment issues; evaluation; and teaching issues, the first two received the most positive feedback. The pace and quantity of the material was considered appropriate. 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.”

3. J1 Visa Processing and Grantee Departures

J1 Visa processing began for the PFDP PhD fellows in May 2006. The DS156, 157 and 158 were completed and sent to the US consulate in Jerusalem for each PFDP fellow. AMIDEAST also entered the relevant data for each person on the USAID TraiNet website. In June security clearance was received for all fellows and interviews were held at the US Consulate for all the West Bank candidates. Overall, the visa process for the West Bankers went smoothly and efficiently. Despite numerous efforts to bring the eight Gaza fellows to Jerusalem to conduct their interviews it was not possible. For weeks efforts by USAID and AMIDEAST failed to get the candidates to Jerusalem. Consequently, the Gaza candidates submitted the initial documentation to the US Consulate in Jerusalem, and the US background check was also processed – this was the most time consuming part of the process. However, the Gaza candidates actually received their visa interview and were issued J1 visas through the US Embassy in Cairo.

The majority of DS2019 were received from Washington DC on July 16 and a second batch was received August 9. Each West Bank Fellow traveled one week before their university program began. However, the Gaza fellows all departed together to Cairo on August 20 and left to the US August 23 to avoid the border closing again. The extremely frustrating and time consuming efforts to get the Gaza grantees out of Gaza in a timely manner is fully documented in a report written by Steve Keller, the AMIDEAST Country Director. The report details the level of effort on behalf of a large group of US government sponsored grantees, including PFDP grantees. It is provided in Appendix D. There were heroic efforts made by AMIDEAST, as well as US government personnel over the course of seven different attempts in order to ensure permission from Israeli security for their exit.

Prior to departure to the US each PhD grantee was provided with a one way airline ticket, \$350 transit allowance and \$300 settling in allowance. These funds were given to ensure the grantee has no problems during travel. OSI arranged hotel accommodation in the nearest hotel for each grantee unless they informed AMIDEAST otherwise. OSI forwarded a check to each participant with their designated stipend amount for an entire semester (minus the \$300 settling in allowance). All grantees successfully traveled to Amman or Cairo for their flights to the US and safely arrived at their respective cities.

4. Departure Orientation

AMIDEAST staff hosted a two-day Departure Orientation in Ramallah for all grantees. The full schedule of the two day event is available in Appendix B, followed by a summary of evaluation results in Appendix C. This event followed immediately after the six day pre-academic training for the PhD Fellows addressing academic writing and research methodology, as well as the five day Effective Teaching Strategies Course offered to the Short Term Fellows. Therefore, the timing of the Departure Orientation was scheduled in a manner that would maximize attendance and expand upon the cohort building that had occurred the previous week.

The orientation took place on July 15 and 16 at the Grand Park Hotel in Ramallah. All West Bank grantees, both PhD and Short Term Fellows attended, except one person who was sick. However, none of the Gaza candidates received permits to travel from Gaza and therefore did not attend at all. This was a significant disappointment. A separate half day orientation delivered by the COP via DVC occurred the following week to all of the Gaza finalists. This was not ideal and the focus was only on PFDP rules and regulations as outlined in their Handbook. Recognizing this shortcoming, OSI and AMIDEAST have planned for a follow-up in-person orientation for the 7 Gaza PhD Fellows in October in Pittsburg.

The Departure Orientation in Ramallah was anchored by three key sessions where the PFDP Grantee Handbook rules and regulations were reviewed thoroughly. This was a time for questions and explanations provided by the AMIDEAST staff. In addition to the emphasis on rules and regulations, there was a panel discussion provided by two Presidential Scholarship Program (PSP) alumni. Two recently returned PSP women spoke energetically for an hour and a half about their experience. This session largely took place in Arabic and involved many questions from the PFDP grantees. The end of the first day included a formal dinner around the pool which was a wonderful setting and capped off the previous week's training activities.

The second day began again with ice breakers and a short session on Academic Life in the US. The content of this session focused on the culture of campus life, campus social outlets and venues, professor-student relations and on-campus work opportunities. In retrospect, not enough time was allocated for this area. This was followed by a PowerPoint Presentation on culture shock and diversity issues in America. The COP narrated the presentation. The session involved a discussion of what is culture shock and how it manifests itself. Other topics included dating, alcohol, smoking, ethnicity and sexual harassment and survival tips. This session was well-received and interspersed with occasional laughter.

The final two sessions of the day that did not deal specifically with grant rules and regulations involved another panel discussion with two Americans with experience living and studying in the US, as well as in the Arab world. This session lasted an hour and delved further into cultural aspects of living in the US and how it differs from Palestine. Although the panelists were engaging, there were few questions. The last session involved a live internet presentation by the COP on the OSI Networker. The Networker will allow current grantees and alumni to post their academic, career, and personal profiles and to search for others throughout the PFDP and wider OSI community with similar professional and research interests. Students and alumni will be able to track and contact others working in a particular geographic region or professional field. All users will be allowed to contribute and retrieve material directly to and from the system. Useful links include the *Directory of the Open Access Journals*—a service providing access to 1,525 free, full-text, quality-controlled scientific and scholarly journals.

5. Open Society Institute US-based Placement and Grantee Monitoring

Ongoing Contact with Grantees and Host Universities

Throughout the quarter OSI staff continued:

- responding to inquiries from grantees prior to and after arrival in the US;
- conducting outreach to current and potential host universities by e-mail and phone;
- facilitating grantee-host institution contact by putting grantees with questions about their academic programs in touch with appropriate faculty members / advisers;
- updating host universities regarding the uncertainties of the departure of Gazan grantees due to the ongoing closure of the Strip;
- answering questions from host universities about issues such as grantee health insurance coverage and grantee tuition / fees billing.

Grant and Terms and Conditions Letters

The PFDP Grant Letter and associated Terms and Conditions letter were finalized and approved in mid-July. They were then sent to the 21 PhD fellowship grantees for countersignature. Countersigned originals are on file. In July OSI staff also set up electronic files for all grantees in OSI's grants database / monitoring software program, GrantSQL.

Grantee Arrivals in the US

In mid-August the first grantees began arriving at their US host institutions. By the end of September all 21 PhD grantees had safely arrived at 12 host universities. OSI staff verified the grantees in TraiNet and VCS. Grantees in TraiNet/VCS have updated US addresses on file.

Prior to arrivals, OSI staff arranged hotel stays of up to one week for grantees near their host institutions and sent grantees detailed arrival instructions. OSI staff also notified host university contacts of grantees' arrival dates and made arrangements to have grantees' first stipend checks waiting for them upon arrival. As grantees arrived, OSI staff responded to inquiries from grantees and host university contacts about housing issues, tuition billing, letters of certification for social security number applications, and health insurance coverage. In several cases the HAC B plan did not meet host university requirements, and university plans had to be purchased.

Site Visit – University of Akron

Joe Glicksberg, OSI's PFDP Program Manager, and Martha Loerke, the Director of OSI's Network Scholarship Programs, visited the University of Akron on September 12. The purpose of the visit was two-fold: 1) to relay to grantees Nasser and Mysoon Abuelnoor the PFDP program's strong concern regarding issues that had been brought to our attention by host university contacts; and 2) to discuss the issues regarding the Abuelnoors with our host university contacts, establish a monitoring plan, and set up communication channels.

Meetings were held with the Abuelnoors and faculty members from the Department of Public Administration and Urban Studies (PAUS) and the Institute for Health and Social Policy (IHSP). The main issues included: course scheduling, academic performance, leadership / proper behavior, employment, dependents, and car ownership. We believe that the meetings were successful in that the Abuelnoors now understand that the PFDP program expects them to seriously consider the advice of their academic advisers and to behave in a professional manner towards university staff and faculty. PFDP regulations regarding car ownership, employment,

and dependents were fully covered, and the Abuelnoors made it clear that they understood them. This has been confirmed by the professional way in which the Abuelnoors have been communicating with OSI staff and Akron faculty members about issues and questions. OSI staff are in close contact with the Abuelnoors, who plan to bring their two children to Akron in early 2007. OSI staff remains in contact with the Abuelnoors' adviser at the University of Akron and are monitoring the situation.

Gaza Orientation Planning

In September OSI staff began planning and coordinating an arrival orientation session for the seven Gaza grantees who did not have a full orientation before departing to the US. Although planning began in September, the orientation was successfully held at Pittsburgh's Quality Suites Hotel on October 7 and 8, 2006. Details of that event will be provided in the next quarterly report.

Short-Term Visiting Fellow Placement

In September OSI staff prepared and mailed approximately 50 packets to potential host universities to begin individual Short-Term Visiting Fellow placements. The packets were mailed to departmental chairs, graduate studies deans, and selected faculty members in approximately 45 departments at 33 public and private universities. The packets were discipline-specific and contained: a) a cover letter; finalist files with interview comment summaries; c) a program and Short-Term Visiting Fellow component overview; d) ranking instructions; e) a ranking sheet; and f) a host university application. Follow up was conducted by phone and e-mail throughout September and continued into October. Throughout the quarter OSI staff was in communication with potential host university contacts to answer questions about the program's structure, timing, and requirements. A list of Short-Term Fellow placements can be found in Appendix A. Importantly, OSI only placed 13 finalists because 2 were determined by USAID to be ineligible due to their employment status with the Palestinian Authority.

6. Administration and Reporting

Financial: AMIDEAST submitted its fourth quarter financial pipeline report on September 15, 2006. This report included estimations for the month of September. The total cumulative expenditures reported in the pipeline report were \$677,349. This does not include a total of \$196,115 of cash OSI has spent on US-based activity as of September 30, 2006.

Amendments and Extension: AMIDEAST submitted a letter to the USAID Agreement Officer on October 30, 2005 requesting several amendments pertaining mostly to financial reporting deadlines. As per the CTO's information, the requests in the amendment letter will be incorporated in a one-year extension of the grant. As per the CTO's recommendations, AMIDEAST and OSI drew up a new 5-year budget and revised program description incorporating 20 additional PhD positions. These documents were submitted to USAID on September 28, 2006. A review of the program extension is now pending.

Annual Implementation Plan: As per the Contracting Technical Officer's request, AMIDEAST submitted the 2005-2006 Annual Implementation Plan on November 30, 2005 and received approval on September 2006.

GIS: Upon receiving approval of the Implementation Plan AMIDEAST engaged the appropriate USAID personnel in order to receive further guidance on how to input data I

in the GIS system. A meeting is scheduled for early October in order to move forward on this reporting requirement.

TraiNet:

AMIDEAST staff completed all of the reporting requirements in the TraiNet system that pertains to in-country participant training.

APPENDIX A

PFDP 1st Cohort Short Term Fellowship Placement

	First Name	Last Name	Current University	US University
Education				
1	Jamal	Rabee	UNRWA College	University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of Education
2	Said	Hamed	UNRWA College	Not placed yet- possible placement is Southern Illinois University
3	Hisham	Hidmi	AlQuds Open University	Vanderbilt University, Peabody College of Education and Human Development, Department of Leadership Policy and Organizations
4	Khalid	Abed Rabbo	UNRWA College	University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of Education
5	Ata	Darwish	Al Azhar University	University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of Education
6	Hasan	Barakat	Al Azhar University	University of Pittsburgh, Department of Linguistics
Public Administration				
7	Samir	Abuznaid	Hebron University	Portland State University, College of Urban and Public Affairs Hatfield School of Government
8	Abdufattah	Shamleh	Hebron University	University of Southern Maine, Muskie School of Public Service
9	Sahar	Natsha	Red Cross	Columbia University or Duke University (not decided)
10	Saed	Al-Koni	An Najah University	Maxwell School at Syracuse University
11	Mohammed	Owdda	Al Azhar University	University of Minnesota, Clinical Outcomes Research Center
Urban Planning				
12	Mahmoud	Okasha	Al Azhar University	Portland State University Nohad A. Toulon School of Urban Studies and Planning.
13	Mazen	Hamada	Al Azhar University	University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign, Department of Urban and Regional Planning

APPENDIX B

PFDP Weekend Orientation Schedule Grand Park Hotel July 15 & 16, 2006

Saturday, July 15

9:30-10:30:	Ice-breakers
10:30-12:30:	Grantee Handbook session
12:30-2:00:	Lunch
2:00 -3:30:	Palestinian Alumni Panel Questions and Answers.
3:30-5:30:	Grantee Handbook session
7:30-9:00:	Dinner around the pool

Sunday, July 16

9:30-10:00:	Ice breakers
10:00- 10:30:	Academic Life in the US
10:30-11:30:	Culture Shock/ Diversity Issues
11:30-12:30:	Grantee Handbook session
12:30-2:00:	Lunch
2:00-3:00:	American Question & Answer
3:00-3:30:	OSI Networker
3:30-4:00:	Evaluation

APPENDIX C

Evaluation Results of the Departure Orientation July 15 & 16, 2006 - Grand Park Hotel

22 attended the Orientation Weekend and 13 returned completed evaluations. Results are as follows with 1 being very useful/Yes and 4 not useful/No:

1. **How useful did you find the ice breakers?**
46% answered #1 and 54% answered #2
2. **How useful did you find the Palestinian Alumni Q & A discussion?**
38% answered #1, 46% answered #2, 8% answered #3 and 8% answered #4
3. **How useful did you find the American Q & A discussion?**
46% answered #1, 46% answered #2 and 8% answered #4
4. **How useful did you find the review of the Grantee Handbook sections?**
69% answered #1 and 31% answered #2
5. **How useful did you find the Culture Shock presentation?**
31% answered #1, 46% answered #2, 15% answered #3 and 8% answered #4
6. **AMIDEAST staff were helpful.**
92% answered #1 and 8% answered #2
7. **Do you feel the orientation weekend was worth your time?**
61% answered #1, 24% answered #2 and 15% answered #3
8. **Do you feel more confident about your expected departure to the US as a result of the orientation?**
38% answered #1, 46% answered #2 and 15% answered #4
9. **Do you feel you were able to get to know your fellow PFDP colleagues?**
69% answered #1 and 31% answered #2
- 1- **Things I liked the most about this orientation:**
 - Information about American culture
 - Getting new information about studying in the US and being able to know my fellow PFDP grantees
 - Getting to know PFDP colleagues better and learning some information about US culture
 - The grantee handbook discussion was very helpful as a resource and reminder. I also liked the culture shock presentation that described expected life in the US as a newcomer. It will help us adapt to the new life there.
 - I found it very efficient and helpful. The AMIDEAST staff was the best since they were careful for very small details that will make our life easier. The fact that all the group was together was very interesting. This orientation goes together with other sessions made the PFDP program more than just academic. I felt that I am more committed to this scholarship and the group including AMIDEAST staff.
 - The committed AMIDEAST staff and the high level of organization, good preparation of all details and most importantly the nice atmosphere the three staff members created all through the week.

- It refreshed my experience in the US.
- I liked the informal structure, what is more, it provided me with answers to my questions that I had in mind regarding my travel to the US.
- I enjoyed the discussion related to the culture shock and the real life examples presented by all participants.
- The arrangements and information presented.
- The chance to get to know everyone better.
- All presentations were very useful. Trainers were advanced in their field and outgoing especially Sophie. The manual is a valuable item and Chris managed to go through it smoothly. We got to know each other very well and the presence of AMIDEAST staff. It was a relaxing time for me.
- The icebreakers were very interesting.

2- Things I did not like about this orientation:

- It was too intensive
- The topics could have been covered in a shorter time
- It was too long; could have been done in a shorter time
- Some of the topics discussed did not add to my previous knowledge; such as the cultural shock issue.
- The long hours and setting
- The long hours and high temperature in the hall.
- Ignoring the fact that some of the participants have previous experience living abroad especially in Europe. This was the reservation on the two alumni that were hosted who dealt with the participants as if they never left Ramallah.

3- What would you advise Chris and his staff about future orientations?

- Make it shorter and less intensive
- Bring into the discussion a US multicultural expert who would brief on several aspects of cultural differences and means to help cope with these differences
- I think you carried out this session successfully. I felt that you tried to help and advise us as if we were members in your “large family”.
- I think they have done huge efforts to make everything clear. They were patient, cooperative and informative to the maximum.
- Have the pre-departure orientation before the training.
- Longer time with alumni of different backgrounds
- To give more emphasis to the Palestinian Alumni discussion.
- I would like to suggest for time for the ETS course for PhD participants.
- Aside from the time you need to discuss bureaucratic issues allow attendance to be voluntary.
- Maintain same program but with less hours.
- To have the program ready the night of arrival at hotel registration.
- Try to bring more live examples. Give more weight to extracurricular activities – games-ask the participants to submit their questions in writing in advance and based on that prepare the schedule. If there is a possibility to bring a video tape about an orientation in a US university.

APPENDIX D

Report on Coordination to Secure Passage from Gaza of U.S. Government Sponsored Grantees

Below are descriptions of three of the seven failed coordination attempts throughout the month of August by the US Consulate in Jerusalem, the USAID Mission in Tel Aviv, and AMIDEAST's West Bank/Gaza office to secure passage out of Gaza for twenty U.S. Government sponsored grantees, including Youth Exchange and Study (YES) high school exchange students, Fulbright Foreign Student Program grantees, and Palestinian Faculty Development Fellows. These are followed by the description of the final successful coordination.

It is a miracle that we lost so few grantees during this lengthy and painful ordeal; many grantees at many points along the way expressed that they were thinking of dropping out of their programs, unable to bring themselves to continue to go through the torturous process of organizing themselves to travel, time after time, only to have the border close before their arrival or while they were in the midst of being processed at the border. And despite the frustration and exhaustion brought on by working tirelessly for a month—after so many late night and early morning phone calls and meetings, logistical arrangements, and other labor intensive efforts each time to deliver in a matter of hours a coordination effort that should really take days—the U.S. Consulate, USAID Mission, and AMIDEAST West Bank/Gaza refused to give up until our students and scholars were able to cross the border in order to fly to the United States to begin their respective programs.

Steven Keller
Country Director
AMIDEAST West Bank/Gaza

Monday, July 17, 2006

After several failed attempts to gain Israeli permission to piggy-back onto an American Citizen evacuation from Gaza a group of U.S. Government sponsored YES, Fulbright, and Palestinian Faculty Development Program grantees, ConGen Jerusalem sent an urgent message to program managers in Washington DC updating them on the situation and on steps we/they were planning to take to maintain the programs despite the lack of movement. At that point, several grantees were already late for their programs. This is not unusual in Gaza or the West Bank, where closures, permit problems, and security concerns often disrupt programs. While post felt that the situation was serious, they were committed to working hard to keep every program viable until the last minute. Now that it was clear that adding the students and scholars to the AmCit evacuation would not be permitted by the Israeli authorities, ConGen Jerusalem stated that, should the Rafah terminal reopen, we would all work hard to ferry as many of our grantees as possible to Cairo. The Consul General remained extremely interested in keeping the various programs going, and while post's number one priority in Gaza at the time was the evacuation of AmCits, the CG agreed to work with Embassy Tel Aviv to approach the Israelis about establishing a special procedure to try to ferry Gazan exchange grantees from Erez to Amman, in the event that Rafah did not reopen.

Friday, August 11, 2006

After receiving word that the Israeli army informed the European Observers and the Palestinian Police that they should report early morning to open the Rafah crossing point for two days in one direction (Tuesday, August 8 and Wednesday, August 9), the Consulate, USAID Mission, and AMIDEAST undertook, for the fourth time, the necessary coordination and logistical arrangements to prepare our grantees for safe and successful passage out of Gaza and into Egypt. However, the border remained closed on both of these days, with no specific explanation given for the Israeli decision to keep it shut. However, on Thursday morning, the border opened up with very short notice, and all of our YES students, PFDP Fellows, and Fulbright Scholars were gathered at AMIDEAST's Gaza office and traveled together to the border, where they found a chaotic mob scene of thousands of other people attempting to pass through the terminal gate. After several hours of fighting the crowd under a hot, relentless sun, one YES student fainted from heat exhaustion, while another was pushed into a barbed wire fence and had to be rushed to the hospital, where he received six stitches in his hand. Palestinian Police and Presidential Guard were present and attempted to control and facilitate entry into the Rafah terminal, and successfully did so for 1,300 people. However, our grantees were still waiting when the EU observers suddenly stopped working after receiving a message from the Israeli army to close the crossing point. The EU observers asked all passengers who were waiting in the first hall entry to go back to Gaza, and the passengers who were inside the passport check area to go to the Egyptian side, and they announced that the border was closed after just three hours.

Saturday, August 12, 2006

Given the dangerous situation that confronted our grantees—particularly our young YES teens—at the Rafah crossing the day before, AMIDEAST respectfully requested that ConGen Jerusalem and USAID work together in a coordinated fashion to apply pressure, once again, for an Erez crossing for the grantees, based on how unpredictable and frequently unsafe Rafah had proven to be. The Consulate and USAID Mission agreed that an Erez exit with departure to the US from Amman represented the most viable (and safe) option for the Gaza grantees, and initiated contact with the appropriate Israeli officials to gain permission for passage through Erez into Israel, and onward to the Allenby crossing into Jordan. After only a few days of what apparently was a united, concerted, relatively high level U.S. Government effort to get the Israelis on board to allow and assist an Erez crossing, AMIDEAST received word that permission was not likely to be granted, and that the chances of an Erez crossing were slim to none. We were also told that, even if we use Rafah for a coordinated passage rather than Erez, we are still going to need Israeli clearances on our list of grantees, and that our grantees should be aware that if the Israelis let them leave, there is no guarantee that they will be allowed back into Gaza. Clearly frustrated, the Consulate was frank with us and said that despite the less than ideal conditions, Rafah was still our best bet if we ever hoped to get our grantees out of Gaza and to their U.S. programs on time.

Saturday, August 19, 2006

After a seventh failed attempt to leave Gaza—this time via the Rafah border crossing—all of our Gaza grantees, with the exception of one Fulbright scholar, ***successfully crossed into Egypt*** during the eighth attempt, thanks to a great deal of special coordination and assistance from USAID, ConGen Jerusalem, the EU Observers, UNRWA, and the Palestinian Presidential Guard.

After getting calls from the Consulate and USAID the night of Friday, August 18, with the news that Rafah would be open the following day, AMIDEAST Gaza staff once again phoned all of the grantees with instructions regarding logistical arrangements for a seventh attempted border crossing in the morning. A bus was donated on short notice by UNRWA, and the necessary coordination was arranged quickly the next morning with EU monitors and the Palestinian Presidential Guard. After this effort, the border was closed and our busload of grantees was turned back. Everyone went home, thinking that was it for today, and hoping that the reports were true that Rafah would be open again on Sunday.

Two hours later, the PAO at the Consul in Jerusalem phoned again and said the border was going to open up a second time during that same day, but only for a quota of 8 buses full of humanitarian cases, but ConGen Jerusalem and USAID were pushing hard to get our bus added to the roster as a special exception. We were told to "just go, there isn't time to wait to see if the permission is granted" and that we needed the grantees to be there just in case. The other catch was that the border was to close at 6pm, and the call telling us to mobilize once again came at 4:45pm. Given that it takes an hour to get from Gaza city to Rafah, and there was no way we were going to get hold of everyone in just 15 minutes, we were skeptical, and hesitated mobilizing everyone once again for what looked like another doomed attempt. But our PAO was adamant that she and her counterpart at USAID were applying pressure to keep the border open later, and to make sure our bus was admitted and our grantees processed. Despite our misgivings, cynicism, and exhaustion, we went ahead and contacted everyone, except for one Fulbright grantee who could not be reached. Rather than hold up the bus and risk losing our chance, given the urgency to get to the border as close to 6pm as could be managed, we ordered the bus to proceed without the missing Fulbrighter. The border stayed open until our bus arrived; this time the Consulate and USAID were able to finally successfully lobby the Israeli authorities. AMIDEAST's Cairo office followed up with Egyptian State Security to ensure that they still had the list of grantee names and passport numbers we sent earlier, in order to facilitate their admission into Egypt.

APPENDIX E: PFDP Participant Departure Checklist for 1st Cohort PhD Grantees and Families

No.	Name	Visa Docs Sent to Consulate	Received Medical Certification	Entered Info into TrainNet	Received Interview Clearance	Conducted Interview	Provided Financial Guarantee	DS-2019 Received	Enrolled In HAC Insurance	J 1 Visa Stamped	Signed and sent to OSI	Air Ticket Issued	Received 3050 in Allowances	Expected Date of Departure	University State of Arrival	Requested Hotel Accommodation	Safely Arrived to US & Contacted OSI	Verified in SEVIS
West Bank																		
1	Ola Khalili	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	21-Aug	MA	√	√	√
2	Ahmad Abu-Awad	√	√	√	√		NA	16-Jul	√		√	√	√	25-Aug	NY	√	√	√
3	Ayman Khalifeh	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	28-Aug	MA	√	√	√
4	Karam Adawi	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	21-Aug	MA	√	√	√
5	Ali Shaar	Withdrawal																
6	Ammar Al Dwaik	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	15-Aug	MA	X	√	√
7	Ziad Zaghrou	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√			13-Sep	WA	√	√	√
8	Najeh Shahin	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	28-Aug	PA	√	√	√
9	Abeer Shaheen	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	19-Aug	NY	√	√	√
10	Ihab Daqqaq	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	19-Aug	NY	X	√	√
11	Emad Dawwas	√	√	√	√	√	√	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	21-Sep	WA	√	√	√
11.1	Amani Majdoub	√	√	√	√	√	√	9-Aug	NA		NA		NA	21-Sep	WA	NA		√
12	Shaden Awad	Deffered																
13	Fida Yaseen Araj	√	√	√	√	√	√	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	15-Aug	IL	√	√	√
13.1	Mahmoud Araj (husband)	√	√	√	√	√	√	9-Aug	NA	√	NA	√	NA	15-Aug	IL	NA	√	√
13.2	Dana Araj (Daughter)	√	√	√	√	√	√	9-Aug	NA	√	NA	√	NA	15-Aug	IL	NA	√	√
13.3	Ziad Araj (son)	√	√	√	√	√	√	9-Aug	NA	√	NA	√	NA	15-Aug	IL	NA	√	√
14	Ahmed Al Noubani	√	√	√	√	√	√	16-Jul	√	√	√	√		21-Sep	WA	√	√	√
14.1	Mariam Al Noubani (wife)	√	√	√	√	√	√	9-Aug	NA	√	NA	√	NA	21-Sep	WA	NA	NA	√
14.2	Rami Al Noubani (son)	√	√	√	√	√	√	9-Aug	NA	√	NA	√	NA	21-Sep	WA	NA	NA	√
14.3	Hani Al Nouabni (son)	√	√	√	√	√	√	9-Aug	NA	√	NA	√	NA	21-Sep	WA	NA	NA	√

THE PALESTINIAN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PFDP)

15	Muhammad Zayyad	√	√	√	√	√	√	21-Aug	√	√	√	√	√	22-Aug	MA	√	√	√
15.1	Jihan Zayyad	√	√	√	√	√	√	22-Aug	NA	√	NA	√	NA	22-Aug	MA	√	√	√
15.2	Shahd Zayyad	√	√	√	√	√	√	23-Aug	NA	√	NA	√	NA	22-Aug	MA	√	√	√
15.3	Majd Zayyad	√	√	√	√	√	√	24-Aug	NA	√	NA	√	NA	22-Aug	MA	√	√	√
15.4	Zayd Zayyad	√	√	√	√	√	√	25-Aug	NA	√	NA	√	NA	22-Aug	MA	√	√	√
Gaza																		
16	Akram Al-ijla	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	23-Aug	OH	√	√	√
17	Bashir Al Hajjar	Withdrawal																
18	Khitam Abu Hamad	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	23-Aug	MA	√	√	√
19	Maysoon Abu Al-Nour	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	23-Aug	OH	√	√	√
20	Nasser Abu El-Nour	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	23-Aug	OH	√	√	√
21	Sadek Firwanah	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	23-Aug	MA	√	√	√
22	Wael Dokhan	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	23-Aug	CO	√	√	√
23	Wasim Al Habil	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	23-Aug	OH	√	√	√
24	Duaa Al Nakhleh	√	√	√	√	√	NA	16-Jul	√	√	√	√	√	13-Aug	TX	√	√	√