

# PFDP National Roundtable on Higher Education

## History and Development of World Universities and Higher Education Systems

September 23-24, 2011

Caesar Hotel

Ramallah

### Background

As universities in Palestine look to the future, they can learn much from the experience, changing vision and mission, and quality of many existing universities around the world. They can also draw inspiration, ideas and confidence from many newer universities that have been created since Palestine's universities emerged in the years after 1973. Both types of university—the existing paradigms and the emerging new institutions—offer ideas and models which Palestinian educators, leaders, policy makers and stakeholders can study and adapt (or reject) as they plan for the future of higher education in Palestine.

Palestine itself is an example of a new system of higher education created to support the development of a new state, a new economy and to support the development of key components of civil society. Although many of its post-secondary institutions have a long history as schools or colleges, none attained official university status until 1973. The newest universities were established as late as 2007. The impetus for sustained growth and development came from the Oslo Accords of 1993 and the transfer of education from Israel to the Palestinian National Authority. The system itself formally came into being with the Higher Education Law of 1998.

All of Palestine's universities—as well as the Ministry of Education and Higher Education— have labored under severe financial and political constraints. These have impeded and stifled robust growth and development. Yet these institutions have attained a remarkable level of fiscal viability and academic vitality that reflects the deep commitment of Palestinians to the vital importance of quality higher education to the future of the state and its people. The accomplishments of more than 35 years are a tribute to the strong leadership and professionalism of university leaders, administrators and faculty.

Now is the time to begin debate on the future of universities and the entire system—a debate which must include an understanding of the evolution of the world's higher education systems and many types of excellent universities that range from venerated and dominant research institutions to dynamic teaching universities committed to more open access and innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

The first National Roundtable will review the key aspects of the evolution of formal higher education around the world—from the creation of the first university in Bologna (1088) to the appearance of the newest universities being developed in Morocco, Oman and Russia(2012). Sessions will include formal presentations with ample opportunity for questions and discussion.

## PROGRAM

**Friday, September 23**  
**Roundtable Plenary Sessions**  
**Caesar Hotel: First floor - Rome I & Rome II**

### **Morning Session**

**9:30 am-12:30 pm**

*Dr. Sophie Howlett*, Dean of Special and Extension Programmes at Central European University in Budapest and a specialist in higher education policy and systems, will review the context, values, and multiple forces that shaped the world's major universities and higher education systems as they have evolved over more than 900 years into what they are today. Her analysis will not only provide a useful historical context for deliberation about the future direction of higher education in Palestine; it will also enable us to identify and discuss critical strategic and policy issues that will be highly relevant to the development of Palestine's universities as well as the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

### **Lunch and Prayers**

**12:30-2:00**

### **Afternoon Session**

**2:00-4:30**

*Dr. John W. Shumaker* is Chief of Party of the Palestinian Faculty Development Program. He is an experienced university president and international consultant on the creation, reform and development of universities and higher education systems. He will present an overview of new or dramatically restructured universities in Korea, Singapore, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Oman, Switzerland, the UK and the USA. These are but a few countries that have seen well-established universities strategically reinvent themselves; they are also home to many highly creative and innovative new institutions or approaches that have challenged conventional ways of delivering and assessing higher education. These models will provide a context for discussion of future directions for higher education in Palestine.

**Saturday, September 24**  
**Case Studies and Workshop**

### **Morning Session**

**8:30-10:00**

### **Illustrative Case Studies**

University teams will divide into two groups to attend two separate and concurrent sessions. Each session will involve a more detailed scrutiny of illustrative case studies from a variety of countries and will conclude with a discussion of the value implications of these examples for Palestinian universities and higher education. The focus will be on a general comparative analysis of mission, values; governance; academic programs and organization; teaching and learning; research and community engagement.

Dr. Howlett will discuss in greater detail selected examples of the evolution of various types of universities drawn from several different countries and historical periods. Dr. Shumaker will present the experience of several new universities or initiatives created to respond to urgent national and local priorities or education in a variety of countries. Examples will focus on the critical factors that led to the creation of the new institution or stimulated significant reform, the key strategic and policy questions that the institutions had to address, and key innovations that make these universities distinctive.

**10:15 am-1:30 pm**  
**Workshop Teams**  
(Working Lunch)

### **Dreaming the Future: Creating a New Model University for Palestine**

Dr. Howlett and Dr. Shumaker will challenge participants to draw upon their own experience as well as the information and models discussed in previous sessions to craft a vision and basic master plan for an “ideal” new “model university” in Palestine. The participants will be divided into 6 working groups (composed of members from different universities). Each group will focus on developing an outline of the key components of such a master plan: vision and mission, and core values; governance; academic programs and organization; teaching and learning; research, and community engagement. Dr. Howlett and Dr. Shumaker will suggest some key questions and issues in each area which the teams should address—giving the groups license to go beyond those topics as necessary.

**1:30-5:00**  
**Reporting Session**

At the conclusion of the work sessions, each team will designate a spokesperson to report to the entire group as the basis for a discussion of what a new “model university” in Palestine would eventually look like. The goal is to identify key issues, problems and possibilities to suggest how they might be addressed in the Palestinian context.

**5:00-6:00**  
**Evaluation**

The session will conclude with an evaluation and the discussion of the process of evaluating the entire roundtable series to be designed and implemented by an evaluating committee working in consultation with Dr. Denise Drane of Northwestern University.



**Dr. Sophia Howlett**

Sophia Howlett is the Dean of Special and Extension Programmes, Central European University. Dr Howlett received her first degree from Cambridge University in English Literature and her DPhil from York University. She went on to teach English Literature at both York and the University of Teesside, and was a member of the Northern and UK Renaissance Seminars. Dr Howlett worked also with Civic Education Project - a volunteer organization for university teachers – first teaching and acting as a senior academic evaluator at universities in Ukraine, and then as the Director of the country programme for Ukraine, and founder of the programme for Moldova.

In 1997, she moved to Central European University as the head of a newly established office to promote CEU's external activities with the East European and Former Soviet Union region, with a focus on higher education development and innovation. Under her leadership, the office has developed into a department providing grants, training and consultancy to more than 1000 higher education practitioners a year, has expanded its geographical scope to include, amongst other regions, the Middle East, and was made the first Carnegie Institutional Leader in Teaching and Learning in continental Europe. She has been teaching for the CEU Gender Studies department since 1997, serving also on its doctoral committee, but from 2007 has moved her academic interests into her practice – researching now and teaching for the new specialization in Higher Education at CEU's Department of Public Policy.

In the field of higher education, Dr Howlett has been an Open Society Policy Fellow, working on the Bologna Process and its affect on higher education in non-EU countries, and a Visiting Scholar at Harvard University, where she recently completed a manuscript on the history and present policy context of Russian Higher Education. She is a member of the board of the European Journal of Higher Education, and a member of the Comparative and International Education Society. Dr Howlett regularly provides consultancy, evaluation and training in higher education policy to colleagues from universities up to the ministry level. She has served on the Board of Civic Education Project, and a large variety of Open Society Institute boards and committees focusing on higher education. She speaks at a number of conferences and events per year with a particular focus on the intersections between macro policymaking, national agendas in higher education and making change in universities. She also provides independent consultancy to organizations such as the Institute for International Education, Academic Training Association, Amideast, etc.



**Dr. John W. Shumaker**

Dr. John W. Shumaker is the Chief of Party of the USAID-funded Palestinian Faculty Development Program for AMIDEAST. Dr. Shumaker has served as a leader in education as professor, senior administrator at The Ohio State University and the University at Albany in the SUNY System. He also spent several years as president at Central Connecticut State University, the University of Louisville and the University of Tennessee. Since 2005, he has served as a senior advisor to ministries of education and higher education in Armenia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Morocco in projects funded by the World Bank, DANIDA, USAID, the Government of Saudi Arabia and the private sector in Rabat and Casablanca.

As a university president Dr. Shumaker was highly successful as a fund raiser and specialist in community engagement, change management, international programs and university-industry relationships for teaching as well as advanced research and knowledge transfer. In recognition of his service to the University of Louisville the university presented its highest award—The Minerva Award—in 2002 and subsequently dedicated the John W, Shumaker Research Building on its main campus in November, 2009.

Before coming to Ramallah, Dr. Shumaker served as team lead of an international group of experts responsible for creating a master plan for a new polytechnic university that will be at the center of a new Green City developed by a large industrial corporation north of Marrakech. Prior to his work in Morocco he was team lead of the Tatweer Strategy Formation Project in Saudi Arabia and served as Chief of Party of the USAID-funded Higher Education Commission/Financial Aid Development program in Pakistan for the Academy for Educational Development. This program involved developing a comprehensive financial aid system for higher education in Pakistan, as well as capacity-building for the Higher Education Commission and 11 universities to raise funds from the private sector for scholarships and other financial assistance programs.

His work at the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education in Kabul, Afghanistan focused on a range of areas including strategic planning, policy development, quality control, financial aid systems, national university entrance examinations, resource development and fund-raising, as well as leadership training and workforce development.

Dr. Shumaker received his BA from the University of Pittsburgh (Phi Beta Kappa) and the Ph.D. and masters degree in Classical Studies from the University of Pennsylvania. He holds honorary degrees from Briarwood College in Southington, Connecticut and Kyung Hee University in Seoul, Korea.



**Dr. Denise Drane**

Denise Drane is Associate Director for Research and Evaluation at the Searle Center for Teaching Excellence at Northwestern University and an Adjunct Professor in the School of Communication Sciences and Disorders. She holds a PhD in Speech and Language Pathology and a master's degree in Public Health. Over the past 10 years, Denise has conducted research and evaluation projects in higher education in areas such as faculty development, undergraduate science, math and engineering education, nanoscience education, doctoral student training, critical thinking and collaborative learning.

Dr. Drane is a member of the Northwestern University team working with An Najah University in the development of its new Center for Learning and Teaching funded by USAID and the Palestinian Faculty Development Program.