



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, PAKISTAN

The Future of Learning
Introducing a Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Pakistan
A Day of Dialogue

March 2-3, 2020, Brown University

EVENT REPORT



“Educating for leadership must imply something more than the mere development of rote skills. In a world of rapid change, an agile and adaptable mind, a pragmatic and cooperative temperament, a strong ethical orientation – these are increasingly the keys to effective leadership. And I would add to this list a capacity for intellectual humility, which keeps one’s mind constantly open to a variety of viewpoints and which welcomes pluralist exchange. These capacities, over the longer term, will be critically important to the developing world.”

His Highness the Aga Khan, 2008



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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- ◆ Co-Host Brown University and its Office for Global Engagement and Strategic Initiatives
- ◆ Professor Rashid Zia, Dean of the College, Brown University, for his keynote address
- ◆ Delegates from 17 universities and institutions, for their active contribution and counsel
- ◆ Aga Khan Professors of Islamic Humanities and of Landscape Architecture and Geography
- ◆ President Emerita, Dr Lisa Anderson, Trustee of AKU
- ◆ Members of the International Advisory Committee to the AKU Faculty of Arts and Sciences
- ◆ Aga Khan University, Offices of the President and Global Partnerships

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Aga Khan University (AKU) aims to respond to foreseeable future needs of the countries it serves, doing so through new educational programmes set at the highest standards possible, in teaching, research and/or service. From its earliest days, the University foresaw the indispensability of a liberal education as emanating from the need for capacities to make the myriad adjustments modern life would require, of intellectual, cultural and moral kinds that only a general education can provide. Subsequently, and with a plurality of invaluable contributions on its design and development over some two decades, the inaugural Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Pakistan (FAS) was granted with an approval in 2018 for a launch on Stadium Road campus in Karachi. Against a tradition of learning from global best practice, the Day of Dialogue to discuss “the Future of Learning” as it pertains to the launch of FAS was held on 2nd and 3rd March, 2020 in Providence, Rhode Island at Brown University, who served as the event’s generous co-host.

With the foundational philosophy, aims and overarching structure of the FAS programme in place, the Day of Dialogue sought to unpack with participants experiences in launching and leading undergraduate arts and sciences education, to draw out lessons learned, and to deliberate on the strategic approaches to programmatic design and delivery that would be contextually relevant and in support of the AKU’s vision, mission, guiding principles and values.

A sample of the **key guiding questions** steering the Dialogue included:

1. How might FAS fit within the wider, evermore comprehensive university setting?
2. How will we underwrite success in learning and teaching with an interdisciplinary ethos?
3. What constitutes the ‘student life course’? How can we help students navigate their course?
4. What does effective academic governance look like?

Accordingly, the Dialogue convened leadership and scholars from higher education across USA and Canada, but primarily from the rich concentration of renowned liberal arts colleges in New England. Participants held considerable expertise in governance and administration, academic affairs including teaching and learning, and student experience and services. AKU Trustee Dr. Lisa Anderson, AKU alumni and members of the Pakistani diaspora now leading academia in USA, and participation from leaders of AKDN institutions in North America all served as strategic interlocutors with their contextual understanding of AKU and Pakistan. Importantly, the Dialogue featured a panel of Brown students from first years to a recent graduate, who provided insights into the *whole* student experience and where improvements might be made. In sum, there were over 30 participants representing 17 institutions.

The format for the gathering sought to maximise dialogical exchange. An evening reception was held to formally open the event. There, to help provide a backdrop against which dialogue would emerge, a mini-documentary of the global work of His Highness the Aga Khan was viewed, outlining the basis and goals of the AKDN, within which AKU is situated. A keynote address by Brown University’s Dean of the College, Professor Rashid Zia, provided a personal and compelling account of the value of a ‘liberating education’. The next day, on 3rd March, following an overview presentation of AKU by President Rasul, a series of structured sessions enabled fruitful deliberation over the abovementioned guiding questions and more.

There were several themes emergent from the Dialogue. Each bore important considerations for FAS as it continues its preparations for launch. Four key themes are presented in this Report, each with detail on the range of perspectives offered. Considerations for further deliberation and some of the early thinking established by AKU-FAS are presented at the end of each theme.

Key themes and considerations in summary:

A. Interdisciplinarity. *Following a framework of interdisciplinarity, where and how does the Core Curriculum (broad-based and integrated) give way to disciplinary pathways (often the 'Majors' with their degree of specialisation)? Are disciplines helpful?* As students mature through their 4-year study, FAS includes community-based internships and senior research projects to develop independence. These will ask of students not to become insular in their fields but to contemplate with greater applicability how knowledge from various corners can be interrelated as problems are approached, understood, questioned and addressed. Disciplines and a growing mastery over specialisations are critical, just as is knowing how and where to integrate knowledge, develop new knowledge, and derive benefit from multiple perspectives bearing on seemingly singular phenomena. A disposition for interdisciplinarity coupled with an ethical outlook was also felt to support students' abilities in balancing rights with responsibilities, individual inquiry with social conscience. To engender these aims, and given our small size, the faculty will likely not belong to 'departments' within FAS but constitute a single eclectic mix, modelling for students pluralism and interdisciplinarity at their best in teaching, research and service.

B. The Whole Student Experience. *Where will FAS students come from, and why is this important? How will previous learning experiences in secondary education be transformed to meet the demands of a broad-based general education? How will FAS students extract the most from their experience, navigating with success their 'student life course'?* FAS will need to be intentional about marketing, recruitment and admissions, in order to build the desired student profile and subsequent culture to take root on campus. Diversity, access and meritocracy will be drivers, through an outreach programme to schools both rural and urban. FAS will organise orientation and mentoring programmes that include families to instil and internalise both the expectations and rewards of a transformative FAS education. Such supports are viewed as providing much needed support to those students who will need to negotiate with family members their concomitant expectations for protected time and space to engage seriously with independent study. Clubs, sports, team-based activities and leadership development will populate the student calendar and underwrite holistic development. Weekend residential retreats focusing on building community and belonging amongst the diverse student body will be planned too. The importance of academic development and career and wellness counselling services are underscored, and professional development with a view to best prepare students for the changing world of work will be on offer from the earliest moments of the programme, not at the end as an appendage where it will be too late. Finally, for graduates, their alma mater and its campus should provide those open doors through which meaningful alumni engagement can be established, virtually and in-person, be it through special lectures and cultural events, mentorship opportunities, to address classes as guest speakers, and to steward financial and in-kind support to AKU and FAS for ever stronger programming, services and facilities.

C. Academic Leadership and the Teaching Faculty. *What are the most important attributes of Deanship for this launch? Will there be a Vice-Dean role instituted in FAS that can augment the role of the Dean by focusing on faculty development? Attracting high caliber faculty who will be pioneers, translating the bold goals of FAS into a contextually meaningful and rigorous curricular experience will be critical, but also extremely challenging.* Our small size means we must be nimble and a two-pronged academic administrative structure with a Vice-Dean devoted to faculty may not be advisable. Securing the right Dean is paramount. She/he will have, foremost, deep experience in recruiting, developing and leading faculty. The Dean will also be an established leader in her/his scholarly field, with prowess in research direction and output, providing stewardship to colleagues and students alike. With the Dean in place, building the faculty complement will be a priority, looking to diasporic academic communities, wider international searches and from within the growing talent pool in Pakistan. It would be a grave oversight, however, if FAS should not leverage the assets inherent in our small but mighty University. FAS will seek but equally attract faculty, through joint appointments, from AKU's Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations, as but one example, where excellence in teaching in the humanities and social sciences is established. With a vision to be a 'cohesive factor' for AKU, FAS will build through multiple joint faculty appointments exciting, inter-entity collaborations with the present and growing base of graduate schools, including the upcoming School of Government, Civil Society, and Public Policy to be launched in Pakistan.

D. Stakeholder Engagement. *Wide interest will pour in from government, the private sector and civil society, including universities globally, to scrutinise, learn more, and seek partnership with FAS. Communicating the ethos, goals, activities and output of FAS will be instrumental in building brand identity and signaling the value of an arts and sciences education in and for Pakistan and its region. The AKDN and its wide-ranging activity in quality of life initiatives constitutes a unique asset for FAS that must be availed. Careful and innovative stakeholder engagement will be key.* Just as FAS will work hard to be a cohesive factor within AKU, bridging faculty and students in crisscrossing fashion for teaching, research and project work, so too will FAS be outward facing to communities and organisations of various stripes. FAS will do so based on shared values and goals. Campus-community partnership will seek to provide for students and faculty a rich laboratory in which to gain grassroots experience, grow and test ideas, devise new questions and directions for research, and contribute to enhancing quality of life. There is the potential here to produce new models for the intersection of higher education and civil society, one which FAS will approach with other esteemed universities, including several that may emerge from the Dialogue Day itself, building strength on strength.

The Day of Dialogue delivered on its promise. It has endowed our efforts to date with important reinforcement and substantial material on which to reflect and propel our developments.

AKU expresses deep gratitude to Brown University, our co-host, and all participants for their active, voluntary contribution and counsel. As we look ahead to the launch of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, we are immensely grateful for and indebted to the Chancellor, His Highness the Aga Khan and the University's Board of Trustees for their unending guidance and support.

1. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

1.1 Foreseeing Needs

The overall aim of the Aga Khan University is to make clear and rational judgements as to which foreseeable future needs of the developing countries require new educational programmes and, having identified these openings, to address them by the appropriate means, setting the highest standards possible, whether in teaching, in research or in service.

The Chancellor of the Aga Khan University, His Highness the Aga Khan, presented this institutional aim in 1983 at the University's Charter signing in Karachi, Pakistan. Today, across six countries on three continents, AKU is a predominantly health sciences university and with graduate degrees on offer in education, communications and Muslim cultures. However, from its earliest planning days, the University foresaw growing demand for a first, broader degree in the arts and sciences education, that AKU might someday provide if it were of distinctive character and nature. The indispensability of a liberal education, it was said, would surely come from the need for capacities to make the myriad adjustments modern life would require, of intellectual, cultural and moral sorts that only a general education can provide.

While substantial planning and development has been underway for the past two decades for a Faculty of Arts and Sciences to open on new principal campuses in both Karachi, Pakistan and Arusha, Tanzania, approval was granted in 2018 for the launch of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) in Pakistan, on its present Stadium Road campus in Karachi. This approval underlines that an opening, or need, is indeed apparent in our contexts, one which will soon be addressed in line with the overall aim of the University.

Leading up to and following the 2018 milestone approval, more directed planning has been underway for this launch in Pakistan accounting for a range of specificities and against important contextual factors. Rounds of consultation, discussion, debate and dialogue have greatly contributed to plans. It is against this continuum of learning that the Day of Dialogue was conceived.

1.2 The Transformative Nature of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

AKU has engaged over its years a range of experts to help define the guiding philosophy for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences:

The programme is transformative in nature as it is informed by two mutually supportive philosophical positions. First, a unique and qualifying feature is the programme's embeddedness in the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) with its ethos of service and giving back to the community and adherence to AKU's core principles of impact, quality, relevance, and access (IQRA). Secondly, the curricular content and process are framed by a philosophical perspective that meaningful learning occurs if it is integrated in context and experiential in nature with concomitant pedagogical implications. These positions are at once reflective of a universal outlook for higher learning and of the more specific contemporary needs across higher education in and for Pakistan and its region.

Its academic programmes support a transformative education through a deeply integrated and interdisciplinary structure that includes intensive shared experiences in the form of a Core Curriculum, deep exploration within a degree programme with

increasingly independent work, integration within and between degree clusters and programmes, interdisciplinary and specialised research at multiple levels, the integration of FAS with current and proposed graduate schools and with the Faculty of Health Sciences, and the interconnectivity of research, teaching and practice.

Informed by the above, FAS aims to promote in its learners knowledge, skills and a disposition for a life of consequence continuously powered through lifelong learning. The hallmarks of FAS graduates include what has been referred to as the four C's and three E's: **Critical thinking, Clear communication, Creativity, and Commitment to service,** and an **Entrepreneurial outlook, Engagement with pluralism and an Ethical orientation to action.** More on the Faculty's mission, goals and structure can be found in the FAS Brochure included in Annex 4.

1.3 Rationale and Structure for the Day of Dialogue

As AKU prepares further for the launch of FAS, the promise at this juncture in time for a day of dialogue with leading experts in higher education and the liberal arts cannot be overstated. Similar to past engagements, AKU sought a dialogue based on a shared desire to learn from global best practice, to unpack experience and draw out lessons learned, and to deliberate on strategic approaches to programmatic design and delivery that would be contextually relevant and in support of the University's vision, mission and values.

More specifically, AKU sought through a small but august convening of experts discussion on **key guiding questions** in search of thoughtful responses as the University endeavours a successful launch for FAS in Pakistan:

<p style="text-align: center;">A. Fit and Structure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How is this new academic programme to fit within the wider, evermore comprehensive university setting? 2. What do effective academic governance and leadership structures look like? 	<p style="text-align: center;">B. The Total Student</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. What are students' perceptions and perspectives of the liberal arts? What are they most concerned about as they undertake a broad general education both during and after their course of study? 4. What does an academic "life course" approach look and feel like, from marketing and outreach, through application, admissions, and 4-year program delivery, to graduation, alumni affairs, careers, and beyond?
<p style="text-align: center;">C. Learning and Teaching</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. What academic and extracurricular components will help to ensure success? 6. What mindset will underwrite success in approaches to learning and teaching centered on an interdisciplinary ethos? 	
<p style="text-align: center;">D. Priorities and Sustainability</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. What are the top priorities? What is the optimal timing of our movements? 8. How to account for financial sustainability in the delivery of the University's commitment to quality, impact, relevance, and, most critically, access? 	

Brown University served as a natural partner of choice, with whom to co-host the Day of Dialogue. With its own renowned offering of a liberal arts and sciences education, Brown University is also recipient of the endowed Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Humanities, presently held by Dr. Shahzad Bashir, Director for the University's Center for Middle East Studies.

Surrounding Brown University throughout New England lies what is arguably one of the oldest, most successful concentrations of liberal arts institutions in the contemporary world. It is through these small and large liberal arts colleges and comprehensive universities that an impressive list of participants were identified to participate in the Day of Dialogue at Brown University on the 3rd of March, 2020, with a reception and dinner held on the evening prior to formally open the event.

Participants were identified and invited based on several objectives:

- To have a range of types and sizes of institutions represented, from small, dedicated undergraduate liberal arts colleges to larger universities that include components of liberal arts education.
- To include participants with both little-to-no experience with AKU, the AKDN or Pakistan and those with substantial knowledge of and experience with AKU and the AKDN and their contexts. As well, to have a few strategic interlocutors, including heads of AKDN agencies, holding knowledge of multiple systems, who could help bridge understandings and translate across different knowledge landscapes.
- To include professionals with specific areas of expertise, such as with faculty hiring and development, student experience, academic governance, and/or newer, start-up colleges.
- To have the benefit of insight and continued contribution from members of key governance and advisory bodies groups already guiding the launch of FAS.

For the full participant list of 30+ participants, representing over 17 institutions, see Annex 2.

In many cases, detailed interviews were conducted with selected participants prior to the gathering. The interviews served multiple purposes, including to introduce AKU as needed, to help inform the development of the agenda for the programme, and to capture the advance perspectives of selected individuals on what they anticipated would be the most important considerations that deserve further discussion. Outcomes of these interviews are woven through this report, as they add to and reflect more deeply the learning and key takeaways for AKU in support of the launch of FAS.

The programme of activities constituting the Day of Dialogue are detailed in the Agenda document in Annex 1.

A Reception and Dinner held on 2nd March served to welcome participants and have the overall group become more acquainted with one another. Welcome remarks were offered by leadership from both Brown and AKU. President Firoz Rasul presented a short bio-documentary video of His Highness the Aga Khan in the context of his role as not only as Founder and Chancellor of AKU but as Founder and Chairperson of AKDN. The video allowed participants to appreciate the broader mission and range of activities instituted by the Aga Khan, within which the Aga Khan University is but one endeavor. This also helped to set the backdrop for the dialogue that would follow the next day. At the Dinner, a keynote address from Brown University's Dean of the College, Dr. Rashid Zia, illuminated several important features of not only a liberal arts education but his own personal conviction for the role and value of a liberating education in our modern world, as will be detailed below.

On the dialogue day itself (3rd March), engagement was structured around a programme designed to address the key, guiding questions above and more. To initiate discussion, President Rasul provided an overview presentation on AKU, its vision, mission and values that drive the

University's existing and expanding operations and global aspirations. He concluded with several reflective questions for participants to consider as they entered into dialogue. These questions and those used during the interviews mentioned are available in Annex 3.

2. THEMES EMERGING FROM THE DIALOGUE

The dialogical exchange on the several key questions were far-ranging with many valuable, diverse insights and takeaways for AKU-FAS. These are clustered into four themes: (1) interdisciplinarity; (2) the *whole* student experience; (3) academic leadership and the faculty; and (4) stakeholder engagement. Each theme contains respective considerations for AKU-FAS as advancements are made for the Faculty's launch.

2.1 Theme 1 – Interdisciplinarity

Participants held extensive experience with a wide range of approaches to the development of students' academic breadth and depth. Even so, they shared strongly in a recognition that the general education to be provided by the small-sized FAS would be best achieved by a programme design that supports multiple academic pathways and interdisciplinarity. Participants agreed on the merits of condensing and consolidating departments and majors – even to the extent of eliminating them. In a programme like FAS, deliberately small and designed to develop societal leaders who will address complex, multifaceted challenges and opportunities, the rationale for interdisciplinarity is both apparent and compelling.

Yet the establishment of some rigid baseline of disciplines and their disciplinary boundaries was ascertained by some as increasingly artificial and counterproductive, particularly in a broad-based, undergraduate arts and sciences programme. Disciplinary boundaries can hinder student exposure to a variety of fields and their perspectives, some opined. Directing students into impermeable majors can also constrain the possibility for integrating knowledge across domains.

Moving on, irrespective of the approach taken to the formation of disciplinary boundaries, participants advocated for flexibility, arguing for structures that drive an interconnectivity of learning. The administrative benefits of avoiding the imposition of departments and majors were especially highlighted, including what this could mean for collaboration amongst faculty.

Students' perspectives on the aspects of disciplinary and interconnected learning was important to hear. The students who formed one of the panels at the event demonstrated the growth in understanding over the four-year course of an arts and sciences undergraduate programme. Two first-year students displayed uncertainty about the role and value of a vast array of pathways open to them. However, a senior student and a recent graduate reflected on their appreciation for the flexibility offered by Brown's Open Curriculum to mix and match courses building up to not a major but a 'concentration' (of which there are over 80 at Brown). These same students also spoke positively about the personal growth required in finding their moorings through the deliberately wide-ranging landscape of knowledge fields.

Finally, participants anchored insights on the paradigms, expectations, and consequences of a broad-based, interdisciplinary arts and sciences curriculum. Through such a curriculum, it was argued, learners would be better equipped to approach careful balances that invariably confronts the inquiring mind: balances between individual rights and collective responsibilities, on acquiring knowledge but also acting, on asserting moral agency adjacent to recognising our moral liability, on the freedoms we defend for intellectual inquiry counterweighed by an active

social conscience. It was felt that these are important equilibriums to consider in our contemporary times, ones that FAS courses, for example, may use to deconstruct knowledge and frame problem solving in areas as the environment, economic equity, access to clean water, bridging digital divides, achieving meaningful global health, and approaching political ideologies.

Considerations for AKU-FAS

- 1. Interdisciplinarity is seen as an imperative** to recognise the complexity of seemingly singular issues and to address the opportunities behind our most pressing challenges, locally and increasingly globally. The extent to which interdisciplinarity features in FAS will likely be pervasive.
- 2. An appreciation for and some mastery to apply interdisciplinarity in knowledge, research and service** will be a predominant component of the learning gains and outcomes we seek in FAS students. How this application will take shape will constitute a major development activity.
- 3. To foster the capacity to see the interconnections between knowledge domains**, a degree of forming disciplinary bases is both welcomed and necessary. In and for society, specialist knowledge will continue to be highly relevant, even as the contours within it may change out of necessity. To perpetuate the existence of disciplines (both traditional and new credentials) is not to diminish any aspect of a broad-based, general education. Instead, we are challenged to develop a programme that honors both some initial mastery of a disciplinary field amidst the important faculty of learning how to see beyond one's 'base'. To approach this challenge, the Core Curriculum, which is sequenced first for all FAS students, will furnish the mind with that important faculty to see connectedness. Only with that basis, are more defined 'bases' approached, and even then, we expect students to be testing the boundaries with respect to interdisciplinarity in their senior thesis capstone projects.
- 4. Given our size but also our intent, departments based on disciplines would be a miscalculation. We will likely endorse one faculty complement collaborating with one another** in their teaching both in and between their disciplinary bases. Organised in this way, with more thought required on how to position Chairs and their Majors, we anticipate deriving great benefits from fluid exchange between faculty on approaching knowledge construction and research, and this will be an important model for students in their academic development.

2.2 Theme 2 – The Whole Student Experience

Who are FAS students – individually but also as a collective study body? Where do they come from and why does that matter? What has been their experience in education thus far, and what shifts or disruptions lie ahead as they move from secondary school to the tertiary learning environment of FAS? What are their expectations of a broad-based arts and sciences programme and are these likely to change as they mature through their studies? How will FAS students extract the most out of FAS?

These questions and more animated several distinct and integrated discussions at the Dialogue Day, all of them centering on the student experience and the full student cycle. Discussion raised design considerations that ought to help how students navigate through their multifaceted

journey at FAS. Given the breadth and depth of interrelated topics under this theme, what follows is the presentation of important sub-themes emergent under the wider discourse on the *whole* student experience.

2.2.1 *Student profile*

Participants asked with great interest: what is the FAS student profile? AKU will want to actively design the profile of FAS cohorts, balancing traits, such as a commitment to service or innovation drive, with considerations such as first-generation students or academically, artistically or athletically gifted students. To get organised around these considerations, participants advised the development of a multi-year plan for admissions as a means to deploy intentional strategies for student recruitment that supports the desired student profile. With such planning in place, AKU will exercise a positive degree of control on the kind of culture that will imbue FAS, and that carries important implications for the wide range of outputs the programme will exteriorise for its own students and faculty as well as society at large.

2.2.2 *Diversity and access*

Recognising AKU's inherently social mission guided by principles of quality, impact, relevance and access, participants discussed the challenges ahead in achieving diversity and being accessible against the equally important drivers of quality, excellence and impact. Overlaying these aspirations is the particular focus in FAS to identify and work with students who will become leaders in their societies. To ensure diversity and access, the importance of reaching out to and through remote local communities was underlined. Within this effort, accessing local schools and their graduating or soon-to-be graduating classes will be worthwhile. These will be schools that might otherwise not have information about the new opportunities in arts and sciences at AKU. In doing so, FAS will be encouraging a range of students of varying socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds to consider applying, in line with AKU's mission.

2.2.3 *Students' previous experiences of learning*

Students would largely if not entirely be drawn from a range of secondary schools in Pakistan. From all accounts, the K-12 education system in the country is structured around students that are streamed very early into disciplinary tracks such as science, arts and commerce. They remain somewhat insular in these streams and it is not common nor encouraged to cross over. Like students, teachers are similarly embedded in disciplines, further limiting exposure to breadth of academic pursuits. Finally, teaching and learning is largely premised on the 'teacher transmission' model. Thus, students may need to unlearn some habits of learning and thinking, and FAS faculty will need to employ pedagogy to achieve this whilst being responsive to the diversity of student backgrounds. The endorsement of student-centric approaches will be essential.

2.2.4 *Navigating the experience with growing independence*

Students will be expected to take charge of their learning and deliver on independent learning tasks with concomitant expectations on their part of protected space and time. Many of these tasks and assignments may need to be completed in settings beyond the classroom and campus. At home, cultural traditions and hierarchical and gendered family relationships may constitute a challenge for some students; for example, young women often have more household chores than do their male counterparts. How and where will students find that protected space and time for the increasing demands FAS will place on their capacity to read, reflect, deconstruct and

construct informed ideas, arguments and narratives that genuinely express their growing intellectual abilities?

One method offered to address the matter above, was for AKU to consider how students can be engaged from the earliest of points on their curriculum and its design. For example, a participant from Olin College of Engineering outlined how at Olin, in the year immediately prior to the college's recent launch, planners invited a unique cohort of unenrolled students to spend an entire year at Olin working with faculty and administration to collaborate on the final elements of the programme's design – an involved but rewarding experience for all involved. Others emphasised the value of organising for students – and their families – a full orientation to the programme, including the spirit of the endeavour, and to encourage students and their families to participate together in the growth that will follow. These forms of engagement in programme design and orientation can help to pre-empt misunderstandings that may arise once in and further along the programme, around the kind of education FAS will both provide and demand, of students but also of an encouraging environment in homes and families to support the realisation of students' full potential.

2.2.5 *The experience beyond the classroom*

The amount of time a student spends out of class – “the other 18 hours a day” – is not inconsequential. Given this, it is important that administrative planning not be entirely consumed in the development of academic programme design, curriculum, and teaching and learning as it exists in and for the classroom setting. Ensuring students gain a holistic experience requires strategic planning to integrate a wide range of activities. Co-curricular activities can include team-based community projects, internships and other forms of work-integrated learning, study abroad, leadership development challenges, etc. A residential experience also constitutes an integral element of the student experience, commonly found as a staple of undergraduate liberal arts education the world over. Recognising on-campus housing may not be possible at the time of launch nor necessarily in demand for Karachi-based students (compared to some North American liberal arts models), other modalities such as weekend retreats can be employed to unite students and help build important bonds, as would be the case in a residential programme.

Participants also recommended a wide range of wrap-around student supports, including academic counselling and mentoring, athletic and sports programmes, physical and mental health services, social clubs, and career services, to list the predominant ones. For the initial cohorts, therefore, there needs to be a deep commitment to creative programming that encourages students and their families to engage in extracurricular programming, even when not on campus.

2.2.6 *On the physical campus*

The campus environment plays an important role in the student experience, especially as students are considering applying. A visit to campus can often be the most influential factor in the decision making of applicants about their preference of institutions. Families will weigh in here, seeking for their children a campus that is, foremost, safe and secure. An aesthetically pleasing campus that is also functional with spaces for study and socialising are key too, especially for the goals of a curriculum prized on inquiry and contemplation. Participants offered more specifics here, underlining the importance of good classroom designs, common rooms, sports facilities, libraries, and spaces for clubs and extracurricular life generally. Finally, the campus should be an attractive return destination for graduates, where they enjoy reunions or visit for any number of

reasons (eg. guest lectures, onward mentoring, continued engagement with faculty, sporting events).

2.2.7 *Preparedness, mentorship and academic and career development services*

How will first year students from wide-ranging backgrounds be set up for success in what will be a demanding academic programme? Bridging programmes can be helpful here, ranging from summer versions for confirmed students just prior to their start to a full-year of additional preparation for students who meet predefined criteria as ‘eligible to apply’ but in need of remedial instruction or ‘catch-up’ courses in one or more core areas (eg. math, English, academic writing, etc.). For the latter, online modes of learning can help to keep costs manageable. Language labs, communication workshops, and other modular approaches to knowledge and skills development can also be considered.

Many participants commented on the evolving phenomenon of formal and informal mentoring in higher education, running throughout all years of academic programming. These can be interconnected with academic advising and tutoring, augmenting more formal relationships between faculty and students. Such mentoring, between final and first year students, for example, can also augment the suite of academic development services on offer. And FAS will need to apply careful planning to the kinds of services that will be in demand for the broad-based, interdisciplinary arts and sciences programme.

Finally, as students prepare for graduation and next steps in higher learning or the workforce, career counselling services will need to be robust and engage students as early as possible, in fact, in their time at FAS. Indeed, participants were unanimous in asserting that preparation for students’ life after graduation should be an important strand of the students’ experience throughout the course of their study. From the perspective of building FAS’ reputation and brand, it will be imperative to AKU’s success that the first cohorts of graduates find excellent jobs or gain entrance to top graduate schools. To support this, students’ voice at the Dialogue Day referred to the need for professional development courses to run throughout the four years of study, offering preparation for the knowledge economy and the skills required for successful employment. This will include though not limited to resume writing, interviewing, making career transitions, and balancing life and work. Participants cited the practice of weaving relevant themes in professional and career development into the academic progression of students.

2.2.8 *Mental wellbeing*

There is wide consensus on the significant attention to be paid to the mental health concerns of students, faculty, and administrators alike. In our contemporary higher education sector globally, there is widespread anxiety and other related illnesses among youth. At the time of the meeting at Brown, the COVID-19 crisis was only emerging on the horizon. But the implications of this health, economic, and social crisis are profound, and one can reasonably expect sustained impact. Combing these concerns with the uncertainties students may experience as early entrants in a new programme magnify the rationale for adopting strong prevention activities and allocating investment for adequate services. Faculty must also be trained in mental health awareness. And any indication of stigma must be quickly addressed.

Considerations for AKU-FAS

- 1. Diversity, access, quality and excellence.** On achieving diversity and being accessible and the seemingly counteracting yields desired in meeting the highest standards of quality and embodying excellence, another way to frame the matter is to see these four elements as belonging to each other, in what will be FAS's distinctive character and nature. Recognising the trials all institutions face in striking a fine balance, AKU will delve further to define several positive relations that can exist between these four elements. For example, can FAS seek a diverse, meritorious student body – parts of which will both be actively sought and necessarily supported where means are insufficient – that is attracted to and thrives in an environment of uncompromising quality and excellence? Certainly, an admissions strategy, as discussed by participants, will help as FAS works diligently to find the 'balance'.
- 2. Using a range of innovative approaches to forge pathways to communities both urban and rural in Pakistan will indeed be required as part of FAS' outreach in recruitment.** This helps to meet the diversity aspect, as above. Such 'student streams' can include those emerging from the networks of schools under or in partnership with the AKDN. Different agencies of the Network hold mandates in supporting school and teacher development, in addition to influencing wider policy and sectoral development. For example, AKU's own Examination Board (EB) points to a wellspring of meritorious high school learners each year, that demonstrate through the objective EB assessments their open and critical thinking as core to their conceptual development. Ultimately, FAS will need to be inclusive in its outreach while pragmatic in its execution in a highly populous country with innumerable school systems.
- 3. Supporting students navigate all the dimensions of their experience at FAS,** the University's commitment to providing a conducive learning and physical environment will contribute. More specifically, there are sporting activities, clubs, a Development-Lab, summer internships, a community-based capstone project and more all planned for FAS. We need to conceive of structural modalities to help with navigation of the mentioned activities and more. Devising supportive programming such as residential weekend retreats for students, a leadership academy in their initial summer break, and ongoing academic services for student learning are some initial thoughts.
- 4. The nature of study at FAS is explorative and interdisciplinary, guided often by the theoretical and practical connections students can make when confronted with problems (eg. through problem- or case-based learning).** Thus, we expect the FAS student body to approach the matter of defining their careers in quite novel ways than we are used to (given our offering thus far has been primarily in health sciences, education and more recently professional schools). The options and directions will fray further as they interact with one another across their various interests, projects and majors. Thus, **career services at FAS** will need to balance both these particular and at times impulsive interests of students with offering direction on the changing nature of the world of work, the trends therein and, crucially, societal needs, including a sense of the unforeseen challenges (and thus opportunities) that will require inventiveness and entrepreneurship. Guidance for our student body will be instrumental, as will the continual nurturing of their capacity to become independent, thoughtful, lifelong learners and leaders in society.

2.3 Theme 3 – Academic Leadership and the Faculty

The gathering at Brown offered significant insights on the academic leadership structures used by some institutions to oversee the administration of academic, faculty and student affairs of their colleges. For example, in some institutions, there are two key academic leadership positions working in partnership: (1) Dean of the College and (2) Dean or Vice-Dean of the Faculty (ie. the teaching staff). Specific arrangements differ from one institution to the next, but the core premise is an expansive and partially shared purview of accountability. The Dean of the College is the senior academic leader executing on vision, determining programme curriculum and requirements, and overseeing academic quality and co-curricular life. The Dean or Vice-Dean of the Faculty is a senior member of academic administration and shares responsibility for the recruitment, retention, and development of faculty (ie. its professorial or teaching staff).

Ensuring the highest quality of faculty was repeatedly emphasised. The participants underscored the multitude of expectations early faculty hires will face. They will be pioneers, leading across a wide range of goals inherent to the success of the new enterprise. These include curricular expectations, but they must also embody and teach the attributes of adventurous exploration, pluralistic endeavour, the cosmopolitan ethic, integrity, humility, and so on. Participants suggested an international outreach programme working through the Pakistani diaspora and their associations to help with searches and recruitment of faculty. Some participants anticipated that AKU would face challenges in attracting renowned and high-quality faculty. Others argued that the right faculty will be the ones who are naturally attracted to the mission and that the challenge is not in the attraction but in the selection of high-quality researchers and instructors who will offer value both in the classroom and beyond.

Not necessarily stemming from these challenges in securing faculty, discussion turned to the inherent strengths AKU should draw on from its own existing pool of world-class faculty. The most obvious source for FAS lies with faculty at AKU's Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations (ISMC) based in London, UK. Faculty of ISMC are renowned for their teaching, research and scholarship in the humanities and social sciences; some could be jointly appointed with FAS engaging intensively with the programme in a variety of ways both in-person and online.

Participants discussed a potential concern that may arise for FAS, as seen elsewhere, regarding the accessibility of faculty to students. Significant time needs to be dedicated to didactic methods of teaching in which faculty engage students in thinking through practical applications of learning, especially learning outside of the classroom.

Considerations for AKU-FAS

1. Given our size, the planners of FAS will need to evaluate if a **two-pronged, academic leadership structure** is warranted. Noting the value to be derived from a Dean for FAS whose remit would be distinct from that of a Vice-Dean for Faculty (Development), AKU is small compared to Brown (with 6500+ undergraduates) and others where the Dean/Vice-Dean duo likely exists. Of note, as the academic leadership of FAS develops specific strategies for faculty development relevant for undergraduate teaching and learning in the arts and sciences, there are existing resources at the University that can be drawn upon (eg. AKU's Network of Quality, Teaching and Learning), and this will help in determining whether a dedicated Vice-Dean of Faculty is required/desirable.

2. The importance of **securing the initial faculty complement** cannot be overstated. Working through the diaspora and other networks both particular to Pakistan but also the wider arts and sciences academic community will be key. Securing a Dean who has strong experience in searching, recruiting, onboarding, and building a faculty base can be the single most effective strategy to employ. The Dean will be responsible for devising and following a strategy for faculty recruitment that yields the diversity and expertise desired. In doing so, considerations for internationally and locally sourced faculty will be applied. There will be senior researchers brought on who can mentor junior faculty with high promise for an exciting research career. Experienced pedagogues will model best practice in undergraduate teaching in the arts and sciences to those with less experience but who are eager to develop their dossier. And several other dimensions will be at play as the Dean forms her/his faculty. All to say, the optimal Dean and her/his background and strengths will underwrite the success we desire to see in a robust, world-class FAS faculty.
3. That FAS would leverage ISMC for joint faculty appointments must also be understood against the wider aspiration for FAS to interconnect and align elements of its programme with current and upcoming AKU graduate schools, such as the Graduate School of Media and Communications in Nairobi, Kenya (underway) and the Graduate School of Government, Civil Society and Public Policy, which is being planned for its launch in the same building with FAS in Karachi in the near future. Thus, there is a vision in place, that will need operationalising, of an **eclectic faculty complement** that, in part, shares and draws on existing and future academic entities across AKU, and this, we feel, offers great advantage to faculty recruitment plans and efforts.
4. Finally, and particularly for an arts and sciences undergraduate education, faculty recruitment should consider the aspirations of the FAS programme to develop **leaders who can integrate knowledge and be creative, critical and interdisciplinary in problem solving**. As important, onboarding of new faculty should include a strong component of faculty development to enable pedagogical approaches commensurate with the aspirations for student learning outcomes. Training faculty to internalise the ethos of AKU and FAS, helping them shape the early experience of student development in areas such as volunteerism and ‘giving back’, and encouraging them to take the same holistic approach to education as is expected of the students will be important undertakings. Given this task, the merits are clear to ensure a good degree of dedicated resources are directed to faculty development.

2.4 **Theme 4 – Stakeholder Engagement**

Participants shared insights and experience with the management of new academic programmes that attract wide interest from the public, government and within civil society. Inherent in this management is the continual exploration of untapped opportunities, particularly with partner universities, themselves actors in civil society. Sub-themes that emerged are below.

2.4.1 ***Regulatory environment***

The frequency of unforeseen issues arising as a result of new programmes and the significant amount of time required for managing regulatory and other demands can be significant. A fulltime government liaison is often required.

2.4.2 *Communicating to the public*

It was acknowledged by participants that AKU will need to deploy robust communications to a wide variety of stakeholders as well as the general public regarding the launch of FAS and its early operations. There will be considerable interest in what AKU is undertaking in the launch and projected long-term vision for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. It will be important for AKU to tell its own story and write its own headlines – locally and globally. Students, too, will need to be eloquent in articulating their purpose in enrolling in the programme. Helping them define their stories will be valuable in attracting subsequent cohorts and building the early yet foundational identity of the programme. It will also be an essential tool for students in communicating the merits of their programme and their new knowledge, skills and attitudes to future schools, employers and in the public arena they will enliven.

2.4.3 *Collaborating within AKU and across civil society*

A key point raised from the dialogue focused on the value of connectivity with collaborators. This means better leveraging opportunities presented by AKU's multi-country campuses and range of academic programmes. The design of the curriculum and other components should enable FAS students and faculty alike to tap into the people, places, and programmes that comprise AKU's various schools, institutes and centers.

Those familiar with AKU and its unique position as an institution of higher education within the wider Aga Khan Development Network emphasised the inherent opportunities. As an example, in the area of FAS' commitment to the study and promotion of pluralism, the AKDN offers vast reinforcement of pluralism's supporting themes of civil society, governance, economic and social development, ethics across traditions, and science in service to society. There will be many other avenues between AKU-FAS and AKDN over which to connect.

Connections with other key partners in civil society will also be key, particularly given the goals of FAS to develop leaders that will drive positive, inclusive change for all in society. But the partnerships can certainly extend beyond community-based organisation and civil society, to a broad range of strategic employers in government, business, and non-profit sectors who carry a strong social agenda and whose work is underpinned with values we share. These organisations will be interested to absorb the knowledge, skills and fervor FAS students can bring to important endeavours affecting positive change in markets and causes both at home and internationally.

2.4.4 *Partnering within higher education*

Finally, relationships with premier higher education institutions globally are strengthened through events such as the Dialogue Day co-hosted at Brown University. Other schools offering liberal arts education are natural allies of AKU's Faculty of Arts and Sciences. They have a stake in AKU's success, not only as a vested member of the global community, but as partners in creating mutually rewarding opportunities for students and faculty to participate in academic exchanges. Whether for partnership activities pertaining to FAS (eg. curriculum development or student services) or for any other aspect of AKU's operations, these relationships offer great potential and should be nurtured. Certainly, the interest from counterparts around the table to extend and explore partnerships was palpable.

Considerations for AKU-FAS

1. Regarding the caution offered on the need for **government relations**, AKU has established relationships with various levels of government and the related regulatory bodies. For some years, in preparation of our offering in undergraduate arts and sciences programming in Pakistan, government-university relations have been strong and based on input already requested by the government on sectoral reforms, where AKU is relied on to play a leadership role. That said, it will be important to strengthen relationships in place as we near launch and contingency planning for unforeseen issues is always prudent.
2. Latterly, the notion of a singular AKU (internally known as *oneAKU*) across our geographies and schools has gained momentum. Various instruments are in place and planned to support what is inherently a challenging ideal given our spread. For FAS, we've developed the conception of an entity that carries a '**cohesive factor**' between many if not all academic entities at AKU, and this happens through a range of exchanges and channels, be it through faculty advisors to student projects, faculty exchanges, sharing curricular approaches, and think tanks, amongst others. Thus, participants' conviction for connectivity within AKU is shared. What will be important is to now space out the timing of certain connections over others. Where do we forge bridges first? How can we leverage virtual learning environments? What regional requirements from regulatory bodies will need consideration to ensure legitimacy? Responses to these and more questions will guide our strategic moves.
3. One framework that needs substantive work is **the role FAS can hold with AKDN**. From one perspective, we can envision AKU (and FAS within) it serving as a knowledge base for AKDN and, therefore, the notion of a 'knowledge-based civil society' emerges. AKU has recently produced a case-study textbook featuring projects from AKDN agencies – their challenges, solutions and questions for students to draw out lessons and best practice. We could weave case-based learning into several courses of FAS. We might bring in 'professors of practice' from the AKDN to engage students through lectures and as co-advisors. Beyond the formal classroom, we imagine FAS faculty and students working on real world development challenges in the field where AKDN is immersed, through internships but also senior thesis capstone projects. They would bring back to the Academy a clearer sense of the questions to ask and the research that is needed to achieve improved quality of life, a cornerstone of AKDN's work. The FAS Development-Lab (or D-Lab) will feature here, fostering interdisciplinary cross-talk and ideation in the spirit of bringing pragmatic solutions to community-based development. We will need to carefully plan what execution looks like, against what academic goals and under which governance structures. And, if FAS can strike these connections with AKDN agencies, an engagement model will be borne that can apply/adapt to civil society organisations more broadly.
4. In its now 37 years, AKU has grown and prospered through deep collaborative and **institutional partnerships** with great universities from around the world. For FAS, we do not envisage a different trajectory. In fact, with all major initiatives AKU commits to, our strategic imperative is to design and, where applicable, implement new programmes with a global university partner. With this in mind, FAS is nearing a pivotal moment as we near launch. With whom do we partner? At what level? How will we define mutuality? Against what shared values and goals will our work be based?

3. CONCLUSION

The Day of Dialogue at Brown University delivered on its promise. In convening experts to deliberate on a range of themes pertinent to launching an arts and sciences education both in our contemporary times and as such programmes will invariably change in response to future needs, planning for AKU's Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) in Pakistan benefited tremendously. Foremost, the gathering reinforced the importance underpinning our aspirations to offer in Pakistan this new undergraduate programme of distinctive character and nature. More specifically, the considerations and takeaways drawn from the key themes outlined in this Report provide important questions and inspiring material for our continued development efforts. They include:

On Fit and Structure, Teaching and Learning. With regard to how FAS will be positioned within AKU and the best administrative structures to apply, that FAS should constitute a 'cohesive factor' connecting to other academic entities, through faculty and programmatic aspects, was appreciated and underlined. FAS will next plan exactly how to leverage the unique multi-country, multi-campus and increasingly multi-disciplinary configuration that defines AKU. Deanship at FAS, given its small size, will likely lead both programmatic and faculty development vectors, and the Dialogue Day has helped considerably to consider how administrative adjustments can meet the expectations of teaching and learning excellence that we must rightfully underwrite. What becomes all the more imperative is securing an eminent Dean, experienced dutifully in faculty recruitment and development, administration, and research. Departments within FAS will likely not exist, for this can perpetuate silos. Instead, a single faculty complement where members collaborate between disciplines in teaching, research and advisory capacities will model for students the importance and applicability of interdisciplinarity in their academic development.

On the Whole Student Experience and Navigation for Success. Insights into the full student-cycle obliges us to think through, in integrated ways, how to best support an excellent student experience for what needs to be a diverse, highly meritorious community of learners. An admissions strategy will be key to bringing about the desired student profile, ensuring the desired culture that will infuse FAS for years to come. Sensitivity is needed to account for previous experiences of learning, especially as many singly-minded students are ushered into a broad-based, integrated approach to learning and knowledge production. Navigation supports for curricular engagement and the "other 18 hours in a day" will be paramount. Accordingly, the Dialogue surfaced consideration for preparatory programmes, orientation, mentorship, a range of counselling and academic services, weekend retreats, clubs and sports, and other such instruments. As students mature through their study and develop independence with an ethical mindset, they will be consumed with what to do after graduation. Agile professional development and career advice that bridges their new dispositions with the changing world of work and/or upper-level study will be critical, for their futures but also for demonstrating FAS' value to society.

On Engaging Stakeholders, Adding Strength on Strength. Several components of FAS face outwards. Well-designed two-way pathways will bridge the campus and community. The assets available to AKU and FAS via the AKDN are immense. Faculty can consult on development initiatives, research questions can emerge from students' community service projects, new knowledge will be constructed, and improving quality of life – a cornerstone for the AKDN –

will lie in the hands of FAS students and faculty. These are exciting opportunities, which need careful planning and evaluation before going to scale. There are models to develop here for how higher education, and specifically an arts and sciences education, can interface and strengthen civil society. Finally, and in continuing AKU's tradition in building global partnerships, FAS will seek a partner, or more, through which to take up the considerations and opportunities outlined in this Report. Indeed, the Dialogue Day presented a palpable response from our thought partners to join us in our journey, help extend our reach, and add strength on strength.

ANNEX 1 – AGENDA

THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY



BROWN

The Future of Learning:
 Introducing a Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Pakistan
 Hosted at:
 Brown University – The Innovation Center, 225 Dyer Street, 5th Floor
 March 2-3, 2020
Agenda

March 2, 2020

- 5:00 p.m. **Welcome Reception**
Co-Host Welcome:
Shankar Prasad, Deputy Provost for Global Engagement and Strategic Initiatives, Brown University
Firoz Rasul, President and Chief Executive Officer, Aga Khan University
Program Objectives and Introductions:
Anjum Halai, Vice Provost and Interim Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Aga Khan University
- 6:30 p.m. **Dinner**
Introduction:
Carl Amrhein, Provost and Vice President Academic, AKU
Keynote Remarks:
Rashid Zia, Dean of the College, Brown University

March 3, 2020

- 7:20 a.m. Shuttle departs Hampton Inn and Suites lobby.
 and
 7:40 a.m.
 8:00 a.m. **Welcome**
Shankar Prasad, Deputy Provost for Global Engagement and Strategic Initiatives, Brown University
Anjum Halai, Vice Provost and Interim Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Aga Khan University
- 8:30 a.m. **Aga Khan University: Overview and Future Directions**
Firoz Rasul, President and Chief Executive Officer, Aga Khan University
- 9:15 a.m. **The Rationale for Arts and Sciences Today**
 This session asks participants to examine the grand challenge facing Aga Khan University’s introduction of a Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Pakistan – not “why” should AKU or other institutions offer or students undertake a “liberal arts” education, but rather “how” can institutions best deliver value through such programs in the context of today’s dynamic environment for learning?
Facilitator: **Diana MacKay**, Special Advisor to the Provost, AKU
Case Studies:

1. The Role of AI in Today’s Curriculum – **Diana MacKay**
 2. Mindset in Teaching and Learning – **Shahzad Bashir**
 3. Positioning All Students for Academic Success – **Marlene Sandstrom**
- Pre-arranged speakers are invited to present for 3 minutes each. Subsequently, participants will be invited to add additional case studies. The session will proceed into a facilitated discussion.
- 10:30 a.m. **Refreshment Break**
Group photo to be taken.
- 11:00 a.m. **Pluralist Endeavours – Drawing on Diverse Perspectives**
Reputations are built on the success of students and graduates, and on the ubiquitous and spontaneous demonstration of institutional engagement in the issues of the day. The small Faculty of Arts and Sciences as envisioned by AKU is, at its core, a pluralist endeavour, depending upon a diversity of perspectives. This session explores how to exploit diversity in the lifecycle of institutional operations.
Small Group Discussions:
Table A: Marketing
Table B: Admissions
Table C: Early Student Experience
Table D: Senior Student Experience
Table E: Alumni Years
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch (down one level to the 4th Floor)
- 1:30 p.m. **Students Today – Leaders of Tomorrow**
This session offers insights into the mindset of today’s students – their outlook on and expectations of their education, their connection between their education and their future careers, and their aspirations for personal leadership.
Panelists:
Andrea Grossmann – first-year student at Brown
Tran Minh Thu Phan (“Minty”) – senior-year student at Brown
Jamie Smith – senior-year student at Brown
Dylan Daniels – Recent graduate of Brown
Moderator: **Lisa Anderson**, Aga Khan University Trustee
- 3:00 p.m. Refreshment Break
- 3:15 p.m. **Excellence and Access**
Traditionally, and still today, institutions offering a liberal arts education have needed to address the demands both for excellence in academic teaching and learning and for equitable access to programs. This session explores how some institutions have sought balanced solutions.
Provocateur:
Adil Najam, Dean, Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University
- 4:00 p.m. **Summary of Reflections and Advice**
Carl Amrhein, Provost and Vice President, Academic, AKU

ANNEX 2 – PARTICIPANTS

Carl Amrhein

Provost and Vice President, Academic,
Aga Khan University

Lisa Anderson

AKU Trustee; President Emerita, American
University in Cairo; Dean Emerita of the
School of International and Public Affairs,
Columbia University

Shahzad Bashir

Director, Center for Middle East Studies,
Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Humanities,
Depts of Religious Studies and History,
Brown University

Debbie Chachra

Professor of Engineering,
Olin College of Engineering

Robert Gibbs

Inaugural Director of the Jackman
Humanities Institute, Professor of
Philosophy and Religion,
University of Toronto

Anjum Halai

Vice Provost and Interim Dean of the
Faculty of Arts and Sciences,
Aga Khan University

Adnan A. Hyder

Senior Associate Dean for Research
Professor of Global Health
Milken Institute School of Public Health,
George Washington University

Farzana Karim-Haji

Director, University Partnerships Office,
Aga Khan University

Henry Kim

Director and Chief Executive Officer,
Aga Khan Museum

Susanna Loeb

Director, Annenberg Institute for School
Reform, Professor of Education,
Brown University

Diana MacKay

Special Advisor to the Provost,
Aga Khan University

John Mangan

Sr. Asso. Dean, Faculty of Arts and
Sciences,
Yale University

Nergis Mavalvala

Professor of Astrophysics,
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Adil Najam

Inaugural Dean, Frederick S. Pardee School
of Global Studies, Professor of International
Relations and Earth & Environment
Boston University

Azim Nanji

Former Director, Institute of Ismaili Studies;
Former Sr. Asso. Director of the Abbasi
Program in Islamic Studies at Stanford
University; Special Advisor to AKU
Provost,
Aga Khan University

Fayaz Noormohamed

Senior Advisor, Academic Strategy,
Aga Khan University

Brian Peterson

Chief Communications Officer
Aga Khan University

Shankar Prasad

Deputy Provost for Global Engagement and
Strategic Initiatives,
Brown University

Meredith Preston McGhie
Secretary General,
Global Centre for Pluralism

Firoz Rasul
President and Chief Executive Officer,
Aga Khan University

Marlene J. Sandstrom
Dean of the College

Williams College

Andy Shennan
Provost and Lia Gelin Poorvu '56 Dean of
the College, Professor of History,
Wellesley College

Karen Sibley
Vice President for Strategic Initiatives,
Office of the Provost, Adjunct Assistant
Professor, Department of Education
Brown University

Hugh Silk
Professor, Family Medicine and Community
Health, UMass Medical School, and
Lecturer, Harvard School of Dental
Medicine and Harvard Medical School

Tracy Steffes
Chair of Department of Education, Asso.
Professor of Education and History,
Brown University

Leif Stenberg
Dean, Institute for the Study of Muslim
Civilisations,
Aga Khan University

James Wescoat
Aga Khan Professor of Landscape
Architecture and Geography,
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Kenneth Wong
Walter and Lenore Annenberg Professor of
Education Policy, Professor of Political
Science, Brown University

Mary Wright
Executive Director of the Sheridan Center
for Teaching and Learning,
Brown University

Rashid Zia
Dean of the College, Associate Professor of
Engineering, Professor of Physics,
Brown University

Brown University Students

Andrea Grossman, First-year Student

Jamie Smith, Fourth-year Student

Minty Phan, Fourth-year Student

Dylan S. Daniel, Recent Alumnus

ANNEX 3 – QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Achieving Balance

- How do we envisage the role of shared human values as a driving force behind the processes of change that we seek our students to be leaders of?
- How do we help shape the interplay between intellectual freedom, honoring cultural identity, adherence to global standards in modern scholarship, and anticipating and addressing intractable societal challenges?
- In a globalised environment, how can a university education help students to seek stability, direction and inspiration from one's own ethical and cultural traditions?

Higher Education, Civil Society, and Leadership

- How can a spirit of voluntary service find a natural place in higher education?
- How can our knowledge production spur intellectual innovation and change that resonates with the goals and work of the agencies of the AKDN?
- How can higher education support the growing scale and quality of civil society in shaping democratic societies?
- How can we help support the exteriorisation of the capacities of leadership for civil society in developing world contexts?

Strategic Directions and Goals

- How important is it to set goals that are unique to a particular school, or does striving to deliver a world-class liberal arts education suffice, especially in a context where there are few such schools?
- What have other recently established schools set as their goals, and what has been their experience in delivering on them?
- What are the goals of older, long established liberal arts schools? Do they change over time? To what extent do these goals factor into decision making about curriculum changes, student experience, alumni engagement, study abroad and internship opportunities, faculty recruitment, research investments, etc.?

Program Design

- To what extent should the program of a new liberal arts school mirror the common and classic programs of established, successful schools?
- Or, to what extent should the program seek to stand out with a 21st Century design that
 - either offers non-traditional courses on topics such as:
 - > the nature of work in the digital age;
 - > ethics, gaming, and decision making in virtual reality;
 - > artificial intelligence and the future of judgement
 - or embeds questions, exploration, and analysis of these kinds of topics in every course and activity of the program?
- Students – What should be the ideal composition of the study body?
- Faculty – What should be the ideal composition of the faculty?
- Academic program – What are essential attributes of the program's duration, pace, curriculum, and components? For example, does the academic calendar need to be

aligned globally? Should summer programs be required or optional? What should be the nature of associated internships and study abroad opportunities? Does the proposed curriculum:

- Reflect best practice
- Meet the expectations of today's students?
- Resonate with the interests of other stakeholders?
- Have any glaring omissions?
- Seek more than can be reasonably delivered in a small program?
- What lessons can be derived from the experience of other school that have been recently established or which have undergone significant programmatic changes?
- What are some of the often-overlooked elements of a liberal arts program that warrant greater attention?

Investment Priorities

- In the context of establishing a liberal arts school, what have been the investment priorities of successful start-ups?
- What are some strategies that enable institutions to leverage additional sources of support in the provision of liberal arts education?

Partnership Development

- What kinds of partnerships can best advance the potential for success of a new liberal arts school?
- Are there important caveats to the development of partnerships of one kind or another?

Student Experience

How important is the student experience to the long-term success of the program?

THE POWER OF LEADERS



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, PAKISTAN



The mission of the Aga Khan University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences is to educate leaders. The reason is simple: leaders drive positive change. They initiate it, rally support for it and collaborate with others to orchestrate its forward march in the face of indifference and opposition. They invigorate civil society, champion good governance, promote social and economic development, foster appreciation for pluralism and encourage ethical behaviour. They empower multitudes to create a better world.

When we speak of leaders, we mean all those individuals who possess the character and the intellectual capacities necessary to improve people's lives – and especially the lives of the disadvantaged. We think of the entrepreneur who creates a low-cost product that meets the needs of the poor. The community organizer who amplifies the voices of the marginalized to ensure their rights are respected.

The researcher who spotlights a looming environmental crisis and sparks action. The journalist whose exposés lead to reform. The novelist who inspires us to re-examine our lives and ideals. We think of all those impassioned and well-informed men and women who say, "We must do better," and then take considered action to bring about the future they wish to see.

The Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) will develop leaders through a transformative education that is endlessly challenging, stimulating and mind-opening – one that prepares graduates for innovative thought and consequential action.

In Asia and elsewhere, higher education has long been synonymous with professional education: students attend university to obtain the qualification needed to begin a career in medicine, engineering or law, or to study a single subject such as business. But there is another approach with a long and distinguished history, one that seeks, in the words of an early proponent, “not to teach that which is peculiar to any of the professions, but to lay the foundation for that which is common to them all.”

This form of education develops the whole person with a wide-ranging, multidisciplinary learning experience that equips graduates for success in whatever career they eventually choose, as well as for active citizenship and meaningful lives. This is the approach to undergraduate education taken by renowned universities such as Harvard and Yale, as well as small but highly regarded liberal arts colleges like Williams and Amherst. It is this tradition that has inspired the creation of FAS – precisely because it is known for producing leaders in every field of human endeavour.





Hallmarks of the Graduates

In developing the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, we have kept constantly in mind the attributes and skills needed for leadership in a complex and fast-evolving world. The hallmarks of our graduates will include what we refer to as the four C's and the three E's: critical thinking, clear communication, creativity, commitment to service, entrepreneurial outlook, engagement with pluralism and ethical action.

Critical Thinking

The critical thinker combines skill in quantitative reasoning; the ability to scrutinize ideas in the light of their social and historical context; and close attention to humans' emotional needs and cognitive biases. Critical thinkers hold themselves and others to the highest standards of intellectual integrity: they eschew bad faith, tendentious argument and obfuscation. Enduringly curious, they are lifelong learners who relish opportunities to add to their knowledge. This cluster of capabilities allows the critical thinker to penetrate to the heart of whatever matter is at hand, delivering clarity without sacrificing nuance.

Clear Communication

The value of critical thinking is drastically curtailed if its logic or conclusions remain unclear to others. Those who cannot effectively share the fruits of their thinking fail in one of the key tasks of leadership, which is to build understanding of vital goals and issues through persuasive communication. The ability to clearly communicate one's ideas to multiple audiences – in writing, orally and visually – will be among the most important attributes of FAS graduates.

Creativity

So often, change begins with an act of the imagination. Creativity helps us to perceive what apparently disparate phenomena have in common, to take an idea developed for one purpose and adapt it to another, to see a problem from the perspective of different individuals, cultures and academic disciplines. It makes it possible to narrate another person's story as they themselves might, and to understand the roots of a worldview we do not share. Above all, creativity inspires us to ask the most generative of all questions: what if?

Commitment to Service

True leaders think of their duty rather than their power. Instead of dwelling on the obedience owed to them, they

focus on their obligations to those they are meant to serve. Viewing their position as a trust, they work for the good of others. Though many look up to them, they do not look down, but measure their own actions against their guiding principles to see if they are indeed worthy of emulation.

Entrepreneurial Outlook

What do we mean by an entrepreneurial outlook? Not one motivated by profit. Rather, the determination to tackle daunting challenges and do that which has never been done, whether in art, science or business. A searching cast of mind grounded in confidence in one's abilities and the recognition that great achievements require calculated risks.

Engagement with Pluralism

Pluralism enriches our lives by expanding our sense of what it means to be human. But it also presents serious challenges. We want our graduates to overlook neither the benefits of pluralism nor the difficult issues it raises. Instead, we intend for them to actively engage with both throughout their lives. We want them to understand the ways diversity can open the mind, as well as the discomfort and misunderstandings it can occasion. We want them to possess the resilience required not to take offense, and the forbearance needed not to give it. We want them to remain optimistic about the potential for reason and discussion to bring us closer together.

Ethical Action

Around the world, we see corruption eroding trust and compromising the effectiveness of institutions. Our graduates must be capable of rigorous ethical reasoning, and committed to acting upon the conclusions they reach. They must have the independence of mind needed to swim against the tide and the honesty required to scrutinize their own conduct as closely as that of others. They must be alert to the all-too-human tendency to substitute noble words for the hard work of living according to one's ideals.

“What is required today is an educational approach that is the polar opposite of indoctrination – one that nurtures the spirit of anticipation and agility, adaptability and adventure.”

His Highness the Aga Khan



Nurturing the Spirit of Adventure

How will we develop the kinds of leaders we wish to send into the world? With an education that *goes beyond* – beyond the confines of a single subject, culture or mode of inquiry; beyond outmoded pedagogy that hampers learning and thwarts enthusiasm; beyond the classroom and into communities; beyond what can be found on any campus in Pakistan.

The Core Curriculum

The core curriculum is a required set of reading-, writing- and discussion-intensive courses in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, quantitative reasoning and ethics. Occupying the bulk of students' first two years, it is an opportunity to grapple with profound questions and the answers given to them by different cultures, religions, eras, thinkers and disciplines. By ensuring that every student shares a formative intellectual experience and acquires certain essential knowledge and skills, the core creates a community of inquirers. Rather than a superficial survey, it is a sustained conversation that engages students in humanity's quest to understand itself and the universe. Not the least of its benefits is that it provides a model for the reasoned debate on which democratic polities and pluralistic societies depend.

Interdisciplinary Majors

The major enables students to acquire powerful intellectual tools for illuminating reality and shaping the world. Through their major, students develop both confidence and humility, as they begin to master different modes of inquiry and to discover what it takes to add to humanity's store of knowledge. Students select their major by the end of their second year, and spend most of their third and fourth years taking courses within it. At launch, options will include Politics, Philosophy and Economics; Asian and Middle Eastern Studies; and Social Development Studies. We have chosen to offer interdisciplinary majors because we believe a multifaceted perspective on reality will enhance students' capacity not only to analyse the world but to act in it. An economist who is also an acute judge of the political scene is more likely to succeed in influencing public policy, just as a writer who understands the historical origins of literary forms will be better equipped to adapt them to her own moment.

Effective Pedagogy and Learning Experiences

Decades of research have clarified which teaching strategies work best, and which educational experiences are most likely to lead to deep learning. Effective classroom methods include problem-based learning, where students spend substantial class time solving problems using concepts learned in lectures, readings or online; team-based learning, which offers opportunities for learning in small groups that allow students to assist one another; and inquiry-based learning, which encourages the discovery of concepts through experimentation. Meanwhile, a number of outside-the-classroom experiences have been found highly beneficial. These include assisting faculty research, structured internships that require students to analyse their experiences and a senior thesis or capstone project that involves extensive self-directed research and writing. FAS will leverage these and other insights to maximize learning across all four years.

Life in a Diverse Community

It is one thing to study humanity's diversity in the classroom. It is another to experience it for oneself, through the process of living and learning alongside people from a range of cultures, religions, regions, ethnicities and countries. To afford our students that invaluable opportunity, we will assemble a student body that reflects the extraordinary diversity of Pakistan and its neighbours. To ensure that FAS is accessible to all talented students, regardless of their financial means, we will offer generous scholarships and financial assistance. Every FAS graduate will learn, from personal experience, how rewarding it is to form relationships across boundaries. They will see for themselves that a common appreciation of diversity and a common commitment to tolerance can form the foundation of a thriving community.



Our plan for FAS takes full advantage of the extraordinary opportunity to design a new undergraduate education from the ground up. We have drawn on the rich tradition of arts and sciences education while adapting it to a new context and infusing it with our distinctive values. We have thought carefully about the intellectual capacities and personal characteristics required of leaders, and how best to develop them, inside and outside the classroom. We believe the result is one of the most exciting developments in higher education in Pakistan in recent memory.



An Abundance of Co-curricular Activities

Academic work is only one aspect of the FAS experience. A wealth of co-curricular activities will offer numerous opportunities for self-discovery and peer-to-peer learning. Team sports, debate clubs, music and drama groups, literary and research journals and visits by inspiring speakers will foster a vibrant campus where there is always another chance to form a new interest, make a new friend, acquire a new skill, collaborate with classmates and build confidence.

World-Class Faculty

As much as anything else, the quality of our faculty will determine how much students learn, and how great a contribution FAS makes to knowledge. Our professors will be outstanding teachers and accomplished researchers, and will come to us from within Pakistan and around the world. They will consider their activity in the classroom to be as important as their work in the laboratory or library, and will continuously endeavour to improve the quality of their instruction in collaboration with their colleagues. With deep scholarly interests in the region, they will enhance students' understanding of and commitment to the societies that have nurtured them.



A History of Excellence

We are confident we will succeed in making our vision for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences a reality. Our certainty stems from the fact that the Aga Khan University has repeatedly demonstrated it can turn bold plans into remarkable achievements.

AKU is known as a pioneer and a quality leader. Founded in 1983 by His Highness the Aga Khan, AKU was Pakistan's first private university. Our Medical College has repeatedly been ranked the country's best, our School of Nursing and Midwifery is Pakistan's most influential and our Examination Board and Institute for Educational Development were the first such private institutions in the country. Six out of Pakistan's 10 most productive health researchers are AKU faculty members, and their work – much of which focuses on improving the health of the poor – has had a significant impact locally and globally. Our graduates go on to study and work at internationally renowned institutions, and to make a difference in Pakistan and around the world as leading researchers, teachers, clinicians, entrepreneurs, advocates and policymakers.

The Aga Khan University Hospital was the first in Pakistan to meet the rigorous accreditation standards of the U.S.-based Joint Commission International and the College of American Pathologists. The University's annual economic impact in Pakistan is more than US\$ 1 billion, according to a study by U.S.-based Centennial Group International.

AKU's global reputation is reflected in its leadership and the many organizations with which it has collaborated. Our Board of Trustees includes current and former leaders of such institutions as the University of California, San Francisco; the American University in Cairo; the Universidade NOVA de Lisboa; and the University of Toronto. Our partners and supporters include the development agencies of Canada, France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Johnson & Johnson Corporate Citizenship Trust, the Harvard Kennedy School, the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, the University of Washington and the University of California, San Francisco.

AKU is an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), one of the world's largest private development organizations. In Pakistan, AKDN has positively impacted millions of lives through its renowned rural support programme, 160 schools, historic preservation work and private-sector investments. AKU's ability to collaborate with its fellow AKDN agencies is a major advantage for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.



The Faculty of Arts and Sciences will be housed on five floors of the new University Centre (shown at far left), which is currently under construction on AKU's Stadium Road campus in Karachi. At right, from top to bottom: the entrance to the University Centre, the library, a common area and a classroom.



Our world is changing with remarkable speed. Technologies that once existed only in science fiction are a reality of daily life for billions. What all sides deemed impossible only yesterday is now established fact. As economies and societies transform before our eyes, voices contend with growing stridency for our allegiance.

Such an era demands the leaders we intend to educate. It needs their imagination as much as their scrupulous critical thinking. It needs their commitment to lifting up the poor as much as their ability to compete with the best the world has to offer.

Such an era demands the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.



“Educating for leadership must imply something more than the mere development of rote skills. In a world of rapid change, an agile and adaptable mind, a pragmatic and cooperative temperament, a strong ethical orientation – these are increasingly the keys to effective leadership. And I would add to this list a capacity for intellectual humility, which keeps one’s mind constantly open to a variety of viewpoints and which welcomes pluralistic exchange. These capacities, over the longer term, will be critically important to the developing world.”

—
His Highness the Aga Khan



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY