SUMMIT Chronicles ‘07

By Noor Al Jassim & Yasser Khan

It was a trip of a lifetime, one that we would never forget. Only ten of us were chosen from a few for such a trip and we knew enough from those who went last time. Our journey may have spanned continents, but a chance to travel to the main campus of our university could not be thrown out of the window. It’s time that we delve deeper into what we have been through - from the happy moments to the humor…

Day 1: We rose from comfy beds at the Marriott, and struggled to make our way down to the lobby as the bus was due to arrive anytime. We were eagerly looking forward to our 1st day of SUMMIT. We were scheduled to have breakfast, and it wasn’t the kind that you would expect – a variety of bagels with either cheese or peanut butter. Within 30 minutes, we were whisked away to our classes. Morning classes were different for some of us: Game Design, Survival Training, and Wireless Communications. Some had to spend time out in the freezing cold, learning how to make fire. I wish I had been there to see the look on their faces.

My afternoon class was my biggest highlight of the day – Improvisational Comedy. Now this is something that I was looking forward to. I never realized how many naturally born comedians were present around me. At the same time, Noor got a chance to explore the artistic side of herself. Within walking distance from the campus at the Pittsburgh Glass Centre, she created a work of art that was viewed as a masterpiece by many. What was even better was that we even met some of the students who came to Qatar last year. In the evening, things did not go as planned for our presentation as technical difficulties had stifled our hard work. So, we had to contend with tomorrow.

Day 2: The morning progressed the same as Day 1: breakfast with bagels, and then off to the morning class. Lunch had some nostalgia as it felt great to see Arabic cuisine being served. It almost felt like we were back in Doha. Our afternoon...
A Word from the Editorial Board

At the beginning of every semester, we make promises to become more professional. One of our main responsibilities is to meet your expectations to the fullest. This semester is not much different. All Around will again evolve, and will continue to change until we can not achieve any better, which is never.

However, All Around will go through the most drastic transforma-
By Rooda Al Neama

Every semester starts with new courses, new professors, and new challenges. The first impression of the semester is very important to us students, you either feel the pressure immediately or able to handle the workload. After talking to some of the students I realized that there are many pet peeves of students that have come with this semester. On a more positive note, some students actually liked some of the new changes that came with the new faculty. Here are some opinions:

**On seating charts:**
“I feel like I’m in fourth grade with the whole seating chart situation”
“I actually like the seating chart its something different”

**On Closed Laptop policy:**
“I get confused on which classes allow laptops and which don’t!”
“I can’t concentrate without my laptop, if I am just staring at the professor I fall asleep”

**On grading systems:**
“Fail/Pass quizzes, does that mean I either get a 100 or a 0?”
“60% for a final means we will fail!”
“Thank god its spread out quizzes instead of cumulative”

**On working with groups:**
“This random groups work means I have to work with free riders”
“I don’t know how to convince my group to come to university to work!”
“I like discussing my work in groups, it makes me understand better”

**On mathematics on campus:**
“Are you sure we are studying business and not a math major?”
“I forget all that math I know after a quiz”

**On morning classes:**
“I can’t get to a morning class no matter what”
“I can’t keep my eyes open in my morning classes!”
“I like morning classes so I can go home early”

Other comments around campus included “I am so depressed and its only the first week”, and “I have known you for three years already?!” and “YAY, I switched to business.” So with all the mixed emotions, and its only the beginning, I hope you all have a High GPA semester.
I tried to break it. The biggest challenge for us was to prove our competitiveness as a small campus. In the end, it proved to be a runaway success. We almost floored the audience.

The biggest highlight of our 2nd day was when we decided to follow an established tradition – painting the fence. With the support of our hosts and dedication, we succeeded in leaving our mark on the infamous fence. We know because we faced the perils of the rain as it attempted to wash away our painting efforts.

Day 3: This was it, the grand finale. Our last day at SUMMIT was drawing to a close, and we were all regretting it deep down in the bottom of our hearts. Game Design for me went very well, the very person who taught it worked in Electronic Arts for 2 summers. That’s where my future will be.

During our lunch break, Noor & I had a sudden craving for Ruffle’s potato chips, which were so irresistible. We couldn’t stop eating them. Out of curiosity, we decided to check up on the fence, and were able to witness our masterpiece in all its glory in daylight. We just hoped that it would stay that way for at least a week. Not only that, we had the urge to shop in the university bookstore. This was practically the last time we were able to visit this place for official merchandise.

We realized that we had learned so much that we were now motivated to bringing SUMMIT to Qatar. Who knows what surprises will be in store? One thing is for sure, that SUMMIT did change our lives more than we can ever imagine.

Would anybody like a hope booster?

By Mona Maher

During their final day of summit, the students from the Qatar campus, were sitting in a church pew by 9:30 in the morning, in spite of the rain and cold, and being welcomed profusely and lovingly by the community that makes up Pittsburgh’s Mt. Ararat Baptist Church. The summit students and I, attended Senior Pastor William H. Curtis’s fiery and motivational Worship Service on Sunday, the 14th of January, as organized by Gloria Hill, the university’s Vice Provost for Education.

While the students certainly had some idea of what to expect, mostly based on what they had witnessed in movies, they certainly did not anticipate getting up from their pew, holding hands with their neighbour, and some, singing along raucously with the remainder of the crowd and the Church choir.

Singing and standing up in union, while certainly an exciting experience, was not the most influential part of the service for the students. They were actually more enthralled by the service given by Pastor Curtis, which revolved around having enough faith not to give up on life, because Jesus Christ has not given up on his followers. Many of the students, in spite most of them being Muslims who do not believe in the divine trinity, left from the service inspired and motivated because Pastor Curtis’s point was delivered; it’s never too late to turn around from the point of hopelessness and believe that things can be better. What several students were particularly pleased about was how Pastor Curtis rejuvenated hope in the people attending, without having referred even once, to other religions, politics and other things such as crime culture.

This was the day’s first hope booster. Soon to follow the service, were brunch and a couple of activities with the RAs, Resident Assistants of the Pittsburgh campus, in the University Centre. One of the activities was creating a design on a pizza shaped piece of card board paper that represented the student who created the design in some way, an then all these pizza slices were put together to create a circular smorgasbord of jaunty colours and creativity.

It was then that the day’s second hope booster started to form itself. The tables and chairs in the room were all pushed against the wall, and the activity, ‘Walk across the line’ was started. None of the Summit students or I, had played this game before, and so, once again did not know what to expect. When playing this game, the moderator tells you to cross the line dividing the room in half, if you are or have done the thing that he says. A mundane example of this would be the moderator saying, ‘Cross the line if you are a Carnegie Mellon student,’ and students were at liberty to choose to cross the line or not. As the game developed, religious groups started crossing the line, in addition to
social classes and even emotional conditions such as being lonely or needing a hug.

Although none of the students had spoken to each other throughout the activity, it felt as if each student knew more significant things about the student standing next to her or him, than if they had tried to discover those details through discussion. Everyone then sat in a huge circle and discussed the outcome of the activity. Initially, many were scared or reluctant to share their perspective on what had passed, because some of the issues put forward were quite sensitive, such as surviving the experience of a drug or alcohol addict in your family.

Of all my experiences thus far at the Pittsburgh campus, ‘Walk across the line’ has been the most significant. The students discussed issues of human vulnerability, fear and stereotypes, and how outside the safe circle of people in that room, the ‘real world’ was still in magnificent disarray because of things so easily accepted in that room. Those things included different religious beliefs, embarrassment over social class and medical diseases. In that circle of emotions, complicated personal history and people, the students came to really appreciate what it means being who you are, and whatever that entails, without receiving censure or judgment in any form from those around you.

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Reallocating CMU-Q

By Wesam Saed

We came into the Weil Cornell Medical College building knowing that we would be leaving it someday, and now the time has come! Unfortunately for us, we made this building our ‘home’. We became attached to the environment much more than what we had anticipated.

If things go as planned, Carnegie Mellon students, staff, and faculty will move to the LAS building currently accommodated by Texas A&M University, Georgetown University, and the Academic Bridge Program, by August 2007. Texas A&M will move to its own newly built building, and therefore, we will take their place in the LAS building together with Georgetown University.

Although many students feel neutral about moving, some have expressed their opinions about the move as being discouraging:

"It’s bad enough that we won’t have the chance to experience “our” own building being the first graduating class, it’s horrible to have to be leaving this building that we’ve grown so used to!”

"Regardless of the complaints we received from Cornell, we have friends here, and we feel comfortable as if this is our second home!"

Naturally, Cornell would be happy to have its own building for itself where they'll be able to have more rooms for their equipment and students. However, some students feel sad and confess that they will miss having us around; "Actually I liked having you all around, it is nice sometimes to get away from the Cornell environment and mingle with other students with different experiences. I will for sure miss you all", says Al Anood Al Qahdi, a first year Med student at Cornell.

However, the Georgetown students are very happy, and are very enthusiastic to welcome Carnegie Mellon to the building. They are looking forward to making joint activities, and sharing interests, provided that it is time to diversify the environment. "I spend a lot of time hanging out with CMU students; it’s great that I’ll be able to see more of them everyday." Students from Georgetown as well as faculty & staff are looking forward to a productive year with us.

Some students feel that it will be "really cool", as Omar Alouba says, to move to a building with Georgetown, as we get along with them easily.

Gloria Khoury has assured us that we will definitely be taking our couches with us. "We will reproduce a warm and cozy environment to study and socialize. Not only will we move the couches, we have to move everything such as the IT equipment, ARC, Library, Recreation room and so on. It will be a big change, but we are going to take the CMU atmosphere & spirit with us".

I’m not going to able to walk into a yellow and red lounge, where most of us spent our most amazing time! However, I am looking forward to making more memories, regardless of where we are (Especially that we'll still have our couches!)
Clothes, do they really matter?

By Noora Al-Ansari

I have always paid close attention to what others wear. I read many books about relationships between clothes, culture, religion and personality, but I never had the opportunity to actually ask people why they dress up the way they do and whether they pay attention to what others are wearing. I took advantage of Carnegie Mellon Qatar being so diverse and asked students and faculty members about their point of view about clothing.

Most faculty and staff members said that they prefer dressing up in a professional way as a means of being physically distinguishable from their students. Professor Marion Oliver, calculus professor, well known for his colorful vests and bowties said, “I dress up the way I do because I like to look professional i.e. just by looking at me people can know that I am a professor not a student. When I am in a class my clothes signal that I am the one in control in the class room, so I dress up to convey my role as a professor and to gain the respect of my students”.

Olufunke Iloej, director of health and wellness, agrees with professor Marion about the fact that a person should dress up in a way that suits his or her profession. She started by saying “Clothes are the first thing that tells anyone something about me. They are the first tool of communication; that is why I choose my clothes carefully. In addition to that, my job as the director of health and wellness requires me to be prepared for any emergency situation; I have to wear clothes that will allow me to kneel, walk fast - speaking of that, I would like to point out that I also select me shoes carefully. I highly advise female students to avoid wearing heels on a daily basis.” During my conversation with Funke I also found out that she has an MBA degree, which she pointed as a reason to why she prefers the professional look.

Speaking of what is considered professional, Professor Patrick McGinnis and the business communication course he taught comes to mind. When Professor McGinnis was asked about his choice of clothes he replied: "It is my job to understand why people dress up the way they do. In fact, my choice of clothes is influenced by the nature of my courses. For example, I tend to dress up in a very formal way in my business communication class because I would like students to learn how to dress up professionally and also learn how clothes affect the way they view others and themselves. While in my cross culture business communication class I tend to dress less formally because I am trying to decentralize the course; give the students the feeling that it is a student driven course.”

I also wanted to know the opinion of some staff members since their interaction with students is not as intense as the faculty interaction. I chose to interview someone who joined our Carnegie Mellon Qatar campus this semester; most of you have probably met Nikki Kaysak new librarian. Personally, when I first met Nikki I was surprised when she told me that she is the new librarian. I took advantage of working on this article to ask her about her fashion style. My first question to her was "You are a librarian, but you do not look like one! How do you choose your outfits everyday?" With a very friendly smile she said, “I know people find it hard to believe that I am a librarian, but I am very proud of the fact that I do not look like one. I really like to personalize my clothes, plus working earlier in a fashion school taught me a lot about different types of clothes and fabrics and I started combining the things I learned with my personal preference.” When asked about her favorite designer she said, “Most of my favorite designers are Japanese and most of my favorite clothes come with instructions!”

After knowing the reasons behind why some faculty and staff members dress the way they do, it is important to see students are actually effected by they way professors or even other students dress. Most students agreed that professors should dress up in a professional way, some even pointed out that although professor wearing casual clothes, especially jeans, might look more approachable and friendly, they prefer seeing them in professional clothes. Here are some answers taken from students when asked regarding this issue:

Do you view professors in jeans as more approachable and friendly?

"No. I don't think that it is really that big of an issue with the professors. Professors are supposed to dress formally; however, other faculty members who wear jeans ARE friendlier." Amal Al- Sulaiti, BA freshman.

"I believe that stereotyping people according to the way they dress is incorrect. For example, like you had mentioned, one may very well perceive a professor wearing casual attire to be more approachable and student-friendly. Yet, such a person may in fact be very unapproachable towards students.” Anum Bashir, BA Junior

Have you ever been offended by what other students wear?

Salam Kayali BA, Junior said, "I was never offended but felt uneasy in two situations, the first being when someone's clothes start smelling and he/she wears them the next morning and the second being when some girls show us more than we choose to see!” Amal Al Sulaiti added, "Actually yes I did. Some girls here wear clothes that are very inappropriate to our Qatari traditions. I know that most of them are not Qatars or even Muslim, but I believe that they should respect us, Qatars and Muslims, even if they were not convinced of the way we think. Some girls wear short skirts, which are somewhat acceptable. But, when they wear skirts that are too short its too much to handle. I am not asking that they wear Hijab and Abaya, but I am asking for some conservativeness. Plus, a Qatari girl most probably would not wear Abaya if she was studying abroad. So, a non-Qatari girl should not wear revealing clothes in Qatar."
Exclusive Interview with Professor Aziz Lookman

By Maha Obaidan

Professor Lookman, a member of the Finance faculty of the Tepper School of Business, joins CMU-Qatar, having taught at Finance at the Pittsburgh campus for two years before coming to Qatar. He is teaching Finance 1 at the undergraduate level and Regression Analysis for the first time. I recently developed a course on the financial aspects of the oil and gas industry, and hope to introduce a module on Islamic Finance in the near future.

How do you like Qatar so far?
I love the pleasant winter weather, and enjoy the fact that I can wear sandals in the mid of January. I have not had the opportunity to see much of Qatar as yet, because I was unwell for the first two weeks when I first arrived. I lived near the sea for most of my childhood, and really enjoy being back on the coast here in Doha. I particularly like going to corniche for a walk were I can exercise while enjoying the view of the ocean. As a veteran sailor, I look forward to being able to sail year-round.

What do you miss back home?
CMU-Qatar is very, very small compared to the Pittsburgh campus. Work-wise, I miss the weekly seminars in Finance and Accounting that I used to attend, being able to interact with other professors in my field, and access to the array of research and teaching infrastructure there. On a personal level, I miss the grocery stores and the good bakeries back home. If anyone knows where to get really good whole wheat bread, please let me know. And I miss the greenery and our family friends. But, I really don’t miss freezing in the winter and having to shovel the snow!

What form of relationship do you have with your students?
My primary responsibility to you is to equip you to become the business leaders of tomorrow. I am here to teach and you are here to learn. For those of you interested in Finance, I anticipate that we will naturally interact a lot more. If you seek my opinion, be prepared to receive honest advice.

How different is CMU-Q from CMU-P?
Firstly, there is only one Carnegie Mellon University. For you students, this means that you will be held to the same standards as Pittsburgh students. Potential employers expect you to have the same abilities as students from our Pittsburgh campus. I think of CMUQ as a little seedling and CMUP as the grown tree. Hopefully, with time, Education City will also become an intellectual powerhouse like the Pittsburgh campus, brimming with libraries, interesting seminars, and scholars huddled together excitedly discussing great ideas.

What is your goal as a professor in CMU-Q?
I have a couple of goals here: giving you students a world-class education that trains you to work anywhere in the world, conducting research on the financial aspects of the oil and gas industry, and on developing new research and teaching initiatives on topics relevant to the Middle East. On a personal level, I hope to run a 10k by the end of the semester and explore the produce souqs.

How did you hear about CMU-Q?
I heard about CMU Qatar’s campus when it first opened back in 2004. I initially contacted Dean Thorpe back then, as I was very interested in working here. Education City and the general intellectual renaissance underway here. Qatar is an incredibly positive development in the Middle East, and I am very keen to be a part of it. I joined the Qatar campus when Finance was offered here.

Are you planning in staying longer in Qatar?
Yes. In Sha Allah, I will be here for the Spring of 2008 and 2009.

Your last words for the readers.
Enjoy it. Have fun. Work at a pace that allows you to become thoughtful, knowledgeable individuals, who still have time for their family and friends. You chose to receive a degree from one of the world’s best business administration programs. Be prepared to work for it.
Peanuts:

DID YOU KNOW:

★ During your lifetime, you’ll eat about 60,000 pounds of food, that’s the weight of about 6 elephants!

★ Some ribbon worms will eat themselves if they can’t find any food!

★ Dolphins sleep with one eye open!

★ The world’s oldest piece of chewing gum is over 9000 years old!

★ In space, astronauts cannot cry properly, because there is no gravity, so the tears can’t flow down their faces!

★ There are more plastic flamingos in the U.S, than real ones!

★ About 3000 years ago, most Egyptians died by the time they were 30!

★ More people use blue toothbrushes, than red ones!

★ A sneeze travels out your mouth at over 100 m.p.h.!

★ Your ribs move about 5 million times a year, every time you breathe!

★ In the White House, there are 13,092 knives, forks and spoons!

★ Slugs have 4 noses!

★ Recycling one glass jar, saves enough energy to watch T.V for 3 hours!

★ Lightning strikes about 6,000 times per minute on this planet!

★ The average American/Canadian drinks about 600 sodas a year!

★ It was once against the law to slam your car door in a city in Switzerland!

★ There wasn’t a single pony in the Pony Express, just horses!

★ Honeybees have a type of hair on their eyes!

On Friendship:

Friendship is like the breeze,
You can’t hold it,
Smell it,
Taste it,
Or know when it’s coming,
But you can always feel it,
And you’ll always know it’s there,
It may come and then go,
But you can know it’ll always be back.