

ASC HIGHLIGHTS

I SPRING 22-23



جامعة أبوظبي
Abu Dhabi University

Goodbye and

Hello

In this newsletter, we are drawn to the ancient wisdom of Laozi, the Chinese philosopher who lived about 2,500 years ago who tells us that “new beginnings are often disguised as painful endings.” As we say goodbye to our graduating students – we hope you had a memorable graduation ceremony – we congratulate you on your achievement as a result of hard work, commitment and dedication.

Leaving a place and people that you have come to know so well over the past 3-4 years is not easy, but it is time to look forward to planning and building a new future, and for this, we wish you well.

We take this opportunity to say goodbye to our dear student volunteers who have served the Academic Success Centre so well in the past few years. Your service to your peers has contributed to their growth and success and we hope that you found personal happiness and fulfillment in this service. Service is an important ethic, and we hope that you will continue to seek out opportunities for service in your new lives. As Winston Churchill once said: “We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

As we bid farewell to our student volunteers, we hope that you will carry fond memories of your time with us at the ASC and we wish you all the best. Make sure you stay in touch – we always love to know how high you have learned to fly.

We also have a welcome message for all our new Course Assistants, Peer Tutors and Peer Mentors – stay and make this your home. Bring your knowledge, your skills, your positivity to help your peers. We hope you will enjoy serving with us.

To all our friends and supporters, we say, thank you, Chill and enjoy the summer!

Your ASC Coordinators,



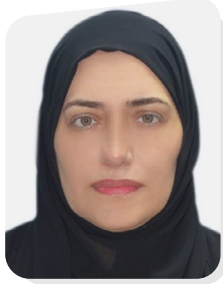
Deenaz Kanji (AA Campus)
and Duha Lababidi (AD Campus)

Meet Our Team!

Abu Dhabi Team



Ms. Duha Lababidi



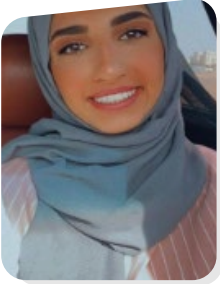
Ms. Mahdeya Abuoudah



Ms. Sara Herzallah



Mr. Abdulkarim Rageh



Ms. Huda Haggag



Ms. Aqsa Gul



Mr. Yazan Mne

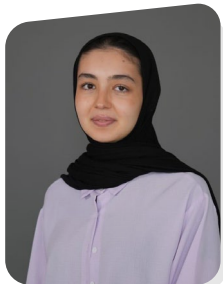


Mr. Qasem Al-Yafeai

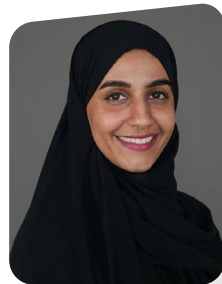
Al Ain Team



Ms. Deenaz Kanji



Ms. Juman Kaddoura



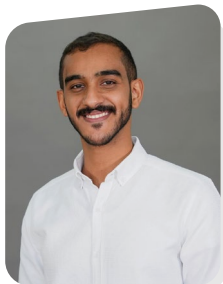
Ms. Mahnaz Baloch



Mr. Amar Shaarani



Mr. Modar Mekdad



Mr. Ahmed Salah

Meet Our Team!

- **What inspires us as a team?**

We believe working in harmony with flexible communication is what inspires us as a team. Moreover, working collectively helps us learn one another's unique skills and attributes, which gives us an understanding of each other's working style and approach towards different tasks assigned.

- **What do we like the most about being an Academic Tutor?**

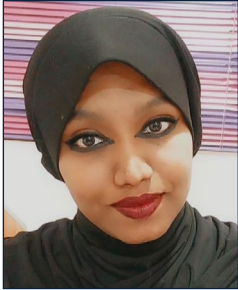
This position allows us to support students' development academically, personally, and professionally. We also take pride in witnessing students excel in exams and projects with the support we provide. Additionally, we aim to help them overcome their weaknesses and conquer their strengths

- **How do we see our work?**

We view this job as a professionally interesting, engaging, and sometimes challenging activity that enhances our personal development.



Reflections from the ASC Family Members



Shagufta Siffat - Course Assistant & Peer Tutor

1077048

Being a Peer Tutor for 3 years and a Course Assistant for 2 years has been an immensely rewarding experience. It has allowed me to share my knowledge and skills with tutees, assisting them in overcoming academic challenges. I have also had the opportunity to contribute to the success of the academic community in my own small way. Additionally, it has provided tutees with an opportunity for personal growth by enhancing their interactive communication skills.



Chakib Derradji Benchaouche - Course Assistant

1087307

My experience with the ASC has been nothing short of remarkable. The academic tutors have been incredibly supportive, surpassing any description. It has been a valuable learning opportunity for self-improvement, both academically and personally.



Sara Hesham - Peer Mentor

1059191

Being as a peer mentor is a very nice experience where I can contact and help anyone who needs support throughout their first semester, help them get to know the university, and maybe even becoming their first friend! This builds trust with students and boosts my self-confidence."



Abdullah Qasim - Course Assistant

1086616

At first, I thought being a course assistant would be challenging, but I pushed myself and made new friends through the role. Moreover, while some may not consider being a CA as the ideal job, I find it amazing. I truly enjoy when students ask for help.

Reflections from the ASC Family Members



Oula Awda - Peer Tutor

1082855

Volunteering at the ASC has helped me improve my time management and focus on my studies. As a third-year student, most of my classes are in the evening, which can be tempting to sleep in the morning. However, volunteering at the ASC has provided me with a reason to come to campus early and utilize the time between tutoring sessions for studying.



Nageena Sajjad - Course Assistant

1090024

The experience has been amazing. It has immensely helped me improve my presentation skills and boost my confidence. It brings me great joy to witness students as they make progress and improve. This satisfaction stems from knowing that my hard work and time have contributed to their growth.



Sultan Majed Alsuwaidi - Tutee

1075900

The ASC has been instrumental in assisting me throughout my courses. They have a knack for explaining complex concepts in a simplified manner, making it easy to understand. The entire team works diligently to ensure that each student receives the individual attention necessary for success. I would like to take a moment to express my gratitude to Mr. Abdulkarim for introducing me to the ASC. I deeply appreciate the time and effort he invested in helping me. Additionally, I want to thank Mr. Yazan for being an exceptional math tutor.



Maryam Tarek Alsiyada - Mentee & Tutee

1088954

During my freshman year, I encountered difficulties in obtaining all the necessary documents required by the university, such as equivalency letters and enrolling in my courses. However, my peer mentor proved to be a valuable resource in resolving these issues. She knew exactly who could assist me and guided me through each step until the problem was solved. Having a peer mentor to navigate the course selection process made things easier for me. She was incredibly helpful, accessible, and had a friendly personality that encouraged me to seek her assistance whenever I needed it. She always made time for me and prioritized my needs alongside her own work.

Unlocking Insights

My Journey of Personal and Professional Growth as a Peer Mentor

It was in 2019, during the second semester of my university journey, when the administration approached us about joining the ASC as peer mentors. Let me begin by sharing my experience from the first semester of becoming a peer mentor. Prior to taking up this role, I was one of those quiet individuals who avoided interacting with other students in class and spent most of my time alone. My desire to serve, help others, and my proficiency in speaking multiple languages drove me to become a peer mentor.

After signing up for the program and becoming a peer mentor, I felt nervous about how to approach and communicate with new students. Ms. Deenaz Kanji, one of our faculty members who introduced me to the program, came to encourage me and said, "Don't hesitate. Be confident and approachable when students come to talk to you." With her guidance, I started reaching out to students after a few days to offer my assistance.

Being a peer mentor has greatly benefited me in numerous ways. Through gaining confidence and approachability, I have overcome my shyness and fear when engaging with students, which is crucial. One valuable insight I have gained is that a significant number of students reach out to me seeking mentorship and advice. Being a Peer Mentor will benefit you in the future as it helps develop leadership abilities, the ability to interact with people in various ways, and interpersonal communication skills.

Overall, I have served as a Peer Mentor for three years. I strongly advise all university students to participate in this program, even if it's for just one semester, as it can significantly transform their lives and provide them with the motivation to assist others. Additionally, they will gain valuable knowledge that will benefit them in the future and enhance their resumes. I am immensely grateful to the Academic Success Center for initiating and prioritizing the welfare of students' academic lives.



Syed Muhammad Noman - 1076240
Peer Mentor & Course Assistant

Spotlight on Faculty Series



Madeleine Al-Tahan

Department of Mathematics and Statistics
College of Arts and Science, Abu Dhabi University
Email: madeleine.altahan@adu.ac.ae

Hello. Its Madeleine Al-Tahan, an assistant professor of Mathematics at ADU CAS. I have 16 years teaching and research experience in Mathematics, *a subject that is considered as ghost for many of you*. The more days, months, years passing in my life, I feel that I am still a student who is learning from her own faults/achievements, from her students, and from every single person I meet.

As an undergraduate student, I focused (only) on getting my Bachelor degree with the best understanding of the subject accompanied with the highest grades. Reflecting back on that part of my life, I realized that I missed many important things that I could do without affecting my purpose. The real thing that I missed was enjoying my university life. This was one of the things I wished I knew at that time: *"University life goes beyond earning a certificate. It is the skills we gain from participating in activities and interacting with colleagues and instructors."*

For our students, I would like to share things I realized their importance for happiness, success, and for being a long-life learner.

The learning process never ends with earned certificates. No matter what and how many they are. Enjoy every step of the journey.

Be clever when dealing with feedback. Not everyone is qualified to provide feedback. Analyze the feedback and construct your improvement accordingly.

Be patient when deciding to master a new skill. The "willing to" is the base, small steps will complete the job. Remember *"The beauty of Burj Khalifa is not the result of a single day's work"*.

Take advantage of every single activity/competition that is done inside (or outside) the university. It is not necessary to get a reward. The real reward that matters with time, is your involvement.

Train yourself on positivity. It is contagious.

There are no bad experiences. They are our best lessons that improve our growth. *"My best lessons were from the worse people I met. Learning just not to be like them is a skill."*

Most importantly, be kind. Kindness starts with a smile and remember that *"There are no taxes on smile. So, think financially and cheer up!"*

There is no A-student or an F-student. We are not evaluated by grades. Remember that *"A grade doesn't evaluate us as a person. It evaluates a very specific task that we did. It rates our achievement for the learning outcome of this specific task."* The role of the Academic Success Center is to provide an opportunity for our students to practice more, view the question from different angles, and get back on track. Therefore, don't hesitate to ask them for help as they are always ready to assist you!

Spotlight on Faculty Series



Dr. Giovanni Piacentini

*Department of Applied Sciences
College of Arts and Science, Abu Dhabi University
Email: giovanni.piacentini@adu.ac.ae*

Sharing my experience as a student

My student experience was very different from what we enjoy at ADU. The pinnacle of educational technology was an overhead transparency projector, and chalkboards were the primary teaching tools. Lessons were interminable lectures with minimal classroom interaction, quizzes, or problem-solving. Often, we had no slides or even course books, just suggested reading lists. This meant we had to take extensive notes, hindering our understanding of the lesson – a massive waste of time in my opinion.

However, I did learn some tricks that turned out to be useful for my success as a student and my career:

1. **Always ask why:** to fully understand any subject, it's key to understand the reasons behind concepts. For example, finding where a function is increasing. You search for 'x' values with a positive derivative. Why? Because the derivative is related to the slope. By grasping 'why', concepts are easier to remember and reconstruct if forgotten.
2. **Use many resources:** sometimes we might not fully understand a concept the way it was taught to us. Luckily enough, the variety of resources we can access is unlimited: first, the university's library, then all the online material we might possibly need.
3. **Never miss an opportunity:** to be successful in the future workplace, you must be versatile beyond your major. With universities like ADU offering myriad growth opportunities, it's wise to engage in as many extracurricular activities, workshops, and competitions as you can. Today's seeds will bear tomorrow's fruits.

The role of the ASC

Something that would have made a difference for me as a student was a system of support like the one you have in the Academic Success Center here in ADU.

The Academic Success Center (ASC) at ADU is a facility that I would have loved to have as an undergrad: it serves as an invaluable hub for those in need of academic assistance by offering free mentoring and peer tutoring, but it also fosters connections among students.

If used properly, the ASC can also be much more than that, and transcend its role as a support center, evolving into a collaborative platform. Imagine students from similar courses meeting in the ASC, studying together independently or under a peer tutor's guidance before critical exams or projects. This collaborative approach, proven to be more effective than solo study, is the essence of what ASC provides, fostering a community-focused learning environment.

ASC Events

Marhabteyn Event

“Marhabteyn” or “Welcome Day” was a very exciting event held in the early part of each semester to welcome our freshmen students to ADU. The event is high energy and full of fun activities, such as welcoming poetry, ice-breaker game “Who Am I?”, Dabkah Band, card magician, sports challenge, beat boxing, Kahoot, ADU Feud, “Things I Wish I’d Known as a Freshmen”, and raffle draw at the end. The audience especially had fun with the “Who Am I” game, which provided clues about a famous celebrity and freshmen had to guess the name of the celebrity. The vibes were truly energetic because the EMCEEs tried to imitate those celebrities, as well. The audience went wild when the “Dabkah Band” arrived, and were thrilled watching them perform. The magician, Mostafa, kept the audience enthralled with his mysterious card tricks. A Sports Challenge pitted two participants against each other as they competed to see who would outlast the other in the fitness challenge – indeed, the audience were extremely invested in the Sports Challenge as though they were participating personally.

All in all, Students, staff, and faculty members enjoyed all the segments; and many students were inspired to join the ASC, so that they can also have the chance to contribute to this event in future semesters. It was an amazing day!



ASC Events

The ASC Appreciation Ceremony

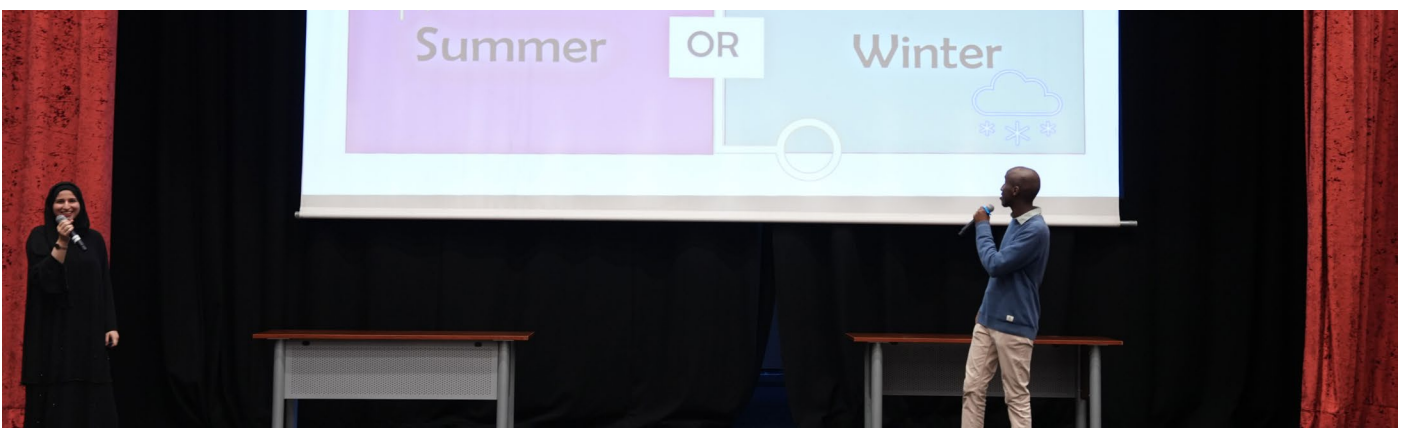
The ASC's second appreciation ceremony was held as a token of appreciation for all the Academic Success Center members of peer tutors, course assistants, and peer mentors for all their hard work and support. The ASC Coordinators, Ms. Duha and Ms. Deenaz, conveyed their sincere gratitude to all members. Several Peer Mentors, Peer Tutors and Course Assistants shared their testimonials and success stories with the audience. As a reward for their efforts, the ASC Coordinators and Academic Tutors distributed gift bags along with the end of semester certificates.



ASC Events

Orientation

ASC organized the orientation sessions for all the Undergraduate and Postgraduate freshmen students who had joined ADU in the spring semester. A series of interactive and informative sessions were held to guide the freshmen students in their transition phase to ADU. From Informing the students on how to access the online ADU portal to telling them about the student housing and about their academic advisors. The Orientation Sessions were a wholesome package and guide for all the students to know all the information they would need in their first year. Students not only gained knowledge about the different departments in these sessions but also had fun playing the activities prepared and the treasure hunt organized at the end of the day.



ASC Events

Ciao Party

The Ciao Party is an end-of-semester event that includes games, activities, and prize giveaways, creating a comfortable and relaxed environment for students prior to their finals. The main objective of this event is to boost student morale and engagement, helping them prepare for their exams with reduced stress. Additionally, it serves as a fun and exciting way to bid farewell to the semester.



Workshops

The ASC aims to enhance student knowledge and equip them with essential skills relevant to the 21st century. In pursuit of this goal, the center has organized numerous engaging and informative workshops, facilitated by students. These workshops have provided valuable opportunities for students to acquire new skills and foster interactive and collaborative relationships with their peers.



ASC Competitions

Math's Competition

When we think 'competition', we usually think about sports or talent, however, the ASC organized a Math competition in collaboration with the mathematics department faculty at the College of Arts and Sciences. All students were invited to participate in the competition. The competition tested the mental math level of the students and allowed them to have fun and engage in healthy competition with their friends. The top six winners were awarded and recognized by the math faculty. ASC is planning to organize many more of these academic competitions in the coming semesters, to enrich the student's academic knowledge and to encourage academic competition between students.



General Knowledge Competition

The Academic Success Center's General Knowledge Competition was a blast! Students from all over campus gathered in the Academic Success Center to test their trivia skills. The competition was fierce, but in the end, five students made it to the podium. The event was a great success, and it helped to promote friendly competition and camaraderie among the students.



ASC Competitions

Ramadan Competition

During Ramadan, the ASC hosted a Ramadan competition to test students' knowledge of the holy month and Islamic culture. The event involved a trivia contest where students competed, and at the end, six winners were selected to receive prizes. This initiative aimed to actively engage students with the ASC and provide an opportunity to enhance their understanding of Islamic culture during this holy month.



ASC

Additions

Academic Circles

ASC organized three different academic circles in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain Campuses. The Academic Circles included the English Conversation, Spoken Arabic, and the Math Lover's circles. These circles gave the students the chance to expand their language and conversational skills, and it allowed them to share their perspectives, culture, and viewpoints on a wide variety of topics. Also, it allowed them to interact and build relationships with a diverse group of individuals. The Math Lovers circle allowed us to cultivate the love of math in many students and had given many students the opportunity to practice math outside the classroom environment and in a more fun and interactive environment. Seeing the level of student interaction and excitement in these circles, the ASC is planning to continue all three of these academic circles in the coming semesters.



ADU Talk

The ASC has introduced an innovative initiative called ADU Talks, which are seminar-based presentations where students have the opportunity to present a topic of their choice in front of an audience. The main objective of ADU Talks is to enhance students' presentation skills and broaden their knowledge by exposing them to various topics. This platform serves as a valuable tool for cultivating confidence and improving communication abilities among students.



Let's Have Some Fun!

Sudoku

			7					
9			5		4			
		8	9		2	5	1	
		4				6		
5	6						4	1
3	2					9		
		3			5	8		
	4		2	3				
			8	9				6

Riddle

I have seas without water, coasts without sand, towns without people, and mountains without land. What am I?

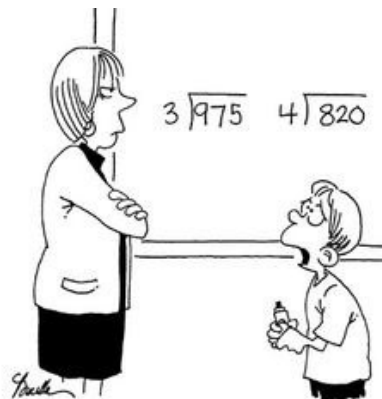


Joke



"Does Hip Hop count as a second language?"

© 2008 Jonny Hawkins



"IS THERE SOME PLACE I CAN SIGN UP FOR A 'DO NOT CALL ON ME' LIST?"

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phone: 216.371.8600 / email: ft@funnytimes.com

Never Give Up!

Amidst the challenges of university life, it's vital not to give up. Every **obstacle** is an **opportunity** for personal growth. **Believe in your potential** and keep pushing forward with determination. Despite feeling discouraged or overwhelmed, reconnect with your motivations. **Visualize** long-term goals to fuel your persistence. Setbacks and failures are part of the journey—embrace them as steppingstones to success. Learn, adapt, and persevere. Success may not come easily, but by staying resilient, you'll achieve the desired outcomes.

Key factors to remember for success and well-being during your university journey:

- **Take it one step at a time:**

Break tasks into manageable chunks and celebrate small victories along the way.



- **Progress is progress:**

Remember that even small steps forward are meaningful and should be acknowledged.

- **Seek support when needed:**

Don't hesitate to reach out to professors, campus resources, and the ASC (Academic Support Center) for guidance and assistance.



- **Surround yourself with positive influences:**

Surround yourself with supportive individuals who uplift and motivate you.

References:

<https://www.crowdcast.io/e/opportunity-in-the-obstacle/register>
<https://sara-katherine.com/2017/07/positive-people/>
<https://examstudyexpert.com/progress-quotes/>

Tasneem Nasri – 1079551
Course Assistant

How To Make ASC Visits Useful?

Visiting the ASC is a crucial first step in improving your performance as a tutee, but you must organize and make the most of your time there.

Some advice on how to make the ASC visits fruitful for tutees:

1. Come Prepared:

Tutees should come prepared with specific questions & topics they want to discuss. This assists to maximize the session time and ensures they get better understanding of the topics.



2. Tutees should be open and honest

Tutees should be open & honest about their strengths and weaknesses of the content. This provides tutors an opportunity to customize our approach as per the individual needs.

3. Take Notes

Tutees must take notes during the session for their own self-study understanding to review later and recall better.



4. Follow Up

Tutees should follow up after the session for further concerns. This ensures that they actually utilized the efforts to prepare.

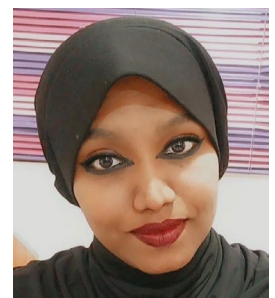
5. Attend Regularly

Tutees should attend tutoring sessions regularly for building strong foundation of understanding of the course matter, because this assists the tutor too to identify their graph of understanding.



6. Book an Appointment

Make sure to book an appointment. Then email your tutor to inform her about the course and the chapters which you want to study, so the tutor can prepare for it.



Shagufta Siffat - 1077048
Course Assistant

Summer Reading Recommendations

Bill Gates' recommendations:

Bill Gates has a long list, here are some that I curated from his list:

***The Lincoln Highway*, by Amor Towles.** "I put Towles's *A Gentleman in Moscow* on my summer books list back in 2019, but I liked this follow-up novel even more. Set in 1954, it's about two brothers who are trying to drive from Nebraska to California to find their mother; their trip is thrown way off-course by a volatile teenager from the older brother's past. Towles takes inspiration from famous hero's journeys and seems to be saying that our personal journeys are never as linear or predictable as we might hope."

***The Ministry for the Future*, by Kim Stanley Robinson.** "When I was promoting my book on climate change last year, a number of people told me I should read this novel, because it dramatized many of the issues I had written about. I'm glad I picked it up, because it's terrific. It's so complex that it's hard to summarize, but Robinson presents a stimulating and engaging story, spanning decades and continents, packed with fascinating ideas and people."

Source: <https://www.gatesnotes.com/Summer-Books-2022>

***The Road to Character*, by David Brooks.** "The insightful *New York Times* columnist examines the contrasting values that motivate all of us. He argues that American society does a good job of cultivating the "résumé virtues" (the traits that lead to external success) but not our "eulogy virtues" (the traits that lead to internal peace of mind). Brooks profiles various historical figures who were paragons of character. I thought his portrait of World War II General George Marshall was especially enlightening. Even if the distinction between the two types of virtues is not always crystal clear, *The Road to Character* gave me a lot to think about. It is a thought-provoking look at what it means to live life well."

Source: <https://www.gatesnotes.com/Holiday-Books-2015>

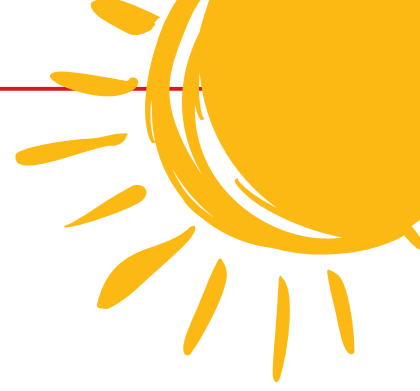
***Range*, by David Epstein** "Epstein provides a good framework for understanding why polymaths are so important for innovation. "In kind environments, where the goal is to re-create prior performance with as little deviation as possible, teams of specialists work superbly." That's why if I had to get surgery, I'd seek out a subspecialist who had a lot of experience with whatever procedure I needed. But when it's a "wicked environment," your job is not to repeat a complex procedure. By definition, it's to do something that no one has done before. Epstein reports that when researchers study great innovators, they find "systems thinkers" with an "ability to connect disparate pieces of information from many different sources" and who "read more (and more broadly) than other technologists."

Source: <https://www.gatesnotes.com/Range>



Ms. Deenaz Kanji
ASC Coordinator

Summer Days are Here Again!



“How will you enjoy this summer?” and “What are your plans for the summer?” These are the trending questions frequently asked as summer approaches. As college students, everyone deserves a great vacation, especially after the projects, finals, and late-night studying and submissions.

Traveling, is one of the greatest suggestions to enjoy the summer, especially when planned with your closest people.

The beach... Al Jumeirah Dubai, is the best place in the country for swimming, whether with your friends or family. Al Jumeirah Beach offers a magnificent view of Burj Al Arab. The view gets even better as the sun sets, with people playing volleyball on the sand, others enjoying the water with their huge beach balloon balls, and some kids timidly avoiding getting wet. Oh, and please don't forget your swimwear. Nobody wants to miss out on the fun.

Since we are talking about water activities, have you ever tried Yas Waterworld? Yes, I'm asking you, the reader. If your answer is no, then let me tell you that you still have a chance to experience a thrilling adventure. With some of the most amazing water slides and brilliantly designed water games worldwide, Yas Waterworld is a must-visit. Book your tickets now and trust me, if I continue describing it, you'll start dreaming about it. Okay, let's be serious. Here's the suggestion: One, go there on an empty stomach. Two, bring your best friends. Three, have fun!

Water, water, water... Next, how about drifting in the desert? No? You don't have to drift in the desert to enjoy it! Drifting is a respected sport, as long as it's done in designated areas and away from harming others. “But what else can we do in the desert?” Well, read this carefully. Get yourself a tent, prepare your car for a desert visit, gather the necessary camping gear, pack your barbecue equipment, and go camping with your friends. The desert is awake at night, but don't worry, it's not because of monsters or zombies. Just remember to share some scary stories!

The choices are endless! Pack your bags and get ready for the fun you've been waiting for. If we keep giving you more choices, the summer will end! Consider the options mentioned above and let us know which one you're most excited about.

Have a lovely Summer!!



Oubaida Mustafa Eziazi - 1086859
Peer Tutor

Why Should You Join ASC?

As a student on your university journey, you spend a significant amount of time at the university. So why not make the most of those hours by engaging in something beneficial that can pay off in the future? Joining one of the programs offered by the Academic Success Center (ASC) can greatly contribute to your personal and professional development. Whether you become a peer mentor, peer tutor, or a course assistant, the experience will not only enhance your academic abilities but also provide you with valuable soft and hard skills that are highly sought after in any workplace. Throughout the program preparation and implementation, you will acquire skills such as time management, interpersonal communication, people management, coordination, critical thinking, creativity, and much more. These skills will contribute to your growth both personally and professionally. Being part of ASC programs goes beyond tutoring or mentoring students. You will have the opportunity to explore different disciplines and further develop your writing, presentation, and creative skills through the events regularly organized by ASC. This exposure will broaden your horizons and provide you with valuable experiences that can shape your future endeavors.

Click on the links for more information about our [Peer Mentoring](#) and [Peer Tutoring](#) programs.

Do not miss the chance to be part of the ASC team and grow personally and professionally!

Hurry up and scan the QR codes or click on the links!



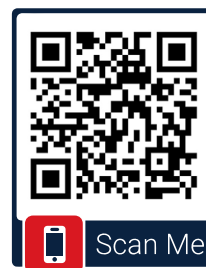
Summer 22-23 Semester

Apply for Peer Mentor Program



[Click Here](#) for the Peer Mentor application link

Apply for Peer Tutor Program



[Click Here](#) for the Peer Tutor application link

Fall 23-24 Semester

Apply for Peer Mentor Program



[Click Here](#) for the Peer Mentor application link

Apply for Peer Tutor Program



[Click Here](#) for the Peer Tutor application link