

NEW CHALK TALK

MIT Office of Digital Learning Conducts Design Camp for AUC and AUB faculty

On March 2, 2017, The [Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education](#) (AGFE) and Massachusetts Institute of Technology ([MIT](#)) launched a two-year capacity-building program promoting online learning in the Arab World with AUC and AUB as the first partners. The program is entitled “Transforming Teaching and Learning in the Arab Region through Online Learning” and involves a commitment from all partners to develop blended courses and promote an online learning agenda institutionally and regionally.

Background on the AGFE-MIT-AUB-AUC Collaboration

The first phase of the collaboration involves the re-design of two undergraduate STEM courses into a blended/digitally-intensive format that adapts existing MITx course content. MITx refers to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) offered by MIT on the EdX MOOC platform, which can be taken by anyone in the world for free but without credit, or can be used for supplementing, flipping or blending for-credit courses.

For the first phase of the collaboration, courses in the following disciplines have been selected:

- Biology (to be redesigned by both AUC and AUB). AUC faculty involved are Rania Siam, Andreas Kakaroukas and Arthur Bos
- Calculus: Differential Equations (to be redesigned by AUC). AUC faculty involved are Wafik Lotfallah and Nermin El Sissi
- Computer Science introductory course (to be redesigned by AUB)

The second phase of the collaboration will involve re-designing undergraduate courses from scratch.



From September 28 - October 1, 2017, CLT hosted faculty and staff from MIT’s [Office of Digital Learning](#) (ODL) and from AGFE, who participated in a public panel on September 28, conducted a three-day Design Camp for AUC and AUB faculty and faculty developers involved in the first phase of course redesign of this project, held a presentation for AUC community and a reception open to AUC faculty.



Public Panel on Blended Education

On September 28, MIT’s Vijay Kumar and AGFE’s Maysa Jalbout participated in a public panel: “Blended Education in Egypt: Opportunities and Challenges”. The panel prominently featured Egypt’s Minister of Education and former dean of AUC’s SSE Tarek Shawki, and was moderated by AUC Provost, Ehab AbdelRahman. This panel was open to the public and well-attended.

One student who attended the public panel commented: “I always believed that Egypt was in need of a true revolution in its education system as education is the

backbone of any society in the world... Before going to the event, I had a very mediocre image of the Egyptian Ministry of Education and its efforts in building a better education system for Egyptian students. However, after the talk, I was impressed with the Minister's idea of [creating] a blended, fun, and interesting learning system which aims to bring the true potential of young Egyptian students.” Camille Artigaud, AUC business senior

Three-day MITx Design Camp

The 3-day MITx Design Camp was led by MIT ODL faculty and staff and held with AUC and AUB stakeholders involved in integrating MITx materials in their courses, including faculty and CLT members.

MIT shared some of the evidence-based pedagogical considerations they use to design in-class teaching, and opportunities for promoting more active learning and critical thinking in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) curriculum. They also held some micro-teaching sessions to model some of their innovative pedagogies, and for the whole group to reflect. Afterwards, MIT and CLT worked with AUC faculty to experiment with creating and teaching a creative lesson plan, after which others gave constructive feedback. Wafik Lotfallah (MACT) commented on how “we learned how to make things more interactive in class, correct our mistakes, [and] get reasonable expectations from the students’ side”.



Faculty were then given opportunities to design their curricula around the MITx material. Faculty had previously been meeting MIT ODL staff online in preparation for the face-to-face design camp. They had had opportunities to explore MITx materials, and map the units to their own course units. During the design camp, they explored the backend of the system they would be integrating into their redesigned courses next semester. Andreas said that they “learned how to integrate MITx material into our courses in order to enhance the learning experience of our students”.



Arthur Bos says “I got inspired by the workshop and regularly encounter situations during my classes thinking: ”I could incorporate some of the MITx material here next semester.”

CLT and MIT will continue to work with faculty to redesign and assess the pilot courses, expected to launch during Spring 2018. Initial work-in-progress will be shared with the AUC community in CLT Symposium, February 2018.