

# **Al-Quds & Brandeis Partnership Administration & Finance Exchange**

Report: Imad Abu Kishek's Strategic Planning Year at Brandeis University

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**Exchange Leaders:** Imad Abu-Kishek, Peter French, and Perry Hanson

**Partnership Directors:** Daniel Terris and Khuloud Khayyat Dajani

**Project Staff:** Josh Wilson and Stephanie Gerber Wilson

## Executive Summary

Imad Abu Kishek spent an academic year in residence at Brandeis University, in which he took courses at Brandeis; worked with Peter French, Brandeis' executive vice president and chief operating officer; met with members of the EVP/COO's executive staff; created a strategic plan for Al-Quds University; and hosted a weeklong visit to Brandeis by several of his deputies to begin preparation for strategic change at Al-Quds.

## Coursework

Mr. Abu Kishek began his coursework at Brandeis over the summer of 2005 with courses in micro and macro economics at the International Business School at Brandeis. During the fall term he continued his coursework at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management with a course on Leadership and Organizational Behavior. During the spring term he completed a course on Strategic Planning.

## Rotation with Office of EVP/COO

Mr. Abu Kishek met with Peter French, Brandeis University's executive vice president and chief operating officer, and his executive staff to investigate Brandeis' operating procedures. During the fall of 2005, each of the Mr. French's executive staff members hosted Imad for a week or more as he learned about the processes in place at the departments that report to the Office of the EVP/COO. These executive staff members included:

- Mark Collins, Vice President for Campus Operations
- Dan Feldman, Vice President for Capital Projects
- Debra Gratto, Vice President for Human Resources and Employee Relations
- Perry Hanson, Vice President and Vice Provost for Information Technology and Libraries
- Jim Hurley, Former Vice President for Budget & Planning

- Maureen Murphy, Vice President for Financial Affairs and Treasurer

### Strategic planning

During Spring 2006, Mr. Abu Kishek developed the backbone of the Al-Quds strategic plan. After meetings with Peter French and Perry Hanson, Imad worked in close collaboration with Josh Wilson and Stephanie Gerber Wilson to develop a document that outlined Al-Quds University's weaknesses and strategic objectives. Mr. Abu Kishek, in partnership with Josh Wilson, then developed a slate of strategic activities for implementation at Al-Quds. He sought and received feedback from Peter French and from members of Mr. French's executive staff.

### Preparing for implementation—Administration and Finance visit to Brandeis

In May 2006, Mr. Abu Kishek welcomed 7 members of his staff from Al-Quds University to Brandeis. He prepared for his staff's visit by creating the backbone for a strategic plan. With assistance from Josh Wilson and Stephanie Gerber Wilson, Imad developed a weeklong program of meetings for his deputies with their Brandeis functional counterparts. During this visit, Imad and his staff also engaged in intense discussions about the need for strategic change at Al-Quds University. A full report of the activities that took place during the visit is included separately.