



Ruya

Annual Newsletter



Volume 6
2026

Dean of General Studies' Message

I am delighted to express my profound pride and appreciation for the Core Curriculum Program on the release of the sixth issue of Ruya, which showcases the program's most significant achievements during the 2025 academic year. This issue is published at a pivotal moment, as the program undergoes a period of dynamic transformation through the introduction of new courses designed to enhance students' critical thinking, innovation, and entrepreneurship skills, competencies essential for meeting the demands of the modern world and for preparing Qatar University students to become creative, forward-thinking leaders in their respective fields.

The program's vision extends beyond the traditional academic scope, viewing the teaching of these competencies as a strategic investment in developing an enlightened generation that is equipped with analytical and critical faculties, an innovative spirit, and an entrepreneurial mindset capable of transforming challenges into opportunities. This commitment aligns seamlessly with Qatar National Vision 2030, ensuring that education remains a cornerstone of sustainable national progress.

Such achievements would not have been possible without the collective dedication and collaborative spirit of the program's faculty and staff, whose steadfast commitment to delivering high-quality education continues to enrich students' academic experience and strengthen Qatar University's reputation locally, regionally, and globally.

I extend my sincere congratulations to all members of the program on this remarkable milestone and am pleased to present the sixth issue of Ruya. May it continue to serve as a vibrant platform for highlighting pioneering initiatives, innovative contributions, and transformative efforts that shape both our students' journeys and the future of our nation.



With sincere appreciation,
Dr. Saba Mansoor Qadhi
Dean, Deanship of General Studies

Director of the Core Curriculum Program's Message

The Core Curriculum Program has remained steadfast in its commitment to continuous growth and academic excellence. Over the past year, its development efforts were marked by several key initiatives, most notably a comprehensive academic review conducted as part of the program's five-year periodic evaluation plan aimed at ensuring sustained educational quality and continuous enhancement. This review process involved active collaboration with all colleges and the Student Representative Council, reinforcing the program's inclusive and participatory approach to improvement.



Among the year's most significant accomplishments was the introduction of new courses that more closely align with Qatar University's evolving strategic priorities while addressing the diverse academic and professional needs of students across disciplines. These include Fundamentals of Personal Finance, Introduction to Creative Industries, and Artificial Intelligence in General Education, in addition to several courses currently under development and review—such as Creative Visual Applications.

The program also celebrated several notable achievements, including the announcement of the CCP Excellence in Teaching Award recipient and the recognition of student winners in the E-Portfolio Award, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Award, and Community Engagement Award, all of which highlight the program's ongoing dedication to excellence and student empowerment.

As part of its sustained efforts to advance pedagogical innovation and strengthen teaching practices, four faculty members successfully completed the Teaching Fellowship in Higher Education—a one-year professional development initiative offered jointly by the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Qatar University.

It is with great pleasure that I present the sixth issue of Ruya, a genuine reflection of the program's sustained achievements and dynamic progress throughout the academic year. This issue showcases the program's milestones, initiatives, and strategic goals, as well as the challenges navigated during 2025 amid a rapidly evolving global and regional landscape.

With kind regards,
Dr. Ali Hamad Fetais
Director, Core Curriculum Program

Program Accomplishments

Qatar University Reviews The Core Curriculum Program to Enhance Quality and Continuous Development



In August 2025, Qatar University launched a comprehensive academic review of its Core Curriculum Program under the Deanship of General Studies, as part of the university's five-year periodic review cycle dedicated to ensuring academic quality and fostering ongoing program enhancement. The review aimed to evaluate and strengthen the program's effectiveness in developing students' competencies, while ensuring alignment with international benchmarks and labour market demands through curriculum modernisation and the adoption of best practices in pedagogy and assessment. According to Dr. Saba Qadhi, Dean of the Deanship of General Studies, the review represents a strategic milestone in assessing the program's educational outcomes and identifying opportunities for improvement. The process actively engaged students, faculty, academic departments, and external reviewers, reflecting the university's commitment to an inclusive, data-driven approach to academic development.

It included preparing a comprehensive evaluation report, conducting a detailed analysis of curricular design and learning outcomes, and reviewing teaching strategies and academic support systems. As part of the review process, the program welcomed delegations from Pennsylvania State University (USA) and the American University in Cairo, who met with university officials and academic committees, held interactive sessions with over 30 students, and observed classes in key courses, including First-Year Seminar and Calculus. The review underscored Qatar University's enduring commitment to cultivating an innovative, student-centred learning environment, advancing teaching excellence, and equipping students with the knowledge and skills required to thrive in a rapidly changing labour market. It also reaffirmed the university's focus on integrating core curriculum requirements with the various academic disciplines across the institution.

Program Accomplishments

Launch of a New Course on Artificial Intelligence in General Education



The Core Curriculum Program has launched a new course titled “Artificial Intelligence in General Education” (UNIV 230), aimed at enhancing students’ understanding of AI concepts, applications, and societal impacts. Offered in both Arabic and English, the course is open to students from all majors as part of the Behavioural and Social Sciences package.

The course adopts an interactive and interdisciplinary design, integrating theoretical foundations with applied projects and real-world case studies. It enables students to grasp the core principles of AI and critically examine its role in everyday life. Emphasising critical thinking, ethical awareness, and innovation, the course encourages students to explore emerging trends in AI while developing creative and problem-solving skills relevant to diverse contexts.

Importantly, no prior programming experience is required. The course utilises user-friendly interactive tools that allow students to apply AI concepts and design practical solutions. It also features class discussions, guest lectures by AI specialists, and collaborative projects in which students propose AI-driven solutions to societal challenges, cultivating a sense of responsibility, digital literacy, and creativity in the ethical use of AI.

Through this initiative, the Core Curriculum Program seeks to empower students to engage with AI responsibly and effectively in both academic and professional settings. The course aligns with global digital transformations and reinforces Qatar University’s leadership in innovation, ethics, and future-oriented education.

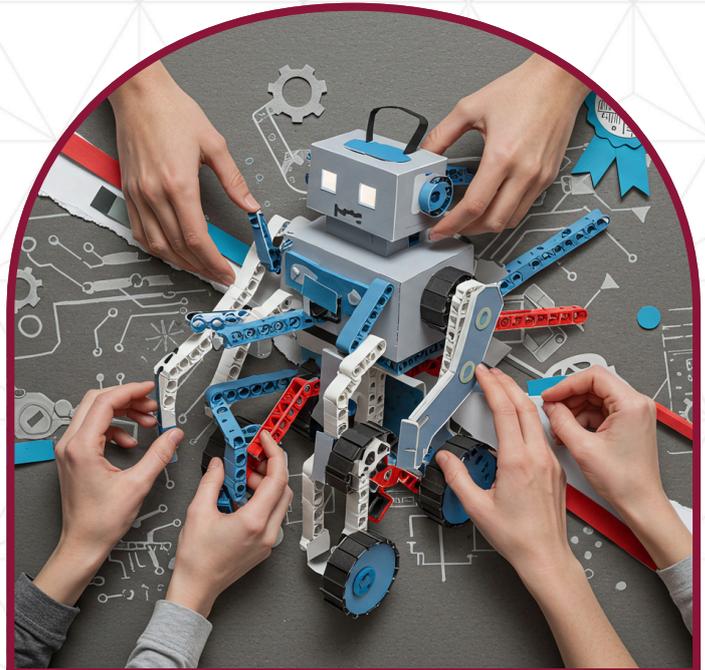
Program Events



Virtual Event: “Volunteering: A Benefit for Me and My Community”

The Core Curriculum Program organised a virtual seminar titled “Volunteering: A Benefit for Me and My Community,” presented by Mr. Maaidh Jabr Al-Qahtani, Executive Director of the Qatar Voluntary Centre and Director of Corporate Communications at the Qatar Center for Events. The session explored the pivotal role of volunteerism in advancing both individual development and societal progress.

The seminar formed part of the program’s ongoing initiatives to promote citizenship values and social responsibility among Qatar University students. It witnessed active participation and dynamic interaction through the Webex platform, reflecting students’ growing interest in community engagement and national service.



Virtual Event: “A Graduate’s Success Story: From Engineering to Innovation”

The Core Curriculum Program presented an inspiring seminar titled “A Graduate’s Success Story: From Engineering to Innovation,” featuring Ms. Iman Al-Hamad, an expert in technology and secure digital transformation. During the session, Ms. Al-Hamad shared her remarkable professional journey from the classroom to the world of innovation, emphasising the importance of perseverance and continuous self-development as key drivers of success and excellence.

Program Events



Student Research Poster Exhibition 2025

The Core Curriculum Program organised the “Student Research Poster Exhibition 2025” at the Research Complex Building, featuring broad participation from students enrolled in key courses such as First-Year Seminar, Leadership, Innovation and Community Engagement, Service-Learning, and Creative Industries.

The exhibition showcased the work of over 150 students, who presented 42 individual and group research posters covering a diverse range of themes. These projects reflected the students’ growing research competence, their ability to apply academic learning to real-world challenges, and their commitment to addressing community issues through informed inquiry and innovation.

Alongside the exhibition, the Core Curriculum Program Awards for the 2024–2025 academic year were announced, recognising nearly 60 outstanding students across several categories, including the E-Portfolio Award, the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Award, and the Community Engagement Award. These honours underscore the program’s dedication to fostering excellence, creativity, and social responsibility among Qatar University students.

A distinctive highlight of this year’s event was the introduction of a special award for the best research projects examining the phenomenon of indebted individuals (“Al-Gharimeen”) in Qatari society—a pressing national and social concern explored within the First-Year Seminar course. Ten student research projects received this recognition, offering multi-dimensional analyses of the issue from economic, educational, and social perspectives, and presenting community-based and awareness-driven solutions rooted in Qatar’s local context. The exhibition reaffirmed the Core Curriculum Program’s commitment to promoting research-based learning, civic engagement, and social innovation, empowering students to become proactive contributors to Qatar’s development and the realization of Qatar National Vision 2030.



Program Events



Virtual Seminar on “Entrepreneurship in the Digital Age: From Innovation to Impact”

The Core Curriculum Program organised an insightful virtual seminar titled “Entrepreneurship in the Digital Age: From Innovation to Impact,” delivered by Mr. Mohammed Al-Dulaimi, Founder and CEO of SkipCash.

During the session, Mr. Al-Dulaimi shared his entrepreneurial journey in building a successful digital startup, offering practical insights into the challenges and opportunities that young entrepreneurs encounter in today’s fast-paced digital economy. His talk underscored the importance of innovation, resilience, and adaptability as key drivers of sustainable success in an increasingly technology-driven business landscape.

The seminar formed part of the program’s broader efforts to foster an entrepreneurial mindset among Qatar University students, equipping them with the skills, creativity, and confidence needed to translate innovative ideas into impactful real-world ventures.



Virtual Seminar: “A Success Story in the Creative Industries”

The Core Curriculum Program, under its “Success Stories” series, hosted a virtual seminar titled “A Success Story in the Creative Industries.” The session featured Ms. Fatima Al-Shaibani—an accomplished artist, designer, and cultural consultant—who shared insights from her creative journey and her experience in transforming art into an industry with tangible cultural and economic value.

During the seminar, Ms. Al-Shaibani underscored the centrality of innovation in the growth of the creative economy. She highlighted the pivotal role of creative industries in reinforcing national cultural identity and promoting sustainable cultural development.

The event reflected the Core Curriculum Program’s ongoing commitment to inspiring students through real-world success stories and deepening their understanding of the creative sector’s contribution to Qatar’s cultural and economic landscape.

Program Events

Professional Development in the Core Curriculum Program



During the Spring and Fall of 2025, the Core Curriculum Program witnessed a series of professional development sessions aimed at empowering faculty members and enhancing their teaching and research practices with the latest tools and methodologies. In Spring 2025, Dr. Abdelhamid Ahmed delivered a session on engaging undergraduate students in interactive learning using the "Mentimeter" tool in teaching core courses, and Dr. Nabeel Albashiry presented a session on employing digital tools to ensure successful learning. Meanwhile, Dr. Youmen Chaaban conducted a session on "Q-Methodology" in educational research, while Dr. Evangelos Moustakas addressed the topic of creative industries.

In Fall 2025, the program continued its sessions as Dr. Haifa Al-Haj presented on "AI-Generated Educational Content and Open Licensing," and Dr. Mohamed Emara

delivered a session on "How to Submit Applications to the Qatar University Institutional Review Board (QU-IRB)." Additionally, Dr. Youmen Chaaban conducted a session titled "Ethical Explorations with Generative Artificial Intelligence," while Dr. Yasmin Hegeer presented on "Using Respondus LockDown Browser in Student Assessment: Advantages and Challenges." Furthermore, Ms. Nesreen Koffa delivered a session titled "From Reflection to Self-Perception: A New Horizon for Self-Awareness in Teaching," and finally, Dr. Abdelazeem Sabry presented a session on "Teaching Through Humour: Applications from the First-Year Seminar Course."

These sessions reflected the program's commitment to developing faculty capabilities and supporting innovation in course design and instructional methods, in alignment with global trends in higher education.

Faculty Accomplishments



Dr. Saba Qadhi, Dr. Abdel Azim Sabri, Dr. Abdel Hamid Ahmed, Ms. Nesreen Quffa, Ms. Ola Abu Rajouh, Mr. Mohammed Qeshta, and Mr. Sami Arar presented two research posters at Qatar University's Annual Research Forum on 19–20 February 2025. The event's theme was “Empowering Communities Through Research: Global Challenges and Local Solutions.”

Ms. Ola Abu Rajouh was awarded the Excellence in Teaching Award for the Core Curriculum Program at Qatar University in 2025, acknowledging her exceptional efforts in fostering an engaging and dynamic learning environment for undergraduates. The award recognises faculty members who exemplify best practices aligned with Qatar University's core pillars of teaching excellence.



Program Members Dr. Manal Al-Obaid, Dr. Iman Saeed, Dr. Abdel Hamid Ahmed, and Mr. Mohammed Qeshta received the Qatar University Teaching Fellowship in Higher Education (QUTF). This program is offered through a partnership with Harvard University (USA) and the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) at Qatar University.

Faculty Accomplishments



The 23rd issue of the Qatar Research Journal includes details about the student grant awarded to Dr. Abdel Azim Sabri Ahmed for his project, “Promoting the Concept of Volunteerism among University Students to Encourage Participation in Global Events in Qatar.”

Mr. Sami Arar has translated three books from English into Arabic: *The Creative Economy and Culture*, *The Bread of Angels*, and *The Last Message*. These works were published by Ninawa Publishing House in Damascus and Amer Publishing and Distribution House in Cairo.



Dr. Imen Said, Dr. Lamia Romdhani, Dr. Bouthaina Larbi, Ms. Ola R. Shadid & Dr. Saba Mansoor Qadhi (2025) published a noteworthy research paper entitled: “Imagine and Make pedagogy: Impacts of Combining Entrepreneurial Thinking, Design Thinking and 3D Printing technology on the learning experience in general education in the *Journal of Cogent Education*.”

Spotlight Interview

Dr. Ali Fetais: From Finance to Core Curriculum

“When you find joy in something, you must give yourself wholly to it.” With these words, Dr. Ali Fetais began reflecting on the driving force behind his success and the journey that took him from serving as Assistant Professor of Finance at the College of Business and Economics, Qatar University, specializing in Islamic banking, capital markets, and risk management, to becoming Director of the Core Curriculum Program at the Deanship of General Studies. His path has been defined by passion, commitment, and a constant pursuit of excellence.

The Core Curriculum Program is far more than a sequence of required courses, it is a shared intellectual space where students from diverse colleges and disciplines converge, broadening each other’s horizons and perspectives. The program seeks to cultivate critical thinking and shape students’ worldviews in harmony with Qatar University’s mission as a center of intellect and creativity grounded in Arab and Islamic values. It serves as a holistic developmental framework, enhancing core competencies, reinforcing professional and social responsibility, and aligning with both the University’s strategic vision and Qatar National Vision 2030. Ultimately, it represents a vital stage in each student’s



Dr. Ali Fetais earned his PhD in Finance from Durham University, United Kingdom (2023). He also holds an MSc in Islamic Finance from the same institution (2017), where he was awarded First Prize for Best Master’s Thesis, and a bachelor’s degree in finance and accounting from Qatar University (2016).

journey of self-discovery, skill-building, and lifelong learning.

We maintain a continuous dialogue with the labour market, ensuring that our curriculum evolves alongside its shifting demands. This responsiveness equips students with relevant skills and competencies for the future. For instance, Artificial Intelligence has been embedded across most program courses to strengthen digital literacy. Additionally, we were among the first to introduce the “Creative Industries” course, designed to reflect emerging market trends and prepare students for innovative and meaningful careers.

Spotlight Interview

Dr. Ali Fetais: From Finance to Core Curriculum

There is ample room for integrating Islamic finance expertise with program leadership. The Core Curriculum Program operates as a crossroads of disciplines, where diverse academic fields intersect, exchange ideas, and generate new knowledge. This multidisciplinary environment is one of our defining strengths. Every area of expertise enriches the program's collective perspective. Our faculty members represent a wide range of specializations, including education, engineering, business, psychology, and media. Such diversity underpins the program's agility, inclusiveness, and distinction.

My advice to students is that when you love something, devote yourself to it. From my own experience as a university student, I learned that while academic excellence is crucial, active participation in extracurricular activities is equally transformative for personal growth and character development. Research consistently shows that students who engage in clubs and campus activities tend to achieve stronger academic outcomes than those who do not.



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