



Al Ain University

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President, Al Ain University

United Arab Emirates

El-Refae is a professor in financial economics with expertise in higher education management, risk management in higher education institutions, and university corporate governance. Before joining Al Ain University, he led the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Science at Al Zaytoonah University of Jordan (ZUJ) for 16 years as a Dean. Since July 2011 he was appointed as the President of Al Ain University (AAU).

During his leadership, a significant milestone in the growth of AAU was achieved in 2016 by the opening of the Abu Dhabi campus with its state-of-the-art infrastructure and latest technology. The expansion was planned not only for the surge of student enrollment that started by then but was also accompanied by an improvement in the quality of education the university has offered.

With a long-term vision, he worked toward accreditation goals for AAU realized by getting internationally recognized accreditations such as The College of Pharmacy by ACPE, the College of Engineering by ABET, the College of Business by AACSB, the College of Communication by AQAS, the College of Law by HCERES being the first and only university in U.A.E. to get this international recognition at that time. In a similar vein, the College of Education is already in an advanced stage of obtaining CAEP accreditation.

EI-Refae's activity included a commitment to serving his community. He has been a member of several councils and bodies. He was a member of the Coordination Council for Higher Education and Scientific Research, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research MOHESR at the UAE, and the Arab Universities Governance Council. Currently, he is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Advisory Council for AACSB, and he is the General Secretary of the Society of Students Affairs Deanship Management (SSADM) which is an emergent organization from The Association of Arab Universities. He served as a member of the Executive Council of the Association of Arab Universities, and as a member of the Board of Trustees at Middle East University MEU.

Besides expanding the enrollment rate at AAU, EI-Refae was keen on coping with the current regional and global trends in education quality. In recognition of his efforts as a promoter of education quality assurance, he was named Model of Good Practice in education management by the Commission for Academic Accreditation of the MOHESR at UAE. He served as a chair and a member of the Academic Accreditation Committee and Equivalence Committee for Foreign Degrees in the Jordanian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. As a president of AAU, he has signed various memoranda and agreements with regional and international higher education institutions from both private and governmental sectors.

EI-Refae's scholarly work and research interests are in several areas including higher education quality, international higher education, diversity and education, risk management in higher education institutions, university corporate governance, asymmetric information in higher education, financial economics, industrial organization, and big data. He has authored fifteen books in various areas like accounting, finance, and economics, and has published more than 120 papers in numerous reputable peer-reviewed journals. His research has appeared in Vine Journal of Information and Knowledge Management System, the Journal of Emerging Technologies in Accounting, Energy policy, International Review of Administrative Sciences, International Journal of Trade and Global Markets, ICT Express, the Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, Global Business and Economic Review, and the International Journal of Economics and Business Research among others. He worked in a team as a developer and writer of textbook content in accounting, business, and economics according to the UNCTAD curriculum offered by the Arab Society of Certified Accountants.

EI-Refae chaired the steering committees of fifteen international conferences in economics and business. EI-Refae is the chief editor of AAU Journal of Business and Law and is on the editorial boards of the International Arab Journal of Information Technology, and GBEA. He was also a guest editor of IJEPR, GBER, and other Arabic academic journals. In addition, he is a reviewer for several Elsevier and Scopus indexed academic journals. He is frequently asked to be an external evaluator of scholarly attainment and promotion portfolios in the fields of

economics, finance, and accounting. Moreover, he is a member of the American Accounting Association, American Economic Association, and Arab Economic Association. In recognition of his leadership and success, El-Refae has received several awards during his professional journey.

El-Refae holds a Bachelor's Degree with honors in accounting, an M.Sc. in accounting, an M.A., and a Ph.D. in financial economics from the University of Cincinnati, USA. In addition, he completed the CMA and CPA courses.

Expertise related to UN Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, UN member states agreed to 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all.

This person's work contributes towards the following SDG(s):

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