

Press Release
KFUPM, Dhahran
January 16, 2008

KFUPM International Advisory Board Concludes its Third Meeting in Dhahran

The International Advisory Board (IAB) of the King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals board held its third meeting in Dhahran from January 12 to 13, 2008. The main points of deliberation included issues related to faculty, students, focused research agenda, challenges and opportunities where KFUPM can excel, and financial plans to achieve the strategic goals of the University. The meeting was highly successful in achieving its objectives. The members recommended that the University expands its research role and increase the number of graduate students to better serve as a strategic resource for Saudi Arabia.

The initiative for establishing the IAB was taken by Dr. Khaled S. Al-Sultan, Rector of KFUPM, to provide KFUPM a global perspective on trends and issues that may affect the University. The objective of IAB is to provide expert advice to accelerate the KFUPM's development drive.

IAB fills very important advisory functions concerning the University's internal planning, and its outreach to its peer institutions for new innovations and developments in research and curriculum, academic administration, and providing service to the community, noted Dr. Khattab Al-Hinai, Secretary-General of IAB.

The board is chaired by Dr. Martin Jischke, President Emeritus of Purdue University, co-chaired by Mr. Abdallah Jum'ah, CEO Saudi Aramco and renowned academicians and some of the world's most influential corporate figures. The IAB features leading experts currently or formerly affiliated with some of the most successful and leading companies and universities. These include British Petroleum, Chevron Corp., General Electric, Georgia Institute of Technology, Harvard University, KFUPM, Kyoto University, National University of Singapore, SABIC, Saudi Aramco, Schlumberger, Stanford University, Purdue University, and the University of Chicago.

The IAB members also held discussions with university officials, faculty and students, and discussed issues associated with University activities. This informal get-together gave the IAB members the benefit of their perspective and insight. These discussions were very fruitful and will form the basis in charting a course on strategic planning and future directions.

During their stay, the Rector of KFUPM hosted a dinner in honor of the Board members, which was attended by dignitaries and members of the University community. The IAB members also paid a courtesy visit and met with HRH Prince Mohammad bin Fahd bin Abdulaziz, governor of the Eastern Province.

The inaugural meeting of the board was in March 2007. The board meets on a biannual basis alternating between the Dhahran campus of KFUPM and sites outside of the Kingdom. At these meetings, members advise, guide, and provide input on the University activities, including the development of action plans and specific strategies on key educational and research areas of national interest. The first meeting culminated in an audience and reception given to the board members by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah ibn Abdul'Aziz in Riyadh in March 2007.

As illustrious as the first forty-four years have been for KFUPM, there is reason for excitement and optimism regarding the future, said Dr. Jischke, chairman of the board. He further noted that "energy and petrochemicals will continue to play a central role in the economy of Saudi Arabia and the world... It is essential that KFUPM continue its quest to be a globally recognized elite technological university... KFUPM's rich history, its importance to the Kingdom and the world, its talented people, and its commitment to excellence make me and the International Advisory Board quite optimistic about the future of KFUPM."