



ATC Spotlight

Saudi delegation visits ATC, seeks partnership



A delegation of officials from King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia visited Athens Technical College Friday, Jan. 20 to gain insights that could help them develop a new community college in Saudi Arabia.

Six representatives from King Faisal University met with ATC President Flora Tydings and several members of the ATC staff and faculty to learn about how the college conducts business, develops curriculum and provides a quality education for its students.

The King Faisal University delegation included Dr. Ahmad Alshoabi, Vice President for Development and Community Services, who led the group, as well as Dr. Sumaihan Alrashidi, Dean, Academic Development; Dr. Abdulhakim Almatar, Vice Dean, Quality Assurance and Academic Accreditation; Dr. Ibrahim Albokhadaim, Assistant Vice Dean, Quality Assurance and Academic Accreditation; Dr. Muhana Aldelami, Supervisor General, Community Engagement Administration; and Dr. Nouriddine Khababa, Faculty, College of Business Administration.

During the Saudi visit to the Athens Campus, Dr. Tydings presented a Power Point overview of Athens Technical College, and Dan Smith, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, discussed the college's accreditation process and institutional effectiveness, areas in which the Saudi delegation expressed interest. Stephanie Benson, ATC's Director of Research and Assessment for Institutional Effectiveness, handed out and explained a packet that highlighted those areas and included a fact book on the college.

Additionally, Andrea Daniel, Vice President for Student Affairs and other members of the ATC staff presented the King Faisal University representatives with gift bags from the college.

King Faisal University's Alshoabi explained that his delegation was visiting several U.S. technical colleges to gather information and assistance in starting up a brand new community college in a small Saudi Arabian town that serves as home to oil company Saudi Aramco's facilities.

"The oil company is looking for all types of (job training) from welding to (information technology) to engineering, to drafting – everything," Alshoabi said. "The oil company gave us a list of disciplines they need taught and Athens Technical College is one of the schools where some of these disciplines are well established."

Alshoaibi went on to say that his group is looking not only for guidance on how to design and set up a community college, but also a partner to supervise, manage academics and oversee the organization for the new college.

The King Faisal University group spent a little more than hour asking questions of ATC staff about its teaching programs , its mission to provide educational opportunities and job training, and its organizational structure.

Following the discussion, Dr. Tydings led the delegation on a tour of the college's Life Sciences building, the Business and Technology center and the Automotive Collision Repair and Automotive Technology facilities.

King Faisal University is in Al-Ahsa, Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia and represents one of Saudi Arabia's largest four-year educational institutions with 80,000 students, including 30,000 online Almatar said.

Photo caption: Members of a delegation from King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia, posed with Athens Technical College President Flora Tydings and other members of the ATC staff outside the entrance to the Business and Technology building Jan. 20 during a visit to ATC by the Saudi group.

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