



NIASD contact information

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NIASD NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2009

We are happy to inform you about the activities which have recently taken place at the Netherlands Institute for Academic Studies in Damascus (NIASD).

1. Science and Education

Preparations, streamlining and promotion three summer courses 2010: 1. Intercultural Communication, 2. Christian and Islamic Art and Architecture, and 3. Arabic

After obtaining the official Syrian permissions at the end of October 2009, the NIASD started streamlining the terms and conditions, information/promotion materials, housing arrangements and application forms for the three summer courses it offers for the summer of 2010. Apart from our traditional summer course Arabic, we are offering two additional summer courses: one on Christian and Islamic Art and Architecture (second edition) and one on Intercultural Communication (first edition).

The summer courses are scheduled to take place:

- from 20 June until 11 July 2010: Christian and Islamic Art and Architecture (CIAA);
- from 27 June until 8 July 2010: Intercultural Communication (IC);
- from 15 July until 10 August 2010: Arabic (AR).

The application deadline for all these courses is 15 March 2010. The course fees vary depending on the housing option which is chosen. With basic accommodation the course fees are: 700 Euro for IC, 850 Euro for CIAA, 800 Euro for AR. For more information and for the application forms, please visit: www.niasd.org.

Whereas the summer course Arabic will be delivered by our team of Syrian teachers, the summer course Christian and Islamic Art and Architecture will be delivered by lecturers of Leiden University and the University of Amsterdam. The summer course Intercultural Communication will be delivered by lecturers of Avans University and the University of Groningen.

Promotion Dutch Higher Education – Study in Holland event at the NIASD (9 October 2009)



The NIASD organized a Study in Holland event at the institute on the 9th of October 2010. For about 30 attendees educational advisor Martijn Leeftink gave a general overview on the Dutch higher education system and the available Bachelor and Master programmes in English. Martijn also presented the available scholarships and PhD opportunities, using NUFFIC information materials. The NIASD plans to organize more of these general Study in Holland presentations at the institute in 2010.

Educational Memorandum of Understanding between Erasmus University's Center for Maritime Economics and Logistics (MEL) and the American University of Technology (AUT, Halat, Lebanon, 1 December 2009)

On the 1st of December 2009, NIASD's Deputy Director Taco van der Zwaag attended the official ceremony for the signing of an educational memorandum of understanding between the Center for Maritime Economics and Logistics (MEL) of Erasmus University Rotterdam and the American University of Technology (AUT) in Halat, Lebanon. (Halat is north of Beirut, close to the ancient city of Byblos.) This new MEL-AUT partnership involves cooperation in education and research, exchange of staff and students and the joint organisation of conferences and other academic events. In this framework, MEL will be offering courses in logistics and shipping and port management in the context of AUT's bachelor program on Transport Management. That bachelor program is endorsed and sponsored by CMA-CGM, the world's third global transport and logistics giant.

During his stay at AUT, MEL director dr. Hercules Haralambides delivered a six day course on transport management to a group of 13 AUT undergraduate students. The second course is scheduled to be delivered by MEL in March 2010.

Promotion Dutch Higher Education – NIASD present at JETE international education fair in Amman, Jordan (5-7 November 2009); presentations at the University of Jordan about educational programs in Holland in the fields of rural development (5 November 2009) and sustainable energy (8 November 2009).



In November the NIASD was present with Study in Holland materials at the Education and Training Exhibition (JETE) in Amman, Jordan. In this three day fair NIASD's educational advisor Martijn Leeftink and freelancer Ruben Elsinga gave information about study possibilities in the Netherlands. On the occasion of this fair, Martijn Leeftink gave two presentations at the University of Jordan on educational programs in Holland in the fields of sustainable energy and rural development.



Further steps taken with regard to the concept-cooperation agreement between the University of Groningen and Damascus University on small scale student research exchanges in the fields of media and culture (10 November 2009)

During the fall, the concept-cooperation agreement between the University of Groningen and Damascus University concerning small scale student research exchanges in the fields of media and culture (see our earlier newsletters) was finalized. On the 10th of November 2009, the concept- agreement was submitted to the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in accordance with Syrian procedures. Once the Ministry gives its approval, the universities can proceed with signing the agreement. The NIASD has offered its assistance with the implementation of the student research exchanges.

Promotion Dutch Higher Education – NIASD present at the EU-delegation’s “Study in Europe” day at Tishreen University in Lattakia, Syria (22 November 2009)

The NIASD participated in the Study in Europe fair organized by the delegation of the European Commission in Syria at Tishreen University in Lattakia. Three NIASD educational advisors were constantly busy at this very well attended fair and informed a great number of students on possibilities for studying in the Netherlands.



Promotion Dutch Higher Education – presentation at the NIASD on Dutch Design & Art educational programs (9 December, 2009).



The NIASD for the first time held a presentation focused on available educational programs in the Netherlands in the fields of design and art. With the expertise Holland has in design and art — exemplified by the brand name ‘Dutch Design’— the country offers some excellent study programs in these fields both at undergraduate and graduate levels. For more information, please get in touch with educationadvisor@niasd.org.

NIASD assistance to Yarmouk Private University (10 December 2009)

In the past months, the NIASD was contacted by Yarmouk Private University (YPU), a new Syrian university about 45 kilometers south of Damascus, with the request to assist in contacting Dutch universities. YPU offers only bachelor programs and is looking for partner universities which offer master programmes in the same fields as their faculties (informatics and communication engineering, financial and administrative sciences, civil and environmental engineering and architecture). On the 10th of December, the NIASD sent letters about YPU to four Dutch universities of applied sciences and to the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (HBO-raad).

Promotion Dutch Higher Education – Advertisement and brochure distribution

In October 2009 the institute published a full two page advertisement on Study in Holland and the NIASD in the Syrian higher education directory of *Shabablek*, a popular magazine for Syrian students and youngsters. Furthermore information brochures about specific higher education programs in Holland, including summer schools, were sent to the relevant university faculties in Syria.



NIASD internship assistance information revised (fall 2009)

The information on the institute’s website on doing internships in Syria has been fully revised and updated so as to better assist Dutch students interested in internships in the region. The institute maintains its individual approach of interns.

Fall 2009 Dutch language courses

In the fall of 2009, the NIASD delivered a Dutch language course to a group of 15 Syrian students. This two month course, given by Trees ‘t Hooft, consisted of 30 lessons of each 2 hours.

Promotion of Dutch Higher Education – Marketing 2010 MENA Scholarship Programme (November-December 2009) and meeting MENA alumni (13 December 2009)

Upon the request of the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Damascus, the NIASD helped to promote and to process applications for the 2010 MENA Scholarship Programme, an initiative of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs which is administrated by the NUFFIC. The programme provides scholarships for short courses in the Netherlands for Syrian mid-career professionals employed by organizations in the fields of Water Management, Environmental Sciences, Business Administration and Management, Agriculture and Geology and Earth Sciences.



On 13 December 2009 NIASD the Dutch Ambassador to Syria, Mr. Hogewoning, and NIASD Director Astrid Rijbroek welcomed a number of 2008 and 2009 MENA Alumni to a cocktail in Al-Dar Restaurant in the Old City of Damascus. During that cocktail the MENA Scholarship Programme 2010 was presented as well.

And furthermore...

During the past several months the NIASD assisted prof.dr. H. Teule of Radboud University in the organization of a study trip to Syria in April-May 2010 for students in the fields of religious studies and Arabic. The focus of this study trip will be on Christianity in Syria both in the past and in the present. <> In October 2009, the NIASD assisted in preparing the third edition of the Archaeological Ceramic Research Course at Damascus University, to be delivered from 11 to 15 April 2010 by dr. Bram van As, dr. Olivier Nieuwenhuys and Mr. Lou Jacobs of Leiden University. <> On 5 November 2009 NIASD director Astrid Rijbroek met with Mr. Anne Willem Kist of the Board of Trustees of the National Museum of Ethnology (Leiden, the Netherlands) to discuss plans for a Syria exhibition in the museum.

2. Culture

NIASD Film Programme 2009: "Art, History, Nature" (27- 29 October 2009) and "December Love & Warmth" (15-17 December 2009)

In the context of the NIASD Film Programme 2009, which is sponsored by the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Damascus and by Holland Film in Amsterdam, the institute produced Arabic subtitles for a total of five Dutch feature films and two Dutch documentaries. These films and documentaries were each screened twice during two well attended series of film evenings.



In October two documentaries were screened: - "Rembrandt's J'accuse", about the conspiracies surrounding and depicted in Rembrandt's famous painting "The Nightwatch", and - "4 Elements", portraying the lives of those who work and live most directly with the four elements fire, water, earth and air. During the October film bloc, Fons Rademaker's famous feature film "Max Havelaar", based upon the classic 19th century Dutch novel by Multatuli, was screened as well.



In tune with the December atmosphere, the film screenings in December had a lighter theme with three Dutch feature films about (the complexities of) love: "HannaHannaH", "Een beetje Verliefd" (*A Little Bit in Love*) and "Alles is Liefde" (*Love is All*). *Alles is Liefde* was introduced at the NIAD by Film director Joram Lürsen himself.



Visit Dutch actress Adelheid Roosen to Syria (24-31 December 2009)

From 24 to 31 December 2009 Dutch actress and performer Adelheid Roosen visited Damascus to do research for a new project. With the help of the NIASD, she met with several relevant players in the cultural scene and visited the Faculty of Fine Arts of Damascus University as well as the Theatre Department of the Higher Institute for Dramatic Arts. Adelheid also met with a renowned psychiatrist and visited a hospital and a refugee project in Syria.

3. Cooperation

During the past few months the NIASD met with several people in the field of cooperation to discuss each other's past and future projects: consultant Petra Stienen (19 October 2009), Marjolein Wijninckx of Pax Christi/IKV (2 December 2009), Monique Doppert of Hivos (13 December 2009) and Jos de Sonnevile and other members of the Syrian-Dutch Water Cooperation Project (21 December 2009).

4. Institutional and Organizational

Detailed regionalization plan finalized and submitted to Leiden University (13 November 2009)

Following the subsidy decision of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for regionalization towards Lebanon and Jordan of 29 May 2009, the NIASD finalized a detailed regionalization plan as well as year plans 2010 for Lebanon and Jordan. These documents were handed in at Leiden University on the 13th of November 2009.

Meeting Netherlands Institutes' directors in Groningen (20 November 2009)

NIASD director Astrid Rijbroek attended the annual meeting of the directors of Dutch institutes abroad. This year the meeting was held in Groningen, the Netherlands.

*Looking at things from a different perspective....
...on the left with the blue jacket NIASD Director
Astrid Rijbroek*



NIASD



THE NIASD WISHES YOU A HAPPY NEW YEAR !!!