

Warm Welcome in Freezing Conditions: Second workshop on the Erbil B.A. programme “German as a Foreign Language” held at Herder-Institut, University of Leipzig

Dr. Mohammed Aziz Saeed, Head of Salahaddin University’s International Office, visited Herder-Institut (University of Leipzig, Germany) from 6-8 February 2012. He was joined by a delegation of academics from the College of Languages at Salahaddin University (SUH).

The delegation and Dr. Mohammed Aziz Saeed participated in the second workshop on the curriculum development for the new B.A. programme "German as a Foreign Language" (B.A. DaF) at SUH. In addition to the two DAAD lecturers in Erbil, Ms. Isabell Mering and Ms. Kerstin Simonis, the delegation also included Dr. Saman Hussein, Head of the English Department, and Mrs. Hanna Wadi Sailler, lecturer in the French Department. They received a warm welcome by the Leipzig project team led by Prof. Erwin Tschirner and Prof. Christian Fandrych, as well as by Mr. Alexander Haridi from the main DAAD office in Bonn (section Iraq-Iran). The workshop discussed a variety of topics, with a clear focus on the further development of the B.A. programme in German at SUH, including principles and methods of language teaching pedagogy, Higher Education teaching pedagogy, (academic) literacy and writing competence, blended-learning concepts in foreign language teaching, study skills and the design of the content course syllabus. The workshop clearly demonstrated the benefits of closer co-operation between the various language departments at SUH – all participants voiced their strong interest in intensifying mutual exchange and collaboration at all levels.

In addition to the workshop itself, there were also opportunities for the Erbil colleagues to liaise with their counterparts from the Leipzig American Studies and French Departments. Dr. Mohammed Aziz had further appointments with the Rector of Leipzig University, Prof. Dr. Beate Schücking, the Dean of the Faculty of Philology, Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Lörcher, and Prof. Dr. Klauser from the Department of Business and Economics Education. Further steps to extend and intensify the areas of co-operation and to sign a partnership memorandum between the two universities were discussed. The arctic weather conditions in Leipzig (between minus 20 and minus 10 degrees Celcius) did not manage to undermine the warm and cordial atmosphere of this visit.

Albrecht Klemm and Isabell Mering, 08.02.2012