Overview and Learning Outcomes

Background:
International Day is an annual celebration that has been part of the Carnegie Mellon Qatar community since the inaugural year. It has served as a great community building event, bringing the students, staff and faculty together. In the early days of CMU, the event was organized by a member of the Student Affairs team. Starting in 2007/2008, the event has been organized by a student committee under the guidance of OIE.

A student committee is convened each year to plan and execute much of the activities related to this day. The students gain deeper learning through their involvement in the planning process with a multi-cultural group. OIE ensures that activities throughout the day align with the vision and goals of the program and include opportunities for meaningful dialogue.

One way to prompt dialogue and appreciate our community’s rich diversity is by inviting everyone to wear something with cultural significance. Another activity that visually represents our ‘global-ness’ is the ‘Where map’. For this activity people are asked to mark an area on a printed map of the world to answer questions like, “Where have you lived?” or “Where were you born”. Other activities have included a cultural fashion show, “Guess Who” interesting facts, dance demonstrations and other performances. The introduction of information tables in 2009 was also a great success. This has evolved to an International Food Fest. During the Food Fest, community members contribute food for sampling and/or items for display and discussion. Conversations around these tables have provided wonderful opportunities for identifying commonalities among cultures and also finding deeper meaning in traditions. It has also provided a great opportunity to talk to one another and further build our community spirit.

Vision:
International Day aims to create an environment where all members of the community recognize, respect and appreciate the rich diversity among us. It also aims to provide opportunities for deeper conversations about who we are to help build a more connected community.

Outcomes:
As a result of participation in this program, students and the greater Carnegie Mellon Qatar community will:
- Develop an understanding and appreciation of cultural differences (INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE)
- Express pride and confidence in their identity (SELF AWARENESS and IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT)
- Engage in conversations that create more meaningful relationships (COMMUNITY BUILDING)
- Recognize the interconnection of individuals, groups, and communities (EMPATHY)

As a result of participation in the International Day Planning Committee, students will:
- Exhibit cross-cultural sensitivity and adaptability
- Act compassionately and respectfully towards others including those who are not similar to themselves
- Communicate across differences (gender, cultural, positional, interdisciplinary)
- Identify beliefs, values, attitudes, and personality traits