

# INScription

Department of International Studies (INS)

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# MEET THE FACULTY

In each issue of *INScription*, we ask one or two faculty members to tell us a bit more about themselves. In this issue, the faculty members under the spotlight are Dr. Christopher Bryan and Dr. Alisher Khaliyarov who joined us in August 2022.

## Dr. Christopher Bryan

I am from the west coast of Ireland in County Clare which is also considered to be the windiest and wettest part of Ireland. Here I grew up and spent my summers in the cooling Atlantic sea. My neighbor was a swimming teacher so I developed a love for the water at a young age and my competitive spirit pushed me toward the Olympic sport of swimming.

The first 50m Olympic pool was built at the University of Limerick when I was a teenager and so I chose to go there for University. Here, they had both the best sporting and business schools in the country where I could focus both on my academia and sport. I stayed for many years completing my PhD in psychology and teaching courses across both the sports and business departments. At the same time, I was lucky to have the opportunity to travel the world representing my country in Swimming.

An opportunity arose to move to a warmer climate in the UAE where I took up a position at NYU Abu Dhabi and focused on my academic research such as psychological stress and resilience. Now, new to AUS I will continue my research across education, sports, and the workplace while applying these interests, when possible, across all my courses. Luckily, we have a beautiful coastline here in the UAE where I further continue to swim for my mind, body, and well-being. I look forward to working with all AUS students and staff as well as using the great facilities here on campus.



Dr. Christopher Bryan swimming with friends at Jumierah Beach, Dubai.

## Dr. Alisher Khaliyarov

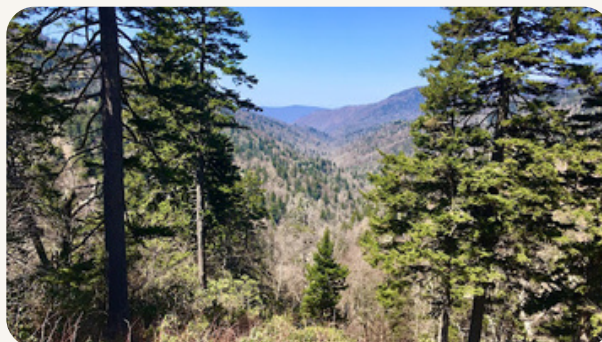
I am from Surkhandarya province of Uzbekistan. I started my academic journey at the International Business School (IBS) Kelajak Ilmi in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. During my early 20s, in quest of knowledge, I went to Malaysia where I earned both my bachelor's and master's degrees. My master's degree is in Islamic Finance from INCEIF University Malaysia. INCEIF was founded by the Central Bank of Malaysia as a research and education center in Islamic Finance and brings together leading experts and scholars from the industry and academia. During my time at INCEIF, scholars and experts of Islamic finance used to bring examples of Middle Eastern economics history compared to European economics. The debate always revolved around conventional economics, Islamic finance, and capitalism, while Central Asian economics was always absent in the discussions. This is precisely what pushed me to pursue Central Asia as an area of study. I was adamant about filling in the gap, and started conducting my primary archival research in Central Asian archives where I found out that 19th-century Central Asia was highly involved in monetary transactions in the global economy as well.

After presenting my initial findings, I joined the University of Bond in Germany, as a visiting scholar, where I started my research on economic history in Central Asia. Soon, my research was awarded with a two-year research grant from Gerda Henkel Stiftung, German research foundation to analyze cash waqf foundations and their impact on the economy. My archival research in Central Asian and Russian imperial archives revealed that Central Asian economies were fully immersed in the global economy of the 19th century and was not isolated. In order to expand my research on Central Asian history, I went on for my PhD study at the Ohio State University with Professor Scott Levi, an economic historian of Central Asia. I successfully defended my PhD dissertation in 2021.



Dr. Alisher Khaliyarov with his kids atop the Great Smokey Mountains in Tennessee.

Outside of academia, which started with me being a student of Islamic Finance and ended up with me being a Historian of Central Asia, I am a dad of two who enjoys camping, exploring new places, and going on road trips with my family. Among the most memorable trips, and one of the longest, is the trip I took with my family to the Great Smokey Mountains in Tennessee, United States. If I were not a professor, I would be a banker or an entrepreneur.



# EVENTS SPOTLIGHT

## INSA Majlis

On Wednesday, October 5, INSA hosted its first in-person Majlis since the COVID-19 pandemic in the new Humanities and Social Sciences Building (HSB). Dr. Seungah Sarah Lee from NYUAD and our very own Dr. Brien Ashdown discussed various ways globalization is intricately present in educational systems, from textbooks to curricula. After the lecture, students enjoyed delicious snacks while getting to know the speakers better.



## Sport Psychology

The Psychology Club held an event on Sport Psychology on Oct. 17 with Dr. Christopher Bryan, who studies stress dynamics in Occupational and Sport Psychology. Dr. Bryan discussed what Sport Psychology is and helped the audience apply the skills needed for athletes to manage their stress levels through multiple engaging activities. The event was described by students as interactive and fun.



Members of the Psychology Club at their booth in the Student Center.

## World Mental Health Day

The Psychology Club held an event to raise awareness of the importance of mental health education and advocacy on October 10, World Mental Health Day. Students were encouraged to donate to a selected mental health charity and were handed tote bags in return for their donations.



## Reconnecting with AUS Alumni

In celebration of the AUS Silver Jubilee, the INS Alumni Events committee hosted Ms. Sidiqa Sohail (INS Alumna, Class of 2012) on October 11. After graduating from AUS, Ms. Sohail earned a master's degree, managed her own business, started a family, published a book on parenting methods, and is now pursuing a doctoral degree at the University of Durham in the UK. Her dissertation compares mental health provisions in early childhood education programs in refugee camps in Bangladesh and Jordan. An extensive Q&A session followed the talk.

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It was so wonderful to be back at the AUS campus and to see the wonderful new building dedicated to the INS department. The energy and buzz of the faculty and students were palpable and I was thrilled to get a chance to meet with everyone! Thank you! - Sidiqa Sohail

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To be able to hear about Sidiqa's experience from the moment she graduated from university was quite unique. Seeing her passion for her PhD topic made me [want to] continue my education in post-graduate studies. - Sarah Zahaf, Double Major in INS and English.

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I tend to compare myself [now] to me 4 years ago, before university. However, Sidiqa inspired me to think about myself 10 years from now. It was inspiring to see my sister's [classmate and friend] sharing her valuable achievements. - Ahmad Al Kaldi, INS Major. Ahmad's sister lynas Al Kaldi was also an INS major and graduated MAGNA CUM LAUDE in 2012.

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## AUSMUN UN Day

AUS Model United Nations extended an invitation to faculty and students to join them in celebrating the United Nations Day on October 24, which commemorates the anniversary of the official creation of the United Nations through the 1945 UN Charter. In 1971, the UN-Day was declared an international observance and is considered a public holiday by the United Nations member states.



# INS DEPARTMENT'S COLLOQUIA SERIES

## Dr. Khym Isaac De Barros

The second department colloquium of the semester, featuring Dr. Khym Isaac De Barros, a Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology at AUS, was held on Thursday, October 13 at HSB. Dr. De Barros presented her paper titled "On Pan-Africanism, Feminism, and Psychotherapy," where she discussed how although pan-African feminists do not necessarily share the same living conditions, religions, and ethnicities, they still share a common African cultural heritage and a history that was impacted by European totalitarianism that spilled over across many generations and accordingly impacted the lives of black women in the diaspora.



## Dr. Lenoard Harris

On Oct. 26, Dr. Lenoard Harris, a globally renowned philosopher from Purdue University, visited the INS department and delivered a thought-provoking lecture on advocacy aesthetics. According to Dr. Harris, advocacy aesthetics is an aesthetic that promotes cultural pluralism, tolerance, reciprocity, respect, transculturalism, disruption of boundaries and is opposed to cultural uniformitarianism, absolutism, dogmatism, value essentialism, and formalism. Advocacy aesthetics allows us to critique practices of subjection that restrict our ability to imagine future forms of self-formation and stereotypes cognitively restrict our imagination. To illustrate, Dr. Harris used pictures of slavery, racist stereotypes, and portraits of dignified persons to convey the importance of aesthetics as a form of advocacy.





# UPCOMING EVENTS!

Events listed below are subject to change

INS Alumni Mixer

Wednesday November 9 | 6:00 – 8:00pm

Psych Club and Psi Chi Event: Forensic Psychology

Monday, November 14 | 5:00 – 6:00pm

Department Colloquium | Dr. Chris Colley

Tuesday, November 15 | 5:00 – 6:00pm

AUSMUN Annual BBQ

Thursday, November 17 | 4:00 – 9:00pm

Department Colloquium | Dr. Anitha Menon

Thursday, November 24 | 5:00 – 6:00pm

## Contact Us!



INSA - [@insa\\_au](#)

Psi Chi - [@psichi.au](#)

AUS Model UN - [@aus\\_modelun](#)

Psychology Club - [@auspsychclub](#)

AUS Model Congress - [@ausmodcongress](#)

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