

## **Introduction to Dallas College, Cape Town - College of Leadership**

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Dallas College is a tertiary education institution that offers a three year Bachelor's Degree\* in Geopolitics. The function of the College is to educate and produce a new generation with the capacity for leadership at the national and international level. Graduates are prepared to enter straight into positions of leadership and management in the industries of media, civic or corporate governance, commodities, diplomacy and trade.

Dallas College is born from many years of experience in the field of higher education in Europe; particularly from the educational model researched and implemented at Achnagairn House in Scotland between 1998 and 2002. The Achnagairn House was a private educational institution founded by Muslim European scholars and teachers, who established higher education modules in Education, History, Literature, Islamic Law, Trade and Finance, Qur'anic Studies and Languages.

In the success of this educative model, it was found necessary to include a focus from within the Developing World in order that a complete education could be provided. Therefore, a decision was made to relocate to South Africa.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2004, Dallas College was inaugurated at its campus in Kenilworth, Cape Town. Lectures began two days later.

The education offered at Dallas College is based on the classical education that has been given to the elite of Europe, one that is derived from the Greek model of *paideia*. Rather than giving the student a specialised education, it was the aim was to build a complete man, where he was considered in his entirety. This method of education gave the graduate a clear understanding of the world in which they lived, the ability to evaluate and act upon situations which they were to face, and left them prepared to successfully engage in whichever undertaking they chose. From this, specialisation, if needed, could subsequently be acquired.

The academic programme has been designed for male and female graduates, not only to fully equip them to understand the evolving social nexus and the devolving political instruments of their time, but also to express themselves in leadership and communicate at the global level. This programme comprises of four fields of study:

## **Politics**

This, along with languages, is the central force of the learning module. Politics will be approached from three distinct disciplines, each internally specialised.

*Geo-Politics* permits the study of events in different terrains and countries, the causes of crises and the interlinking of events.

*Bio-Politics* is quite a new intellectual discipline that will study the impact and connection with events by which an individual can impose, alter or overwhelm these events. A biographic analysis of political leaders is essential in an age when both dictators and democratic leaders hold unique powers over events.

*Lit-Politics* represents an in-depth study of the great literary great works that have fathered ideologies, and sketched both utopian and dystopian models of future society.

*Shakespearean Studies* examines the greatest writer in the English language and the art of rhetoric, as well as providing an enriched vocabulary. These are ancillary to the primary purpose, which is the profound study of Shakespeare's reading of historical events as exemplified in his Histories and his Roman plays.

## **Languages**

*Arabic. Urdu. Turkish-Osmanli.* The student possessing these three languages is literate throughout the Islamic world. The extension of Turkish learning will take in the rich Islamic heritage of Turkey that was halted by the notorious linguicide, Mustafa Kemal. The Osmanli script is still used by the Uygurs in East Turkestan. The students will soon grasp that they are studying three inter-related languages, both in vocabulary and calligraphy.

## **Information Technology**

The classes in *Information Technology* ensure that the students are provided with the means to disseminate and communicate what is required in the assumption of power. Information technology is to the present age what the Encyclopaedia was to the Age of Enlightenment.

*Media* will study the varied political usages in the dissemination of "the message".

## **Qur'anic Studies**

The approach adopted for the study of Qur'an is that which was taught in Madrasas under Islamic governance when their students were preparing for active service as Qadi or Mufti. It entails three sciences:

*Ilm Asbab an-Nuzul* (The science of circumstances and reasons or causes of the Revelation). This knowledge is vital for understanding and for the prevention of esoteric interpretations.

*Nasikh wa'l Mansukh* (The science of the abrogated and abrogating Ayats of the Qur'an). Being able to make this distinction assures recognition that the Qur'an is a living and dynamic force and prevents the kafir from exploiting the Qur'an to confuse the ignorant Muslim. (For example, "No compulsion in the Deen" was abrogated by the Ayat as-Sayf).

*Ahkam al-Qur'an* (Ayat of judgement in the Qur'an) of Qadi Abu Bakr. This study is on those Ayats from which legal judgements are derived and which cannot be subject to Ta'wil.

In addition to the academic programme, the activities outside of the lecture rooms of the College are considered equally important in the education of the student. It is here that the students' characters are shaped by their service to each other in every aspect of communal life.

An illustration of this is the student's rotational service of both the daily coffee break and the lunch meal. These times are intended to allow for an informal yet fundamental inter-action with the faculty, as well as developing the adeptness and courtesy of service in the fulfilment of these tasks. In addition, all work at the College stops at the times of prayer for the students and faculty to join in the worship of Allah.

The strong extra-mural programme is intended to compliment its academic counterpart with cultural and sporting enrichment. Fencing, cricket and horse riding have been selected due to their ability to teach the participant how to compete in the appropriate manner, as part of a team, with honour, and how to acquire the ability to command. Regular viewing, together as a College, of theatre and musical productions, as well as the watching and discussions of classical and contemporary cinema, develop the student's cultural nuance and complete the well-rounded education offered by Dallas College.

Dallas College has feels a duty to ensure that this education of excellence is given to students from disadvantaged backgrounds within South Africa, particularly from its townships, who have the capacity to undertake leadership positions in the future.

Due to the primary barrier of a student from the townships lacking the financial capacity, rather than the aptitude, to successfully study at a tertiary level institution like Dallas College, the College has established the Dallas College Bursary Fund, whereby the responsibility of seeking financial assistance is taken on by the College rather than it being left, as is the general practise, to the successful applicant. This assistance is granted so that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are able to receive not only an excellent education but will also go on to serve and transform their own communities.

This brief paper offers an elementary introduction to Dallas College – College of Leadership. Should more information be required, or if you would like to visit the campus as a guest of the Vice-Chancellor, please contact Siddiq Ferriman, Secretary of Dallas College, by email ([info@dallascollege.net](mailto:info@dallascollege.net)).

\*The Bachelor's Degree in Geopolitical and Societal Studies is currently under the process of accreditation with the Department of Education, South African Qualifications Authority and the Council for Higher Education.

Quotes:

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