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Welcome to Iraqi Attache and Iraqi Students Union

John M. Dunn
Western Michigan University, john.dunn@wmich.edu

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Welcome to Iraqi Attache and Iraqi Students Union
Dr. John M. Dunn
1/16/15

• Welcome to our campus Dr. Alsandook (AHL sahn dook). We are delighted that you are here and able to spend time this week with our large and very active group of Iraqi students. I hope they've been showing you their favorite sites and giving you a sense of who we are as a community.

• The 83 Iraqi students here at Western Michigan University have quickly made a campuswide impression--forming their Iraqi Students Union, sharing information about Iraqi culture and customs and supporting each other through what has been a period of tremendous challenge.

• Students, there are 83 of you here today--where only one Iraqi student studied five years ago. You are one of the fastest growing international student populations at WMU. All but one of you are graduate students (*the event's emcee is an undergrad*) and you have made it your mission to become active members of our campus community.

• You come from urban and rural areas of your country. You are Sunnis, Shiites, Kurds and Christians. You represent your country's great diversity, traditions and blend of cultures. During the past few very difficult months, you have come together to support each other and to educate the rest of us about your country. By proudly, showing your empathy for each other and demonstrating that common ground and friendship is indeed possible among people with differing views, you have provided the rest of us on campus with a powerful example of what your
nation's future can be. You have been highly visible, eloquent and effective in allowing us to know more about Iraq and its people—\textit{you} and \textit{your families}.

My hope for you is that you focus on your studies here and attain the academic success that will one day greatly benefit you, your loved ones and your nation. I hope too that you resolve to build upon the feeling of connection with your fellow Iraqi students. The friendships you build and take back to Iraq will have a tremendous influence on those around you and help set the tone for a better future.

We are delighted you are part of the Western Michigan Community. And I hope Dr. Alsandook's visit is just the first of many visits by Iraq's political and diplomatic leaders. Enjoy the weekend. Stay warm!

Thank you.