

Yara Shaban

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Learning scientist with over a decade of experience spanning educational and policy research, curriculum design, and pedagogy development across professional training contexts. Expertise in knowledge-building theory, designing capacity-building programming, and leading multi-stakeholder initiatives within the development sector in the West Asia North Africa region. Interests include science communication, knowledge production in informal learning settings, and the role of culture and language in education.

EDUCATION

Tufts University

Massachusetts, USA

PhD in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education

May, 2019

Dissertation: Looking at Conceptual Change Dynamics in a Knowledge-Building Classroom. Research focused on how students construct and refine scientific understanding through collaborative work and agent-based modelling environments.

Singularity University

California, USA

Graduate Solutions Program

June 2010 – August 2010

Studied exponential technologies at NASA Ames Research Park, specifically in the AI and robotics sector.

The University of Jordan

Amman, Jordan

Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering

February 2006

Graduation project: Designing an Autonomous Vehicle. Configured a life-sized go-kart to operate remotely and autonomously.

TEACHING & INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN EXPERIENCE

West Asia-North Africa Institute (WANA)

Amman, Jordan

Lead Instructor & Programme Designer, Capacity-Building Programmes

January 2022 – Present

- Designed and delivered multi-session training programmes combining online digital materials, peer review assignments, and in-person workshops on research methods, including conducting interviews and focus group discussions, policy analysis, and policy writing for researchers and practitioners for professional development.

Middle East Scientific Institute for Security (MESIS)

Amman, Jordan

Learning & Development Manager / Lead Instructor

November 2019 – December 2021

- Designed and facilitated tabletop exercises as knowledge-building tools for nuclear security education, applying constructivist pedagogy to professional learning contexts.
- Led the localisation of international nuclear security curricula for Jordanian contexts, adapting content, language, and pedagogical approaches for Jordanian learner populations.
- Trained subject-matter experts on effective instructional strategies for technical education delivery.

Osher Institute for Lifelong Learning, Tufts University

Massachusetts, USA

Group Study Leader

Fall 2015 & Spring 2017

- Designed and taught two 4-week seminars on understanding Arabic and Muslim cultures, employing discussion-based pedagogy and multimedia digital content to engage adult learners.

Tufts University

Massachusetts, USA

Teaching & Research Fellowships

September 2013 – June 2019

- Completed the Graduate Research Excellence (Summer 2016). A programme dedicated to leveraging interactive pedagogy and a supportive interdisciplinary environment to enable graduate students to acquire skills in research and communication.
- Completed the Graduate Institute for Teaching (Summer 2017). A programme designed to prepare Tufts doctoral students for an academic career in teaching at the university level.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

West Asia-North Africa Institute (WANA)

Amman, Jordan

Manager / Head of Human Security and Social Justice Division

February 2023 – Present

- Responsible for formulating the strategic direction and the day-to-day operations of the Human Security and Social Justice Division.
- Manage multi-stakeholder research partnerships, proposal writing, and quality assurance across research outputs.
- Lead the conceptualisation and implementation of multi-national research projects on women's economic inclusion, governance, and social inclusion with local and regional partners.

Moore Project, Tufts University

Massachusetts, USA

Research Assistant

September 2017 – June 2019

- Analysed classroom episodes to understand how students engage in authentic scientific practices; presented findings on teacher facilitation strategies at national conferences (NARST, AERA).

SiMSAM Project, Tufts University

Massachusetts, USA

Research Assistant

September 2013 – August 2017

- Investigated how computational modelling and simulation toolkits support pre-teens' exploration of complex scientific phenomena, contributing to the design of technology-enhanced learning environments.

SKILLS & TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Research Methods: Qualitative research design, discourse analysis, interaction analysis, cross-national comparative studies, and memetic analysis.

Instructional Design: Curriculum development, assessment design, constructivist and knowledge-building pedagogies, culturally responsive instruction.

Languages: Arabic (native), English (fluent), French (limited working proficiency), German (limited working proficiency)

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Shaban, Y. (2026). The role of civil society organisations as sites for knowledge production in Jordan. West Asia-North Africa Institute (WANA) & Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) – Jordan Office.
https://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Civil%20Society_%20DrYara%20Shaban.pdf

- Shaban, Y., Auda, J. (2025). The role of human security in addressing the inclusion of women: Nuclear security and the women, peace and security agenda in Jordan and Egypt. *The International Journal of Nuclear Security*, 9(3), Article 16.
- Homan, Z. S., Shaban, Y., Rane, S., Özkan, F. Ö. & Yun, E. (2023). The language of nuclear security: New case studies exploring online open-source information from Turkey, India, and Jordan. *The International Journal of Nuclear Security*, 8(1).
- Shaban, Y., & Alblui, A. (2022). Designing tabletop exercises as a knowledge-building tool in nuclear security. *Proceedings of the INMM 2022*.
- Homan, Z. S., Shaban, Y., & Rane, S. (2022). The language of nuclear security: Language diversity in open source internet searchers. *The International Journal for Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*.
- Shaban, Y., & Wilkerson, M. (2019). Co-Construction of epistemological framing in clinical interviews and implications for research in science education. *International Journal of Science Education*, 41(12), 1579–1599.
- Wilkerson, M., Shareff, B., Gravel, B., Shaban, Y., & Laina, V. (2017). Exploring computational modelling environments as tools to structure classroom knowledge building. *Proceedings of CSCL 2017*.
- Wilkerson, M. H., Andrews, C., Shaban, Y., Laina, V., & Gravel, B. E. (2016). What's the technology for? Teacher attention and pedagogical goals in a modeling-focused professional development workshop. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 27(1), 1–27.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE & COMMUNITY

- Reviewer, American Educational Research Association (AERA), *Learning Sciences and Complexity Theories in Education* (2020–present)
- International Society of the Learning Sciences (ISLS), Membership Committee member (2019–2022)
- TEDx speaker: "Accelerating Technologies and the Challenges of the 21st Century" at TEDxRasAlEinSquare
- Curator, TEDxRamallah@Amman: first TEDx event broadcast from three cities (Bethlehem, Beirut, Amman) with 400+ audience